



Youth Development Practitioner Pre-Apprenticeship

Facilitator Manual

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The National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL) developed the Youth Development Practitioner Pre-Apprenticeship Curriculum as a resource to prepare youth for entering a professional workplace environment. To encourage the efficacy of competency building, this toolkit required partnership with several key stakeholders to develop the following pre-apprenticeship curriculum. NIWL would like to thank the many youth development professionals who dedicated their time and expertise to the development of this pre-apprenticeship toolkit. Their combined years of research and dedication to the field has led to the successful design of this curriculum.

About FHI 360

FHI 360 is a global organization that mobilizes research, resources, and relationships so people everywhere have access to the opportunities they need to lead full and healthy lives. With collaborations in over 60 countries, we work directly with local leaders to advance social and economic equity, improve health and well-being, respond to humanitarian crises, and strengthen community resilience. We share data-driven insights and scalable tools that expand access and equity so communities can effectively address complex challenges, respond to shocks, and achieve thriving futures.

FHI 360's National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL) advances solutions in education and workforce systems. We focus on two key drivers of individual well-being – education and employment – to improve lives. NIWL seeks to strengthen the capacity of public and private organizations, providing information, resources, and support needed to make decisions, strengthen programs, and improve outcomes for individuals.

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Introduction

Pre-Apprenticeships provide young people (ages 16-24) with an introduction to a career field through hands-on classroom learning and brief work experience opportunities. The pre-apprenticeship curriculum outlined here will provide background knowledge on the core competencies of pre-apprenticeships, explore essential job readiness skills, as well as build core competencies related to becoming an effective youth development worker.

This curriculum is of unique design in that it will serve as a competency-based pre-screening that will lead to a content-based sister apprenticeship curriculum for those interested in the youth development career pathway. Once participants have successfully completed the pre-apprenticeship curriculum, they will have the opportunity to move forward to the registered Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) component or another apprenticeship aligned with their career interests and skillsets. The subsequent apprenticeship will serve as a guide for individuals looking to enter education and workforce programs centered on youth development. The combined pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship toolkits help train youth workers to train young people in becoming professionals like themselves.

Note: While the following pre-apprenticeship curriculum has been designed with a subsequent youth services apprenticeship in mind, participants are not limited in their choice of subsequent programs.



NIWL's Pre-Apprenticeships and Registered Apprenticeship Programs create an affordable pathway for starting or advancing fulfilling careers in a variety of care services. Learn more at niwl.fhi360.org/apprenticeships.

Pre-Apprenticeship Defined

Pre-Apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies that is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) ([U.S. Department of Labor](https://www.dhs.gov/e-verify/)). **Registered Apprenticeship** is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience with a mentor, receive progressive wage increases, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential. Pre-apprenticeships can be the first step for young people to find and achieve meaningful and rewarding employment.

Elements of a Quality Pre-Apprenticeship

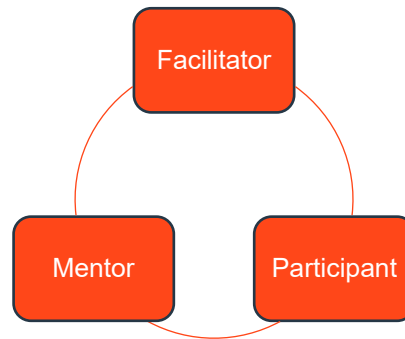
The U.S. Department of Labor recommends that implementors incorporate the following six elements to achieve a quality pre-apprenticeship experience:

 <p>APPROVED CURRICULUM</p> <p>Training that is based on industry standards and approved by a RAP partner</p>	 <p>SIMULATED EXPERIENCE</p> <p>Hands-on training or volunteer opportunities that do not displace paid employees</p>	 <p>FACILITATED ENTRY</p> <p>Agreements with RAP sponsors that allow program participants to enter directly into a RAP</p>
 <p>INCREASED ACCESS</p> <p>Recruit and prepare a large number of apprentices for a robust workforce</p>	 <p>SUPPORTIVE SERVICES</p> <p>Wrap-around services or referrals to help participants complete the program (e.g., transportation)</p>	 <p>SUSTAINABLE PARTNERSHIPS</p> <p>Collaboratively promote Registered Apprenticeship to other employers</p>

NIWL is providing this curriculum to assist organizations in developing or expanding their own pre-apprenticeship programs. Implementors of this curriculum are encouraged to consider and incorporate the additional elements of quality pre-apprenticeships when designing their programs. Visit <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/employers/explore-pre-apprenticeship> for additional information and resources.

Stakeholder Expectations

Each stakeholder plays a key role in the success of the pre-apprenticeship program.



Role of the Curriculum Facilitator

To successfully implement the pre-apprenticeship curriculum, facilitators should meet the following qualifications:

- Experience working with youth, young adults, or youth-serving individuals
- Background knowledge of required credentials needed for youth development work
- Attainment of certification or degree related to youth development work
- Ability to facilitate access to appropriate supportive services during pre-apprenticeship to remove young people's barriers to completing the program (transportation, housing, etc.)

Facilitators should spend time reviewing the curriculum content, preparing materials, and arranging for any logistics needed before implementing this curriculum. This will not only help facilitators become familiar with content but will also provide an opportunity to identify areas within the content they can modify to better support the needs of the population in which they will serve through this pre-apprenticeship.

It is recommended that this curriculum be presented by at least one consistent facilitator throughout the course. While sites may opt to include co-facilitators, such as experts with specific content knowledge, it is recommended to have a consistent facilitator to lead sessions to allow for stronger connections to form amongst participants. This format also affords the facilitator an opportunity to observe the learning styles of participants and implement activities in a manner best conducive to their learning needs.

Facilitators will be provided with session guides, presentations, and associated handouts for each curriculum component. While these resources have been designed to support the pre-apprentice youth and curriculum goals, it is welcomed and encouraged for facilitators to utilize additional resources they may find support or compliment curriculum lessons. If appropriate, these resources can be added to the curriculum to help build the program

profile and diversify opportunities that will benefit the unique populations being served through this curriculum.

Role of the Pre-Apprentice Participant

A successful pre-apprenticeship program cannot exist without committed pre-apprentices. All pre-apprentices are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions, actively participate and engage with peers, be open to new ideas and opportunities, communicate effectively with the facilitator, maintain consistent contact and communication with their facilitator, and ask questions when in need. While there are no eligibility requirements for participants to use this curriculum, each individual participating in this curriculum should meet the following qualifications:

- Be at least 16 years of age
- Self-identify as a willing and dedicated participant
- Commit to the full-length pre-apprenticeship program
- Demonstrate the capacity to work well with others
- Express interest and/or intent to participate in a registered apprenticeship program

Role of the Pre-Apprentice Mentor

Connecting participants to mentors can accelerate their success in the pre-apprenticeship program. Mentors can be experienced professionals from the youth work industry that can guide students and offer insight as they complete the program. Facilitators are encouraged to reach out to colleagues at their organization, youth-serving or mental health employers, and other community organizations with staff who may be interested and available to serve as mentors. Pre-apprenticeship mentors can engage with participants in a variety of ways, such as:

- **Coaching:** Assist participants in completing assignments and providing career guidance;
- **Teaching:** Share their professional experience related to the program competencies; or
- **Networking:** Help connect participants to organizations and opportunities in the field

Opportunities for mentor involvement, also called volunteer or employer engagement, are referenced throughout the curriculum.

Curriculum Overview

Designed to introduce learners to the youth development field, this pre-apprenticeship curriculum provides an entry point for young adults interested in pursuing a career working with youth. The 42-hour program is organized into four modules consisting of 27 sessions (see the [Session Overview](#) on page 11 for a detailed list).

- Module 1: Orientation
- Module 2: Introduction to Positive Youth Developments
- Module 3: Exploring Youth Development Work
- Module 4: Competencies in Action

The content is underpinned by the National After School Association's ten [Core Knowledge, Skills & Competencies \(CKSCs\) for Out-of-School Time Professionals](#). Facilitators are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these competencies as they will be frequently referenced throughout the curriculum.

Core Knowledge, Skills & Competencies for Out-of-School Time Professionals



Competency Connection

Module 4 includes **Skill Builder Challenges**, where pre-apprentices can complete a homework assignment that relates to one or more of the NAA Core Competencies and the Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship modules. These activities are designed to be completed independently by participants during their own time. Participants have the option to engage in the activity with a mentor or volunteer from a youth-serving organization or with another pre-apprentice. Both approaches offer valuable opportunities to develop and refine essential skills while allowing participants to choose the method and pace that best suit their needs.

Local/State Requirements

Implementors can incorporate their local or state-specific credentialing information and resources and are expected to engage a youth-serving organization as an employer partner for successful delivery of the curriculum.

Please note: Some states may also require registration for quality pre-apprenticeship programs. Check with your state's apprenticeship board for more information and support resources.

Completion Incentives

Upon successful completion of this pre-apprenticeship curriculum, pre-apprentices will have the ability, knowledge, and skillsets to continue pursuing a career path in youth-serving work, particularly through apprenticeships. It has been designed for participants to enter into the [Youth Development Practitioner](#) occupation, specifically through [FHI 360's Youth Development Practitioner Registered Apprenticeship](#). Whether or not participants continue into an apprenticeship program, they will exit the pre-apprenticeship equipped with the skills to pursue a variety of related occupations such as:

- [Peer Support Specialists](#)
- [Recreation Workers](#)
- [Social and Human Service Assistants](#).

Digital Badge

Participants who complete the pre-apprenticeship curriculum are eligible to receive a certificate of completion and the Youth Development Work digital badge. This micro credential can be displayed on earners' digital profiles to demonstrate their achievement in learning about the foundational youth development practices and applying the competencies. Encourage participants to include this digital certification on their resume and digital profiles such as LinkedIn.

Facilitators must submit the **Completion Form** at the conclusion of implementation in order to receive the certificates and badges for their pre-apprentices.



Read more about the Youth Development Work digital badge accompanying this curriculum at: www.credly.com/org/fhi-360/badge/youth-development-work

Curriculum Delivery Recommendations

The Youth Development Practitioner Pre-Apprenticeship is organized into 27 sessions ranging from 30 minutes to 2 hours each. It is recommended that the entire curriculum be delivered within 10 weeks; however, each facilitator should determine the timing and scheduling that aligns with the needs of their participants. Facilitators may use their discretion if they feel their pre-apprentices will require additional hours based upon their needs and previous experiences.

Classroom Size and Design

The ideal cohort size for curriculum delivery should not exceed 15 participants. This allows for an inclusive environment where all members of the cohort can participate and actively engage in activities, thus increasing overall understanding and achievement rates. This cohort size also promotes a community environment and fosters an opportunity for participants to connect on deeper levels with their peers. These connections can lead to lasting friendships, cultural awareness, and a built-in network for the future.

To help promote an inclusive environment and active participation, it is recommended that facilitators use the round table approach and arrange desks in a circle for each classroom session. This increases collaboration amongst participants and helps to instill a sense of belonging, increased sharing, and expand the action zone area.

Materials

Facilitator Guides and Presentations

In addition to this overview facilitator guide, each module and the corresponding sessions will be accompanied by a facilitator guide and slide deck. Facilitators should review all preparation instructions and materials prior to leading a session. As mentioned above, facilitators are encouraged to enhance materials with additional, relevant resources as appropriate.

Participant Workbooks

Accompanying the facilitator resources is a **Participant Passport** – a workbook that can be printed and distributed to participants at the start of the program. Providing participants with these workbooks not only lays the foundation of an organized program but also equips each learner with the materials and resources needed to be successful at the onset of program implementation.

Everything that a pre-apprentice needs to be successful should be included in their Passport. Each Passport should begin with an introductory page of the pre-apprenticeship program followed by an agenda of scheduled dates, times, and locations of all class sessions, along with a copy of program expectations. A brief biography that includes

contact information for each facilitator can also be included. Suggested readings and additional resources can also be added at the discretion of the facilitator.

Classroom Agreement

To help ensure the overall goal of becoming skilled in areas necessary to succeed in professional workforce systems, participants are recommended to confirm their agreement to complete the full coursework and attain the credentials essential to entering such positions. It is recommended that students work closely with the facilitator to ensure goals are established at the beginning of the program, milestones are clearly outlined, and checkpoints are held at least every two weeks.

It is essential that all levels of confidentiality be upheld throughout the implementation of the pre-apprenticeship program. Facilitators should review their local and federal guidelines related to confidentiality and mandatory reporting prior to program implementation.

Facilitators will find a sample participation agreement in their materials, which should be signed and agreed upon by all participants and the facilitator at or before the first session. The suggested language may be modified to represent the standards and roles outlined in individual pre-apprenticeship partnerships. The primary goals of this agreement are to recognize voluntary participation in the course, outline terms and conditions of the program, and identify expectations and responsibilities of all parties in the agreement. This agreement will be reviewed as a class with the facilitator during the first session as well to ensure clear guidelines and expectations are set and agreed upon prior to curriculum implementation.

Program Evaluation

Included with Module 4 facilitator materials is a program evaluation template. While it is not mandatory to use this template, facilitators are encouraged to gather feedback from pre-apprentices to improve future deliveries of the curriculum.

Session Outline

Review the facilitator guide and materials for each session for more in-depth information and session objectives.

Module 1: Orientation

Introduces participants to apprenticeships, youth work careers, and set goals for their time in the program.

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
1.1	Defining Pre-Apprenticeship Facilitators and participants will begin building a relationship and establishing a welcoming learning environment as they review the program goals and expectations.	90 mins	-
1.2	Youth Work Career Pathways Participants will learn about various youth work occupations and the skills, training, and certifications required to pursue them.	90 mins	Introduces the 10 competencies
1.3	Goal Setting Participants will set goals for the remainder of the pre-apprenticeship program and their future career.	90 mins	-
1.4	Module 1 Reflection Participants will assess their comprehension of the module topics.	30 mins	-
Module 1 Total Time:		5 hours	

Module 2: Introduction to Positive Youth Development

Participants will be introduced to the foundational concepts of PYD.

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
2.1	Principles of Positive Youth Development Participants will learn the basics of PYD and why youth development matters.	90 mins	1: Child/Youth Growth and Development
2.2	Understanding Youth Part 1 Participants will learn the definition of child and youth and review the stages of child and youth development.	90 mins	1: Child/Youth Growth and Development
2.3	Understanding Youth Part 2 Participants will learn the importance of formative assessments and review resources for supporting youth with a variety of needs.	90 mins	3: Child/Youth Observation and Assessment 6: Equity and Inclusion

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
2.4	Positive Youth Outcomes Participants will be introduced various models of positive youth outcomes and the necessary supports to achieve those outcomes.	90 mins	-
2.5	Youth Engagement & Relationships Participants will learn what meaningful youth engagement looks like and the benefits of positive youth-adult interactions.	90 mins	4: Relationships and Interactions with Children and Youth 5: Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice
2.6	Module 2 Reflection Participants will assess their comprehension of the module topics.	30 mins	Incorporates elements of the NAA Self-Assessment Tool.
Module 2 Total Time:		8 hours	

Module 3: Exploring Youth Development Work

Participants will get a deeper look into the YDP occupation, employers, training, and the YDP registered apprenticeship.

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
3.1	Youth Work Landscape Participants will learn about typical employers and work environments for youth-serving occupations and explore local opportunities.	90 mins	10: Professional Development and Leadership
3.2	Youth Development Programming Participants will learn the features of effective programming and planning strategies.	90 mins	2: Learning Environments and Curriculum
3.3	Ethics and Related Issues Participants will explore the ethical side of youth work, confidentiality, and other related topics.	90 mins	8: Safety and Wellness 10: Professional Development and Leadership
3.4	Professional Panel Participants will hear from youth work professionals on current topics in the field.	90 mins	7: Family, School, and Community Relationships 9: Program Planning and Development 10: Professional Development and Leadership

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
3.5	Introduction to the Youth Development Practitioner Registered Apprenticeship Participants will learn about the YDP RAP sponsored by FHI 360 and explore how they can pursue apprenticeship programs.	60 mins	-
3.6	Module 3 Reflection Participants will assess their comprehension of the module topics.	30 mins	Incorporates elements of the NAA Self-Assessment Tool.
Module 3 Total Time:		7.5 hours	

Module 4: Competencies in Action

Participants will have the opportunity to develop some of the key skills needed for youth development work. These sessions also include a Skill Builder Challenge, allowing participants an opportunity to practice the ten core competencies for youth workers.

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
4.1	Skills for Success Participants will learn about work readiness skills and complete a self-assessment.	2 hours	10: Professional Development and Leadership
4.2	Interpersonal Communication and Digital Storytelling Participants will enhance their ability to express themselves confidently and build strong connections with others through the power of shared narratives.	2 hours	1: Child/Youth Growth and Development 5: Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice
4.3	Empathy and Emotional Intelligence Participants will learn how to use empathetic listening skills to support inclusive environments.	2 hours	6: Equity and Inclusion
4.4	Increase Your Creativity Participants will learn how different thinking styles support creativity and create a vision-board.	2 hours	2: Learning Environments and Curriculum
4.5	Strengthening Teamwork Skills Participants will practice using their communication and collaboration skills to achieve a goal.	2 hours	9: Program Planning and Development
4.6	Mental Health and Self-Care Participants will learn the differences between mental health and mental illness and engage in self-care activities to promote overall well-being	2 hours	8: Safety and Wellness
4.7	Social Capital and Mentorship Participants will learn about the importance of community support for personal and professional growth and the impact of mentoring.	2 hours	7: Family, School, and Community Relationships

Session	Topic	Time	NAA CKSC Alignment
4.8	Time Management Participants will learn to maximize their productivity and efficiency by using a time journal and Eisenhower's time matrix to identify strategies for better time management.	2 hours	3: Child/Youth Observation and Assessment
4.9	Conflict Management Participants will learn about conflict management, effective conflict resolution techniques and take a management style assessment.	2 hours	4: Relationships and Interactions with Children and Youth
4.10	Personal Branding and LinkedIn Participants develop their brand and profile with the assistance of technology.	2 hours	10: Professional Development and Leadership
4.11	Module 4 Reflection Participants will assess their comprehension of the module topics.	90 mins	Incorporates elements of the NAA Self-Assessment Tool.
Module 4 Total Time:		21.5 hours	

References

National AfterSchool Association. (2023). *Core Knowledge Skills & Competencies for Out-of-School Time Professionals*. https://cdn.ymaws.com/naaweb.org/resource/collection/F3611BAF-0B62-42F9-9A26-C376BF35104F/NAA_Core_Knowledge_Skills_Competencies_for_OST_Professionals_rev2023.pdf

U.S. Department of Labor. ApprenticeshipUSA. <https://www.apprenticeship.gov/>