



Georgetown Public Policy Institute



HCZ and Promise Neighborhoods: Some Comments

Harry J. Holzer
Georgetown University
Urban Institute
January 25, 2010



What Limits the Education and Earnings of the Poor?

- Poor Achievement, K-12
- Limited Attainment: Dropping Out, Lack of Postsecondary
- Lack of Occupational Skills/Access to Middle-Skill Jobs
- Weak Attachment to Formal Labor Market and Early Work Experience



Many Sources of Problems

- Family Poverty and Single Parenthood
- Weak Schools and Teachers
- Neighborhood Effects: Spatial Mismatch, Peers, Lack of Adult Models and Contacts
- Race - Discrimination
- Both Opportunity/Access to Good Schools/ Jobs and Behavioral Choices and Norms



Solutions: Comprehensive and Neighborhood-Based Over Life Cycle

- Early Childhood/Pre-K
- K-8 Reforms
- Adolescents: Mentoring and Positive Youth Development
- High School Years: Range of Pathways to Higher Education and Labor Market – High-Quality Career Education as well as Strong Academics
- Labor Market Supports, Training and Work Experience (Intermediaries, Attention to Labor Demand and Employers)



Examples from the Literature

- High Quality CTE: Career Academies
- Successful Neighborhood-Based Youth Interventions: BBBS, Youth Opportunities
- Training: Sectoral Training Initiative (PPV)
- Work Supports: EITC, Child Care



Overall: Support for HCZ Model

- Comprehensive Range of Services over the Life Cycle of Children/Youth
- Neighborhood Based
- Parental Involvement
- Also: Supportive Evaluation Evidence from Dobbie and Fryer



Some Important Questions for Promise Neighborhoods

- Exactly What Services are Essential?
- Limited or Universal?
- High School and Beyond: CTE??? Nature of Labor Market Services and Supports as well as Postsecondary (Involvement of Intermediaries and Employers)
- Replicating Success: How to Raise the Odds? (We can't clone Geoff Canada...)