

MRC Initiatives for Youth with Disabilities

The goal of our services is to promote dignity through employment and community living, one person at a time. We hope all citizens with disabilities in Massachusetts will have the opportunity to contribute as a productive member of their community and family as a result of services provided by the MRC.

MRC Statewide VR Services

The MRC provides Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) to youth consumers based on their interests, skills, employment goals, and needs. VR Services include (but are not limited to) assessment, counseling and guidance, training, education, assistive technology, and job placement. VR services assist youth consumers in obtaining and maintaining competitive employment.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
MRC youth consumers	8,353	1,186 successful employment outcomes in FY'14	\$7,937,939 (est.)

Turning 22 Program

MRC's Community Living Division operates the Turning 22 program to provide transition services for youth with physical disabilities under the age of 22 by providing supported living, skills training, mentoring, and adaptive equipment to assist in transitioning from school into independent community living placements.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth with disabilities age 22 and under	613	613 youth received transition services	\$1,385,265

MRC VR College Student Internships

The MRC has implemented a paid VR internship program for students enrolled in VR Counseling degree programs, to provide VR college students with paid, real world experience. The program supports the MRC Workforce Planning Initiative by providing potential new VR staff recruits. Since 2010, 23 interns have been hired as VR staff by the MRC.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
VR Students	16	Since 2010, MRC has had 72 VR student interns	\$77,973

2014 Youth Summer Internship Program

In 2014, the MRC initiated a pilot Summer Internship Program in the Worcester Area Office, partnering with area businesses to place high school youth in 8 week paid summer internships. Interns received valuable work experience and were evaluated by employers upon completion. The program is modeled on best practices established in the 5 year MRC Transition Works grant. The pilot was a great success and may be replicated in other MRC Area Offices going forward.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Transition Youth in Worcester Area	16	16 youth received valuable work experience	\$34,277

Transitional Internship Program (TIP)

MRC provides summer internship opportunities for youth with disabilities aged 18 to 23 through Independent Living Centers throughout Massachusetts. In coordination with schools and MRC Area Offices, the program provides youth with employment related skills, guidance, and work references to improve future employment opportunities and outcomes.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth with Disabilities ages 18-23	109	109 interns at 87 internship sites	\$600,000

Transition to Adulthood Program (TAP)

The MRC Community Living Division partners with Independent Living Centers to provide skills training, peer counseling, mentoring, and other services to youth with disabilities to help prepare them for transitioning into adulthood and to live independently in the community of their choice. The TAP program funds a wide variety of services for participating youth.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth with Disabilities	623	623 youth provided with skills training and counseling	\$529,323

MA Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) Transition to Work Program

The MRC partners with the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MCDHH) to provide internships for youth with hearing impairments to assist them in preparing for post-secondary education, developing career goals, and acquiring competitive work experience. In FY 2014, 36 youth from the MCDHH received valuable internship experiences.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth from the MCDHH	36	36 internships provided to MCDHH college students	\$250,000

Youth Leadership Forum

In partnership with Easter Seals and other organizations, the MRC supports an annual multi-day Youth Leadership Forum for youth with disabilities. The forum matches high school youths with peer mentors in intensive workshops and activities to foster employment readiness, independence, peer networking, and leadership skills in participating youth.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth with Disabilities	57	All 57 Youth received Certificates of Completion	\$100,000

Youth Leadership Network

In partnership with Easter Seals, the MRC supports the Youth Leadership Network, consisting of regional workshops taking place throughout the Commonwealth on topics such as leadership, self-determination, peer networking, assistive technology in the workplace, and employment skills for youth with disabilities between the ages of 14 and 26.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth with Disabilities	93	Peer mentoring, networking, and community service	\$120,000

Ambassadors of Mentoring Program

The MRC supported the Ambassadors of Mentoring Program in collaboration with Partners for Youth with Disabilities (PYD). The project funded print and social media efforts to increase exposure for mentoring, including a documentary (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W5AEbIA7iSg>), and held outreach events to recruit mentors with disabilities. The program served 15 mentees and achieved 76 new mentor referrals, 23% of which were mentors with disabilities.

Target Group	2014 # Served	Key Outcomes	Cost
Youth with Disabilities	15	15 mentees and 76 mentor referrals	\$15,000