



# *Blueprints Model Programs* FACT SHEET

FS-BPM04

1998

## Quantum Opportunities Program

The Quantum Opportunities Program (QOP) is a youth development program designed to serve disadvantaged adolescents by providing education, service, and development activities, as well as financial incentives, over a four year period, from ninth grade through high school graduation.

### Program Targets:

QOP is designed to serve adolescents from families receiving public assistance. QOP activities begin when youth enter the ninth grade, and continue for four years through high school.

### Program Content:

QOP provides education, service, and development activities over a four year period, from ninth grade through high school graduation. Each QOP participant is eligible to receive annually:

- **250 hours of Education** — participating in computer-assisted instruction, peer tutoring, etc., to enhance basic academic skills;
- **250 hours of Development Activities** — participating in cultural enrichment and personal development, acquiring life/family skills, planning for college or advanced technical/vocational training, and job preparation; and
- **250 hours of Service Activities** — participating in community service projects, helping with public events, and working as a volunteer in various agencies.

Factors which contribute to QOP's success include:

- *Small groups* of 20-25 young people, bonding with each other and with caring adults.
- A *community-based*, case-management approach, tied closely to school, and individually tailored to the youth's own needs and circumstances.
- A program that *starts early* (average age of participants in pilot was 14) before many young people are in deep trouble, and invests in their future, year-round over four years, by providing opportunities for learning, development, and service.
- An approach with *multiple dimensions*, building basic skills, imparting life and social skills, broadening horizons, and enabling young people to give back to their communities.
- *Financial incentives* that reward youngsters immediately for hours worked, providing periodic completion bonuses, and contributing matching funds to their accrual accounts over the longer-term.
- Program administrators who *go the extra mile*, by tracking the whereabouts and activities of each young person, making home visits, and motivating the youth to go the extra mile, too.

- *Multi-year funding*, provided in advance so that excellent staff can be recruited and retained, and so that the youngsters can absolutely count on this program sticking with them.

### **Program Outcomes:**

An evaluation which compared QOP participants to a control group demonstrated that QOP members were:

- *more likely to be high school graduates*: 63% of QOP members graduated high school compared to 42% of the control group.
- *more likely to go on to post-secondary schools*: 42% of QOP members compared to 16% of the control group.
- *less likely to be high school dropouts*: 23% of QOP members compared to 50% of the control group.
- *more likely to have received an honor or award in the past year*: 34% of QOP members compared to 12% of the control group.
- *less likely to become teen parents*: 24% of QOP members compared to 38% of the control group.
- *less likely to be arrested*: 19% of QOP members compared to 23% of the control group.

### **Program Costs:**

The cost for four years was \$10,600 per participant, or \$2,650 per year.

#### **The information for this fact sheet was excerpted from:**

Lattimore, C.B., Mihalic, S.F., Grotmeter, J.K., & Taggart, R. (1998). Blueprints for Violence Prevention, Book Four: The Quantum Opportunities Program. Boulder, CO: Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence.