WHO WE SERVED IN 2017. UTEC aims to ensure social and economic success for proven-risk young adults. We reserve our intensive program for those aged 17 to 25 who fit our impact young adult criteria. We define impact young adults as those who are seriously gang- or criminally-involved, with a priority on felony convictions and reentry from prison or jail. Most participants also lack a high school credential and many are young parents.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMMING. Through sustained relationships with caring adults and intentional programming, we help young adults make significant changes in their lives.

UTEC's model begins with Street Outreach and Gang Peacemaking, where we engage young adults into and through an orientation phase. They then advance to the Workforce Development program, where they gain paid work experience. Each participant is paired with a Transitional Coach, who works with them on a wide set of goals. Participants develop a variety of critical life and job skills by working in our social enterprises, and resume their Education through academic classes with a project-based focus. We embed values of Social Justice and Civic Engagement in all programming, with special emphasis on our local and statewide organizing and policymaking work. UTEC also provides supplemental enrichment activities so participants have additional safe outlets for expression.

Of 136 Young Adults Served in FY17, at Intake:

- 93% had a criminal record
- 72% were gang involved
- 36% were pregnant/parenting
- 69% lacked a high school credential
- 96% had more than one risk factor, including 11% who had all four

In fiscal year 2017 (FY17), we served 136 young adults. All participants had at least one targeted risk factor and most met multiple risk criteria.
OUTCOMES AND IMPACT 2017. UTEC aims to help young adults secure three outcomes: reduced recidivism, increased employability, and increased educational attainment. We track progress on these outcomes while young adults are engaged at UTEC and for a 2-year period after they complete the program.

LOOKING AHEAD. UTEC values continuous learning and improvement for ourselves and our young people. And we expect to see further improved outcomes for our participants, due to intentional enhancements in program operations.

- **Engagement.** Since our Streetworkers are the primary referral source into programming, we are increasing the size of our team and refining Streetworker roles to focus on either in-reach to correctional facilities or outreach for neighborhood-based engagement and gang intervention.

- **Risk-Needs-Responsivity Assessment.** We are looking to adopt a research-based Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) assessment to help identify participants who will best benefit from programming and how to tailor our services.

- **Employment.** A second commercial kitchen will provide more job slots for our young adults. We are also expanding our internship offerings through corporate partnerships.

- **Education.** UTEC currently offers HiSET preparation classes and is expanding its range of educational supports. We plan to add developmental classes for those who are not yet ready for HiSET and a dual-enrollment program for those who have already completed their high school credential. We are also developing a set of key competencies that will help young adults meet our three outcomes.

- **Two-Generation Strategy.** UTEC opened an on-site early childhood education center in September 2017 to help address young parents’ barriers and as the first step in a 2Gen strategy, which works with the family as a whole.

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**Excerpt from “Cell block for young men holds promise,” an editorial in the Boston Globe, November 22, 2017.**

“One of the most important criminal justice reform experiments in the country will spread to a stately brick jail-house in Billerica. The Middlesex Jail and House of Correction will become one of the first in the nation to create a dedicated, service-rich cell block for young men. [...] And UTEC, an impressive, Lowell-based organization already working to rehabilitate some of the toughest young men in the region, will play a central role.”
Recent brain development research demonstrates that young adults are developmentally different than adults ages 25 and older. Young adults are more impulsive and more likely to make poor decisions. This has notable consequences for criminal justice; as a MassINC policy brief summarized, “Young adults ages 18 to 24 are the most likely demographic to find their way into Massachusetts prisons and the quickest to return to them upon release.” Beyond the mid-20s, criminal involvement tends to drop-off. For this reason, we feel that if we can engage young adults during this critical high risk period, they will be more likely to succeed in their mid-20s and beyond.

In addition, research shows that after 6 or 7 years without criminal activity, an ex-offender’s risk of future criminal activity is nearly identical to peers without a criminal record. This suggests that if UTEC can keep impact young adults engaged without further criminal involvement, those individuals will be much less likely to re-offend than if they had not received such support.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Three-Year Reincarceration</th>
<th>Jail (HOC)</th>
<th>Prison (DOC)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24 years old</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34 years old</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44 years old</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 and older</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Statistics from CSG Justice Center

136 young adults ages 17-25 participated in our intensive programming in FY17.

- 93% HAD A CRIMINAL RECORD
- 72% WERE GANG INVOLVED
- 69% HAD NO HIGH SCHOOL CREDENTIAL
- 36% WERE PREGNANT OR PARENTING

96% met multiple risk criteria, including 11% who had all four.
UTEC reserves our intensive program for those who fit our impact young adult criteria. We define impact young adults as those who are seriously gang- or criminally-involved (with a priority on felony convictions and reentry from prison or jail).

UTEC’s primary hypothesis has two parts:
1) If impact young adults are productively engaged in UTEC for an extended period during the critical ages of 17-25, then by 25, they will have the skills and resilience needed to maintain stable employment and avoid further criminal activity.
2) If we are able to specifically target and serve those impact young adults (through the age of 25) who are most likely to recidivate and cause harm in our communities, success will also translate into a significant return on investment from a public health, public safety, and economic development perspective.

UTEC aims to ensure social and economic success for proven-risk young adults. Driven by the concept of multiple chances and redemption, the model has relapse embedded within it, reflecting our philosophy that we must be relentless — never giving up on any young person. Through sustained relationships with caring adults and intentional programming, our impact young adults redefine their futures.

We take a staged approach: programming intensity and structure increase with each stage, before facilitating full transition back into the community. UTEC can devote upwards of 5 years toward working with and following up with each participant. This extended period builds resiliency and proficiency in positive outcome areas.

UTEC’s Core Program Model

- **Streetworker Outreach and Gang Peacemaking** (1) builds relationships with young adults (YA) who are involved in gangs and criminal activity on the streets and in prisons to promote peacemaking and (2) recruits YA into UTEC’s intensive model.
- **Transformational Beginnings** is an orientation and acclimation period, during which YA gain work experience in our mattress recycling social enterprise and receive wraparound services to stabilize them to be ready for the next stage of programming.
- **Social Enterprise-Based Workforce Development** provides youth with on-the-job training in additional social enterprises, personal development, high school credential preparation, and social justice instruction, career exploration, and eventually external employment.
- **Supplemental Offerings** provide civic engagement activities, as well as drop-in afternoon enrichment activities.
- **Transitional Coaching** goes beyond mentoring to (1) provide YA with wraparound services and connections to supports, (2) monitor YA progress, and (3) address barriers to YA participation and success.
- **Follow-Up Services** for 2 years post-completion to provide continued support, collect longer-term data, and assess post-program outcomes.
In FY17, we served 136 young adults through our intensive model. Of these young adults, 52 were new participants in Transformational Beginnings (i.e., completed at least one orientation during the year). We also estimate that we served another 750+ individuals (both target and non-target) through Streetworker engagement.

The participants we serve tend to be out of their teen years when they first enroll at UTEC. Although we serve ages 17 to 25, the average age of new entrants this year (i.e., those who completed Transformational Beginnings orientations during the year) was 22. This is in line with our focused attention on serving young adults who are most likely to recidivate.

All of the young adults served in FY17 had at least one targeted risk factor and nearly all met multiple risk criteria. The primary risk criteria required for eligibility into UTEC’s intensive program are serious criminal involvement and/or gang involvement. We prioritize participants who have serious criminal records, namely, felony charges and convictions. We give additional preference to young adults who are pregnant or parenting (36% this year) and/or who lack a high school credential (69%). The vast majority of participants (96%) had more than one risk factor, including 11% who had all four.

I’d spent enough time in the wrong places with the wrong people. But UTEC is the right place with the right people.

Jimmy
Former UTEC Young Adult
With the success of current partnerships, we are expanding internship offerings to further develop the transition out of our model. These internships provide a new level of “real-world” job experience, while also supporting participants with additional training and coaching to prepare them for sustained employment.

Laura Derba, Whole Foods Market North Atlantic Region President (retired)

I want to congratulate UTEC on receiving the 2016 Youth Workforce Program of the Year Award. UTEC does incredible work to train and equip young people with important skills that they will use long after leaving the program.

Charlie Baker Governor of Massachusetts

We need a pipeline of talent, and UTEC’s young adults need jobs. We are partnering with UTEC to provide two types of internships: a training internship and an employment internship. Our mutual hope is that these opportunities will provide young people exiting UTEC with good-paying jobs in our industry.

Kevin Barlow, Keiver-Willard Lumber Corp. Vice President

UTEC stands out for its ability to identify a social enterprise that thoughtfully organizes itself ... UTEC demonstrates a solid understanding of a formula that works for their social mission as well as their business model. We are confident that UTEC is a sustainable partner.

Laura Derba, Whole Foods Market North Atlantic Region President (retired)
49% of 18-24 year-olds who are incarcerated to county facilities in Massachusetts are not re-arraigned within 1 year.

UTEC’s established model for reentry services includes correctional facility partnerships at the county and state levels, including screening for all MA Department of Correction inmates by the Reentry Division. Its existing “behind the walls” relationship-building is critical to success with young adults who reenter UTEC’s target communities and join their employment program.

Daniel Bennett
MA Secretary of Public Safety & Security

REDUCED RECIDIVISM

90% of young adults served were not arrested during the year.

99% were not convicted.

94% of young adults from our follow-up group were not arrested in the 2 years since leaving UTEC.

IN COMPARISON:

49% of 18-24 year-olds who are incarcerated to county facilities in Massachusetts are not re-arraigned within 1 year.6
INCREASED EMPLOYABILITY

78% of young adults who left UTEC programming were employed two years later.

INCREASED EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

32% of young adults engaged in our HiSET classes obtained a high school credential within the last year.

IN COMPARISON:

Former inmates earn, on average, 40% less than they would, had they not been incarcerated. In Massachusetts, this amounts to around $760 million in lost wages annually. UTEC works to help our young adults avoid this potential wage loss.7

IN COMPARISON:

Less than 20% of incarcerated males ages 18-24 nationally have attained at least a high school diploma or GED.8
The Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model uses a formal assessment of risk factors to make sure individuals are matched with programming that best suits their needs. Currently, UTEC uses a risk assessment tool we developed in-house, based on our sense of what factors constitute the highest risk. Moving forward, we will work with our correctional partners and with funding from the U.S. Department of Justice to implement a more formal RNR assessment that is already in use with some incarcerated individuals. Adopting an RNR assessment can help ensure we are serving those who are most likely to recidivate. An accurate risk assessment helps identify participants who will best benefit from programming and how to tailor our services.

Looking Ahead

UTEC values continuous learning and improvement for ourselves and our young people. And we expect to see further improved outcomes for our participants, due to intentional enhancements in program operations.

Outreach and Engagement

We are taking several steps to increase the number of participants we serve.

Since our Streetworkers are the primary referral source into programming, we are increasing the size of our team and refining Streetworker roles to focus on either in-reach or outreach. In-reach Streetworkers are now being assigned to specific correctional facility partners to provide supports to young men and women who are within 6 months of release from incarceration. Outreach Streetworkers are on the streets from 12-8 pm each day, concentrated on peacekeeping. These activities center on crisis intervention, but are particularly focused on visits to gang hotspots.

Risk-Need-Responsivity Assessment

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Two-Generation Strategy

UTEC’s early childhood center is central to the development of our two-generation (2Gen) strategy. 2Gen approaches involve programming that benefits both parents and children, to address their needs individually and the needs of the family as a whole. These strategies improve family stability and serve to intervene in intergenerational poverty — children who are born into poverty are significantly more likely than their more affluent peers to remain in poverty as adults, to drop out of school, and to become teen parents. The new 2Gen Center @ UTEC opened in 2017 and will scale up enrollment to serve up to 35 children of UTEC-enrolled young adults.

Young Adult Justice

UTEC is working with correctional system partners on young adult justice pilot programs to enhance the pipeline and referrals into UTEC. Specialized young adult units can provide effective and comprehensive services for young adults (ages 18-24) in jail to best prepare them for reentry and decrease their likelihood to recidivate. This pilot unit will expand on the pre-release services currently provided by UTEC Streetworkers to further strengthen relationships and to bridge the transition from jail back to the community through UTEC-delivered services, both pre- and post-release. UTEC aims to increase programming “behind the walls” to mirror a young adult’s post-release experience at UTEC. For example, additional unit programming will likely include: weekly therapeutic groups and circles, high school equivalency prep classes, workforce readiness training and certifications, young fatherhood workshops, family visitation and counseling, and off-site employment in UTEC enterprises for those who advance to the pre-release security level. Priority consideration will be given to those young adults who are interested in continuing post-release services through UTEC.

Education

UTEC is expanding its range of educational supports and options for the impact young adults we serve. Our integrated Workforce Development program provides HiSET preparation classes, which lead to a high school credential, alongside on-the-job training, personal development, and career exploration.

Now, we will add developmental classes for those who are not yet ready for high-school equivalency testing. For those who complete their HiSET/GED while at UTEC, a dual-enrollment pilot with Middlesex Community College will help young adults earn college credits for work completed at UTEC. This will include classes and tutoring for those who want to pass the Accuplacer exam to test out of remedial classes in community college.

A set of core competencies is also being developed; it will be designed to help young adults meet our three key outcomes and guide their experience in our intensive programming.
1 Fiscal year 2017 began on July 1, 2016 and ended on June 30, 2017.
5 This number excludes anyone who participated in fewer than 15 days in Transformational Beginnings, since we do not consider young adults to be officially part of our program until they have been with us for 15 days; many who start with us are not yet ready to engage fully in our programming.
9 For more information about two generation approaches, see the Aspen at the Aspen Institute’s website: http://ascend.aspeninstitute.org.