

Jobs-Plus: Strong Implementation Matters

A summary of findings from MDRC's Jobs-Plus Report

This report, "The Second Generation of Jobs-Plus Programs" provides extensive implementation analyses of the early experiences of Jobs-Plus scale-up and replication in the Bronx and San Antonio from 2011-2014. Jobs-Plus is designed to raise and sustain the level of employment and earnings among residents of public housing developments. While MDRC, a non-profit social policy research firm, had previously gathered strong evidence that the program worked, the SIF replication of Jobs-Plus aimed to expand on this evidence to see how the program could be implemented in a substantially different economic and policy context.

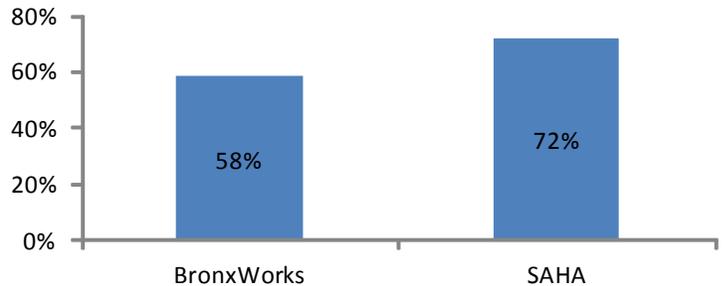
MDRC's evaluation finds that Jobs-Plus remains promising in today's program and policy context, but that **strong implementation matters** and implementing all pieces of the Jobs-Plus model effectively can be a challenge even for well-equipped providers. Specifically, the evaluation found that:

- Jobs-Plus enrolled over half of the residents of the targeted housing developments in the program, which represents a strong early indicator of program saturation.
- Both sites placed hundreds of participants in jobs, but these jobs tended to be concentrated in low-wage work and the Jobs-Plus sites had challenges building connections to higher-quality job opportunities.
- Jobs-Plus was able to successfully integrate financial counseling into program delivery — an enhancement of the original Jobs-Plus model.
- Many residents had long believed that it is better to "keep to oneself" in a public housing community, yet the programs found effective strategies for changing perceptions and increasing engagement among long-time residents.
- Providers needed substantial time and technical assistance to effectively implement the program.

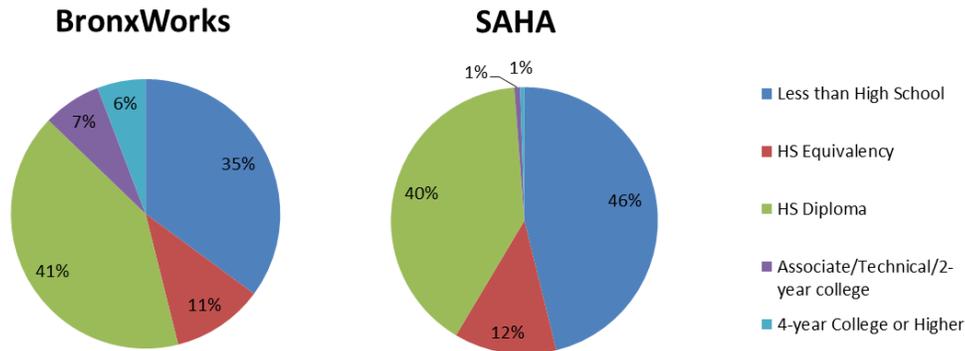
What Is Jobs-Plus?

Jobs-Plus is being conducted under the auspices of the Social Innovation Fund (SIF), a public-private partnership administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Jobs-Plus is part of CEO and the Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC's SIF project, which also includes four other programs. Jobs-Plus is a public housing-based employment program designed to increase the level of earnings and employment among residents of public housing. The program saturates targeted developments with job and career support, rent-based and other financial incentives that "make work pay," and community organizing activities that support a culture of work. Jobs-Plus aims to increase earning and employment outcomes not merely for residents who directly receive program services, but for whole public housing developments. There are two SIF Jobs-Plus sites, one administered by BronxWorks in the south Bronx and one administered by the San Antonio Housing Authority in San Antonio, Texas.

Percentage of Working-Age Households in Developments Enrolled



Highest Educational Credential Held by Members on Program Entry



Building Evidence

This report can equip replicators of Jobs-Plus with strategies for effective implementation and proactively address challenges that other programs have faced. CEO is continuing to build on the Jobs-Plus knowledge base by supporting an evaluation of non-SIF Jobs-Plus sites in NYC by the Urban Institute. MDRC will also evaluate the Jobs-Plus sites in other cities funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Affecting Policy

Increasing public housing residents' self-sufficiency has been a longstanding bi-partisan public policy goal. Jobs-Plus produced significant evidence in its first demonstration that it can increase residents' earnings and employment, but only when all program components are implemented well.

By confirming that finding and documenting effective strategies the SIF sites used, this research informs the new replications underway across the country, including those funded locally by the City of New York's Young Men's Initiative and those funded by HUD - currently nine with new grants expected.

It has also informed policy improvements that could enhance Jobs-Plus system-wide. For example, the SIF research highlighted the challenge of the Earned Income Disallowance as an effective rent-based work incentive for residents. As a result, HUD is experimenting with a simpler Jobs-Plus rent incentive at its national sites.

Related Research

Learn more about Jobs-Plus and the programs that inspired its development:

- [*The Second Generation of Jobs-Plus Programs: Implementation Lessons from San Antonio and the Bronx* \(2015\)](#)
- [*Jobs-Plus: an Evidence-Based Program for Public Housing Residents Expands* \[http://www.mdrc.org/publication/jobs-plus-evidence-based-program-public-housing-residents-expands\] \(2014\)](http://www.mdrc.org/publication/jobs-plus-evidence-based-program-public-housing-residents-expands)
- [*Sustained Earnings Gains for Residents in a Public Housing Jobs Program* \[http://www.mdrc.org/publication/sustained-earnings-gains-residents-public-housing-jobs-program\] \(2010\)](http://www.mdrc.org/publication/sustained-earnings-gains-residents-public-housing-jobs-program)
- [*Promoting Work in Public Housing: the Effectiveness of Jobs-Plus* \[http://www.mdrc.org/publication/promoting-work-public-housing\] \(2005\)](http://www.mdrc.org/publication/promoting-work-public-housing)

Jobs-Plus Partners

Lead Partners: NYC Center for Economic Opportunity, Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC, and MDRC. NYC agency support provided by the NYC Human Resources Administration, the NYC Housing Authority, and the NYC Office of Financial Empowerment.

Providers: New York City, NY — BronxWorks; San Antonio, TX — San Antonio Housing Authority.

Funding Partners: The Social Innovation Fund of the Corporation for National & Community Service, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Open Society Foundations, The Rockefeller Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Catholic Charities of San Antonio, the Food Bank for New York City, The Kresge Foundation, Morgan Stanley, the New York City Council, Tiger Foundation, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the United Way of New York City, and the United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County.