

One of the pilot programs in the Nation, launched last October, is called Job Opportunity through Better Skills, known as JOBS. It is a cooperative program being conducted almost entirely by three private agencies: the YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago, the Chicago Boys Clubs, and Chicago's Youth Centers, cooperating with such public and private agencies as the Illinois State Employment Service, the Cook County Department of Public Aid, Chicago Commission on Youth Welfare, and the Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago.

This year-long project, first and largest of its kind, is financed by the Federal Manpower Development and Training Act. The pilot project is designed to help the 1,000 youth, many of whom lacked the equivalent of a sixth-grade education, reach the necessary education level for employment—to acquire some job skill experience, and, finally, be placed in employment.

JOBS represents a special attack on the unemployment problems of the disadvantaged youth. Most of the trainees are between the ages of 17 and 22, most dropped out of high school their second year, and most were classified as "functional illiterates" when they entered the program. Unable to read or do arithmetic past the fifth-grade level, some had never worked, all were unemployed, none had a consistent employment record.

During the first 24 weeks of the program, attendance averaged 80 percent. It must be understood that no one was screened, but the program was offered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

About 80 percent of the trainees, those between the ages of 19 and 22, received a \$19 a week training allowance—a major motivation to keep them in class. Project officials point out, however, that the prospect of a job, of a pay-your-own-way ticket in life, appears to be as effective an incentive as a training allowance.

JOBS conducts two principal programs. Approximately 600 of the trainees are enrolled in basic education units, learning reading, writing, arithmetic, and employment disciplines. Of these, 147 have been placed in on-the-job training stations in industry.

The remaining 400 are in vocational workshops, training as automobile service station attendants, duplicating machine operator training, mail handling, and clerk-typist training. They will all be placed in jobs this summer. Training costs average \$1,500 a person. This may appear to be high for a program that teaches the three R's and simple vocational skills, but the support cost for a youth on general assistance amounts to \$1,500 in two and a half years. Further, it is estimated that an employed trainee will repay that amount in income taxes in from 3 to 4 years. Another important aspect of the program is that young people who join it are frequently induced to go back to school to finish their education.

The Chicago Board of Education has a number of specialized programs to assist disadvantaged youth. Its urban youth program develops educational and job training programs for school dropouts between the ages of 16 and 21. This program was begun in late 1961 and has been continuously accelerated as funds, facilities, and personnel have become available.

The urban youth program is divided into three phases:

1. Census and counseling.
2. Education and employment.
3. Training and transition.

This three-pronged attack reaches the roots of the dropout problem, and equips these young people with the skills and knowledge to make them productive members of society.

In the first phase of the program—census and counseling—known as double C—all school dropouts are contacted and requested to visit the office of the urban youth program for counseling. A followup service is built into the double C phase. The counselor attempts to persuade the individual to return to school or enroll in the urban youth program or is referred to another agency or trade school for job training. To date over 2,000 students have been contacted for counseling.

The second phase of the program, education and employment, known as double E—is a cooperative work-study program in which the student spends 12 hours a week in school classes and 24 to 32 hours a week on the job in a merchandising or clerical occupation. The school curriculum is job oriented and instruction is given in the areas of English, social studies, mathematics, and business organization. Attendance is arranged to suit the student's work schedule and high school credit is given in the subject areas. Some 450 students have enrolled in this program and 270 of them have been placed in jobs in 32 corporations that