

# Myth Busters

American Job Center (AJC) Network



**Myths** perceived as fact can interfere with the ability of States to fully implement an integrated workforce development system envisioned under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Myths thought to be true may result from misunderstanding the law and regulations and from a lack of experience with other workforce development system partners. Described below are some myths about the changes made by WIOA and the facts that provide the real story:

## WIOA Youth Program

### Myth:

WIOA Youth program and Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) (Titles I and II of WIOA) funding can't be used jointly to serve disconnected youth.

### FACT:

Title I Youth and Title II of WIOA provide complementary services to youth ages 16 to 24 and may work together to serve disconnected youth. Disconnected youth often need many resources to get them back on track. The AEFLA program is the major source of Federal support for adult basic skills programs that provide instruction for individuals who lack basic academic skills, a high school diploma or proficiency in English. The WIOA Youth Program provides low-income youth with comprehensive services and prepares them for postsecondary education and employment opportunities, educational and occupational skills credentials attainment and employment. When used together, these two funding sources increase the capacity of programs and help young adults meet their employment and educational goals.

Some disconnected youth are eligible for both workforce and adult education services. Individuals must be at least 16 years old and not be enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under state law to be eligible for adult education services. For the WIOA Youth Program, which prioritizes funding for out-of-school youth (OSY), OSY participants must be 16-24 years old, not attending school, and face one or more barriers to employment.

WIOA also requires, for the first time, that all core programs, including WIOA Youth and Adult Education, use the same common performance indicators to measure success. Both programs use the same 6 performance indicators, with only minor differences for youth for the first two indicators. Furthermore, all core programs use the same data collection requirements through a joint Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL). Given that both programs measure success in the same way and collect the same information, this enables easier partnering and an incentive to work together.

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## MYTH:

■ Youth don't access AJCs as part of their WIOA youth programming.

## FACT:

The WIOA Youth program is a required one-stop partner. Many AJCs around the country have taken steps to make AJCs more welcoming to youth (as well as all participants) through customer-centered design approaches. WIOA requires Local Boards co-locate WIOA youth staff in one-stop centers and ensure one-stop center staff are trained to serve youth. A new WIOA youth program element also focuses on local area labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations. Local areas may leverage existing AJC labor market information services for youth participants. In addition, bringing WIOA youth participants to employer events hosted by the AJC can help prepare youth to interact with employers. Eligible youth ages 18 to 24 may co-enroll in the WIOA youth and adult programs depending on what support they require. Finally, if youth feel comfortable seeking services through the AJCs, they will visit AJCs again when they have future workforce service needs as adults.