



RTI Center for Career and Adult Education and Workforce Development

Our Capabilities

- Research Studies and Policy Analysis
- Customized Technical Assistance
- Accountability System Design and Improvement
- Program and Policy Evaluation
- Performance-Based Funding System Development
- Marketing and Communications

Areas of Expertise

Adult Education

Adult education programs help people build important basic skills, setting these individuals on a path for success in education, training, and employment. RTI provides technical assistance and conducts research on state and local efforts to integrate adult education and training services. We also create comprehensive career pathways for adult learners; develop technical assistance resources; and offer research analysis support to federal, state, and local policymakers to improve adult learners' education and employment success.

Career and Technical Education

RTI believes that people learn best when they connect the academic and technical skills learned in the classroom to meaningful work-based experiences. Our research provides evidence on the effective organization and delivery of career and technical education (CTE). This work—including evaluations of CTE programs and policies at the federal, state, and local levels as well as research-based technical assistance—is designed to ensure that all secondary and postsecondary students are prepared for careers in high-skill, high-demand fields that offer living wages for families.

Workforce Development

RTI's workforce development experience involves preparing individuals to enter, advance, or reenter the workforce and helping employers improve workforce effectiveness. We partner with policymakers, educators, and employers to design educational programming that provides youth and adults with the academic, technical, and employability skills necessary to find work, advance their careers, and realize life success. We also work with employers to develop, implement, and evaluate systems, processes, and programs. Our combined efforts help to increase organizational productivity and facilitate employee growth, engagement, and retention.

Education for Justice-Involved Individuals

Education can be a lifeline for youth and adults involved in the criminal justice system. RTI's evaluation, research, and technical assistance work supports adult, career and technical, and postsecondary education programs designed to divert individuals from incarceration, prepare incarcerated individuals for release, and facilitate the transition of formerly incarcerated individuals back into the community.

Project Highlights: Career and Technical Education

National Perkins Reporting System. RTI manages the Perkins Information Management System and the Perkins Collaborative Resource Network for the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) in the U.S. Department of Education. This work includes providing technical support to OCTAE staff members and Perkins grantees and performing system upgrades in response to Perkins reauthorization. RTI also offers webinars, training materials, and customized technical assistance to states about effective data collection practices and the use of data for program improvement.

New Skills for Youth Evaluation. With funding from JPMorgan Chase, this initiative includes a grant program for the development of rigorous career pathways that prepare students to succeed in high-skill and high-wage jobs. As the third-party evaluator, RTI is examining the effects of the 10-state initiative on career education systems and student outcomes. The evaluation includes annual site visits, stakeholder surveys of initiative stakeholders, and the analysis of quantitative student outcome data.

Assessing CTE Programs in Corrections. RTI conducted a study to assess the status, challenges, and benefits of offering CTE programs to incarcerated individuals in preparation for their release. The report summarizes the literature and findings from interviews with state correctional education administrators in eight states as well as employers and employment placement specialists that work with formerly incarcerated individuals. The report documents a growing interest in, and support for, nondegree credentials and a body of evidence that supports the labor market benefits of correctional education leading to industry-recognized credentials.

Developing CTE-Focused Diversion Programs for Justice-Involved Young Adults. Under contract with the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Justice, RTI is providing technical assistance to 16 state and local partnerships; these partnerships provide justice-involved young adults (ages 16–24) with alternatives to incarceration, including CTE and career pathways. Partnerships receive targeted technical assistance on diversion strategies, education and workforce development practices, special education, partnership development, data collection, and sustainability.

National Assessment of Career and Technical Education (NACTE). RTI researchers led the 2008–2014 national evaluation of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 2006. The study's final report to Congress provided an overview of CTE in the United States, including impact studies of CTE course-taking and CTE school attendance, state-level strategies for meeting Perkins finance and accountability requirements, and analyses of national data on CTE participation at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

Using a Common Framework for Employability Skills. Employability skills are key to preparing individuals for college and careers. With funding from the U.S. Department of Education, RTI led a national project to create an interactive framework and online resources to inform employability skill instruction and assessment. We also developed a training module that provides guidance on integrating employability skills into multiple education levels and settings.

National Center for Innovation in Career and Technical Education (NCICTE). For the U.S. Department of Education, RTI conducted research and led the NCICTE consortium. The consortium's studies addressed work-based learning, apprenticeship programs, Perkins implementation, CTE program access, and student outcomes. NCICTE also developed print and web-based materials to communicate research findings to practitioners, policy makers, and researchers, and provided trainings to increase the effectiveness of CTE.

More Information

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