



READY BY 21

All young people need to be prepared to succeed in college, work and life. But in our communities, only four out of ten young people are ready for a productive adulthood and two in ten are in serious trouble. With effective state and local leaders, nonprofits and public structures like schools, community centers, and libraries working together, communities can prepare a competitive workforce, strengthen social networks, support families and help all young people realize their potential. Using innovative strategic planning tools developed by the Forum for Youth Investment, Ready by 21 is designed to maximize resources to ensure all young people grow up healthy and strong, learn skills for today's jobs, be connected to community and prepared to succeed in college.

HOW DOES IT WORK? Ready by 21 is a strategy that helps communities improve the odds that all youth will be ready for work, college and life. It taps the expertise and dedication of diverse leaders who care about children, youth and families, meeting them where they are and helping them chart a course for better outcomes for young people. The Ready by 21 strategy is already helping communities such as Indianapolis, Austin and Nashville to actively coordinate efforts that support schools to ensure healthier, more productive children and youth.

READY BY 21 NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP. An unprecedented coalition of organizations representing government, education, non-profit, business, research and philanthropy is taking Ready by 21 into states and communities around the country. A “dream team” of the country's most effective agencies, it works with trailblazing leaders who are shaping youth and community development policies and best practices. Its combined reach is over 650,000 state and local leaders who impact the lives of more than 1 million children and youth.

The Forum for Youth Investment is the creator of Ready by 21, and the founding and managing partner. *United Way Worldwide* is the signature partner, joined by mobilization partners that engage core stakeholders to help today's youth be ready for college, work and life:

- American Association of School Administrators
- Corporate Voices for Working Families
- The National Collaboration for Youth
- The National Conference of State Legislatures
- The Search Institute

The National Partnership also includes technical partners who can offer community leaders packages of cutting-edge and competitively priced services and tools; these organizations include Child Trends, Community Systems Group, Spark Action, David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, The Finance Project, The Gallup Organization, nFocus Software and Results Leadership Group, LLC.



PREPARING YOUTH FOR SUCCESS IN THE WORKFORCE

ABOUT CORPORATE VOICES. Corporate Voices for Working Families is the leading national business membership organization representing the private sector on public and corporate policy issues involving working families. A nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, it combines research and corporate best practices to develop and advance innovative policies that reflect collaboration among the private sector, government and other stakeholders.

CORPORATE VOICES' ROLE IN READY BY 21. Corporate Voices believes that all young people deserve to grow up healthy and strong, equipped to excel in school today and in the jobs of tomorrow. American business competitiveness and future economic prosperity depends on a skilled and prepared workforce. Business leaders agree that many youth do not possess the skills needed to succeed at work. Activating the workforce pipeline is a fundamental and systemic imperative to drive business sustainability, ensure global competitiveness and to uplift the standard of living for working families.

Corporate Voices challenges business leaders to invest in workforce readiness as a business imperative. Business leaders can work with the Ready by 21 National Partnership as collaborators in their efforts to advance global competitiveness. As the Partnership's expert on business and industry, Corporate Voices is recruiting national and local business support, leading the federal public policy efforts for the Partnership, guiding corporate outreach for fund development and developing tools and landmark research that assist business and communities to better articulate the needs and solutions for a fully prepared, innovative and competitive workforce.

CORPORATE VOICES' GOALS FOR READY BY 21. Business and education need better alignment around workforce development and resources across the board. Corporate Voices' goals include raising the bar for business and community leadership to work together to address the needs of youth, developing a network of business thought-leaders at both the national and local levels committed to improving youth outcomes, combining resources in ways that maximize the impact to communities while helping businesses prosper, and engaging in policy conversations where business can advocate for effective policies to support these goals. Businesses thrive in communities where youth thrive.

TAKE ACTION. We need your voice! Join the Corporate Voices' Ready by 21 Working Group to become involved in Ready by 21. Current members include Abbott Nutrition, Altria Client Services, Inc., CVS/Caremark, Ford Motor Company Fund, Knowledge Learning Corp., Marriott International and TJX Companies. Contact Sara Toland, Sr. Manager, Workforce Readiness, Business and Community Engagement at stoland@corporatevoices.org. Visit www.readyby21.org and www.corporatevoices.org for more information.