

Connecting Youth During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This infographic explores the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on programs that support young people, ages 16-24, who experience disconnection from school and work, often referred to as "opportunity youth."

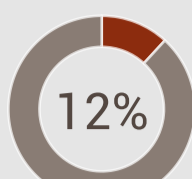
Programs included focus on helping youth reconnect to education, obtain employment, and advance in the labor market.

Project Officers: Kaitlyn Jones and Lisa Trivits

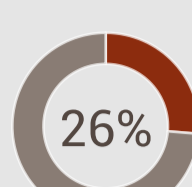
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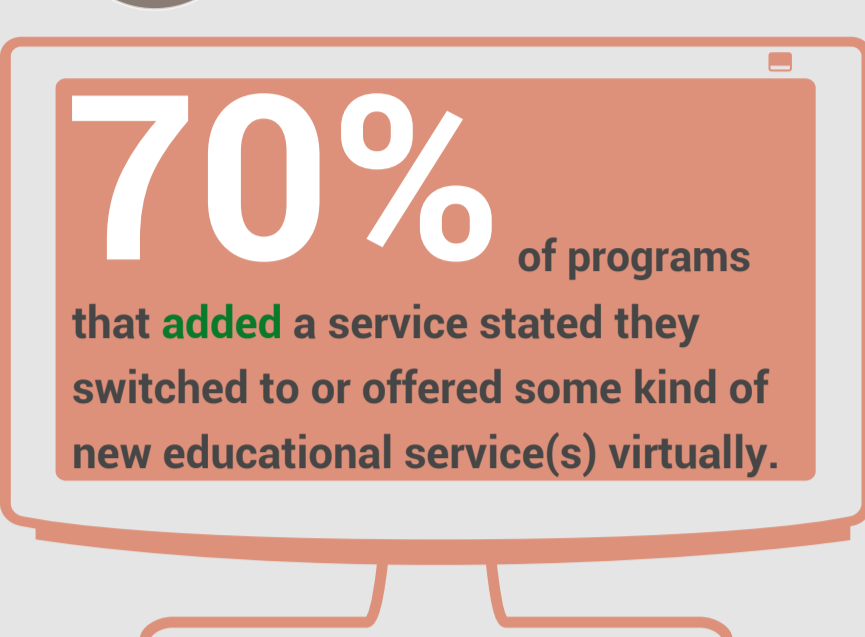
Education Services



Nine Programs Ended Education Service(s)



20 Programs Added Education Service(s)

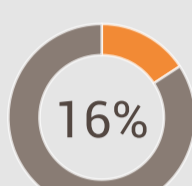


Of the 20 programs that reported adding education services:

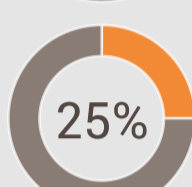
- Four (20 percent) supplied technology, such as hardware and/or Wi-Fi;
- Three (15 percent) provided digital learning services, tools, and/or training;
- Four (20 percent) distributed income assistance;
- One became a High School Equivalency Testing Center to provide a safe environment for testing and offered personal protective equipment; and
- One expanded eligibility criteria to everyone in the community.



Job Training Services



12 Programs Ended Job Training Service(s)



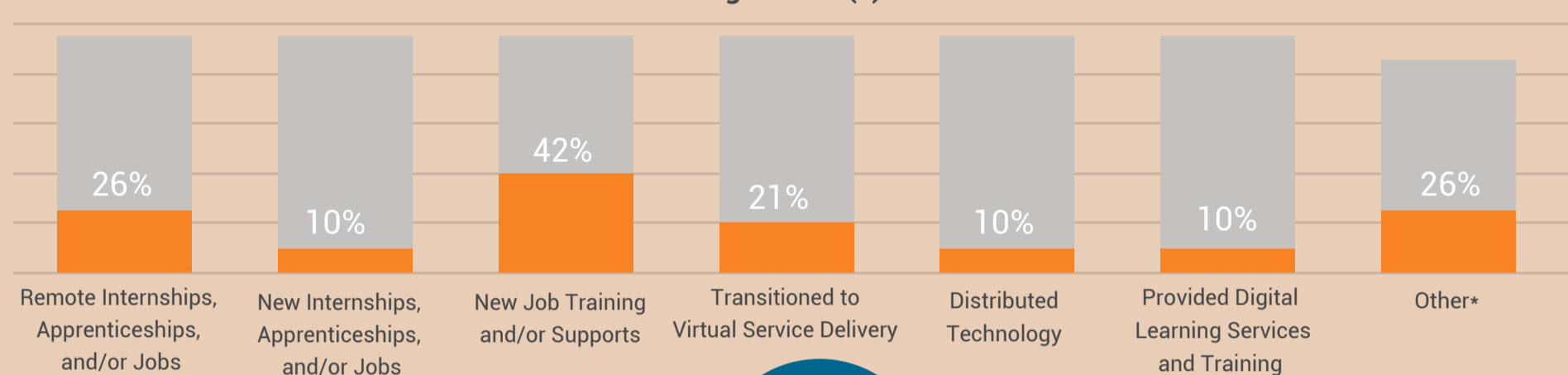
19 Programs Added Job Training Service(s)



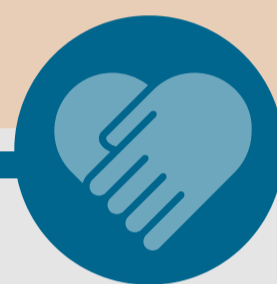
67%

of programs that ended a job training service reported a reduction/loss of employment sites.

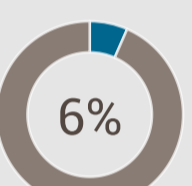
Of the Programs Adding a Job Training Service(s): The Percentage of Programs that Added a Particular Job Training Service(s)



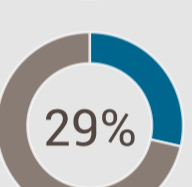
*including expanding eligibility criteria, providing more intensive case support and hiring additional staff, food, and transport



Supportive Services



Five Programs Ended Supportive Service(s)



22 Programs Added Supportive Service(s)



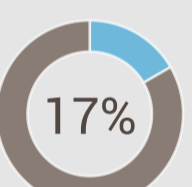
80%

of programs that ended a supportive service reported ending one or more in-person service(s), although one program was able to transition to providing the service(s) virtually.

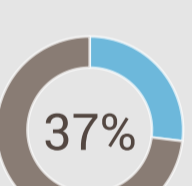
Most common type of supportive service added were those to meet **basic needs**, such as cash assistance for emergencies, housing and utility payments, food assistance, gift cards, and transportation stipends. Over **50%** of programs who reported adding supportive services, provided financial assistance to help youth meet their basic needs.



Enrollment Practices



13 Programs Ended Enrollment Practice(s)



21 Programs Added Enrollment Practice(s)



Added Virtual Enrollment Services

- Information sessions
- Meet and greets
- Use of digital platforms for recruitment and outreach
- Online application process and testing
- Virtual interviews
- Orientation and onboarding

Enrollment practice(s) ended:



Job fairs, community, and school events



Street outreach



In-person services, such as interviews, orientation, and additional support.

Enrollment practice(s) added:



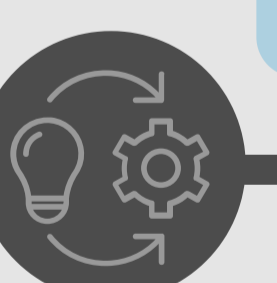
Transitioned to virtual services



Increased social media presence and outreach

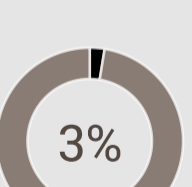


Supportive services/case management

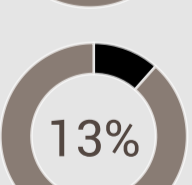


Implementation Practices

The previous sections describe what services were available to participants, implementation practices refer to the overall approach or strategies programs use in the delivery of services.



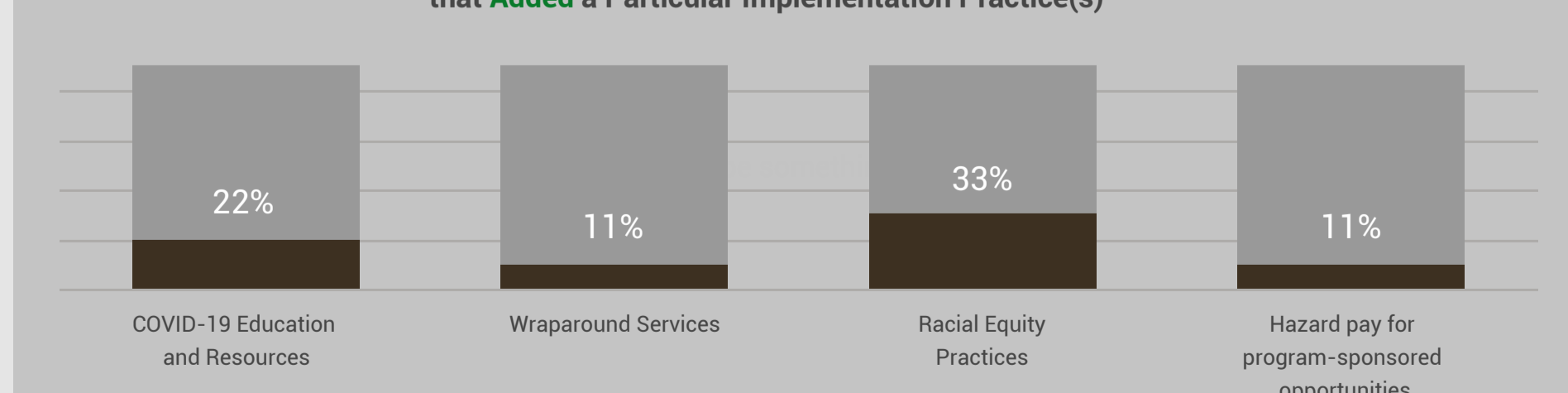
Two Programs Ended Implementation Practice(s)



Nine Programs Added Implementation Practice(s)

The **ONLY** implementation practice(s) that organizations reported ending, were the ability to conduct **in-person services**.

Nine Programs Reported Adding Implementation Practices: The Percentage of Programs that Added a Particular Implementation Practice(s)



Information for this infographic was gathered through a qualitative questionnaire fielded in spring 2021 to programs that serve a "significant share" (approx. 25 percent) of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Out-of-School Youth (WIOA OSY) eligible participants. WIOA OSY are defined as between the ages of 16 and 24, not in school (secondary or postsecondary), and experiencing one or more risk factors*. In total, 109 programs were identified that met scope and 78 of those completed the questionnaire.

Overall, 21 programs (27 percent) reported both adding and ending one or more service(s), 22 (28 percent) reported only adding one or more service(s), eight programs (10 percent) reported only ending one or more service(s), and 27 (35 percent) didn't report adding or ending any services. Although, in a few cases, it was difficult to determine whether the organization ended a service, or just ended it in-person and now offers it virtually. When there was no response it was not clear whether the program had not ended or added a practice, or whether the reported had chosen not to answer the question.

*no secondary credential, low income/basic skills deficient, involved in the justice system, experiencing homelessness, pregnant or parenting, in foster care/aged out of foster care, and living with a disability