

BROOKINGS

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Evidence-Based Jobs Programs: What Works? What Doesn't?

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Four Approaches to Evidence-Based Policymaking

- Evidence-based reviews of social interventions
- Evidence-based grant making:
 - Fund programs supported by quality evidence
 - Funded programs feature continuous evaluation
- What Works Clearinghouses
- Program evaluations by administrative agencies

Obama Evidence-Based Initiatives

| Name | Status | Goal |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Investing in Innovation | Grants Awarded | Three tiers of grants – development, validation and scale-up – each tied to an increasingly higher evidence standard to fund a broad array of education interventions |
| Home Visiting | Grants Awarded | Tiered system of competitive and formula grants to fund home visitation model programs that are tied to strong evidence |
| Teen Pregnancy Prevention | Grant Awarded | Tiered system of grants, with most money for programs shown to be effective through rigorous evaluation |
| Social Innovation Fund | Grants Awarded | Funds for community-based programs in economic opportunity, healthy futures, and youth development that have evidence of success |
| Community College Challenge Fund | Grants Awarded | Funds for community college programs that are evidence-based to help economically dislocated workers |
| Workforce Innovation Fund | Proposals Submitted; Awards Summer 2012 | Test and scale strategies to improve skills of the workforce and expand evidence of effective programs; incentivize reform of state workforce investment systems |

What Works Clearinghouses

What is a Clearinghouse?

- A trusted website with information about social programs that have impacts
- Overviews of research and evidence on studies and best practices of particular intervention programs or topic areas

Why Are Clearinghouses Important?

- Provide information on programs that have been proven effective
- Help policymakers, researchers, and practitioners sort through the large quantity of studies and research on any given type of social intervention
- Promote high standards for evidence

Example: Department of Education's "What Works Clearinghouse"

- Includes a searchable and easily navigable database of education research
- Includes reviews of the education literature in areas such as math and science, dropout prevention, and English language learners
- Shows programs that work to produce impacts on important education outcomes
- Informs educators and policymakers aiming to fund interventions that have been proven effective

Agency Portfolios

- Requires a respected state budget agency with power to lead administrative agencies
- Budget agency must devise systematic annual review process of intervention programs supported by administrative agencies
- Emphasis on clear goals, well-defined outcome measures, and standards of evidence
- Award additional funds to agencies based on outcomes
- Role of legislative bodies

Examples of Evidence-Based, Employment-Related Policies that Are Ready for Scale-Up

- Preschool
- Manufacturing Extension Partnership
- Sectoral Employment
- Career Academies

Example 1: Preschool Programs

Effects of Selected Early Childhood Programs on Adolescent and Adult Behaviors

| Intervention and Outcomes: | Group | | |
|---|----------|---------|--------|
| | Control | Program | Impact |
| Teenage Parenting Rates (Abecedarian) | 45 | 26 | -19 |
| Health problem (Perry Preschool) | 29 | 20 | -9 |
| Drug user (Abecedarian) | 39 | 18 | -21 |
| Needed treatment for addiction (Perry Preschool) | 34 | 22 | -12 |
| Abortion (Perry Preschool) | 38 | 16 | -22 |
| Number of felony violent assaults (Perry Preschool) | 0.37 | 0.17 | -0.20 |
| Net Earnings Gain from Participating in Early Childhood Programs: | | | |
| Abecedarian | \$35,531 | | |
| Perry Preschool | \$38,892 | | |
| Chicago Child-Parent Centers | \$30,638 | | |

Note: Table entries are percentages unless otherwise noted.

Source: W. Steven Barnett and Clive Belfield, "Early Childhood Development and Social Mobility," *The Future of Children* 16, no. 2 (Fall 2006): 85.

Example 2: Manufacturing Extension Partnership

1. Small firms (account for 7% of GDP) less likely to employ efficient technologies because they lack information
2. Manufacturing extension programs invented to give advice on technology
3. Financed by federal, state, and private funds
4. Centers in every state; 1,400 technical experts in technology, supplier development, sustainability, workforce, and continuous improvement
5. For every \$1,570 of investment, one manufacturing job is created or maintained

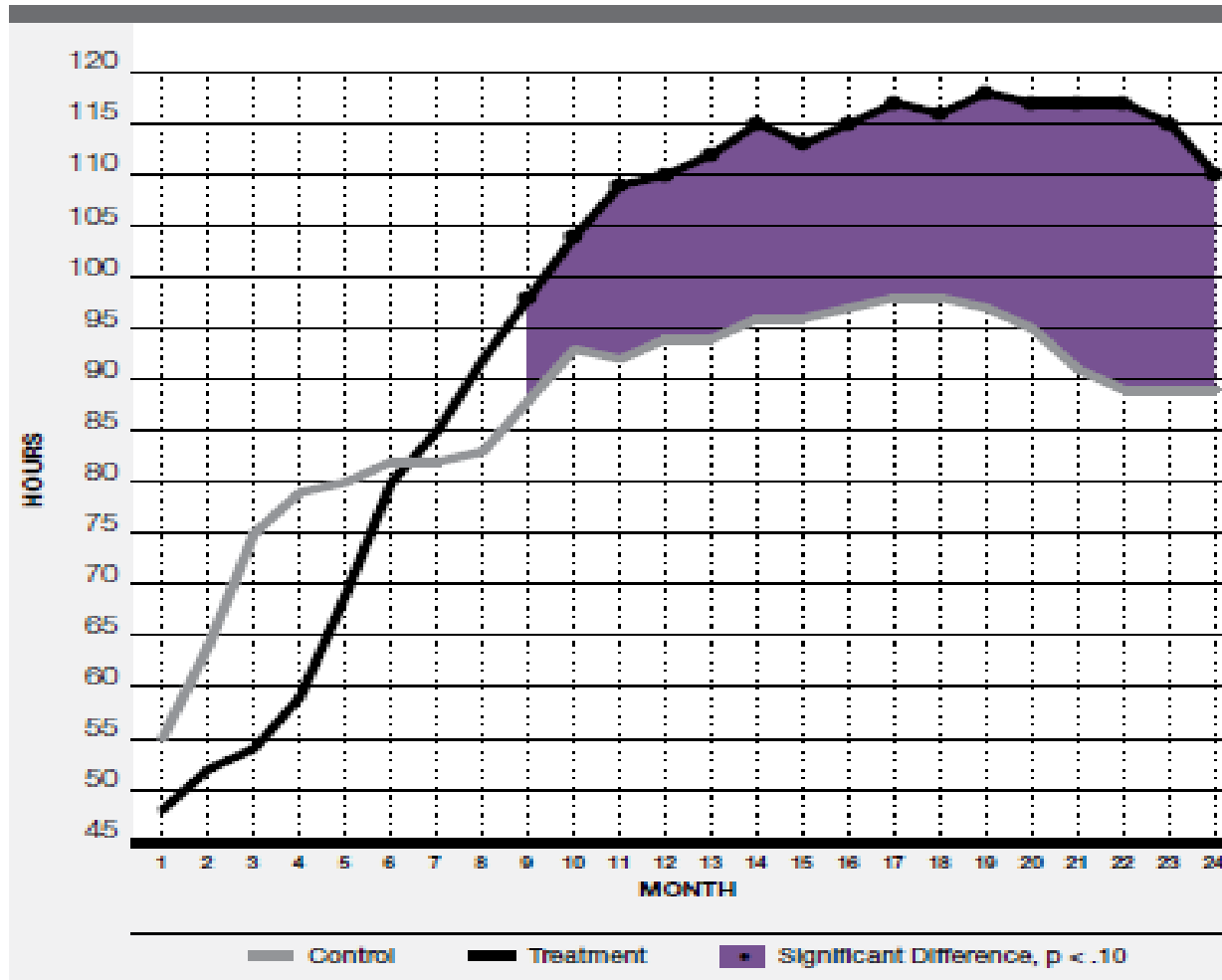
Example 3: Sectoral Employment

- 3 sites (Milwaukee, Boston, New York City)
- Mature programs with experienced staff
- Train low-income workers for jobs available in local market; training duration of 2-22 weeks
- Occupations:
 - Construction
 - Health care
 - Clerical
 - Information technology

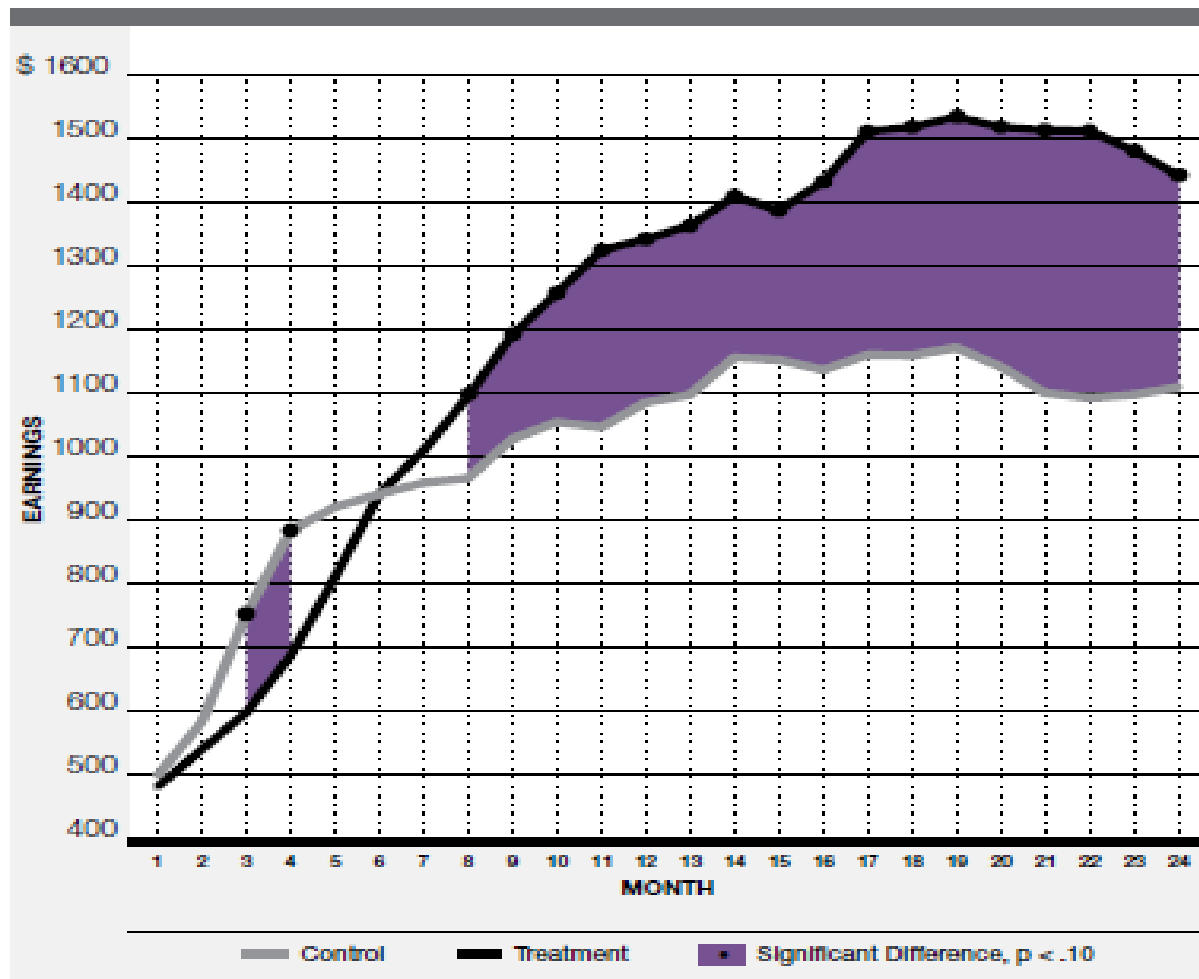
Sectoral Employment (Cont'd)

- Some training requires internships
- Close coordination between trainers and employees a must
- Training organization must be skilled in matching training program graduates with employers
- Impacts on hours worked and earnings over 2 years (see charts)

Sectoral Employment Impact: Hours Worked by Month, Total Sample



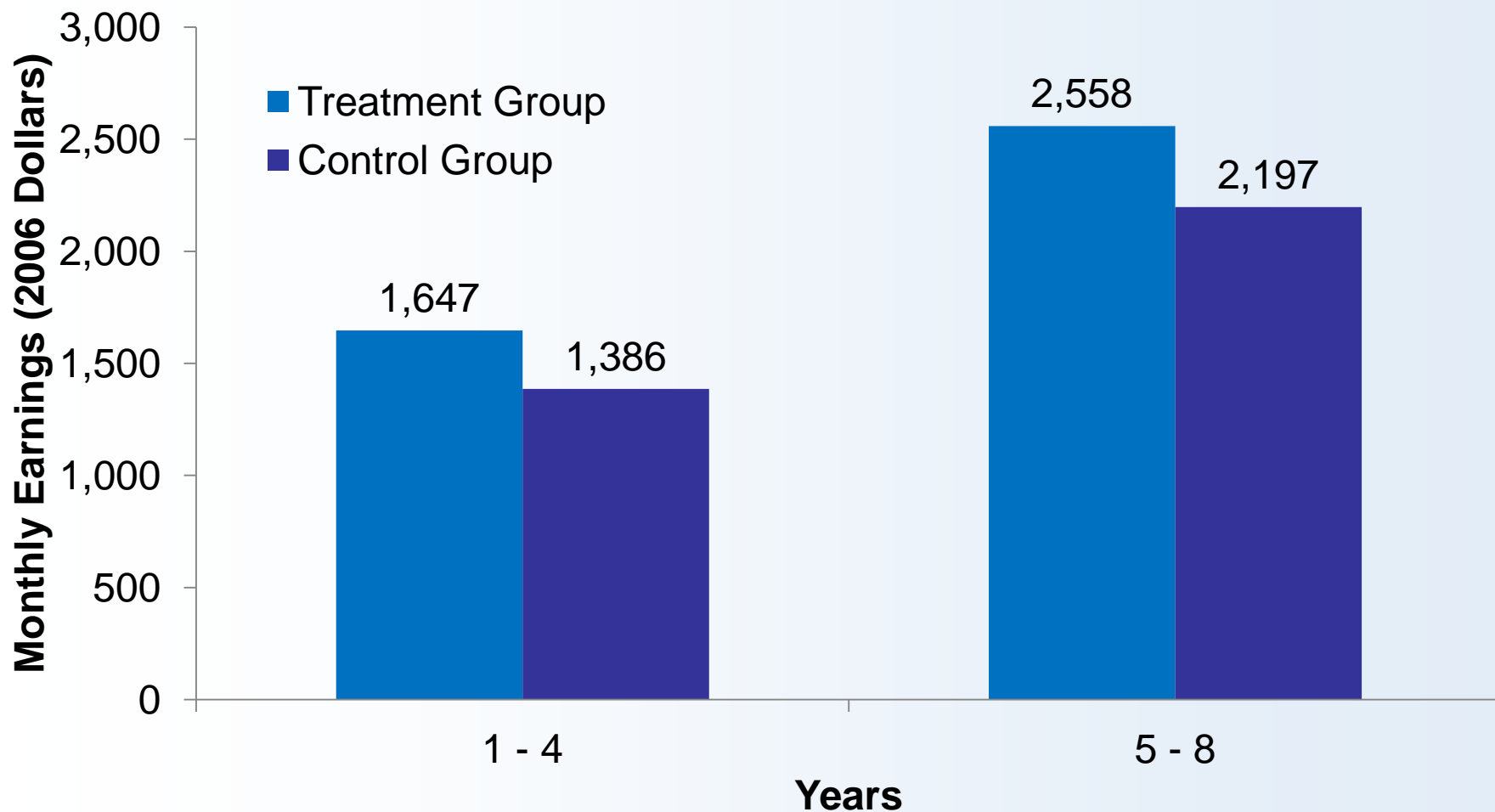
Sectoral Employment Impact: Total Earnings by Month, Total Sample



Example 4: Career Academies

- Established about 35 years ago; 2,500 now in U.S.
- Grades 9-12
- Three features:
 - Small high schools (150-200 students)
 - Combine academic and technical curricula
 - Work-based experience
- Impacts:
 - Earnings; \$30,000 over 8 years for males (see charts)
 - Increase in two-parent households (23%); increase in marriage rate (13%)

Career Academies: Impact on Average Monthly Family Earnings for Eight Years (Males)



Career Academies Month-by-Month Impacts on Earnings, Males

