



Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network

Engaging TANF and Immigrant Populations into Work Activities that Create Pathways to Self-Sufficiency



PROMISING PRACTICE PROFILE TEMPLATE

Contact Information:

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Geographic Scope (Please Be Descriptive): WorkStyles primarily serves newly arrived refugees to the Denver metro area. They are referred by their case managers and job developers from Lutheran Refugee Services, Ecumenical Refugee Services, and African Community Services.

Participant Demographics:

Number of Participants Enrolled/Served per Year: 300 to 400 per year in WorkStyles

Number of Participants Served over Duration of Project (24 Years): approximately 3,000

Type(s) of Immigrant Populations (i.e. Refugees, Legal Immigrants, Asylees, etc): Refugees

Number of Native Languages Represented in Current Participant Group: 5

Percentage of Current Participants with High School Diploma/GED: In the database, there is a field marked "years of education". However, this is often left empty as we don't generally know the answer from intake. (Their employment plans may have this information on it, but is often missing at intake). As the course progresses and the PDS is finished, we do have access to this information but it isn't recorded in the database. So as of now, we could not accurately say.

Percentage of Current Participants enrolled in TANF: all families with children

Does Your Program Enroll Clients Who Speak No English? (If So, What Percentage of Current Participants Spoke No English At Time of Enrollment?): a very small percentage, but we do provide services to some people with pre-1 English levels.

Briefly Describe Continuum of Services Provided (In the Box Below):

WorkStyles is a 2-week, 60 hour intensive pre-employment skills training which focuses on understanding American work culture, developing language skills, and promoting self-confidence. Participants develop a basic resume, complete applications appropriately, and engage in video-taped interviews successfully. Refugee clients study English in the Colorado Refugee ESL program for up to four months, then are referred to WorkStyles before their job developers focus on job placement.

Is the Client's English Language Comprehension and Speaking Level Professionally Assessed before Enrolling in Your Program?: Spring assesses oral English with the BEST interview and written English through performance on an application pre-test.

To What Extent Is Interpretation Provided Throughout the Duration of the Program (In How Many Languages?; Are Program Handouts Translated?; If So, Into How Many Languages?): We have provided interpretation for Refugees from Burma most mornings during the 10-day training.

Duration of Services Provided: 30 Hours per Week, 2 Week Limit



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Briefly Describe Funding Sources (i.e., TANF, Other Money?):

In Colorado the 60-hour WorkStyles program for Refugees is funded with TANF and RSS (ORR) money. The same funding sources would be available for other states that want to set up a WorkStyles program for Refugees. Workforce centers that want to offer a 60-hour WorkStyles program or a customized version for a larger audience either hire Spring Institute to provide the training or have their own trainers trained and certified by Spring Institute. Funding for such program typically comes from TANF and economic stimulus funds.

Approximate Cost per Participant: \$ 400 per (Pick One) Week

1. What strategies/processes are you currently using to help immigrant participants become engaged in work activities that will lead to self-sufficiency?

One aim of WorkStyles is to encourage people to take part in or take charge of their job search by equipping them with sample applications, having them practice on line applications, and introducing them to the concept of networking as an effective job search strategy. Another aim of WorkStyles is to mirror as far as possible the work situation and work place expectations so that people have classroom duties, are expected to call in if they are sick or late, and have a performance evaluation.

2. What challenges and barriers have you encountered?

Different populations have brought different challenges and barriers. Limited literacy, limited exposure to technology, limited experience working outside the home, shifting from an agricultural to an industrial view of time, religious discrimination, and inadequate, lost cost, reliable childcare have all been barriers for some of the refugee populations. Without a doubt the two most significant barriers at this point are English language ability and an economy where service industry jobs have been significantly reduced. Most refugees are eager to work if their barriers can be overcome.

3. What types of partnerships have you established with other agencies?

The program is a partnership with the whole refugee resettlement network. This includes the state, the voluntary agencies, and the Refugee ESL program. Participants are referred by their voluntary agency and the funding prioritized by the refugee resettlement network so that for funds to be available for WS the whole network must concur.

4. What relationship does your program have, if any, to the agency that conducts and monitors TANF work participation activity requirements in your jurisdiction? If a relationship exists, how did it begin and how is it maintained?

There is not a relationship that I am aware of.