

## Preparing Youth for Summer Employment April 2010

**The Article:** "Under Equipped and Unprepared: America's Emerging Workforce and Soft Skills Gap"

**Where It's From:** *Issue Brief: Workforce Readiness*. America's Promise Alliance

**The Findings:** This research brief discusses significant gap between the level of soft skills that future workers need and the level of these skills that they now possess. Many employers said that the high school graduates they hire lack enough of the "soft" skills they need even for entry-level jobs.

**Some Specifics:** Below are the workforce skills and competencies that are lacking:

- **Decision-making.** To acquire this skill, young people need opportunities to participate in the making of decisions not just at home but in other environments as well.
- **Teamwork and leadership.** Opportunities in and outside of school to work in teams, take on leadership roles, and resolve conflicts are indispensable preparation for the workforce.
- **Communication.** ECEP research found that fewer than half (46%) of the youth surveyed believe that they communicate well with others.
- **Working with diverse groups.** Like American society as a whole, the U.S. workforce is becoming more diverse.
- **Computer skills.** Today, computer skills are not just a plus but increasingly a prerequisite for many jobs.
- **Money management.** Understanding how to manage money — including making a budget, saving, and investing — is increasingly relevant in the workplace.

**Read the Full Article:** [www.americaspromise.org/Resources/Research-and-Reports/~media/Files/About/ECEP%20Workforce%20Brief.ashx](http://www.americaspromise.org/Resources/Research-and-Reports/~/media/Files/About/ECEP%20Workforce%20Brief.ashx)

**The Article:** "WorkReady Philadelphia: Preparing Youth for Job Readiness"

**Where It's From:** Brett Pawlowski, AllBusiness.com

**The Findings:** The Philadelphia Workforce Investment Board Youth Council WorkReady Philadelphia to help area youth, ages 14 to 21, gain direct exposure to the world of work and develop the skills needed to thrive in the workplace.

**Some Specifics:** One of the largest-scale programs managed by WorkReady Philadelphia is the Summer Youth Program which was launched in 2003. In 2009 it worked with 8,800 area youth through various partner agencies to prepare them in some way for the work world. PYN places participating students into programs based on their level of preparedness. Program options include:

- **Summer Internships** provide older youth the opportunity to gain work experience, career exposure and learn specialized skills with an employer. Youth are employed for a total of 120 hours - 20 hours per week for six weeks.
- **Work Experience** programs combine employment at a nonprofit or public sector agency with academic enrichment during the summer.
- **Academic Support** programs focus on developing academic skills while providing exposure to higher education and career options
- **Service Learning** program participants work in teams to develop projects that incorporate active community service as well as academic enrichment during the summer.

**Read the Full Article:** [www.allbusiness.com/education-training/curricula-apprenticeships-internships/14060791-1.html](http://www.allbusiness.com/education-training/curricula-apprenticeships-internships/14060791-1.html)