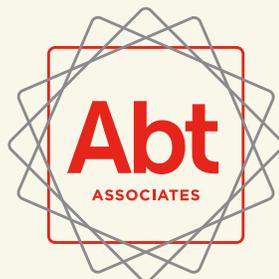


ABT ASSOCIATES

Supporting Education Strategies to Improve Skills, Employment, and Earnings



BOLD
THINKERS
DRIVING
REAL-WORLD
IMPACT

Abt's innovative research and technical assistance on workforce development, economic growth and mobility, public benefits, and social insurance supports work and family well-being worldwide. We study ways to help individuals gain skills for family-sustaining jobs and strategies to strengthen the healthcare workforce. Abt Associates leads the field in research and evaluation of **career pathways** systems, an important innovation for advancing the employment and earnings prospects of low-income and low-skilled individuals. Using evidence-based strategies, Abt also provides technical assistance to states and local entities as they develop, implement, and evaluate career pathways systems. Abt is also at the forefront of **apprenticeship** initiatives, supporting national and state-led efforts to build evidence on the effectiveness of apprenticeship programs for participants and employers.

Specialties

- Experimental and quasi-experimental evaluation approaches, including multi-arm experimental studies
- Implementation studies that examine program design and operations, organizational capacity and scale, and partnership experiences to provide lessons for policy and practice
- Cost-benefit studies
- Evidence-based technical assistance
- Effective recruitment strategies and scaling of promising programs to facilitate evaluation
- Collaboration with practitioners and policymakers to ensure results are relevant and used in the field

Our Work in Apprenticeship and Career Pathways Research and Evaluation

The Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education (PACE) Evaluation

Abt is conducting a 10-year random assignment evaluation of nine promising career pathways strategies that aim to increase employment and self-sufficiency among low-income, low-skilled adults and youth. The study, funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is the first rigorous evaluation of career pathways strategies nationwide. PACE uses an experimental study design to assess the impact of these interventions on educational attainment, employment and earnings, and other outcomes. In addition to program-specific impact studies, the evaluation includes implementation studies and cost data collection activities.

Evaluations of the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG)

HHS funds the Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG), a federal program with two important

intertwined goals: training low-income adults for careers in health care and addressing the nation's shortage of skilled health care workers. Abt Associates has played a key role in supporting the HPOG program since 2010 through five key efforts. For the first round of HPOG grants, Abt developed a grantee performance monitoring and information tracking system and is conducting an impact evaluation and a national implementation evaluation. Abt designed the national evaluation and information tracking system for the second round of HPOG grants.

Abt is also conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the second round of grants, which includes an impact evaluation, an implementation study, and a cost-benefit study. The impact evaluations will determine if the HPOG Program overall increased the degree to which Temporary Assistance for Needy Families recipients and other low-income adults completed training and obtained family-wage jobs in healthcare. It will also explore which practices and policies are associated with variations in impacts on educational and economic outcomes. The implementation studies of the grants will describe the context, management and administration, substantive services, activities and outcomes of

grantees' program. Finally, the evaluation and system design for the Next Generation of HPOG presents an exciting opportunity to shape and learn from the next wave of healthcare education and training programs for low-income adults

Assessing Intermediate Outcomes of Career Pathways

Building on the evaluations of PACE and the first round of HPOG grants, Abt will collect and analyze data on the intermediate outcomes of participants in these two studies. Funded by HHS's ACF, the Career Pathways Intermediate Outcomes Evaluation will estimate impacts of the programs on educational attainment, earnings, and economic well-being three years after the evaluations started, allowing them to have two additional years for participants beyond the earlier evaluations' time frames in order for participants to advance their education or training and make progress in their careers.

The study will also take advantage of outcomes measured at 15 months to analyze intermediate steps that lead to success three years after enrollment in the education and training programs. As part of this project, Abt will also synthesize findings across the evaluations of PACE and the first round of HPOG grants.

Green Jobs-Health Care Impact Evaluation

The Department of Labor (DOL) provides grants to partnerships of workforce agencies, training providers, and employers to provide training programs in a range of industries and occupations. In 2009, two of these grant initiatives (Pathways Out of Poverty and Health Care and Other High Growth Industries) awarded 93 grants for training in the "green" energy and health care sectors. Of these four are being rigorously evaluated as part of Green Jobs and Health Care Impact Evaluation.

The programs provide occupational training combined with a range of supports to economically disadvantaged, dislocated, and out-of-work populations. The evaluation includes: (1) an impact study to measure the effect of the programs on participants' credential attainment, employment and earnings, and overall financial circumstances, and (2) an implementation study examined program operations, including participant recruitment practices, training and supports provided, key partner roles and responsibilities, and participation patterns of program enrollees.

Evaluation of the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) Grants

In an effort to expand registered apprenticeship in the United States, the American Apprenticeship Initiative (AAI) was created, providing \$175 million in five-year grants to 46 grantees across the country. To understand the operation and effects of these grants, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) contracted with Abt Associates to conduct an evaluation to build evidence about the effectiveness of apprenticeship for participants and employers, as well as lessons for developing and operating these grant programs. Abt Associates is conducting an implementation study, outcomes study, and a return on investment study to evaluate this initiative. All 46 AAI grantees are included in this high profile and high priority study for DOL.



Evaluation of Round 4 Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Career Training Grants (TAACCCT)

The TAACCCT grants provide funding to community colleges for developing innovative training programs that serve unemployed and underemployed adults and prepare them for high-wage, high-skill occupations. Under a DOL contract, Abt is conducting a multi-faceted study of grantees that involves 1) an impact study of up to five grantees to determine the effect of the grant on training and employment outcomes for service recipients; 2) an implementation study based on visits to a subset of grantees and a survey of all colleges participating in grants; 3) technical assistance and peer learning opportunities for grantee third-party evaluators to help improve the rigor of their evaluations; and 4) an employer engagement study.

Study of Effects of Accelerated Basic Skills Instruction on Adults' GED Attainment and Enrollment in Postsecondary Education

Under funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, Abt is conducting a study with Oregon's Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) to investigate the impacts of adult learners' participation in the Oregon Pathways for Adult Basic Skills Transition to Education and Work Initiative (OPABS). OPABS helps low-skilled adults move from Adult Basic Skills programs to postsecondary education. The study is examining OPABS participants' development of basic skills, attainment of a General Educational Development (GED) credential, enrollment in postsecondary education, and attainment of postsecondary credits and credentials.



Evaluation of the Bridges to Career Opportunities Model

Under funding from the Corporation for National & Community Service's Social Innovation Fund, Abt is evaluating the Bridges to Career Opportunities (BCO) model developed by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and implemented by community-based organizations. The Bridge to Career Opportunities intervention includes a bridge program and the Financial Opportunity Center (FOC) model. Through the delivery of contextualized basic skills education, the bridge program prepares adults to enter occupational skills training courses. The FOC model is comprised of financial education and coaching, employment services, and supportive services. Abt's evaluation is assessing the impact of the BCO model on participants' education, employment, and financial well-being.

Career Pathways Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance for States Developing Career Pathways Systems

Abt is partnering with Manhattan Strategies Group and CORD Communications in a Department of Education-funded project to provide multi-tiered technical assistance to support integration and scaling of state career pathways systems. Adult education offices in 13 states are receiving customized assistance to strengthen and expand their career pathways systems in local communities. As part of their local career pathways expansion, states are conducting pilot tests of adult basic education (ABE) providers' activities to build local partnerships and facilitate ABE participants' enrollment in postsecondary education and attainment of jobs. Implementation and outcome data are being collected to develop models for scaling career pathways at the local level.

Contact

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Abt Associates is an engine for social impact, harnessing the power of data and grounded insight to move people from vulnerability to security worldwide. We provide research, consulting and technical services globally, working in the areas of health, environmental and social policy, and international development.

