

BUSINESS LAB

Equipping young adults with essential behavioral and professional skills

The Business Lab is an innovative program that supports young adults in developing the professional and behavioral skills to make positive choices, choose alternatives to violence, and pursue professional pathways.

The Business Lab concept is grounded in behavioral science research demonstrating the effectiveness of combining behavior-change programming with concrete financial opportunity.¹ Tailored cognitive behavioral therapy helps participants develop positive ways to cope with stressful and conflict-prone situations. Participants also practice essential soft skills, receive 1-on-1 job readiness coaching, and complete professional skills training in order to expand their career opportunities. Upon exiting the program, participants are better equipped to regulate their emotions and make thoughtful decisions, and have taken steps toward meaningful employment and financial stability.

Pilot Details (Fall 2018 - Spring 2019)



25 underserved young adults
(ages 18-25)²



Part-time, paid training
(\$15/hr)



East New York
(Brooklyn)

"I learned a lot of things about myself from this environment, and I decided to learn how to elevate myself from it to become a better person."

—Business Lab Participant

Program Components

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

focuses on strengthening behavioral skills such as regulating emotions and developing positive ways to cope with stressful and conflict-prone situations.

Discussion Groups

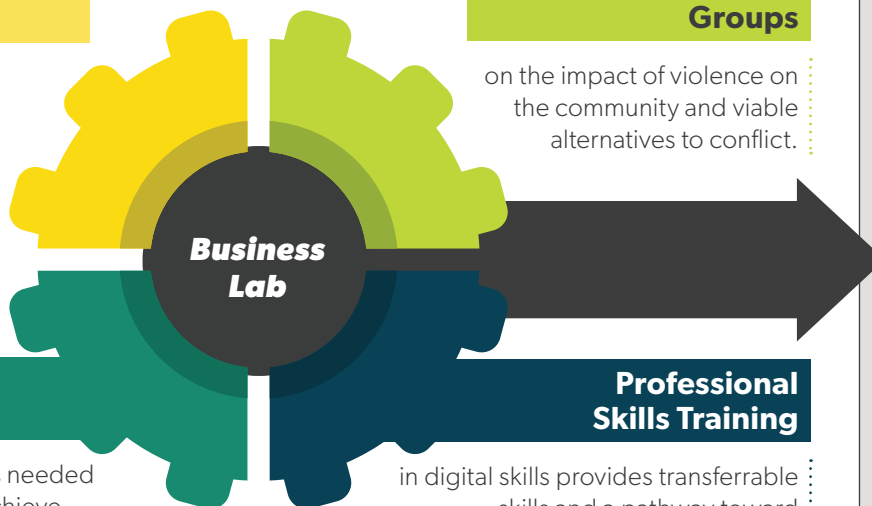
on the impact of violence on the community and viable alternatives to conflict.

Employment Readiness

ensures acquisition of skills needed to find employment and achieve success in a professional context.

Professional Skills Training

in digital skills provides transferrable skills and a pathway toward participants' chosen professions.



Exit Opportunity

defined through 1:1 counseling ensures continued growth beyond the Business Lab, supporting youth in pursuit of their long term employment goals.

¹ Christopher Blattman & Julian C. Jamison & Margaret Sheridan, 2017. "Reducing Crime and Violence: Experimental Evidence from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in Liberia," American Economic Review, vol 107(4), pages 1165-1206.

² The pilot enrolled young adults who had previously participated in the Next Steps or Arches programs offered by the New York City Department of Probation.

Outcomes

In the inaugural pilot, the 22 participants who graduated from the Business Lab reported impressive results across multiple behavioral and professional areas, as measured by pre- and post-program surveys:

Improved behavioral control

↑ **31%**

Increase in the number of participants who said they consider the consequences of different reactions ahead of acting

"We got to learn how to handle difficult feelings, difficult emotions...to pause and take a step back and gain perspective."

—**Business Lab Participant**

Decreased willingness to participate in violent behavior

> **2x**

Increase in the number of participants who responded that they would walk away from or ignore others after feeling disrespected

"I've used those tools [I learned in Business Lab] and helped stop a gang fight."

—**Business Lab Participant**

Decreased perception that weapons are necessary and acceptable

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The number of participants who responded that they would consider using a weapon in confrontational situations

"If you on the other side of that gun, you thinking about everything you about to die for. That's crazy. You got a life; you got a family."

—**Business Lab Participant**

Improved career readiness and uptake of career opportunities

↑ **27%**

Increase in assessment scores for participants' computer and job application skills

"I'm getting job calls, and it's really real... it's like wow, that's amazing!"

—**Business Lab Participant**

Partnership

The Business Lab was developed by the NYC Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) and ideas42 in partnership Good Shepherd Services, Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow, General Assembly, Defy Ventures, and other City partners.

ideas42 is excited to work with more partners to grow this program in NYC and beyond. Reach out to info@ideas42.org to learn more.