Housing and Employment: Evaluation of the Lakefront SRO Transitional Service Center

James H. Lewis April Payton-Bernard Kathleen Kane-Willis

Institute for Metropolitan Affairs Roosevelt University

December, 2002

This report was funded by a generous grant from the John D. and Catherine T.

MacArthur Foundation

Authors

James H. Lewis, Principal Investigator

April Payton Bernard Kathleen Kane-Willis

Institute for Metropolitan Affairs Roosevelt University 430 S. Michigan Chicago, IL 60603

312-341-3541 jlewis@roosevelt.edu

Acknowledgements

Survey data utilized in the report was collected by the Metro Chicago Information Center under the direction of Woody Carter and Thais Seldess.

Data bases of client data were compiled by Gina Haverland of Lakefront SRO and Jamie Woy of the IMA.

Special thanks go to senior management at Lakefront SRO including Executive Director Jean Butzen, Vice President Patricia Tucker and Director of Research and Evaluation Sophia Ross Lloyd for facilitating data collection and reviewing drafts of the report.

Contents

Executive Summary	iv
Introduction	1
Chapter 1. Background	4
Chapter 2. Mental Health, Drug Abuse and Motivation	17
Chapter 3. Delivering Social Services	29
Chapter 4. Employment	50
Chapter 5. Public Housing and Neighborhoods	64
Chapter 6. The Near South Service Model	68

Tables and Figures

Table 1.1	Age of Near South clients	4
Table 1.2	Education of Near South clients	5
Table 1.3	Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores for Near South clients	5
Table 1.4	Selected characteristics of Near South clients	6
Table 1.5	Near South case openings by quarter	7
Table 1.6	Near South clients living in CHA by quarter	7
Table 1.7	Near South clients by gender by quarter	7
Table 1.8	Near South clients with TANF by quarter	8
Table 1.9	Pace of Near South service provision by quarter	8
Table 1.10	Number of Near South clients with identified service need to work	9
Table 1.11	Number of services provided to Near South clients by quarter1`	9
Table 1.12	Near South job placements by quarter	11
Table 1.13	Near South jobs placed by full time/part time, TABE, and quarter	11
Table 1.14	Days to first employment from intake by quarter	11
Table 1.15	Occupations of Near South job placements	12
Table 1.16	Prior to your current job, when was your most recent job?	13
Table 1.17	Number of prior jobs listed at intake	14
Table 1.18	Work status at time of interview	14
Table 1.19	Time expecting to stay on current job	15
Table 1.20	Gender of Near South and SRO clients	15
Table 1.21	Education levels of Near South and SRO clients	15
Table 1.22	Age of Near South and SRO clients	16
Table 1.23	Percent of clients employed and unemployed at program intake and survey interview	16
Table 2.1	Self efficacy score by program one year after intake	18
Table 2.2	Self efficacy items by program one year after intake	18
Table 2.3	Depression score by program one year after intake	18
Table 2.4	Depression items by program one year after intake	19
Table 2.5	Presence of depressive symptoms by change in employment status from intake to survey	20
Table 2.6	Percent of clients with depressive symptoms by client characteristic	20
Table 2.7	Problem solving items by program one year after intake	21
Table 2.8	Hassle items by program one year after intake	23
Table 2.9	Working at time of interview by self-efficacy score	24
Table 2.10	Mental health constructs by client-reported source of strength	24
Table 2.11	Client attributions for success by program	25
Table 2.12	Client ascribed reasons for failure by program	25
Table 2.13	Reasons for failure by program	26
Table 2.14	Reasons for failure by gender and program	26
Table 2.15	Drug status and referrals	27
Table 2.16	Prior drug treatment participation by employment for clients identified as having drug problems	28
Table 2.17	Employment outcomes of clients with drug problems by whether they got referral from Near South	28

Table 3.1	Percentage of Near South clients with problems identified by case managers	30
Table 3.2	Percentage of Near South clients receiving selected services	31
Table 3.3	Percent "somewhat" or "very satisfied" with services	33
Table 3.4	What do you like most about the Near South services and staff?	34
Table 3.5	Client service expectations: Percent indicating expectation of	36
	receiving service	
Table 3.6	Percent indicating their expectations were met	37
Table 3.7	Percentage of clients engaging in employment activities	38
Table 3.8	Percentage of clients engaging in work preparation activities	38
Table 3.9	Percentage of clients learning job skills	39
Table 3.10	Percentage of clients learning basic education skills	39
Table 3.11	Percentage of clients receiving help with mental health	40
Table 3.12	Percentage of clients receiving help with drug abuse	41
Table 3.13	Percentage of clients somewhat or very satisfied with services	41
Table 3.14	Satisfaction with services at Near South	42
Table 3.15	Percentage of residents expressing satisfaction with housing services:	42
	CHA residents and SRO residents	
Table 3.16	What clients liked best by program site	43
Table 3.17	What clients like least by program site	43
Table 3.18	Factors predictive of client attrition	45
Table 3.19	Self-attribution for failure by gender for Near South and SRO clients	46
Table 3.20	Self-reported strengths by gender and program	47
Table 3.21	Satisfaction levels by gender and program for selected program	48
	outcomes	4.0
Table 3.22	Service planning for employment by gender at Near South	49
Table 3.23	Service planning for Near South clients by TANF and No-TANF	49
Table 4.1	Near South level of satisfaction with your current job	50
Table 4.2	Correlation of type of client goal by client characteristics	51
Table 4.3	Whether Near South client got job by training program type	52
Table 4.4	Logistic regression of factors predictive that Near South placed a client	58
Table 4.5	Logistic regression – Lakefront found job	60
Table 4.6	Logistic regression – employed at interview	62
Table 5.1	Comparison of public housing and non-public housing clients on key	65
	characteristics	
Figure 1	Near South staffing and service categories	72
Figure 2	Clients and service needs	74
Figure 3	Near South employment center model	77

Executive Summary

The evaluation report provides an analysis of the impact of employment-related social service provision on clients of Lakefront SRO's Near South Service Center and residents of its single room occupancy (SRO) buildings. The Near South Service Center underwent three distinctive phases during its operation. Originally designed to apply the social service model operated by Lakefront SRO in its SRO buildings, Near South aimed to provide a holistic set of services to residents of the Hilliard and Ickes Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) public housing developments, which were slated for redesign by the CHA. The service model included two-year development plans for each client, detailed problem assessment, referral to social services, and job training and placement services.

During the first months of the project, beginning in the fall of 1999, the Near South center was inundated with clients, far surpassing their original expectations. These clients were roughly equally CHA residents and non-CHA residents who heard about the service. Both client surveys and behavior indicated that the vast majority of clients wanted only assistance with employment and, however much they may have needed additional training, planning or social service assistance, they generally did not want these services. Staff responded immediately to the client demand, and to the quantitative goals for job placement embedded in Lakefront SRO's contract with its funder by referring clients to work as rapidly as possible.

During the middle of the first year of the project, Lakefront management became aware of the change in methodology that had taken place from the original design necessitated by the size of the caseload, and determined to redirect the program back to the original vision. Program staff underwent retraining and committed to limiting the size of the caseload, concentrating on CHA residents, and attempting to provide a wider array of services to the clients served. Service statistics indicate that staff were able to respond by focusing services more on CHA clients and attempting to provide more intensive services.

Financial commitments to the project were for the first of two years only and late in the first year it became apparent that a second year would not be fully funded and that Lakefront's operation of Near South would conclude earlier than planned. Consequently, service provision began to decline as clients were referred to other possible sources of service and a greater percentage of clients coming to the program received only an intake and no social service referrals. The program concluded during its second year of operation.

The Near South center vastly surpassed its outreach goals, seeing more than 1,000 individuals and providing services to more than 550. Of the clients enrolled, 72 percent were CHA residents. In part because half of the center's clients were male, only 21 percent of all clients were on welfare. CHA clients were more likely to be younger women on welfare with little education and children while the non-CHA clients were more likely to be older males with somewhat more education.

Patterns of Employment

Near South placed 268 persons in a total of 404 jobs, generally attaining project goals. Referrals to training fell somewhat short of original goals but were substantial. The project performed 4,338 social services to its clients, the vast majority of which were issuance of transportation subsidies to interviews or work (2,146) and counselor-client meetings to discuss employment (1,835). The program reported fewer referrals for mental health, substance abuse, housing counseling, child care and health services.

Most jobs in which clients were placed were entry level employment with labor, factory work, food preparation, health aids and clerical the most common. While wages for jobs were low, averaging under \$8.00 per hour, the program did a good job of continuing to serve clients well after their intake, and of serving clients no matter their level of education. Nearly half of Near South clients had failed to attain a high school education and registered extremely low TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) scores.

Although jobs were low-wage and entry level, most clients expressed satisfaction with them and 73.6 percent said that they expected to remain there at least a year. Only about half of clients indicated to their case managers that they had specific vocational goals, the majority saying that they only wanted any job that would provide steady income. More educated, younger clients were more likely to have specific goals than older, less educated clients.

One of the missions of the evaluation was to compare various aspects of the Near South and SRO-based employment services. The evidence suggests that Near South and SRO clients were subject to a great deal of job turnover. Near South appeared to be more successful at placing an unemployed person in a job. SRO was more successful at sustaining a newly employed person in a job, and Near South clients proved more adept at finding employment on their own when service providers failed to do so.

Evidence from any number of sources indicates that getting low-skilled persons into entry-level jobs is relatively easy; keeping them employed is extremely difficult. The Near South service center experienced a great deal of "job churning," which is typical of low income workers.

The Lakefront experiences suggest that quality initial placement, and ability to troubleshoot problems that emerge on the job site or breakdowns of transportation or child care, are extremely important for sustaining employment. If employment strategies focus on placing large numbers of clients in entry level positions, they are unlikely to result in long term economic independence for low-skilled workers. The priority, then, becomes reducing the spells of unemployment and trying to maximize tenure in low-wage positions.

Training and Preparation

Near South provided three types of employment preparation programs, 1) hard skills training, 2) education, and 3) employment orientation. As has been common to many programs historically, the hard skills training provided by Near South offered the least return in terms of employment. While over 70 percent of participants in orientation and education were placed during the life of the program, only 57 percent of skills trainees got jobs. Only 44 percent of those trainees who got jobs, got them in the fields in which they trained. Many trainees had participated in numerous job training programs prior to their Near South enrollment.

Substance Abuse

Near South utilized some drug testing but relied more on an informal case worker assessment of whether a client might be abusing drugs or alcohol. Staff identified about one third of cases as abusers through the use of self-reported indicators and case worker assessments. About half reported having received prior treatment. Near South was able to make treatment referrals for less than 20 percent of those clients so identified. Clients with drug concerns were less likely (40 percent) to get a job through Near South than clients without them (50 percent). Clients receiving a Near South referral were more likely to get a job through Near South than abusers who did not receive a direct referral.

Mental Health

A substantial proportion of Near South and SRO clients experienced problems with mental health.

Higher self-efficacy was positively related to work and as many as 40 percent of Near South and SRO clients may have had low self-efficacy.

About 22 percent of Near South clients and 29 percent of SRO clients indicated symptoms associated with depression. Clients who were working were less likely to be depressed but clients making the transition to work were more likely to be. The transition to employment appears to be what is hardest. Among Near South clients, only 5 percent of males reported depressive symptoms, compared to 33 percent of females.

Clients of both programs indicated shortcomings in problem-solving skills. Clients of both programs indicated problems dealing with contradictory situations, finding ways to satisfy both parties in disputes, and knowing how best to ask for help.

Clients of both programs reported problems with hassles, although the SRO clients were significantly more likely to report feeling hassled than the Near South clients – who tended to be more self-reliant. Key areas included problems at work, conflict and interpersonal relations. Clients of both programs reported that their worst problems were in the areas of income and money management.

Although the differences were not significant, depression was more associated with a client attributing his/her strength to a support system or their personal motivation, as opposed to a strong set of skills and abilities.

In general, clients of Near South indicated significantly better mental health attributes one year after intake than they did at intake.

Social Service Delivery

Clients seeking services from Near South were far more inclined to seek only employment services than clients of SRO. While 3 percent or less of Near South clients said they sought mental health or substance abuse treatment, more than 25 percent of SRO employment clients said they expected that.

SRO clients consistently expressed higher degrees of satisfaction with service provision than did the Near South clients with differences statistically significant for employment/referral, and training. Clients of both programs reported working with staff to set goals for outcomes such as employment, training or social services, but few felt that a service plan had been created. Most clients of both programs reported that they felt they had made progress in the area of concern. The most important exception to this was in the area of basic education skills where SRO clients who worked on this were far more likely to say that they had received referrals and made progress. Virtually all of the SRO clients receiving mental health or drug abuse services felt that they had made progress.

While most Near South clients expressed that they were either very or somewhat satisfied with most services provided, large numbers were dissatisfied with support following employment, with the job they were found and the referrals they received for services. Clients who lived in one of Lakefront's SROs were far happier with their property management than were clients who lived in public housing.

When asked open-ended questions about what they liked best about Near South, clients were most likely to cite empathy and respect they received and the effort put out. Half of clients surveyed declined to name any attribute that they disliked.

Gender

The study uncovered a variety of issues affecting men and women differently. Women were far more likely than men to have assumed responsibility for child care. Women appear to have somewhat different expectations of the role of a service provider. Differences continue to exist in the capability of men and women to perform certain jobs, differences in vocational interest, and probably willingness of employers to hire persons of particular gender.

Female clients at Near South appeared less likely to have confidence in their skills or abilities, leaving them at a distinct disadvantage in their job search. Fifty percent of male

clients received jobs from the program compared to 45 percent of female clients. Males were more likely than females to be "very satisfied" with various program attributes, and whether they felt listened to, in particular. This pattern was also true among SRO clients. Near South males were more likely than females to say they had a service plan created. Females were far more likely to blame childcare or other logistical problems for their failure to be employed than did males. They were also significantly less confident of their skills and abilities.

As important as building self-esteem may be to clients, the evidence from the Near South experience indicates that self-reliance on skills is a better predictor of future employment than motivation or "support." Males are more likely to attribute success to skills, women to motivation.

Comparative Program Effects

Multi-variate analysis produced a number of important findings that weigh the comparative impact of different programmatic components on outcomes such as employment, client attrition and mental health.

Predictors of Employment at Near South

Overall, the presence of the social service staff clearly had a positive effect on clients who worked with them. The overall effect of the program was sufficient to offset advantages some clients had in terms of having been previously, or currently, employed. The process of meeting continually with staff was very important. Male clients were significantly more likely to find employment than female clients.

Predictors of Client Attrition at Near South

More educated clients were 1.5 times as likely as less educated clients to not return and clients who had recently lost a job were twice as likely to not return. Clients on TANF were 3 times as likely to return, clients without income at intake were 2.5 times more likely to return, clients with children were twice as likely to return and clients with previous jobs were 1.5 times more likely to return

Predictors of Employment for Near South and SRO Clients

Whether a client was employed at the point of intake had an overwhelming impact on whether they were employed long-term, but no impact on the ability of Lakefront to find them a job, indicating that services provision successfully overcame some clients' disadvantage of not having been previously employed.

After controlling for a wide range of client characteristics and types of programs, there was no independent effect on employment of whether services were delivered through Near South or a SRO, indicating strengths of both programs.

Provision of social services had a much stronger effect on whether Lakefront placed a client than on whether a client happened to be employed one year after their intake, suggesting that they had a strong short-term impact but tended not to change a client's life-course.

Predictors of Depression

SRO did an outstanding job diagnosing mental health problems of clients and depressed clients received little encouragement from employment programs. Analysis also suggests that the experience of depression was unrelated to most client characteristics and programs, although there was a tendency that approached significance for females to experience more depression than males, an observation also made in the bi-variate correlation of gender and depression.

Predictors of Self Efficacy

Higher self-efficacy was associated with employment and programmatic support. After controlling for client characteristics and program effects, SRO clients had higher self-efficacy than the Near South clients. SRO also had a positive, but not statistically significant, effect relative to Near South on the likelihood that a client would report symptoms of depression.

Conclusion

The SRO clients were clearly more willing to depend upon Lakefront for service than were the Near South clients, and approached the agency with a wider variety of personal problems that they were willing to work with Lakefront on. The Near South clients appeared to share most of the problems that confront the SRO clients, but were considerably more independent people.

Without the willingness of the client to cooperate in service provision, it is extraordinarily difficult for an agency to deliver social services in the areas of mental health, drug addiction or interpersonal relations that could be life-changing. To do so would require staff significantly more experienced and skilled than was available to a temporary project operating on a relatively low budget. As a result, in part because of the clients' willingness to participate and in part because of the regular contact between clients and staff, SRO found itself in a superior position to deliver intensive social services. Near South certainly had the capability to deliver effective services, but within narrower parameters as clients were impatient with extensive service planning or training. And so staff found themselves largely limited to an information, referral and placement function, which had the positive effect of sustaining clients with income in the near term, but held less promise for effecting sustained change in client life courses.

Discussion

The evaluation presents a number of findings of practical use to those designing social services aimed at securing or supporting employment for persons with low education or loose attachment to the labor market:

- Low income clients seeking employment typically need a variety of other services as well, but may have little patience for being evaluated for them, or receiving them. Programs seeking to serve them will need low staff-client ratios with intensive follow-up with the client. The evaluation discovered clear differences between the neighborhood clients of Near South, and the SRO residents with respect to willingness to participate in drug abuse or mental health services, although observation of both groups indicated needs for these services. It is possible that the willingness to seek services determined the choice to live independently as opposed to living in an SRO. On the other hand, it is also possible that the closer connection to the client formed by the SRO tenant relationship helped the client to feel more secure in seeking needed, but stigmatized, interventions. To the extent that this is true, it suggests that community, and housing communities in particular, could be useful vehicles for helping needy people obtain services.
- A larger percentage of clients had significant problems in the broad category of mental health, including depression, low self-efficacy, and difficulty conducting human relations sufficient to make job retention problematic. Some mental health or relational problems make it hard for clients to get jobs; but they also can make it hard for them to keep jobs once found. In many instances, becoming employed contributes to the emergence of these types of problems as work leads to a variety of stresses. The study suggests that creative community-based mental health programming could make a major contribution to improved employment retention.
- The evaluation discovered that the persons studied tended to attribute what successes they had to 1) high levels of motivation, 2) strong skills, or 3) strong support systems. People who trusted in their skills tended to have better employment outcomes than those who trusted more in motivation. While strong motivation is surely important, it does not seem to be a good substitute for the education or ability that make someone a valued worker.
- The evaluators found that clients participating in job readiness or educational programs were more likely to find employment during the course of the project than were clients participating in job training programs. There appeared to be a number of reasons for this. In some instances, it was not clear that clients participating in job training were very committed to working in the fields for which they were being trained. Consequently, they made little effort to find a job in the particular field. Participation in training in a particular field did not guarantee that the client had aptitude for the field and so some participants effectively "washed out" through the training process. In some instances, there did not appear to be a close connection

between trainers and potential employers, making it difficult for the client to be placed in a job in the field for which he or she had just been trained.

- On the basis of these observations, one would conclude that hard skills training should be used for clients who can demonstrate a commitment to a particular field and can demonstrate some aptitude for it. Ideally, training programs for the lowskilled would also secure commitments from specific employers to hire their program graduates.
- The Near South program demonstrated that placing low-skilled clients with barriers to employment in entry level employment is easier than sustaining that employment. Social services provided by Lakefront successfully mitigated the negative effects of lack of work experience for many of the Lakefront clients. But while it therefore appears a reasonable expectation that most in this group would be able to find employment with some support, it also appears unlikely that they would enter a career path, achieve upward mobility, rise very far above poverty, or retain jobs for as long as a year without additional support in the form of social services or more education. Entry-level jobs do not have wage/benefit structures conducive to supporting families, are highly vulnerable to swings in the fortunes of individual businesses, and employers have not invested in low-wage workers sufficiently to retain them in their jobs when personal problems such as health, child-care or transportation breakdowns inevitably occur.

Introduction

Lakefront SRO is one of the leaders in the Midwest, if not the nation, in providing housing services to low-income persons. In the fall of 1999 Lakefront SRO opened its Near South Service Center in order to provide services to tenants of the Hilliard and Ickes CHA developments located on the near south side of Chicago. At the time, provision of employment services appeared vital as the developments were undergoing significant changes, the Ickes homes were scheduled to be demolished and the Hilliard homes renovated into a mixed income development. Residents of both developments had, therefore, added incentives to become self-supporting. Lakefront received major funding from the City of Chicago's Mayor's Office of Employment and Training and opened a new service center on land adjacent to the developments in a pair of small modular buildings, generally referred to as the "trailers".

The site manager hired the first two job coaches in October of 1999. In November, Lakefront hired a job developer, two tenant advocates and the mental health specialist. One of the tenant advocates resided in Hilliard, the other in Ickes, enabling the tenant advocates to provide outreach to members of both communities. The last individual to join the Near South team was the recovery counselor who was hired in December, just before Near South officially opened.

Lakefront believed that it was necessary to offer comprehensive social services which would provide a holistic approach to the client's employment needs. Available services would included pre-employment training (skill building), employment opportunities, post employment services, substance abuse counseling, and mental health counseling. Many of these services were provided on-site. Additional services included transportation subsidies, a used clothing program for job interviews and employment, linkages to drop-off day-care facilities, an in-house literacy program, as well as a computer-learning lab.

Program goals included:

- 1. Recruiting a minimum of 500 residents per year from the Hilliard and Ickes community and assessing 400 Hilliard/ Ickes residents a year. Assessments would be indepth and would include using the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Learning) tests to determine client abilities in reading and math.
- 2. Place at least 250 individuals from Hilliard and Ickes in job-readiness training programs during each program year.
- 3. Place 175 individuals into jobs within a one-year period.

Lakefront SRO hired the Institute for Metropolitan Affairs at Roosevelt University to undertake the evaluation of what was expected to be a two-year employment initiative at the developments. As work on the evaluation began, Lakefront asked the Institute to compare the findings from surveys of clientele of the Near South center with a survey of residents of its SROs who had sought assistance with employment from Lakefront SRO.

Lakefront SRO's original motivation in commissioning the evaluation was to study what sorts of adaptations were necessary to implement a service model designed for an SRO population in a neighborhood site-based setting. Additionally, it wanted to learn as much as possible about the challenges that would inhere to serving residents of public housing and what the differences were between public housing residents and residents of their SROs. Because of the breadth of the study undertaken for the evaluation, we believe that the applications of the findings extend beyond these narrower questions to broader questions regarding how to best facilitate the independence of low income people. Among the key matters explored in the research include:

- What sorts of interventions are most likely to lead to shorter and longer term employment outcomes.
- How to use training and employment preparation resources most effectively.
- The types of mental health issues faced by low income persons.
- How gender affects social service delivery.
- What motivates clients to persist in working with a social services provider as opposed to dropping out of a program.

Research methods

The report is prepared from data accumulated during a two-year study of the Near South Service Center and a review of clients and program of Lakefront's SRO facilities. The report incorporates a wide range of types of data in order to provide both a comprehensive description of the operations of the Near South Service Center, and a set of observations that we believe are applicable to the provision of social services to low-income populations more generally.

Data sources include:

Direct observations of operation of social service programs at Near South Evaluation staff conducted on-site observations of operations from April, 2000 through March, 2001.

Interviews of staff Evaluation staff conducted interviews with most site staff and managers during 2000. Additional focus groups were held with staff during the summer of 2001.

Surveys of clients The survey was undertaken in December 2000 and January 2001 and interviewed 101 clients of Near South who received intake between November 1999 and August 2000. One hundred surveys of SRO residents were completed during the winter of 2001. The surveys included various questions regarding program performance, as well as a set of mental health inventories. In addition to data collected from clients of Near

South, the research design also included 100 surveys of residents of Lakefront SRO's residential buildings who had participated in Lakefront employment programs. This set of surveys enables the researchers to compare the outcomes from the Near South program, where Lakefront did not have control of housing, with the SRO environment, in which it did.

Data from client service files Client data from paper files was entered into electronic files throughout most of the life of the project. Upon conclusion of the project, an additional audit was conducted of the electronic and paper files and the electronic data base was edited for additional accuracy.

Chapter 1. Background

"Her past work history is short, but she informed me that she has a complete resume at home. At this point, Ms. Smith stopped the assessment stating that she was going to go get her resume and would return. By the end of the day Ms. Smith had not returned."

"During the assessment Mr. Jones was not alert and he was not able to remember the name of the high school he attended. He stated he works from 4 PM to 12 AM. I am not sure if that played a factor in his ability to be alert."

"Client came into the office because he received a message from me over the phone about a follow-up and he was glad to see that we were interested in how everything was going for him at work and with finances and responded that he really likes what we do here in the program."

"Goal: To take care of my baby and make his or her life to better for me. I would like to work and not to sit on my bed all day every day."

Case Notes from Near South Service Center

Characteristics of Near South Clients

Most Near South clients were of prime working age. Only 23.9 percent were over 40 and only 8 percent were under 21.

Table 1.1 Age of Near South clients

Age range	Percent n=527
Less than 21	8.0%
21 to 25	22.7%
26 to 30	19.8%
31 to 40	25.6%
41 and over	23.9%

Source: Near South database

Near South clients were very poorly educated. In addition to low TABE scores, only 56 percent reported having graduated from high school or earning a GED. While Near South staff questioned the validity of the TABE scores and indicated through interviews that they felt that clients under-performed their capability on them, most if not all Near South clients attended high school prior to the ending of social promotion in the Chicago Public Schools and many graduates likely did so without learning many basic skills.

Table 1.2 Education of Near South clients (n=536)

	Percent
Less than 9	3.5%
9 to 12	40.5%
High School/GED	41.4%
Some college	12.5%
College graduate	2.1%

Source: Near South database

Table 1.3 Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) scores for Near South clients

TABE Score	Reading	Math
0-1.9	2.3%	0.5%
2-2.9	2.9%	5.8%
3-3.9	4.2%	10.7%
4-4.9	9.1%	11.8%
5-5.9	15.9%	17.0%
6-6.9	10.1%	16.0%
7-7.9	8.4%	12.3%
8-8.9	11.5%	9.4%
9-9.9	14.9%	8.4%
10-10.9	4.9%	1.0%
11-13	13.8%	6.8%
16	0.3%	0.3%

Source: Near South database

- Near South clients were evenly divided between males and females.
- Near South staff assessed 56.2 percent of clients as being job-ready at the time of the intake.

Staff at Near South recorded a wide variety of client characteristics during their intake process. Of the characteristics recorded, the most notable were the 20 percent of clients who were on TANF, and therefore, under considerable pressure to obtain steady employment, and the 19 percent of clients who reported having had a prior conviction. For the most part, Near South clients were not receiving public benefits of any sort. Relatively few clients complained of various forms of violence, and clients were notably reluctant to label their neighborhoods as violent, although for most they surely were. Notes from interviews with Near South staff indicate hesitancy to send even the outreach

staff hired from the developments back into the developments to do follow-up for fear for safety.

Table 1.4 Selected characteristics of Near South clients (n=536)

Characteristic	Percent of clients
Veteran	5.2%
Social Security	2.4%
SSI	5.0%
TANF	20.2%
GA/Earnfare	4.0%
Unemployment	4.0%
Family dispute	1.9%
Domestic violence	2.1%
Neighborhood violence	1.7%
Medical disability	2.1%
Prior conviction	19.3%

Source: Near South database

Program Implementation

The following section of the report provides analysis of how the Near South program developed over its roughly two years of operation. The analysis is conducted from paper files developed for each client that received significant services from Near South. In actuality, the project saw approximately 500 additional clients, for whom little or no service was rendered. Most of these clients, for whom full case files were not developed, made a brief visit to the project, may have had an intake form completed, but then never returned for any additional service. Most of these clients appeared during the first few quarters of the project.

The Near South project experienced three distinct phases. The first was the start-up period, consisting of the 4th Quarter of 1999 and extending through the 2nd Quarter of 2000. This period was characterized by a high level of client intakes taking place at the same time that staff were acclimating themselves to the site, to their work assignments, and to one another. As the table below indicates, during this period the program opened 193 new case files. The second phase took place during the 3rd and 4th Quarters of 2000. This period was characterized by a high level of client activity, but also significant adjustments in how Near South staff conducted work, as staff re-committed to working more intensively with fewer clients. During those six months, the project added an additional 280 new clients. The final phase began when rumor, and then fact, began to circulate that the project would be closed ahead of schedule. Staff did less work during

this period, some began to be transferred to other job assignments, and staff began referring clients to alternative sources of service. By contrast to the preceding periods, only 76 new clients were enrolled in the project during that period.

Table 1.5 Near South cases openings by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr 2001	1 st Qtr 2001	4 th Qtr 2000	3 rd Qtr 2000	2 nd Qtr 2000	1 st Qtr 2000	4 th Qtr 1999	Total
Clients	23	53	170	110	83	92	18	549

Source: Near South database

The Near South Service Center was created principally to serve the residents of the Hilliard and Ickes CHA Developments. As the table below indicates, the project was generally successful in serving these residents. Over the course of the project, over two-thirds of project clients were CHA residents. Project staff responded to the appearance of an unexpectedly large number of clients by enrolling most – whether or not they claimed CHA residency. As the project re-committed itself to its first purposes during the 3rd and 4th Quarters of 2000, the data indicates that the project did tend to serve a higher proportion of the CHA residents for which it was originally intended.

Table 1.6 Near South clients living in CHA by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Clients CHA	18	37	153	65	48	58	16	395
% of Clients CHA	78.3%	70.0%	90.0%	59.1%	57.8%	63.0%	88.9%	71.9%

Source: Near South database

With the tremendous amount of programmatic attention that has been paid to welfare reform – which serves primarily women – there have been increasing complaints from many quarters that low-income men are becoming an under-served population. The Near South project appears to have made an important contribution in terms of providing needed social services to males. As the table below indicates, from the start the Near South center was nearly as likely to serve males as females. Ultimately about 55 percent of Near South clients were female.

Table 1.7 Near South clients by gender by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Clients Male	14	24	77	39	42	44	6	246
Clients Female	9	28	93	71	41	48	12	302

Source: Near South database

The vast majority of clients served by Near South were not utilizing TANF when they did their program intake. It would be expected that few of the 246 male clients would utilize TANF. Of the remaining 302 women, only about one-third utilized TANF. This percentage is indicative of the declining TANF caseloads in Chicago and the reluctance of women to return to TANF, even when they have eligibility remaining.

Table 1.8 Near South clients with TANF by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Clients TANF	4	10	43	21	21	14	3	116
% of Clients TANF	17.4%	18.9%	25.3%	19.1%	25.2%	15.2%	16.7%	21.1%

Source: Near South database

Once a client received intake, how likely were they to receive additional social services from Near South? Did the pattern of provision of social services change over the course of the project?

Table 1.9 Pace of Near South service provision by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Clients With Intake, No	0	55	32	20	15	24	12	158
Service								
Percent of Intakes Without	0%	68.8%	45.7%	24.4%	13.3%	19.8%	16.7%	29.4%
Service								

Source: Near South database

Part of the theory behind the staffing and operation of the Near South Center was that the staff would be able to identify specific barriers to work and be able to address them through service referrals, or in some cases by providing direct services themselves. The table below demonstrates the quantity of different types of service needs that were identified by Near South staff.

The most commonly identified service need was for assistance with transportation, noted 293 times. Substance abuse treatment was second, with 168 observations, followed by assistance with housing, at 150. Staff appeared more likely to diagnose substance abuse needs earlier in the program, and housing and transportation needs somewhat later. Comparison of this data with results of mental health inventories given to clients suggests that Near South staff tended to under-diagnose problems with mental health. While the data from client case files indicated that only about 7 percent of clients may have had mental health problems, the mental health inventories suggest that total may have been as high as 25 percent or more.

Table 1.10 Number of Near South clients with identified service need to work

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Childcare	8	24	17	19	14	19	3	104
Transportation	14	57	67	73	61	20	1	293
Health	0	2	4	2	4	7	3	22
Mental Health	1	2	3	7	4	14	8	39
Family Counseling	0	4	4	8	5	6	1	28
Substance Abuse	1	21	25	15	31	47	28	168
Housing	2	44	25	27	27	16	9	150
Total	26	154	145	151	146	129	53	804

Source: Near South database

The following table indicates the total volume of services actually provided. By far the most commonly provided service was assistance with transportation, primarily in the form of public transportation passes. The second most common form of service provision was some type of client-counselor meeting. These meetings could take any number of forms and included explanations of jobs and attempts at counseling. Staff spent considerable effort on enrolling clients in job training – providing 175 such enrollments, and did fairly well at addressing substance abuse needs – at least at a minimal level – helping about two-thirds of clients who presented symptoms of that nature.

Table 1.11 Number of services provided to Near South clients

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Job Training	2	17	28	37	43	45	3	175
Transportation	192	322	400	576	415	196	0	2,146
Health Service	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Mental Health	0	0	6	2	2	2	4	16
Family Counseling	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Substance Abuse	0	7	47	11	9	29	10	113
Housing	2	8	11	20	7	4	0	52
Job Support/Itv	2	5	12	16	4	2	1	42
Counselor-Client Meeting	66	230	349	410	401	312	56	1,835
Total	264	592	854	1,076	885	593	74	4,338

Source: Near South database

Job Placement

The Near South project did an outstanding job placing clients into jobs. Project records indicate that 405 job placements were completed (some clients were placed more than once). Approximately half of all clients for whom full files were opened were placed in a

job. Of these, about one in four was a person on TANF. About half of job placements were persons living in CHA, indicating that most of the clients who came to Near South who lived in CHA housing, received at least one job placement.

Near South placed its highest programmatic priority on swift job placement for clients entering the program and that priority is indicated in the service statistics which show a steady stream of job placements from the outset. The program reached its peak in job placements in the 3rd quarter of 2000 and then declined significantly thereafter – most likely a product of decreased staffing, but also perhaps a result of staff having placed fairly immediately clients for whom placement was not difficult and being left with an increasingly difficult caseload which it had much less capacity to serve. Relative to some employment programs, the Near South program tended to place the onus for job placement on the client. In some cases, program staff had clearly negotiated opportunities with companies to hire large number of Near South clients directly, or worked with a training program that maintained a direct link to jobs.

In several instances, staff placed hope that large numbers of clients would come from placements in fiber optics, through training programs at Wright College, or through construction on the Hilliard Homes rehab and CHA construction. In each of these three instances, a number of planning meetings were held involving representatives of the various industries and institutions, yet very few placements resulted from these initiatives. While the return from these types of relationships often looks promising, in fact institutional relationships are difficult to coordinate on an ongoing basis. Beyond the difficulties of aligning institutional goals, these relationships require time to pay off, as well as strong case management relationships with clients. Clients must be either personally interested in the opportunities being offered, or staff must be rigorous with follow-up and support, or in some cases willing to apply available sanctions.

Job Entries

The peak number of job placements took place during the last three quarters of 2000 before tailing off. During the first three quarters of operation, the program placed as many non-CHA as CHA clients. Beginning in the 3rd Quarter of 2000, the program renewed its commitment to working with CHA clients and the percentage of clients placed who lived in CHA buildings increased considerably thereafter.

Table 1.12 Near South job placements by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
Entered Employment	13	50	76	137	82	44	2	405
Number on TANF	2	10	19	27	13	8	2	60
Number in CHA	10	37	59	84	39	27	2	194

Source: Near South database

Near South appears to have done well in serving clients of various educational abilities equally and avoided the "creaming" syndrome that can affect programs under pressure to place numbers of clients. The balanced data in the table below indicates that clients with low levels of education were no more likely to be placed in part-time jobs, or to have activity on their cases delayed while better prepared clients received more attention.

Table 1.13 Near South jobs placed by full time/part time, TABE, and quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
FT/High TABE Reading	3	15	12	31	12	7	0	80
FT/High TBE Math	4	7	6	25	11	5	0	58
FT/Low TABE Reading	4	9	24	33	11	4	0	85
FT/Low TABE Math	3	17	30	39	12	6	0	107
PT/High TABE Reading	0	1	5	6	3	3	0	18
PT/High TABE Math	0	0	5	6	4	3	0	18
PT/Low TABE Reading	1	0	2	1	10	3	1	18
PT/Low TABE Math	1	1	2	1	9	3	1	18

Source: Near South database

The table below indicates that staff engaged in continual efforts to place clients in jobs and that late in the program, clients who had been enrolled in the early quarters were still being placed in jobs. For instance in the 4th Quarter or 2000, 17 clients were placed whose intake had occurred a year before. In the following quarter, 12 more such clients were placed.

Table 1.14 Days to first employment from intake by quarter

Quarter	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	3 rd Qtr	2 nd Qtr	1 st Qtr	4 th Qtr	Total
	2001	2001	2000	2000	2000	2000	1999	
FT 1-30	2	11	13	17	14	7	0	64
FT 31-90	0	3	7	23	13	8	0	54
FT 91-180	1	2	7	21	9	1	0	41
FT 181+	4	12	17	32	3	0	0	68
PT 1-30	0	0	1	1	6	2	2	12
PT 31-90	0	1	1	3	4	8	0	17
PT 91-180	0	0	5	1	4	2	0	12
PT 181 +	1	1	4	3	0	0	0	9

Source: Near South database

Job Types

As the table below indicates, the vast majority of Near South placements were in entry level jobs. The most common were laborer positions and factory worker positions. Most required minimal skills, training, or orientation. Several clients were placed in professional positions with 5 in management or management training.

 Table 1.15 Occupations of Near South job placements

Factory worker Clerk Janitor/maintenance Security Food preparation Cashier Mover	51
Laborer Factory worker Clerk Janitor/maintenance Security Food preparation Cashier Mover	51
Clerk 2 Janitor/maintenance 2 Security 2 Food preparation 1 Cashier Mover	
Janitor/maintenance 2 Security 2 Food preparation 1 Cashier Mover	3
Security 2 Food preparation 1 Cashier Mover	24
Food preparation 1 Cashier Mover	24
Cashier Mover	22
Mover	2
	9
TT 1.1 11/ 11 1 1	9
Health aid/medical assistant	9
Homemaker	8
Packer	6
Manager	5
Driver	5
Housekeeper	5
Customer service rep.	4
Construction	6 5 5 4 5 4 3 3 2 2 2 1
Crew member	4
Administrative assistant	3
Security	3
Package handler	3
Bellman	2
Telemarketer	2
Data entry	2
Cable tech	2
Burner	
Desk clerk	1
Greeter	1
Hostess	1
Waitress	1
Hotel	1
Tax preparer	1
Telephone operator	1
Social service staff	1
Installer	1

Source: Near South database

Wages of jobs clients were placed in tended to be fairly low and entry level. To some extent this is a product of the low skill levels, client barriers and uneven work histories of clients that lead to placement in entry-level jobs. It is also the product of a case management system that placed a premium on responding to immediate client needs as opposed to undertaking lengthier preparation and placement strategies that would have aimed more at fulfillment of their career goals, or waiting for jobs that might have paid more, albeit at the institutional cost of accomplishing fewer placements.

There was a tendency for jobs that were lost to have lower wages than the jobs clients retained longer:

Average Wage, All Jobs \$7.93 Average Wage, Jobs Lost \$7.40

Although record keeping was inadequate to analyze in detail the characteristics of job loss, case records indicate that the most common reason for job loss was firing (47 percent), followed closely by the client quitting (33 percent). Eighteen percent claimed they were laid off.

Characteristics of Employment

The principal purpose of the Near South center was to assist clients with attaining employment. About half of Near South clients interviewed indicated that they found their current job through a Near South staff referral, suggesting that many Near South clients continued to rely on other potential sources for job leads, which could include family or friends, or other social service providers.

The survey data indicate that the vast majority of Near South clients had a work history. Only 2 percent claimed never to have worked. Clients appeared typical of low income workers who typically "churn" between unemployment and low-skill, low-wage jobs. Seventy-eight percent had worked in a different job within one year of the interview.

Table 1.16 Prior to your current job, when was your most recent job? (n=100)

Time to most recent job	Percent
In the last six months	65.3%
Six months to one year ago	13.3%
More than one year ago	19.4%
Never worked	2.0%

Source: Near South survey data

Most clients who had worked before coming to Near South reported having had multiple jobs. While recollection of past jobs can be faulty, almost sixty percent of clients recalled at least three prior jobs.

Table 1.17 Number of prior jobs listed at intake (n=549)

Number of prior jobs	Percent
0	12.7%
1	8.9%
2	20.7%
3	36.5%
4	9.2%
5 or more	12.1%

Source: Near South data base

Of the Near South clients, less than half, 42 percent, were working at the time they were interviewed, approximately one year after their intake at the Service Center. Most of the clients interviewed had already been placed in jobs and many had already lost them. While Near South was clearly effective at placing clients in jobs, their assistance to clients fit into the churning pattern that already typified the work histories of most of their clients. We did not find evidence that the employment intervention altered the lifecourse of these individuals.

1.18 Work status at time of interview (n=100)

Work status	Percent
Working full time	28.0%
Working part time	14.0%
Going to school or in training	8.0%
Keeping house	20.0%
Something else	30.0%

Source: Near South survey

Despite their work histories, Near South clients who were employed at the time of interview tended to be optimistic regarding their future work prospects. Almost three-quarters of those interviewed indicated that they expected to be working in their current jobs one year later – something that for many of them would represent a significant achievement.

Table 1.19 Time expecting to stay on current job

Period	Percent
A few weeks	3.4%
A few months	23.0%
A year or more	73.6%

Source: Near South survey

Comparison of Near South and SRO Clients

Much of the analysis that follows compares experiences and outcomes of clients of the Near South Service Center with those of the residents of SROs run by Lakefront SRO. The Near South and SRO clients differed significantly with regard to education, age, gender, and likelihood of being employed at intake.

Gender

The two populations were significantly different with respect to gender with 59 percent of Near South clients being female compared to only 31 percent of the SRO clients interviewed.

Table 1.20 Gender of Near South and SRO clients

	Near South	SRO
Gender	n=101	n=100
Male	41%	69%
Female	59%	31%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Education

The two populations were comparably educated. Both groups suffer from extremely low levels of education with more than one-third overall failing to have graduated from high school. SRO clients were somewhat more likely to have attended at least some college and Near South clients were somewhat more likely to report having failed to graduate from high school.

Table 1.21 Education levels of Near South and SRO clients

	Near South	SRO
Education level	n=101	n=100
11 th Grade or less	39%	29%
High school or GED	36%	32%
Trade or vocational school	0%	4%
Some college	21%	30%
College degree or more	3%	5%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Age

The Near South clients were much younger than the SRO clients. About one-third of Near South clients were under 25 compared to only 4 percent of the SRO clients. Depending on the nature of the job sought and the fitness of the individual, age can work either for or against one's likelihood of employment.

Table 1.22 Age of Near South and SRO Clients

	Near South	SRO
Age	n=101	n=100
Under 25	31%	4%
25 to 40	46%	32%
Over 40	23%	64%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Employment status

Near South clients came to Near South expressly to find jobs and only 18 percent were working at intake. SRO clients were more likely to have been employed one year prior to interview (42 percent). However at the time of interview, the two populations were equally likely to have been employed. Neither group appears, therefore, to have been inherently more employable than the other.

Table 1.23 Percent of clients employed and unemployed at program intake and survey interview

	Clients at intake	Clients one year later
Near South n=98		
Employed	18%	42%
Unemployed	82%	58%
SRO n=99		
Employed	42%	44%
Unemployed	58%	56%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Chapter 2. Mental Health, Drug Abuse and Motivation

Mental Health

The study found that issues related to mental health, and depression and self-efficacy in particular, impact on effectiveness of neighborhood-based services.

The mental health battery administered to a sample of both Near South and SRO clients consisted of elements of four scales that were administered to three sub-sets of clients. First, the battery of scales was introduced into the Near South intake process under the term "Skills Assessment" and administered at intake to 102 clients. The battery was also administered to the 100 Near South and 100 SRO clients who were surveyed approximately one year following their initial program participation. Abbreviated versions of the depression and self-efficacy scales were used, and the hassles scale was reduced somewhat from its validated form.

The battery consisted of four types of scales:

Self Efficacy – The project utilized the six-item Hope Scale, which has been utilized in assessment of other welfare-related programs, including the Illinois Families Study, the 6-year longitudinal study of welfare reform in Illinois.

Depression – The project utilized a 12-item Center for Epidemiological Studies – Depression (CES-D) inventory. This is a commonly used scale that suggests symptoms of depression.

Hassles – The project adopted a multi-item hassles inventory modifying the Survey of Recent Life Experiences.

Problem Solving Skills – Unlike the three scales described above, the problem solving inventory is not indicative of any particular condition; rather it is a lengthy list of abilities that an individual might have. Site staff adapted it from an inventory originally developed by Goldstein and McGinnis for child conflict resolution.

Self Efficacy

Near South and SRO clients indicated no difference in levels of self-efficacy. Total SE scores were no different between the two programs and there was no statistically significant difference between the two programs on any item in the inventory.

Table 2.1 Self efficacy score by program one year after intake

	Near South	SRO
SE Score	n=100	n=100
9 to 14	12%	10%
15 to 18	36%	33%
19 to 21	35%	37%
22 to 24	17%	20%

No significant difference.

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Table 2.2 Self efficacy items by program one year after intake (Item scores range from 1-Disagree to 4-Agree)

		Near
Self Efficacy item	SRO	South
Meeting goals set for self	3.01	2.98
Can't think of ways to meet goals	1.90	1.74
See self as pretty successful	2.90	2.87
Few ways around problems	2.01	2.20
Energetically pursuing goals	3.26	3.14
Ways to get out of jams	3.35	3.34
Confidence in abilities	3.68	3.79

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Depression

As the table below indicates, about 22 percent of Near South clients and 29 percent of SRO clients were symptomatic of depression (scores of 10 or more). These figures are comparable to those for the Illinois Families Study of welfare reform in Illinois and somewhat lower than for a similar study in Michigan. Near South clients one year after intake were significantly less likely to report symptoms of depression than were SRO clients one year after beginning employment services.

Table 2.3 Depression score by program one year after intake

	Near South	SRO
Score	n=101	n=99
Less than 10	79.2%	70.7%
10 to 20	12.9%	19.2%
Over 20	7.9%	10.1%

p. <.009 (Statistical significance analysis of variance)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Analysis of the individual items in the inventory indicates that problems with sleep, making efforts and feeling bothered were the most commonly mentioned symptoms of depression.

Table 2.4 Depression items by program one year after intake (Item scores range from 1-Disagree to 4-Agree)

Depression	SRO	Near South Interview
Bothered by things *	1.85	1.53
Poor appetite	1.51	1.34
Trouble concentrating *	1.72	1.46
Feel depressed	1.61	1.55
Everything an effort **	2.26	1.83
Couldn't shake blues	1.57	1.52
Felt fearful *	1.43	1.17
Sleep restless **	1.93	1.50
Talked less than usual ***	1.59	1.21
Felt lonely	1.66	1.44
Felt sad	1.67	1.49
Could not "get going" *	1.58	1.31

***=p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05 (Statistical significance for difference between row items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Females were overwhelmingly more likely to indicate depressive symptoms than were males among Near South clients.

Depression and mental illness are generally associated with poor employment outcomes. In the Near South and SRO experiences depression appeared to be worst shortly after a person was hired, rather than before. This would in part explain why employment entry appears to be fairly easy, but retaining jobs for more than a few months to be quite difficult. The analysis suggests that after getting employment, low-wage workers become subject to requests for money from family members or friends, have new time pressures, and women in particular may see less of their children.

Employment transitions appear to have affected the SRO clients more deeply than the Near South clients. While the goal of both programs was to place clients in employment and help them become more self-sufficient, often the process of becoming self sufficient, and of maintaining a job, creates stress. SRO clients were significantly more likely to be depressed when them moved from unemployment to employment than were the Near South clients. Seventy-nine percent of SRO clients who transitioned from unemployment to employment displayed symptoms, compared to only 42 percent of Near South clients.

Table 2.5 Presence of depressive symptoms by change in employment status from intake to survey

	Employed to	No Change	Unemployed to
	Unemployed		Employed
Near South n=98			
No Symptoms	83%	54%	58%
Some Symptoms	17%	46%	42%
SRO * n=93			
No Symptoms	63%	31%	21%
Some Symptoms	37%	69%	79%

^{* =} p. < .05 (Statistical significance of difference between row items)

Near South and SRO also differed in how client characteristics corresponded to presence of depressive symptoms.

- Near South male clients were significantly less likely to experience depression than Near South females or SRO clients.
- SRO clients gaining employment were more likely than unemployed SRO clients or the average Near South client to experience depression.

Table 2.6 Percent of clients with depressive symptoms by client characteristic

Client characteristics	Percent with depression score over 10
Near South males n=43 ***	4.7%
Near South females n=58	32.8%
SRO males n=69	29.0%
SRO females n=30	30.0%
Job through Near South	21.8%
No job through Near South	19.4%
Job through SRO ***	16.7%
No job through SRO	38.6%
Job at interview Near South	19.0%
No job at interview Near South	21.1%
Job at interview SRO	22.7%
No job at interview SRO	35.2%

^{***=}p. < .000 (Statistical significance for difference between pairs)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Problem Solving Skills

Near South clients indicated significantly better problem-solving skills than did the SRO clients. This is not surprising given that Near South clients who did not receive a placement through the program were more likely to find employment on their own and that they live more independently. Specifically, Near South clients indicated better ability to:

- Ask for help
- Carry out instructions
- Understand people's feelings
- Get permission when it may be needed
- Figure out reasons for things
- Deal with situations where two or more superiors might give the individual contradictory instructions.

In general, clients of both projects indicated the most problems dealing with situations in which they might have received contradictory directions, finding ways to satisfy both parties in a dispute, and asking for help at appropriate times.

Table 2.7 Problem solving items by program one year after intake (Item scores range from 1-Disagree to 4-Agree)

Problem Solving Skills	SRO	Near South
Ask for help ***	2.70	3.16
Carry out instructions **	3.35	3.66
Understand people's feelings *	3.11	3.36
Get permission ***	3.42	3.77
Make both satisfied	3.02	3.15
Control temper	3.07	3.24
Figure out reasons	3.25	3.44
Deal with contradiction *	2.70	2.96
Handle difficult conversation	3.11	3.15
Learn what need to know	3.35	3.45

^{***=}p<.001, **=p<.01, *=p<.05 (Statistical significance for difference between row items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Hassles

The Hassles inventory asked clients to identify a wide range of possible problems they could be experiencing that might stem from the home or the workplace.

SRO clients were more likely to report daily hassles than were Near South clients. Hassle items where differences were significant and SRO clients were worse than Near South clients included the following:

Work
Dislike work
Conflict with supervisor
Dissatisfaction with work
Work uninteresting

Conflict
Ethnic/racial conflict
Actions misunderstood
Taken advantage of

Interpersonal relations
Disappointed with friends
Separation from people
Conflict with friends
Being ignored

Miscellaneous
No time for obligations
Dissatisfaction with writing
Can't understand technology

In one area, poor housing, the Near South clients reported a greater level of hassle than did the SRO clients.

Clients in general experienced the most problems with issues related to income or money. SRO clients in particular were concerned over being taken for granted, separation from other people, or having insufficient time to meet obligations.

Table 2.8 Hassle items by program one year after intake

(Item scores range from 1-Disagree to 4-Agree)

Hassles	SRO	Near South
Dislike daily activities	1.73	1.61
Lack of privacy	1.69	1.69
Dislike work *	1.52	1.28
Ethnic/racial conflict **	1.45	1.16
Conflict with partner	1.63	1.47
Disappointed with friends	1.82	1.61
Conflict with supervisor *	1.43	1.23
Too much to do ***	1.80	1.45
Taken for granted	2.07	1.85
Financial conflict with family	1.58	1.68
Separation from people ***	2.26	1.73
Taken advantage of **	2.11	1.67
Actions misunderstood *	2.35	2.01
Cash-flow difficulties	2.80	2.70
Lot of responsibilities	2.29	2.42
Dissatisfaction with work ***	1.68	1.22
No time for obligations *	2.02	1.70
Financial burdens	2.48	2.53
High level of noise	1.65	1.52
Adjustment to unrelated person	1.36	1.37
Conflict with family	1.53	1.46
Work too demanding **	1.40	1.14
Conflict with friends ***	1.85	1.33
Hard to get ahead	2.19	2.07
Cheated in purchases	1.61	1.44
Dissatisfied with writing **	1.70	1.33
Being ignored **	1.69	1.38
Poor housing conditions ***	1.77	2.37
Work uninteresting *	1.55	1.32
Fail to get money expected	2.12	2.05
Can't understand technology *	1.97	1.66
Transportation problems	1.73	1.81
Hard to maintain home	1.45	1.37

***=p<.001, **=p<.05 (Statistical significance for difference between row items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

The analysis of self efficacy among Near South clients revealed a bi-variate correlation between self-efficacy and work such that workers tended to have higher self-efficacy.

 Table 2.9 Working at Time of Interview by Self-Efficacy Score

Working 19.3 Not Working 17.9

p<.007 (Significance of difference between items)

Source: Near South database

While the findings are not statistically significant, there appeared to be a relationship between the client's self-ascribed source of strength and the likelihood of experiencing depression. Clients who said that they relied on skills and ability were less likely to experience depression. Clients who said that their greatest strength was either high motivation or a strong support system were more likely to report depression.

Table 2.10 Mental health constructs by client-reported source of strength

Source of client strength	Self-Efficacy	Depression
Skills/Ability n=64	18.3	5.5
No n=136	18.6	7.5
High Motivation n=66	18.7	7.3
No n=134	18.0	5.8
Strong Support System n=37	18.0	8.2
No n=163	18.6	6.5

Source: Near South database

One of the most important contributions service providers might make to clients is training in effective ways of solving problems. Clients of Near South and SRO indicated problems dealing with contradictory situations, finding ways to satisfy both parties in disputes, and knowing how best to ask for help.

Focusing on skills rather than motivation

As important as building self-esteem may be to clients, the evidence from the Near South experience indicates that self-reliance on skills is a better predictor of future employment than is reliance on motivation or "support."

Clients of Near South were asked for explanations of what they considered their greatest strengths that would contribute to accomplishing their goals. These answers summarized into three broad categories: Clients who trusted in their education and skills, clients who said they would succeed because they were highly motivated, and clients who felt their support systems would help them.

Clients were also asked what strengths they had that would help them to succeed. Again, there were important differences between responses of the Near South and SRO clients. SRO clients much more likely to cite a social support system – be it family or institutional - as instrumental in how they were going to succeed.

Table 2.11 Client attributions for success by program

Attribution	Near South n=100	SRO n=100
Skills/Ability	30%	34%
Motivation	71%	64%
Support system	10%	27%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

In general, older clients will focus more on skills, and younger more on "motivation."

Attribution of Success or Failure

The survey inquired of clients, if they felt they had failed to reach their employment goals, why? The two programs differed in reasons given by clients for failure. Near South clients were more likely to blame lack of service as their reason for failure while SRO clients were more likely to ascribe failure to poor health or a criminal record.

Table 2.12 Client ascribed reasons for failure by program

Reason for failure	Near South n=31	SRO n=18
Lack of Service	58.1%	33.3%
Need money or car	6.5%	0%
Client's own effort	0%	11.1%
No reason	16.1%	0%
Health/criminal record	0%	27.8%
Got job on own	19.4%	27.8%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

The Near South and SRO clients were statistically different in the obstacles to success that they offered. Because they often had responsibility for child care, the Near South clients were much more likely to cite child care problems as an obstacle to success. The Near South clients were, on average, less educated and indeed were somewhat more

likely to offer lack of education as an obstacle. SRO clients were more likely to report problems with health or disabilities.

Table 2.13 Reasons for failure by program

Reason for failure	Near South n=99	SRO n=100
Nothing	41.4%	48.0%
Myself/laziness/other people	10.1%	13.0%
Childcare/logistics	15.2%	0%
Education/knowledge	12.1%	5.0%
Stress	2.0%	2.0%
Health/disability	3.0%	16.0%
No money or job	16.2%	16.0%

p<.0001 (Chi Square test)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Because of the presence of children, there was a nearly significant difference between males and females among Near South clients with respect to reasons for failure with females much more likely to report problems with child care or other logistical concerns. Males, by contrast, were more likely to admit that they were lazy or that their problems were caused by other people that they had chosen to associate with.

Table 2.14 Reasons for failure by gender and program

Reason for failure	Near South	Near South	SRO Male	SRO Female
	Male	Female	n=69	n=31
	n=41*	n=58*		
Nothing	46.3	37.9	47.8	48.4
Myself/laziness/other people	17.1	5.2	11.6	16.1
Childcare/logistics	4.9	22.4	0	0
Education/knowledge	14.6	10.3	5.8	3.2
Stress	0	3.4	2.9	0
Health/disability	4.9	1.7	20.3	6.5
No money/no job	12.2	19.0	11.6	25.8

^{* =} p.<.07 Statistical significance of NS Male compared to NS Female (Chi Square)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

The Near South experience also indicated that transportation and child care were significant barriers to employment. Breakdowns in either could result in job loss and finding initial solutions was essential to attaining a job.

Drug Abuse

Judging from the client satisfaction survey data, provision of drug abuse services seem to raise many of the same issues that mental health does. Clients at Near South proved far less open to receiving assistance, were much less likely to say that they sought such assistance, and SRO clients appeared pleased with the services they received. As a result, as the data below indicates, Near South was able to provide relatively little drug abuse assistance to clients relative to the level of need observed by its casework staff.

Interviews revealed that staff considered substance abuse a difficult problem to deal with. Many clients attempted to hide drug or alcohol usage, although others were amazingly honest about their practices. In some cases, if staff alleged substance use, the client simply did not return to the program. Overall, program records indicate that staff identified 167 clients as having either a current or recurring drug problem of some kind, or about 30 percent of the overall clientele.

Of the 167 clients, 69 of them were in treatment at intake or had already had prior treatment.

Table 2.15 Drug status and referral

Identified as having current or recurring drug problem	167
Had prior treatment or were in treatment at intake	69
Received additional Near South referral	11
Had no prior treatment	98
Received Near South referral	11

Source: Near South database

Addressing substance abuse and significant mental health problems requires a large amount of trust of the service provider on the part of the client. Again, short of legal or institutional leverage over the potential client, the site-based service provider faces significant challenges to establish the relationship needed to deliver these services effectively.

• A felony or drug problem need not be a barrier to job placement. Many employers test and screen, but others do not. Clients engaged in substance abuse may succeed in being clean for employer drug tests.

Near South served a mixture of clients, many of whom had felony convictions and/or used drugs. Job placements among these clients were surprisingly high. While some employers clearly exclude applicants with felony backgrounds, many evidently do not.

In the case of drug usage, many employers with whom Near South attained placements did not require drug tests. Depending upon the type of drug in question, it is also possible to appear "clean" given enough time to prepare for a job interview/drug test.

Table 2.16 Prior drug treatment participation by employment for clients identified as having drug problems

	In Drug Treatment at Intake or Had	Not In Drug
	Drug Treatment	Treatment
	(n=69)	(n=98)
Did Not Get Job	62.3%	58.2%
Placed in Job	37.7%	41.8%

Source: Near South data base

Table 2.17 Employment outcomes of clients with drug problems by whether they got referral from Near South

	No Near South Referral	Near South Referral
	(n=145)	(n=22)
Did Not Get Job	61.4%	50.0%
Placed in Job	38.6%	50.0%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Percent of Near South clients without drug concerns getting jobs	50.1%
Percent of Near South clients with drug concerns getting jobs	40.1%

Chapter 3 Delivering Social Services

Service Planning

One of the major lessons of the Near South experience is the difficulty of doing service planning, but its importance for achieving successful outcomes. To read case files of Near South clients, or to interview them, is to be astonished by the quantity of unforeseen problems that block their ability to live stable, independent lives or achieve upward occupational mobility. In some instances, clients prove extremely difficult to deal with and provide profound challenges to the social services providers. The records are rife with examples of clients who abruptly left interviews in mid discussion, who showed up drunk or on drugs, who wanted a particular job but refused to undertake the preparations necessary to get it or hold it.

Like many job training programs serving clients with few skills and little education, relatively few of the clients referred by Near South to vocational training programs appeared to get jobs in the fields in which they were trained. Some of this was likely a result of lack of institutional connections between trainers and potential employers, but some of it was a result of referrals of clients to training who were either not yet prepared adequately for the training, or whom case files evidenced minimal commitment to the occupation for which they were being trained. In these instances, successful client outcomes likely required more extensive, in-depth case worker planning with the client – exploring more deeply their vocational goals and what they could commit to. However both stronger systems and more careful referrals require low client-staff ratios.

As the table below indicates, case managers identified a number of different barriers to work among the Near South clients. Staff would identify barriers during the intake process where they followed a prescribed inventory, and also during the course of working with the client.

The first five categories tended to be identified by staff during meetings with clients or intake prior to sending a client to a job interview. Interviews with project staff indicated that problems arranging child care or paying for transportation, and to some extent substance abuse, tended to be identified once a client had an interview arranged or had been offered a job.

Table 3.1 Percentage of Near South clients with problems identified by case managers

Needs help with to work:	Percent
Transportation	48.3%
Substance abuse	29.0%
Housing	17.0%
Child care	10.1%
Mental health	6.1%
Family counseling	4.0%
Health problems	3.8%

Source: Near South data base

Of the array of service needs that could be addressed by Near South staff, staff were most prolific in addressing the needs for transportation, providing assistance for clients to get to jobs or interviews. Staff also undertook individual meetings with most clients which were aimed at discussing an upcoming job opportunity, encouraging the client, or some form of individualized problem solving. Some of these meetings were initiated by clients who requested help, or simply walked-in, and others by staff who wanted to address a particular problem with the client.

Both the staff interviews and case notes reveal the inconsistency of participation on the part of many, if not most, clients, making coordination of complex service provision difficult. This is evidenced by the low numbers of clients receiving help with problems such as child care, health, or mental health problems. As will be observed in the data below, clients consistently noted that goals were set between them and staff, but that they were not aware or specific "service plans" that were created for or with them. As a result, there was a strong tendency for services to be provided on an *ad hoc* basis, responding to immediate needs of clients, but not necessarily placing them on a path that would lead to achievement of specific long-term goals.

The Near South experience indicated that while planning with the client is extremely important, it is hard to do in just one or two sessions with a client. A wide gulf existed between staff and client perceptions of planning. Surveyed clients reported that they had set goals with Near South staff, but not that they had created service plans. Staff, when interviewed, reported that clients had virtually no patience for completing detailed service plans. Clients with low levels of education, and whose parents did not have careers, often have little conception of how to plan a series of steps leading to a higher level of employment outcome, or a career. Often clients simply refused to cooperate or were so inconsistent in their commitment to program participation as to render planning fruitless.

 Table 3.2 Percentage of Near South clients receiving selected services

Service	Percent receiving service
Counselor/client meeting	70.6%
Transportation	42.8%
Substance abuse letter referral	12.8%
Housing	5.2%
Substance abuse direct referral	2.8%
Mental health	2.1%
Health	0.3%

Source: Near South database

As a result, the match between expressed need and service delivered was uneven:

- 41 percent of the time a specific client need was followed by a referral to a specific service addressing that need.
- 60 percent of the time some client need was followed by a referral to some kind of social service.

Multiple regression analysis (see below) indicated that client meetings were extremely important for finding a job, such that clients who met frequently with Near South staff were about twice as likely to find a job as those who did not.

Maintaining quality staff-client ratios

Providing services likely to be life-changing requires low staff-client ratios and necessitates a highly disciplined approach to client intake.

The depth of service that a neighborhood-based center can provide is closely tied to the ratio of clients to staff. A decision to accept all clients may practically be a decision to offer services that are less in-depth and, therefore, less likely to be life-changing. The SRO environment, through the limitation on the number of clients due to their living in SRO rooms, provided a more fixed client-staff ratio than did the Near South center.

That Near South altered its service scope to move away from providing more comprehensive services to clients was very much a result of the large number of clients who arrived. Both client surveys and behavior indicated that the vast majority of these clients wanted only assistance with employment and, however much they may have needed additional training, planning or social service assistance, they generally did not want these services. Staff responded immediately to the client demand, and to the quantitative goals for job placement embedded in Lakefront SRO's contract with its funder, the Chicago Mayor's Office of Employment and Training, by referring clients to

work as rapidly as possible and largely forgoing more time consuming assessment and service planning.

One of the defining characteristics of the experience of Near South was the overwhelming number of clients who showed up for service within the first few months of the program. While the program was ostensibly designed for CHA residents of the nearby Hilliard and Ickes homes, almost as many non-CHA clients enrolled as CHA clients. As the table below indicates, staff attempted to refocus service provision on the CHA clients as the program progressed, but never reached the point of excluding non-CHA clients.

Evidence from Near South indicates that there is a high level of demand for quality employment services. The TANF regulations, which have been in effect since 1996, provide new incentives for welfare recipients to work or to be enrolled in approved training or educational programs. While few welfare recipients have approached their lifetime 5-year cutoff in Illinois, as the years progress increasing numbers will, bringing increasing pressure for work. Recently, far more attention has been given to the needs of low wage/low skill women than has been given to men. As a result, programs that provide employment services for men can expect to receive large numbers of clients. Additionally, changes in CHA policy imply work requirements and can be expected to place additional pressure on CHA residents who want to maintain eligibility, to work. The Near South center benefited from all of these pressures, enrolling CHA residents, unemployed, under-employed, and TANF recipients. They identified the Center through observing its advertisement, word of mouth, and referrals.

The Near South experience also indicated that in the neighborhood setting an agency can expect itself to be strongly pressured to serve family and friends of clients. Again, the breadth of clientele is far greater in the neighborhood than within a SRO and the agency would be well-served to create clear guidelines regarding who it will or will not serve and to maintain strong discipline regarding its rules. This can be complicated because for issues such as substance abuse, mental health, family stability or child care, long term solutions may involve work with family members or friends.

An important aspect of the staff-client ratio in the neighborhood environment is the additional level of staffing needed to conduct follow-up with clients. While SRO resident clients can easily maintain ongoing contact with program staff, this is a much more complicated problem in neighborhoods. Clients may be highly mobile, moving from one domicile to another, they may not have a telephone and are unlikely to have a telephone message machine. Home visits can be complicated by neighborhood crime. As a result, the Near South experience indicated that a high degree of intentionality is required to maintain ongoing contact with many clients and this may necessitate significant numbers of dedicated outreach workers comfortable operating in high-crime neighborhoods.

Building a Client Support System

The SRO appears to have been more successful than Near South in achieving client satisfaction with service provision, and building a functional support system for clients.

Although the finding was not strong, the SRO environment appears to have engendered a stronger sense in clients that they were part of a strong support system than did the Near South neighborhood environment.

Table 3.3 Percent "somewhat" or "very satisfied" with services

Service item	Near South	SRO
	n=98	n=98
Gave you confidence you could progress *	77%	90%
Find a job you liked *	60%	75%
Provide support and follow-up after placement	63%	75%
Feeling you could rely on them *	72%	88%
Feeling you were important and respected	79%	87%
Help you solve problems *	69%	86%
Help you make plans *	75%	77%
Listen to you	81%	89%
Make good referrals *	49%	89%

^{* =} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

As observed above, despite that they were largely separated from family members, SRO clients tended more to indicate that they attributed their likelihood of success in life to stronger support systems (27 percent) than did the Near South clients (10 percent).

When comparing levels of client satisfaction with different program-related indicators, SRO consistently generated higher levels of satisfaction. A number of these indicators are closely related to how persistently staff may have worked with the client and how well they knew them. This is particularly true of items such as creating confidence that one can progress, helping solve problems, helping make plans, conveying feelings that you could rely on them, providing support and follow-up and making good referrals.

On the other hand, Near South clients indicated significantly better problem-solving skills than did the SRO clients. This is not surprising given their stronger ability to find employment on their own if they were not placed by the agency, and that they live more independently. Specifically, Near South clients indicated better ability to:

- Ask for help
- Carry out instructions
- Understand people's feelings

- Get permission when needed
- Figure out reasons for things
- Deal with contradictory directions from two or more supervisors

What Clients Want

A clear message that came from the Near South experience was that clients were starved for respect and empathy.

When asked what they liked most about Near South's program, the most common response (29 percent) had to do with staff's willingness to listen to the client and grant the client respect or empathy. Probably related to that was the second most common response, that the client appreciated Near South's efforts to help them (22 percent) and the professionalism of the staff (14 percent). Seventeen percent of respondents liked most a particular service that was rendered for them, most often that they had found them a job.

Table 3.4 What do you like most about the Near South services and staff? (n=100)

Attribute	Percent
Empathy and Respect	29.0%
Effort	22.0%
Effectiveness	17.0%
Professionalism	14.0%
None	12.0%
Program Design	8.0%

Source: Near South survey

While it is important to know that neighborhood-based clients may very much need service in this form, it is important to consider that it probably is not a sufficient outcome.

The Importance of Connection with Clients

The Near South experience suggests that to the extent that the goal of a social services provider system is to maintain employment in entry-level jobs for individuals or broker simple child care or transportation arrangements, simple intake and referral systems probably provide sufficient client contact. However, in the event that problems are deeper and require more complex, or longer term solutions, a closer relationship with the case worker will usually be necessary. An agency needs to consider whether it wishes to effect short-term income and survival maintenance, or to engage in programming aimed at accomplishing long-term change in the client.

One of the decisions that should be made when designing social services involves whether to try to serve clients in order to accomplish major life changes or to choose primarily to sustain their basic levels of income and survival. Low income clients with minimal attachments to the workforce often suffer from a variety of problems that include some combination of lack of education, lack of orientation to work and career, inability to solve problems well, problems with mental health, drug abuse, and family disruption. The typical pattern of work for people with these characteristics is a series of spells of employment, unemployment, and often utilization of welfare. Generally the sequence of work is determined by circumstance and availability. The combination of low education, difficulty controlling personal life, and lack of personal experience with career-building tends to perpetuate low-wage, low-skill employment. These jobs are mentally draining, offer little or no training and are subject to frequent layoffs, producing a work environment not conducive to upward mobility.

Mitigating these influences requires extraordinary time and effort on the part of both the client and the social service provider. The best employment programs for disadvantaged clients generally succeed only in maintaining relatively ongoing income for their clients and rarely achieve much upward occupational mobility. Programs that accomplish this may be appropriate to securing particular goals of public policy such as preserving TANF eligibility, which is limited to five years lifetime, but which is preserved through participation in work, or maintaining eligibility to live in public housing, which may increasingly tied to resident work.

Any agency operating in a low-income environment, then, will likely need to make a mission-oriented decision whether to set as its priority basic income, or survival maintenance, which can be accomplished in a setting where contact with clients tends to be episodic and service planning minimal, or whether it seeks to accomplish deeper life changes with clients aimed at leaving them permanently more independent. The latter requires highly skilled staff, longer time frames for client service, and commitments from clients to participate in a lengthy, onerous process.

The Near South project appears to have done an outstanding job accomplishing basic client maintenance of employment and related life needs. It found more thorough-going work with clients more challenging for a number of reasons. While Near South demonstrated that clients can be placed in entry-level jobs through minimal connection to the social service agency, it also appears that much stronger connections to the agency are needed to achieve more thorough-going change in clients.

Near South staff struggled throughout the period of the project to maintain close contact with their clients. This was difficult because clients served by Near South tended to be impatient with service provision. This was indicated through interviews with Near Staff, review of client case notes, interviews with clients, and patterns of client attrition.

The willingness of clients to participate in a longer, more difficult process began with the reasons that they came to the program. As the table below indicates, clients in the Near South neighborhood-based setting were more likely to indicate that they had come to the

program seeking exclusively help getting a job. On the other hand, the SRO resident clients were much more likely to be open to receiving, or even expecting to receive, a much wider range of social services. Relatively few clients who came to Near South for employment services were seeking mental health or substance abuse services. Interviews with Near South staff indicated that many clients declined to participate in the program if mental health or substance abuse screening or treatment would be required of them.

Clients seeking service at Near South expected a far narrower range of services than did the SRO clients. Nearly all (98 percent) of Near South clients surveyed expected to receive either employment or a referral to employment. Another 50 percent expected training in how to do or how to get a job. Almost none expected to get mental health or substance abuse services.

Conversely, persons living in a SRO who sought employment services from Lakefront SRO expected to receive a wide variety of supportive services. Only three-quarters expected direct referral to a job and 23 percent and 30 percent respectively expected to get mental health or substance abuse services.

Table 3.5 Client service expectations: Percent indicating expectation of receiving service

Service	Near South	SRO
	(n=100)	(n=99)
Employment or referral to a job **	98%	75%
Training in how to get a job	56%	63%
Training in how to do a job	51%	47%
Training in basic education skills	28%	36%
Mental health services **	3%	23%
Substance abuse services **	2%	30%

* *= p < .01 (Statistical significance for difference between column items) Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Analysis indicated fairly clearly that staff-client connection was important to addressing mental health-related problems. For instance, strong goal-setting with the client was significant for reducing depression, and SRO clients, who had substantially greater connection to Lakefront staff, indicated higher self-efficacy. Additionally, follow-up to employment provided by program staff and program staff helping to solve problems was associated with higher self-efficacy.

The Near South center was overwhelmed with clients seeking employment services and, in low-income neighborhoods, client recruitment is unlikely to be difficult as long as services basically conform to what clients are seeking. However, the number of clients willing to voluntarily undergo substantial life changes is far smaller than the number willing to continue the ongoing income maintenance cycle. Commitment to working with clients on deeper life changes necessitates lower client-staff ratios, stronger

commitment to ongoing outreach and contact with clients, and possibly greater use of institutional leverage such as maintenance of eligibility for subsidized housing, TANF time pressures, supervision by the criminal justice system, or others.

With regard to most service areas, SRO clients reported greater levels of satisfaction with services than did the Near South clients. Satisfaction levels were statistically significantly different with regard to satisfaction with job referrals and training in how to do a job. Satisfaction levels were substantially different with regard to delivery of basic education skills but too few clients received the service for the difference to reach statistical significance.

Table 3.6 Percent indicating their expectations were met

Service	Near South	SRO
Employment or referral to a job *	51%	72%
Training in how to get a job	61%	74%
Training in how to do a job *	56%	76%
Training in basic education skills	43%	81%
Mental he alth services	50%	75%
Substance abuse services	67%	78%

*= p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items) Source: Near South and SRO surveys

The array of services available to clients of Near South and SRO were similar. Like Near South clients, SRO clients received an assessment that included an individual service plan, TABE and career development/assessment. Clients had access to referrals to various learning programs and to outside training programs. SRO appeared to have a stronger capability for literacy support through clubs and classes than Near South had. Both programs provided access to job readiness programs, job banks, job fairs, and provided assistance with transportation. Both programs offered follow-up to employment and staff actively identifying jobs for clients. While Near South offered a dedicated mental health specialist, SRO relied on *ad hoc* intervention by program staff and referrals to outside providers. SRO client needs are often different in that they live in single rooms and do not have children with them. Consequently, no SRO clients should be receiving TANF while at SRO. Transportation reimbursements were more available to Near South clients. Focus groups held with staff of Near South and SRO employment services indicated similar descriptions of clients and attitudes toward providing services to them.

Clients of both services expressed similar experiences regarding types of activities in which they participated. Over three quarters of clients expressed that they received help setting goals. However in both Near South and SRO, very few clients reported that they had created what they would have called a "service plan." This is consistent with overall programmatic data reported above indicating that Near South clients surveyed reported relatively little service planning. While goal setting is a component of service planning,

creating a strong service plan generally entails detailing a set of steps to be followed over a period of time. In many cases, planning that was done may not have included this.

Nonetheless, over 80 percent of clients of both programs reported getting job referrals. This suggests that for most clients at Near South, at least a cursory assessment was made and an employment referral made fairly promptly to a job that was available at that time. About two-thirds of clients felt that they made progress.

Table 3.7 Percentage of clients engaging in employment activities

	Near South	SRO
	n=100	n=100
Did you work with the agency to find employment? *	89%	73%
Of those answering yes:		
Did you get help setting goals?	76%	80%
Did you create a service plan?	29%	21%
Did you receive job referrals?	84%	81%
Do you feel you made progress?	66%	74%

^{*=} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Far fewer clients of both programs reported participation in work preparation activities. About two-thirds received help setting goals, yet, as with the main job search, clients of neither program reported a lot of specific service planning. As with the job search two-thirds or more of the clients reported having made progress.

Table 3.8 Percentage of clients engaging in work preparation activities

	Near South	SRO
	n=100	n=98
Did you get help with job readiness?	39%	44%
Of those answering yes:		
Did you get help setting goals?	62%	70%
Did you create a service plan?	21%	9%
Did you receive referrals?	28%	21%
Do you feel you made progress?	66%	83%

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

The Near South and SRO programs were substantially different with respect to provision of training in job skills. While only 10 percent of Near South clients reported receiving this, 35 percent of SRO clients did. While the low numbers of clients involved preclude meaningful significance testing, the patterns are fundamentally the same. The percentage of Near South clients surveyed reporting having received job skills is substantially less than the percentage indicated through program data, suggesting that many of the clients may not have ultimately understood a connection between some job skill training programs and Near South, perhaps tending to under-report in the survey referrals to programs such as the Hospitality Institute.

Table 3.9 Percentage of clients learning job skills

	Near South	SRO
	n=98	n=99
Did you get help with learning job skills? *	10%	35%
Of those answering yes:		
Did you get help setting goals?	64%	70%
Did you create a service plan?	23%	20%
Did you receive referrals?	23%	43%
Do you feel you made progress?	75%	77%

^{* =} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Small numbers of clients from both the Near South and SRO programs reported receiving basic education skills. As above, about two-thirds felt that they set some goals, but few felt that they had a service plan. The two programs differed significantly with respect to referrals and progress made. The SRO clients were far more likely to report having received a referral to a basic education skills program and they were far more likely to report that they had made progress.

Table 3.10 Percentage of clients learning basic education skills

	Near South	SRO
	n=101	n=99
Did you get help with learning education skills?	17%	20%
Of those answering yes:		
Did you get help setting goals?	63%	63%
Did you create a service plan?	26%	22%
Did you receive referrals? *	32%	61%
Do you feel you made progress? *	37%	82%

^{*=} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Data reported in the next two tables regarding mental health and substance abuse pertains almost exclusively to the SRO clients as very few Near South clients reported having received services from Near South in these areas. Taking the programmatic data in combination with the survey data, we can infer that few clients came to Near South with the expectation of receiving these services, and indeed few did receive them. Given the high number of clients suspected of having drug abuse problems by Near South staff and the significant volume of depressive symptoms suggested by the mental health batteries administered, the program and clients might have benefited from more service provision in these areas. On the other hand, program participation was entirely voluntary on the part of the clients and so if they did not seek, or want, these services at Near South, staff had little or no leverage over the client to effect service delivery. It is possible that had the planned case management model been implemented that intended more regular, frequent, and quality staff-client interactions, as opposed to the model that evolved, which was characterized by a relatively quick assessment followed by rapid employment referral, that drug and mental health issues could have been addressed more thoroughly. While the SRO clients apparently needed less prodding to address difficult mental health or substance abuse issues, the SRO setting and Lakefront's position as landlord would seem to afford Lakefront a wider variety of tools with which to encourage, or require, that these problems be addressed.

The survey data obtained from the SRO clients who got help with mental health or drug abuse problems suggest that Lakefront SRO had within its agency the capability to deliver quality services in these fields. Substance abuse clients were much more likely than mental health clients to report having received a referral for service, but clients of both services overwhelmingly reported that they felt that they had made progress.

Table 3.11 Percentage of clients receiving help with mental health

	Near South	SRO
	n=100	n=99
Did you get help with mental health? *	1%	17%
Of those answering yes:		
Did you get help setting goals?		65%
Did you create a service plan?		31%
Did you receive referrals?		31%
Do you feel you made progress?		94%

^{*=} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items) Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Table 3.12 Percentage of clients receiving help with drug abuse

	Near South	SRO
	n=100	n=98
Did you get help with drug abuse? *	0%	19%
Of those answering yes:		0%
Did you get help setting goals?		84%
Did you create a service plan?		37%
Did you receive referrals?		63%
Do you feel you made progress?		100%

^{*=} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items) Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Clients of both Near South and SRO services generally reported positive outcomes of their services with satisfaction levels consistently significantly higher among SRO clients. Near South clients gave Near South staff their highest marks for giving them confidence, showing them respect and listening to them. The lowest marks came in the areas of job satisfaction, post-placement follow-up and quality of referrals. Regarding referral quality, SRO clients were almost twice as likely to have expressed satisfaction with service.

Table 3.13 Percent of clients somewhat or very satisfied with services

Service	Near South	SRO
	n=98	n=98
Gave you confidence you could progress *	77%	90%
Find a job you liked *	60%	75%
Provide support and follow-up after placement	63%	75%
Feeling you could rely on them *	72%	88%
Feeling you were important and respected	79%	87%
Help you solve problems *	69%	86%
Help you make plans *	75%	77%
Listen to you	81%	89%
Make good referrals *	49%	89%

^{*=} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items) Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Near South clients were particularly critical of the ability of staff to find them a job they liked or provide support after they got the job, with 41 percent and 37 percent of clients at least somewhat dissatisfied respectively. Several factors appeared to contribute to these figures. One possible cause was the job development strategy undertaken by the Near South staff. As interviews and observations indicated, job developers maintained notebooks of advertised job openings from which clients could select jobs to interview for. On occasion staff would secure an opportunity with a single firm for a number of job

placements and recruit among the Near South client base to rapidly fill these. This strategy tends to achieve employment goals, but sometimes at the cost of client satisfaction. Near South program staff worked to create the best possible matches of clients and jobs but the strength of those matches remained limited to the jobs that were available.

Attaining high client satisfaction requires not only a strong job search program, but also a high level of client cooperation. Staff interviews, observations, and review of case notes make clear the difficulty in ascertaining the occupational preferences of many clients. Many clients might have remained dissatisfied regardless of the job found and support provided.

Table 3.14 Satisfaction with services at Near South

Service	Very	Somewhat	Somewhat	Very
	satisfied	satisfied	dissatisfied	dissatisfied
Give confidence to progress in career	52.0%	24.5%	10.2%	13.3%
Find a job you like	39.2%	19.6%	18.6%	22.7%
Provide support after got job	46.5%	16.3%	16.3%	20.9%
Feeling could rely on them	45.8%	26.0%	11.5%	16.7%
Respect you	56.1%	22.4%	8.2%	13.3%
Help solve your problems	44.8%	24.0%	11.5%	19.8%
Help make plans	39.8%	34.7%	13.3%	12.2%
Listen to you	53.6%	27.8%	7.2%	11.3%
Make good referrals for services	26.9%	22.4%	25.4%	25.4%

Source: Near South database

Specifically regarding satisfaction with their housing, residents of SRO were almost four times as likely as CHA residents to express high levels of satisfaction with property management.

Table 3.15 Percentage of residents expressing satisfaction with housing services: CHA residents and SRO residents

Housing attributes	Near South	SRO
	(CHA Residents	N=99
	Only) n=63	
Happy with property management *	21%	78%
Do you know who to ask about questions regarding your lease? *	41%	43%

^{*=} p < .05 (Statistical significance for difference between column items)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Comparing Near South with SRO responses to open-ended questions pertaining to client satisfaction, Near South clients were more likely to value effort and SRO clients more likely to value the service design.

Table 3.16 What clients liked best by program site

Service attribute	Near South	SRO
	n=101	n=100
Empathy/respect	36.6%	41.0%
Effort	17.8%	4.0%
Effective	20.8%	25.0%
Professionalism	5.9%	8.0%
Nothing	11.9%	10.0%
Program design	6.9%	12.0%

p < .05 (Statistical significance for table differences Chi Square)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

None of the SRO clients surveyed reported lack of effort or a bad job placement as what they like least about the program, compared to almost 12 percent of Near South clients. SRO clients were more likely to discount SRO staff's professionalism.

Table 3.17 What clients like least by program site

Service attribute	Near South	SRO
	n=101	n=100
Nothing	50.5%	55.0%
Professionalism	13.9%	22.0%
Failure	15.8%	9.0%
No effort/bad job	11.9%	0%
Service design	6.9%	13.0%
Communications	1.0%	1.0%

p < .05 (Statistical significance for table differences Chi Square)

Source: Near South and SRO surveys

Client Attrition

In general, Near South attained greater continuity of service with female, TANF clients who had limited experience in the labor market. Men who had previous labor market experience, albeit often marked with a recent layoff, were more likely to drop-out of the Near South program.

Although employment service is not mandated for living in the SRO, clients in a neighborhood-based setting are clearly harder to track and to maintain connection with.

A significant number of clients at Near South underwent intake and then received no further service. A very high percentage of clients received no service beyond intake in the final months of the project because they were being transitioned to other service providers, but throughout the duration of the project there were always some intakes that received no further service. In many instances, clients had no patience for committing to a process of receiving service or wanted to step immediately into a position such as management, but refused to participate in the training that may have been necessary to attain the position. While a quantitative analysis cannot finally tell us why clients failed to return, it can identify factors that tended to separate returning from non-returning clients.

A multiple regression analysis was run to predict the likelihood of a client's returning based on a variety of client characteristics identified at the intake that might reasonably bear on how strongly a client might either need or want the Near South services.

As the table indicates the following factors contributed significantly to client attrition:

- More educated clients were 1.5 times as likely as less educated clients to not return.
- Clients who had recently lost a job were twice as likely to not return
- Clients on TANF were 3 times as likely to return
- Clients without income at intake were 2.5 times more likely to return
- Clients with children were twice as likely to return
- Clients with previous jobs were 1.5 times more likely to return

Table 3.18 Factors predictive of client attrition

Characteristic	Sig.	Probability
Male = 1	.101	.571
Age	.466	.988
Education	.050	1.466
Health insurance at intake	.200	.626
Homeless	.814	1.129
TANF	.040	.354
Violence	.199	.403
Specific job goal	.239	.485
Any job goal	.247	.494
Previous training	.896	.960
Job at intake	.297	.655
Number of previous jobs	.002	.727
Date of intake	.000	1.000
No income at intake	.011	.402
TABE reading	.185	.915
TABE math	.310	1.084
Prior conviction	.474	1.299
CHA	.792	.915
Children	.051	.492
Lost job	.083	1.906
No affordable housing	.257	2.117
Constant	.000	.000

Adjusted R Square .393

Equation Significance .000 (Logistic regression)

Source: Near South database

Gender

Study of Near South and Lakefront SRO revealed several gender-based issues. First, women were far more likely than men to have assumed responsibility for child care. Second, women appeared to have somewhat different expectations of the role of a service provider. Finally, differences continue to exist in the capability of men and women to perform certain jobs, differences in vocational interest, and probably willingness of employers to hire persons of particular gender.

Jobs that are appropriate for women

Analysis of data from the Near South program indicated that holding other client characteristics constant, the program was more successful at employing men than women. While we cannot know with certainty the reasons, data and observations suggest several that should be considered for future service planning.

- Job developers may have identified more opportunities in jobs suitable, or of interest, to men than to women.
- Male clients may have been more aggressive about seeking satisfaction with services and more impatient than female clients, leading staff to be more responsive to their needs.
- While staff were successful in addressing the child care needs of many female clients, others may have lost job opportunities because child care could not be provided at the right time, in the right place, or of the right quality.

Because of the presence of children, there was a nearly significant difference between males and females among Near South clients with respect to reasons for failure, with females much more likely to report problems with child care or other logistical concerns. Males, by contrast, were more likely to admit that they were lazy or that their problems were caused by other people that they had chosen to associate with.

Table 3.19 Self-attribution for failure by gender for Near South and SRO clients

Reason for failure	NS Male	NS Female	SRO Male	SRO Female
	n=41	n=58	n=69	n=31
Nothing	46.3%	37.9%	47.8%	48.4%
Myself/laziness/other people	17.1%	5.2%	11.6%	16.1%
Childcare/logistics	4.9%	22.4%	0	0
Education/knowledge	14.6%	10.3%	5.8%	3.2%
Stress	0	3.4%	2.9%	0
Health/disability	4.9%	1.7%	20.3%	6.5%
No money/no job	12.2%	19.0%	11.6%	25.8%

p.<.07 NS Male x NS Female Chi Square Source: Surveys of Near South and SRO

Males also may have been more successful because they had better skills than women. The data indicated that attribution of success based on skills correlated more strongly with employment than did reliance on motivation or support systems.

Males and females at Near South demonstrated significant differences in their inclination to assess their skills/abilities as their greatest strengths with males more likely to do so. Females were more likely to say that they relied on motivation, leaving them at a distinct disadvantage in their job search.

Table 3.20 Self-reported strengths by gender and program

	NS Male n=41	NS Female n=58	SRO Male n=69	SRO Female n=31
Skills/abilities	39.5% *	22.4% *	33.3%	35.5%
Motivation	62.8%	75.9%	65.2%	61.3%
Support	7.0%	12.1%	30.4%	19.4%

^{* =}p.<.051 (Statistical significance between column items)

Source: Surveys of Near South and SRO

Expectations and Outcomes

It appears that males were more likely to get attention and be satisfied with outcomes than were women at Near South and at SRO. At Near South, males were more likely to report that the agency had helped them make progress with their career, that they liked their job more, that they could rely on Near South, that they were important and respected, that Near South had helped them make plans, and that they were listened to.

At SRO, men were more likely to be very satisfied, and women more likely to be very dissatisfied with the job found, levels of support, feelings that they could be relied on, and that SRO helped them solve problems. While most of these relationships fell short of statistical significance, most of the questions regarding satisfaction fell into the pattern of tendency toward male satisfaction and female dissatisfaction, and three of the comparisons did reach statistical significance: SRO whether a client could rely on the provider and whether the provider helped solve problems, and at Near South whether the client was listened to.

Table 3.21 Satisfaction levels by gender and program for selected program outcomes

Characteristic, place and	Very	Somewhat	Somewhat	Very Satisfied
gender	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	•
Progress with career				
NS Male n=43	9.3%	7.0%	18.6%	65.1%
NS Female n=55	16.4%	12.7%	29.1%	41.8%
SRO Male n=67	4.5%	4.5%	35.8%	55.2%
SRO Female n=31	3.2%	9.7%	41.9%	45.2%
Like job				
NS Male n=42	11.9%	23.8%	21.4%	42.9%
NS Female n=55	30.9%	14.5%	18.2%	36.4%
SRO Male n=67	7.5%	14.9%	29.9%	47.8%
SRO Female n=31	12.9%	16.1%	35.5%	35.5%
Support/Follow up				
NS Male n=40	12.5%	20.0%	20.0%	47.5%
NS Female n=46	28.3%	13.0%	13.0%	45.7%
SRO Male n=67	9.0%	16.4%	19.4%	55.2%
SRO Female n=29	10.3%	13.8%	31.0%	44.8%
Rely on				
NS Male n=42	9.5%	11.9%	21.4%	57.1%
NS Female n=54	22.2%	11.1%	29.6%	37.0%
SRO Male n=67 *	1.5%	4.5%	35.8%	58.2%
SRO Female n=31	6.5%	19.4%	22.6%	51.6%
Important and Respected				
NS Male n=43	4.7%	9.3%	20.9%	65.1%
NS Female n=55	20.0%	7.3%	23.6%	49.1%
SRO Male n=67	4.5%	4.5%	37.3%	53.7%
SRO Female n=31	9.7%	12.9%	19.4%	58.1%
Help solve problems	11.00/	11.00/	26.20	50.00/
NS Male n=42	11.9%	11.9%	26.2%	50.0%
NS Female n=54	25.9%	11.1%	22.2%	40.7%
SRO Male n=66 * SRO Female n=31	3.0% 12.9%	3.0% 16.1%	31.8% 22.6%	62.1% 48.4%
	12.970	10.170	22.070	40.470
Make plans NS Male n=43	7.00/	16 20/	20.20/	46.50/
NS Male n=43 NS Female n=55	7.0% 16.4%	16.3% 10.9%	30.2% 38.2%	46.5% 34.5%
SRO Male n=66	3.0%	7.6%	34.8%	54.5%
SRO Female n=31	3.2%	16.1%	32.3%	48.4%
Listen to you	3.270	10.170	32.370	10.170
NS Male n=43 **	4.7%	11.6%	14.0%	69.8%
NS Female n=54	16.7%	3.7%	38.9%	40.7%
SRO Male n=67	3.0%	6.0%	29.9%	61.2%
SRO Female n=31	3.2%	12.9%	22.6%	61.3%
Make good referrals				
NS Male n=35	22.9%	31.4%	22.9%	22.9%
NS Female n=32	28.1%	18.8%	21.9%	31.3%
SRO Male n=67	4.5%	3.0%	31.3%	61.2%
SRO Female n=31	3.2%	16.1%	29.0%	51.6%

*=p<.05; **=p<.01 (Statistical significance of pairs Chi Square)
Source: Surveys of Near South and SRO

As the table below indicates, clients who created service plans were more likely to be male than clients who had no service plan, two-thirds of whom were female. Males and females were equally likely to set goals. Males were more likely to want school followed by a job, or to list a specific job, and females were more likely to settle for any job.

Table 3.22 Service planning for employment by gender at Near South

Planning goals	Female	Male
Service plan for employment n=26	50.0%	50%
No service plan for employment n=63	65.1%	34.9%
Set goals n=67	61.2%	38.8%
Set no goals n=21	61.9%	38.1%
•		
Find any job n=43	65.1%	34.9%
Find specific job n=12	58.3%	41.7%
School and job n=11	45.5%	54.5%

Source: Near South database

On the other hand, the TANF recipients, who were female, appeared more likely to receive effort toward employment.

Table 3.23 Service planning for Near South clients by TANF or No-TANF

Planning goals	TANF at Intake	No TANF at Intake
Service plan for employment n=26	34.6%	65.4%
No service plan for employment n=63	20.6%	79.4%
Set goals n=67	28.4%	71.6%
Set no goals n=21	14.3%	85.7%
Find any job n=43	39.5%	60.5%
Find specific job n=12	8.3%	91.7%
School and job n=11	9.1%	90.9%
Found job n=46	30.4%	69.6%
Prep or referral n=12	8.3%	91.7%

Source: Survey of Near South

The TANF recipients, feeling particularly pressured by the need to get a job, were much more likely to value the effectiveness of the Near South program.

Chapter 4: Employment

Job Satisfaction

While labor market factors account for many of the job losses of low-wage workers, taking care to find jobs that match clients skills, interests and capability can help low income workers improve employment tenure.

Considerable evidence exists from the academic literature that while entry-level jobs may prevent an individual from utilizing welfare, they are rarely pathways to financial independence or to jobs that pay substantially more. At worst, if job referrals are viewed as inappropriate by the client, the client may seek service elsewhere or choose to forgo service altogether.

In the Near South experience, a strong emphasis was put on placing as many people in jobs as possible to meet placement goals. This created an incentive for staff job developers to refer minimally qualified clients to whatever job became readily available, as opposed to engaging in longer term job searches that might have more closely addressed the stated interests of clients. Although clients expressed various employment interests at intake, it was hard to place clients in the jobs they said they desired – an experience that is typical of employment programs, and typifies the low-wage/low-skill job placements that have occurred during welfare reform. It is the most common response to institutional pressures for immediate employment, but at the cost of forgoing efforts with the client at longer term development.

In interviews, Near South clients voiced concern that they were referred to jobs they were not happy with, although staff interviews and review of case notes indicated little client willingness to plan so as to achieve a better outcome. These problems, as well as the other logistical breakdowns and employer layoffs that characterize low-wage work, contributed to job churning among the clients. To their credit, Near South was successful in placing clients in new jobs following job loss. Placement in a low-wage job is not in itself difficult to accomplish, but without strong client/staff ratios and commitment to long term work with the client, they are likely to have to place the client repeatedly.

Near South clients interviewed proved fairly satisfied with their jobs. Over 97 percent were either somewhat or very satisfied.

 Table 4.1 Near South level of satisfaction with your current job

	Percent
Very satisfied	40.5%
Somewhat satisfied	57.1%
Neither satisfied nor unsatisfied	0%
Somewhat unsatisfied	2.4%
Very unsatisfied	0%

Source: Near South survey

When asked about what types of problems may have come up on their jobs, 75 percent reported no problems. The most commonly cited problems were the hours (8 percent), racism (7.6 percent), low pay (6.2 percent) and health (5 percent).

At intake, clients were asked about their long and short term goals. The vast majority of clients seemed to draw little distinction between these types of goals. Considering the long and short term goals together, clients tended to fall into one of three types of patterns:

- 1) those who indicated a specific course of training they wished to pursue or could identify a specific occupation in which they would like to work,
- 2) clients who indicated that their goal was simply to find any job that would provide for them or their family, or make them wealthy or happy, and
- 3) clients indicating that they wanted further education but were unclear regarding where that would lead them occupationally.

Clients were evenly divided with respect to career aims with 45.1 percent indicating specific goals and 48.5 percent indicating that any job would be sufficient. About 6 percent indicated that they wanted only further education.

The specificity of one's goals appeared to have little impact on eventual programmatic outcomes. Clients with specific and general goals were equally likely to be placed in a job and were equally likely to be placed in an employment training or preparation course. Client characteristics did seem to have some impact on the nature of goal setting with younger clients and more educated clients likely to be more specific in their vocational goals.

Table 4.2 Correlation of type of client goal by client characteristics

	Specific job	Any job	School/other
Gender	023	.015	.015
Age	092 *	.121 **	057
Years of education	.136 **	093 *	087 *
Job readiness	003	002	.010

^{* =} p < .05; **= p. < .01 (Statistical significance rho)

Source: Near South database

Employment Training

• The Near South experience suggests that unless service providers can engage in strong long-term planning with the client and job training programs have close

linkages to available jobs, a program is better off investing in job preparation or basic education programming.

Both bi-variate analysis of the relationship of training to job placement and the multiple regression indicated that job training was an inefficient way of placing clients in employment. Most low-wage clients have severe skill deficiencies and at some point job training may be necessary to give them the ability to rise above entry level positions. However, to the extent that the goal is income maintenance and a large volume of clients must be served with relatively few staff, the Near South evidence suggests that the better investment is in orientation to work or basic education.

Table 4.3 Whether Near South client got job by training program type

	Did not get job	Got job
Employment preparation (orientation only)(n=32) **	28.1	71.9
Job skills training (n=98)	42.9	57.1
GED (n=24) *	29.2	70.8

*= p.< .05; **= p.<.01 (Statistical significance of difference between column items) Source: Near South database

Sustaining Employment

Despite the best efforts of employment program staff, the most common reality for low-skilled job seekers is that they will experience a continued "churning" between low-wage jobs and spells of unemployment. This pattern has been documented in numerous studies and is very difficult to break.

The following charts compare the employment mobility of Near South and SRO clients over a one year period of each program. The analysis begins by breaking the clients into two groups, those who were unemployed at intake, and those who were employed at intake.

Beginning with a comparison of how the unemployed fared, the ostensible principle clients of these programs, 81 percent of Near South clients entered the program unemployed compared with 57 percent of SRO clients. During the program year, Near South placed 68 percent of these clients in jobs and SRO placed 39 percent of its unemployed clients in jobs. (See A) From this evidence we would conclude that Near South performed better than SRO at simply finding a job for an unemployed person.

By the end of the program year, many of those placed had lost their jobs and others that the programs did not place had through other means found jobs. Of those Near South had placed, only 36 percent remained unemployed at the end of the year but of those SRO placed, 50 percent remained employed. (See B) SRO clients were, therefore, somewhat better at sustaining employment once it was found through the program.

Of the clients the programs failed to place, 38 percent of Near South unplaced clients had found employment through other means, compared to only 23 percent of SRO's unplaced clients. (See C) This pattern suggests that when service provision failed the client, the Near South clients were better equipped to find employment on their own.



The second chart provides analysis of the fates of clients who entered the programs employed, 18 percent for Near South, 42 percent for SRO. Both Near South and SRO succeeded in placing more than 40 percent of these individuals in new jobs during the course of the program year. While the survey numbers become too small at this point to draw conclusions, Near South clients employed at intake that did not get new jobs were somewhat more likely to be employed a year later than those employed clients that Near South helped to find a new job.

Multi-variate analysis

Evidence from multi-variate analysis performed on data from Near South indicates that quality initial placement, and ability to troubleshoot problems that emerge on the job site or breakdowns of transportation or child care are extremely important for sustaining employment.

In order to better understand the various factors contributing to the employment of clients at Near South, a multiple regression analysis was performed that weighed various client characteristics and services provided against the probability of becoming employed. The first analysis compared the effects of various client barriers and agency services on the likelihood that a client would be placed in a job. Several program effects appeared to strongly influence who would be placed, such as providing follow-up and working with clients to set goals for employment and job readiness.

The second analysis compared the same effects on whether a client was employed a year after intake. For the most part, social services provided early on appeared to have little impact on the longer term future employment of clients. They appeared most useful for helping the client through pre-employment preparation or the job interview but tended not to sustain them following employment. The data indicated that in some cases, attempts to plan or provide referrals actually correlated with less likelihood of employment. This finding is counter-intuitive but, in fact, the application of service planning tends to defer employment outcomes because more extensive planning can narrow the types of jobs a client searches for, and/or result in greater preparation for work through education, training or social services. On the other hand, helping people find a job they liked and helping clients solve problems were associated with longer term positive employment outcomes.

We analyze two major questions: 1) what were the most important barriers to job placement facing clients at Near South and what social services mitigated against their impacts and 2) what were the relative impacts of the Near South service model compared to the SRO service model?

In order to assess barriers and strategies at Near South, we utilize a logistic regression model where the dependent variable is whether or not a client received a job placement at Near South

The analysis consists of two steps: The first equation predicts client employment based only on selected barriers. The second equation then adds in the "treatment," or the various interventions provided by Near South. The variables selected consist of client characteristics that could conceivably have an impact on whether or not a person might become employed. The level of reported formal education was selected in preference to the TABE score because Lakefront SRO staff expressed concern regarding the validity of the TABE scores and because not all clients took the TABE, thereby reducing the number of useable cases for analysis if it were used. A variable called "Violence" was constructed by combining client reports of family disputes, domestic, and neighborhood violence into a single vector. Case files include a number of other variables that might be expected to inhibit employment but they occurred so rarely in the files that they would have no statistical impact on program outcomes.

Some of the variables used are of semi-reliable nature. For instance, the mental health and family counseling variables from the data base were a product of case manager observation rather than any empirical assessment. Too few mental health surveys were administered by staff to be useable as a diagnostic for this analysis. The transportation services provided were excluded from the "treatment" equation because of co-linearity with the dependent variable, employment. Only rarely was transportation arranged for a client apart from an employment opportunity. Therefore to utilize it in the equation would simply be to predict the dependent variable with itself.

The tables present two types of output from the logistic regressions. The first of these is the probability impact of a variable. It is interpreted such that numbers over "1" indicate that the variable makes the outcome more likely to that degree. For instance a coefficient of 1.5 would indicate that the outcome was one and one half times more likely attributable to that variable. Conversely, a coefficient of .5 would indicate that an outcome was half as likely attributable to that variable. The second of each pair of numbers is the level of significance. Variables with significance coefficients of .05 or less should be considered statistically significant. Those with coefficients from .05 to .1 marginally so, and coefficients above .1 indicate that the variable is not statistically relevant to the analysis.

Equation 1 indicates that when we do not account for the effects of the program, homelessness and substance abuse appeared to have the greatest potential negative impact on likelihood of employment. Conversely, being employed at intake, having had previous employment, and having housing problems were significant predictors of Near South finding a job for the client.

Equation 2 adds to the barriers the various services provided by Near South. Taken in combination, the program appeared to have the following effects:

• Absent program effects, males and females were equally likely to get jobs. The program created an advantage for male over female clients.

- The program nullified the effects of previous employment training. All factors considered, previous training meant that you were about half as likely to get a job through Near South.
- Likewise, the effect of Near South social services was to eliminate the advantage had by those clients who came to the program employed or with previous employment experience who, in the end, were no more likely to become employed through Near South than clients with less experience.
- Clients who went through vocational training were about one fourth as likely to be employed as clients who did not. (see discussion above)
- Referral for housing problems resulted in a far lower likelihood of becoming employed. However, the treatments compensated for homelessness such that it ceased to be a significant barrier to employment.
- Client meetings were extremely important for finding a job, such that clients who met frequently with Near South staff were about twice as likely to find a job as those who did not.

To summarize, most of the individual services were rendered to too few clients to have significant effects on employment outcomes of the project as a whole, however they did tend to mitigate some of the potential negative effects on some clients and there is no reason to think they were not important to the people served. The process of meeting continually with staff was very important. Overall, the presence of the social service staff clearly had a positive effect on clients who worked with them. The overall effect of the program was sufficient to offset advantages some clients had coming in in terms of having been previously, or currently, employed.

Clients were generally better off not pursuing employment training, which had a negative impact on employment chances relative to other activities a client could pursue.

Male clients appeared to benefit more from the services than did female clients.

Table 4.4 Logistic regression of factors predictive that Near South placed a client

	Equation 1 Barriers to Employment		Barriers to Employmen	Equation 2
	Buillets to E	improjiment	Burriers to Emproymen	Effects
	Sig	Prob	Sig	Prob
Gender (Male=1, Female=0)	.439	1.190	.060	1.72
Age	.651	1.005	.612	1.00
Education	.494	.918	.405	.870
Intake date	.869	1.000	.509	1.000
Homeless	.093	.524	.910	.940
No income	.432	1.198	.558	1.18
TANF	.159	1.565	.119	1.863
Violence	.216	.615	.735	1.17
Specific job goal	.294	.661	.429	.67.
Any job goal	.495	.766	.766	.864
Previous training	.216	.777	.045	.59
Prior conviction	.412	1.227	.849	1.06
Live in CHA	.421	1.185	.576	.86
Employed at intake	.055	1.636	.472	1.26
Number of previous jobs	.001	1.231	.241	1.09
Substance abuse to work	.002	.518	.183	.61:
Housing problems to work	.050	1.773	.935	.96
Children	.385	.817	.097	.60
Health problems to work	.124	2.245	.823	.84
Mental health to work	.473	1.252	.152	.42
Family counseling to work	.298	1.740	.655	1.350
Vocational training			.000	.29
Employment prep			.993	.99:
Education program			.830	1.14
Child care ref			.287	5.78
Transportation ref			.666	.81
Health service ref			.909	36.97
Mental health ref			.663	1.96
Subst abuse letter			.306	.64
Subst abuse hard ref			.348	.40
Houisng ref			.034	.123
Other ref			.550	.752
Health svce compl			.844	.012
Mental health compl			.183	.13
Subst abuse compl			.596	1.93
Housing compl			.379	2.70
Child care compl			.910	1.20
Subst abuse compl2			.694	.84
Client meetings			.000	1.92
Constant	.884	11.837	.479	.000.
	R Square .1	101 Sig .007	R Square	.471 Sig. 000

Source: Near South database

Comparing Relative Strength of Barriers, Services and Site

To compare the impact of social services provided at Near South and at SRO, the study conducted two multivariate regression analyses. These analyses identified variables predictive of 1) whether Lakefront found a job for a client and 2) whether the client was employed one year after employment intake. The outcomes of the two analyses are somewhat different and shed light on the Lakefront contribution to client well-being.

1. Job from Lakefront

Table 4.7 below presents a set of equations used to evaluate the extent to which various factors contributed to whether Lakefront found a job for Near South clients and SRO residents who sought employment services. Several equations are presented in order to attempt to isolate different factors that may be of interest.

The first equation, "Characteristics" includes only client characteristics such as mental health factors, gender, age and education, and the types of strengths clients felt that they had such as skills, motivation or support. The equation fails to predict whether a client would find a job, as indicated by the low R-squared. The only significant characteristics are age of the client, with younger clients only marginally more likely to become employed than older clients, and gender, with females twice as likely to become employed as males.

The second equation, labeled Treatment 1, adds a number of important agency activities to the equation. As a result of considering these inputs, the explanatory power of the equation more than doubles. Provision of support and follow-up and help making plans were significant with follow-up correlating with employment but help making plans correlating with not finding a job, probably because strong service planning can defer job placement as services are undertaken. However, setting goals for employment and setting goals for job readiness more than doubled the likelihood of finding a job.

The final two equations introduce the variable of whether or not the client was served at Near South or through a SRO. The findings indicate that by itself, apart from the services provided there, the site had no impact on whether or not a client became employed through Lakefront.

• In summary, client characteristics alone did not predict who would be placed by Lakefront and who would not. Several program effects appeared to strongly influence who would be placed, such as providing follow-up and working with clients to set goals for employment and job readiness. There was no evidence that whether the client received service from Near South or a SRO made a difference in whether Lakefront found them a job, suggesting that for simple job placement, a highly supportive living environment was not essential.

Table 4.5 Logistic regression – Lakefront found job

	Charac	teristics	Trea	tment 1	Trea	tment 2		SRO 1		SRO 2
	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.
Fac 2	.190	1.250	.754	1.085	.747	1.087	.704	1.104	.726	1.096
Fac 3	.148	.779	.521	.848	.520	.850	.660	.890	.646	.885
Fac 4	.191	.799	.378	.805	.374	.805	.356	.799	.368	.802
Fac 6	.971	1.006	.963	.988	.963	.987	.987	.996	.993	.998
Gender	.014	2.268	.014	3.707	.014	3.716	.017	3.586	.019	3.533
Educ	.117	.809	.388	.843	.389	.843	.406	.847	.403	.847
Age	.067	.971	.088	.962	.084	.962	.197	.968	.193	.968
Skill	.543	1.319	.316	1.791	.316	1.788	.327	1.768	.321	1.783
Motive	.573	.790	.365	.608	.365	.610	.354	.603	.344	.593
Suppt	.488	.725	.808	.851	.807	.851	.896	.916	.907	.924
Emp intke	.466	.763	.958	1.027					.811	1.136
Gave conf			.637	1.260	.635	1.262	.644	1.254	.655	1.246
Job like			.645	1.197	.646	1.196	.720	1.152	.723	1.151
Support			.040	2.177	.040	2.174	.035	2.231	.034	2.250
Rely on			.772	.877	.773	.878	.863	.924	.864	.925
Feel imprt			.795	.899	.794	.899	.720	.862	.713	.859
Solv probl			.974	.985	.974	.985	.973	.984	.970	.983
Make plan			.049	.318	.049	.318	.053	.325	.053	.326
Listen			.353	1.601	.352	1.602	.379	1.561	.383	1.554
Gd refrl			.550	.832	.549	.832	.741	.897	.768	.906
Helped set	goals:									
Empl			.000	8.513	.000	8.518	.001	7.813	.001	7.725
Job ready			.055	2.882	.054	2.872	.050	2.935	.049	2.988
Job skills			.316	.521	.314	.523	.317	.525	.306	.513
Basic ed.			.228	5.520	.228	5.533	.218	5.628	.219	5.593
Mntl hlth			.640	.641	.639	.639	.676	.669	.688	.680
Subst abs			.171	3.492	.171	3.497	.145	3.826	.144	3.840
SRO							.521	.661	.495	.633
Constant	.394	2.151	.319	.181	.314	.179	.277	.154	.284	.158
	R2 .1	83 .006	R2 .4	65 .000	R2 .4	65 .000	R2 .4	68 .000	R2 .4	68 .000

Note: "Fac #" indicates variables derived from factor analysis of the survey data. Factor 3 = Problems

working. Factor 6 = Bad living environment Source: Surveys of Near South and SRO

2. Job at time of interview

The regression results for whether a person was employed at the time of interview were different than for whether Lakefront found the job for the person. As above, the first equation contains only client characteristics. Problems with working, satisfaction with the client's home environment, and being employed at intake all had significant and positive effects on the likelihood that a client was working at the time of interview. Satisfaction with the living environment, which includes items pertaining both to interpersonal relationships and facilities, could be strongly influenced by presence of a quality SRO.

The second equation adds in program effects. None of the program effects had clearly significant impacts on employment at the time of interview. Planning job readiness came

close to having a significant negative effect and Lakefront's helping a client find a job that they liked came close to having a significant positive effect. This indicates that service provision tends to be less effective if not sustained over time.

The third equation, Treatment 2, excludes the strong effect of having been employed at intake. Its effect is to move "helped find job you liked", "helped you solve problems" and the negative effects of planning on early job placement closer to true significance.

The final two equations introduce whether service through Near South or a SRO had an impact on likelihood of longer term employment and again the clear conclusion was that it did not. Making good referrals correlated with lower levels of employment but the other relationships remained the same. Reintroducing whether the client was employed at the point of intake had the expected effect of diminishing the effects of the other client characteristics and program activities.

- Whether a client was employed at point of intake was vitally important to whether they were employed one year later, irrespective of whether Lakefront found the job for them or not.
- For the most part, social services provided appeared to have little impact on the longer term employment of clients. The data indicated that in some cases, attempts to plan or provide referrals correlated with less likelihood of employment, probably as a result of deferring the job placement into the future. On the other hand, helping people find a job they liked and helping clients solve problems were associated with longer term positive outcomes.

Table 4.6 Logistic regression, employed at interview

	Charac	teristics	Trea	ntment 1	Trea	tment 2		SRO 1		SRO 2
	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.	Sig.	Prob.
Fac 2	.563	1.104	.521	1.169	.325	1.255	.450	1.195	.572	1.149
Fac 3	.003	1.859	.014	1.952	.004	2.107	.009	1.997	.018	1.919
Fac 4	.516	1.120	.305	1.269	.514	1.157	.447	1.191	.295	1.278
Fac 6	.092	.740	.146	.712	.201	.753	.177	.737	.142	.708
Gender	.633	1.178	.468	1.402	.334	1.531	.291	1.603	.451	1.424
Educ	.415	.892	.983	1.004	.654	1.080	.741	1.059	.990	.998
Age	.097	.973	.014	.946	.054	.960	.032	.948	.021	.942
Skill	.146	1.978	.271	1.875	.684	1.240	.605	1.318	.261	1.905
Motive	.919	1.044	.710	.816	.877	1.082	.842	1.106	.732	.829
Suppt	.553	1.321	.820	.869	.849	.893	.729	.812	.788	.847
Emp	.001	3.440	.001	5.471					.002	5.291
intake										
Gave conf			.202	.536	.323	.634	.333	.639	.210	.541
Job like			.102	1.836	.062	1.937	.051	2.016	.097	1.860
Support			.879	1.062	.624	.837	.657	.848	.872	1.066
Rely on			.123	.471	.249	.583	.190	.524	.117	.456
Feel imprt			.746	1.144	.690	1.173	.567	1.265	.705	1.174
Solv probl			.116	2.413	.087	2.348	.084	2.455	.114	2.463
Make plan			.555	.715	.593	.755	.543	.721	.538	.703
Listen			.170	2.035	.290	1.670	.280	1.688	.173	2.024
Gd refrl			.334	.764	.169	.684	.096	.604	.312	.731
Helped set	goals:									
Empl			.956	.972	.962	.977	.887	1.074	.992	.995
Job ready			.105	.436	.062	.407	.055	.392	.100	.428
Job skills			.326	.542	.844	.895	.851	.900	.334	.548
Basic ed.			.941	1.073	.804	1.275	.837	1.225	.951	1.061
Mntl hlth			.264	2.825	.373	2.100	.446	1.902	.286	2.722
Subst abs			.568	1.655	.410	1.966	.449	1.885	.575	1.645
SRO							.320	1.905	.743	1.251
Constant	.872	1.160	.889	.788	.752	.602	.895	.806	.940	.877
	R2 .19	98 .003	R2 .3	75 .010	R2 .28	38 .119	.29	6 .123	R2 .37	76 .014

Note: "Fac #" indicates variables derived from factor analysis of the survey data. Factor 3 = Problems

working

Source: Surveys of Near South and SRO

Taking these two analyses together, we find that

- Whether a client was employed at the point of intake had an overwhelming impact on whether they were employed long-term, but no impact on the ability of Lakefront to find them a job. Lakefront services compensated for the lack of job experience of many clients.
- After controlling for a wide range of client characteristics and types of programs, there was no independent effect on employment of whether services were delivered through Near South or a SRO. Either setting proved to be a sufficient platform for basic job placement services, although the SRO setting appeared far favorable for delivering drug abuse or mental health services.

• Provision of social services had a much stronger effect on whether Lakefront placed a client than on whether a client happened to be employed one year after their intake, suggesting that they had a strong short-term impact but tended not to change a client's life-course.

Each of the two models observed in this study demonstrates strengths. The Near South site succeeded in placing a large number of clients in jobs within a short amount of time and in many cases was able to keep clients employed through repeated job loss. It appeared to be more successful at placing the unemployed in a job than was the SRO setting.

On the other hand, the SRO setting appeared more successful at creating a wholly supportive environment. Clients came to the SRO expecting to receive services such as drug abuse and mental health and were more than twice as likely as the Near South clients to ascribe their success to a supportive environment. SRO clients regarded their property manager (Lakefront SRO) far more positively than the Near South clients regarded theirs (CHA).

Chapter 5: Public Housing and Neighborhoods

• Judging from the Near South experience, public housing residents may differ in important ways from other low income persons who seek social services. They may be more likely to be younger, female, less educated and on TANF.

Are public housing residents similar to other low income service recipients or do they present a unique set of needs?

Because of Near South's policy of enrollment of all walk-ins and referrals during its first year of operation, the project served hundreds of clients who did not live in public housing as staff chose not to reject clients in need of services even if they did not strictly meet the enrollment criteria. The Near South evaluation is, then, able to draw important distinctions between characteristics of public housing residents and those of other low income persons.

As the table below indicates, the public housing and non-public housing clients served differed in a number of ways.

Public housing clients were:

- More likely to be female
- Younger
- Less educated
- Had less income at intake
- More likely to be on TANF
- More likely to be judged job ready by staff
- Less likely to have a specific employment goal
- Lower TABE reading and math scores
- Much more likely to have children
- Less likely to experience hassles related to needing money

In summary, the non-public housing clients were more likely to be somewhat older and better educated single men who had specific goals for work and felt highly pressured to earn more money.

Table 5.1 Comparison of public housing and non-public housing clients on key characteristics

Characteristic	СНА	Not CHA		
Male *	46%	56%		
Age **	31.8	34.2		
Education **	2.6	2.9		
No income	44%	37%		
TANF ***	26%	8%		
Loss of job	24%	29%		
Violence	05%	6%		
Prior conviction	19%	21%		
Job ready *	59%	50%		
Specific job *	42%	52%		
Any job *	51%	41%		
Previous training	48%	54%		
TABE reading **	7.4	8.2		
TABE math **	6.3	7.1		
Number of previous jobs	2.7	2.6		
Health problems	4%	3%		
Mental health problems	6%	7%		
Substance abuse problems	29%	30%		
Housing problems	17%	17%		
Children ***	51%	29%		
Self-efficacy score	16.4	16.5		
Depression symptoms	23%	39%		
Depression score	7.0	9.0		
Mental health factor: Problems working	04	.19		
Mental health factor: Need money *	21	1.00		
Mental health factor: Depressed	11	.51		
Mental health factor: Problem solver	.02	11		
Mental health factor: Self efficacy	04	.17		
Mental health factor: Restless	.07	33		

^{* =} p.<.05; ** = p.<.01; ** = p.<.001 (Statistical significance between row items)

Source: Near South data base

Neighborhood relationships

• Interviews and observations of staff of the Near South center revealed the importance of maintaining strong relationships with a variety of community groups and institutions in order to successfully operate a neighborhood-based program.

While Lakefront's SRO buildings no doubt seek strong relationships with their neighboring institutions, it is somewhat less important for them as their clients live within

their own buildings and are, therefore, relatively easier to communicate with than are clients who live external to an agency.

Client recruitment and relationships

Word-of-mouth referral is an essential part of the referral process and it is important that local leadership be supportive of the program, and that those leaders pass the supportive message to caseworkers and staff of other agencies operating in the community where potential clients might be receiving other services. Evidence indicates that local advisory council (LAC) members were references for many of the Near South clients and helped to facilitate advertising for the program.

The Near South operation was initially greeted with suspicion by some area residents who wondered if it might be a front for a sting operation aimed at arresting people for drug use. In these instances, the imprimatur of the LAC or alderman's office can be important for circulating word that attests to the legitimacy of the agency.

Program implementation

LAC leadership at Hilliard and Ickes assisted with staff recruitment by providing resident resumes for consideration for tenant advocate positions. While this type of assistance was certainly helpful for identifying qualified candidates, it must be balanced against the desire of local leadership to exert control over program operations, in this case having significant input into Lakefront hiring decisions.

LAC leadership also assisted the program with site selection. Consultation with local leadership was clearly of value in considering space that would be convenient to residents, would communicate both the collaborative nature of Lakefront's commitment, but also its independence of the CHA, and that would negotiate appropriately possible interference by gangs.

Near South staff attempted to negotiate construction employment opportunities with property management. Several conversations and meetings were held mid-way through the project's life to discuss these opportunities. The process did not ultimately result in hires, in part because of the relative lateness in the process at which the opportunity was explored, and because of the complexity of entry-level construction employment including entry into apprenticeship and the necessity of getting hiring commitments from construction contractors.

Competition

Institutional cooperation is also vital to negotiating the turf competition between agencies operating in a particular community, each of which is concerned to recruit as many clients as possible. Ideally agency leadership can meet to identify services offered by their respective agencies that either complement one another, or where credit can be shared to funding sources.

In the case of Near South, minimally informing, and at best obtaining cooperation, was important for helping Near South outreach workers to gain access to CHA buildings for client visits.				

Chapter 6: The Near South Service Model

Mid-way through the operation of the Near South center, Lakefront chose to revisit its mission in a renewed attempt to look closely at how it provided its SRO-based services, and how best to apply them to the Near South service environment. This work could be foundational for attempts to implement neighborhood-based services in the future.

The following are lessons gleaned from the site visits that can be adopted by the Near South staff:

- Strategically garnering resources and assistance from supportive services providers and possibly CHA housing management organization can together form the foundation of a unique approach to providing services to public housing residents.
- *Standardizing the documentation process* and clearly articulating the goals provides the impetus from which quality services can emerge.
- "Vocationalizing" Hilliard and Ickes housing developments may be a way of extending services to residents.
- Supportive service providers and housing management may be utilized as referral sources to Near South employment services.
- Near South representatives may also *extend their services* by spending at least one day per week on-site at each building and conducting home visits.
- Utilizing the client tracking reports and/or eviction lists if possible is a way to *identify* those Hilliard and Ickes residents with the most intensive needs.
- Job readiness skills can be identified by acknowledging and encouraging volunteer services within the buildings and/or broader community as well as through temporary employment opportunities.
- Site team meetings with representatives of the Hilliard and Ickes building's property management, supportive services and employment department may enable staff to deal with difficult cases and achieve commitment and consensus about service needs.

These lessons-learned form the basic elements of Lakefront's "blended management" approach.

A New Vision

As a result of the meetings the Near South team created the following vision statement:

We will positively impact public housing residents through employment services that include supportive services that link residents to resources. We will educate residents to

empower them by increasing their awareness about the reality of change in their community and how it affects their lives. We will work in good faith with the Chicago Housing Authority, City of Chicago Agencies, Local Advisory Councils, developers and management companies and community organizations to ensure that residents are knowledgeable and understand the benefits from redevelopment to the greatest degree possible.

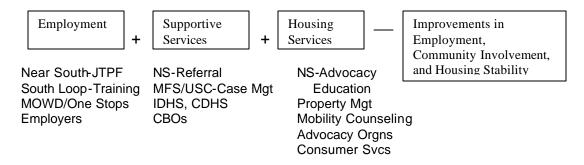
This new vision is enriched by the team's refocus on Lakefront's critical insight and experience with special needs populations and supportive housing. This new vision encompasses the organization's realization that as they enter and environment in which they are not the landlord and do not control building development, management and maintenance, accommodations will need to be made to their traditional model of service provision. Near South's expanded vision articulates a neighborhood-based model that links residents to services and engages housing, supportive service and employment providers in a holistic service system. Near South's vision reflects their commitment to intervene with residents and enhance their ability to maintain or obtain stable housing through employment and support services.

The Near South team also developed the following list of outcomes for Hilliard and Ickes residents that participate in the center's programs:

- Increased employment retention
- Increased lease compliance
- Increased community involvement
- Increased awareness of relocation requirements

To achieve these outcomes, the Near South team is prepared to significantly modify their approach to employment services to include: 1) linking residents to training, information, and services regarding lease compliance and relocation requirements, 2) advocating with housing management on behalf of clients when appropriate, 3) providing opportunities to involve residents in community programs and activities, and 4) conducting intensive follow-up with clients and their employers.

Reaching Hilliard and Ickes residents through:



LAKEFRONT SRO NEAR SOUTH EMPLOYMENT CENTER MODEL

PURPOSE:

Lakefront SRO at the Near South Employment Center intends to draw upon its critical insight and experience with special needs populations and supportive housing to link public housing resident to a comprehensive array of employment, housing and supportive services. This new vision encompasses the organization's realization that as they enter a public housing environment, in which they are not the landlord and do not control building development, management and maintenance, accommodations will need to be made to their traditional "place-based" model of service provision. The Lakefront SRO Near South site is a neighborhood-based model that links residents to services and engages housing, supportive service and employment providers in a holistic service system. Near South's vision reflects their commitment to intervene with low income families and enhance their ability to maintain or obtain stable housing through employment and support services.

GOALS:

At Near South, Lakefront SRO intends to achieve the following goals:

- Positively impact public housing residents through employment services that include supportive services that link residents to resources.
- Educate residents to empower them by increasing their awareness about the reality of change in their community and how it affects their lives.
- Work in good faith with the Chicago Housing Authority, City of Chicago Agencies, Local Advisory Councils, developers and management companies and community organizations to ensure that residents are knowledgeable and understand the benefits from redevelopment to the greatest degree possible.

To achieve these goals, the Near South staff intend to broaden their approach to employment services to include: 1) linking residents to training, information, and services regarding lease compliance, relocation requirements, and budgeting, 2) advocating with housing management on behalf of clients when appropriate, 3) providing opportunities to involve residents in community programs and activities, and 4) conducting intensive follow-up with clients and their employers.

OUTCOMES:

Lakefront SRO has developed the following list of outcomes for Hilliard and Ickes residents that participate in the Near South Employment Center's programs:

- Increased employment retention
- Increased lease compliance
- Increased community involvement
- Increased awareness of relocation requirements

SERVICE BUNDLES:

Service bundles represent a continuum of comprehensive services for public housing residents. The service bundles or types of services that residents can be linked to include employment, housing and employment services. While participants in the Center's services will be linked to community based supportive services, the provision of services by Near South Employment Center staff specifically focus on the domain of employment. Referrals will be made between Near South and providers housing and of supportive services when appropriate.

The Service Bundles or types of services that residents can be linked to include:

Employment

Employment Placement and Retention
Full/Part-Time, Permanent & Temporary Jobs
Adult Training and Education
Youth Summer Jobs
Job Training
Volunteering
Community Involvement/Work

Supportive Services

Life skills training- budgeting, hygiene, stress management, etc. Addressing health care needs Youth Education/Tutorial/Gifted Programs

After School Programs

Early Childhood Education
Education/Counseling for Foster Care Families
Immunizations
Substance Abuse Treatment/Counseling
Mental Health Treatment/Counseling
CAPS

Housing Services

Property Management Mobility Counseling Relocation Counseling Good Neighbor Training Affordable Housing Services Neighborhood Housing Services

Figure 1: NEAR SOUTH STAFFING AND SERVICE CATEGORIES

Service Category	Service Description	Near South Staff Responsible	Quarterly Performance Goals
A**	Outreach & Marketing	Tenant Advocates Door to Door, Bulleting Boards in CHA development, Community Activities, Tenant Forums On-site, Flyer and Visit CBOs, Follow-up on Client Referrals	Coms
B**	Initial Screening *Barriers/Needs (See below), Goals/Wants, Employment History, Education, Lease Compliance, Housing Mobility Status, Redevelopment Comprehension	Tenant Advocates or Employment Specialist	
C**	Intake/Orientation Initial Service Referral Initial Individual Service Plan & Agreement, Authorization of Release of Information & Employment Verification	Employment Specialist	
D**	Employment Assessments TABE Skills Assessment	Employment Specialist	
E**	Crisis Intervention & Case Management Referral	Employment Specialist	
F	Case Staffing Meetings Case/Assessment Review Identify Barriers/Service Needs Develop Strategies Refine ISPs (Weekly among staff)	Tenant Advocates Employment Specialists Operations Manager Job Developer Vice President of Employment Services	
G	Job Search & Referral	Job Coaches	

Н	Job Training Referral or	Job Coaches	
	Job Readiness Training	Operations Manager & Employment	
	Joo Readiness Haming	Specialist Specialist	
		South Loop	
		Community Colleges	
		CBOs	
I	Service Coordination	Job Coaches	
1	Advocacy	Contact employers, property mgt, service	
	Problem Solving	providers, creditors, etc on behalf of client	
	Floblem Solving	to enable client to engage self or family in	
		needed services and obtain/maintain	
		employment and housing	
J	Site Team Meetings	Near South Staff Representative(s)	
	<u> </u>	Crisis Intervention & Case Mgt Provider	
		Others (when appropriate)	
		Client	
		Client Support	
		Supportive Service Providers	
		Property Management	
		1 7 2	
K	Post Employment Services	Job Coaches	
	Career Goal Setting		
	Service Planning & Referral		
L	Job Clubs & Other Support	Operations Manager, Employment	
	<u>Groups</u>	Specialist, Job Coaches	
		CBOs	
		LACs	
M	Employment Related	Job Coaches, Tenant Advocates,	
141	Community Activities—Job	Employment Specialists	
	Fairs	Public/Private Agencies	
	1 4115	LACs	
N	Service Referral via MOWD	Employment Specialist	
	One Stop and Central		
	Information Center/United		
	Way		

^{**} A – E could be done by Service Connector Staff, as a screening for employment services. Near South could lend Tenant Advocates to SC staff for program outreach and screening purposes.

^{*} Barriers: There are a number of potential barriers to reaching one's personal goals that will be initially assessed by the service connector or employment specialist, including: Addiction, Mental Illness, Criminal Record, Lack of Education, Literacy Issues, Domestic Violence, Fear of Failure, Unmet needs for children's care, health, recreation, education, Hygiene issues/Appearance, Physical Disability, Unemployment or Underemployment

Typology of Client by Service Need

The following chart lists the types of clients as they are indicated by service need:

Figure 2: Clients and Service Needs

Client Service Needs	Client Indicators	Service Category	Outcomes
Acute	Non-Lease Compliant Chronically Unemployed (6 months or more) At risk of current or immediate harm to the physical, mental and/or behavioral health of self or others.	A, B, C, D, E, J, H, N Monitoring weekly for 1 month, additional 3 months of monthly follow up before termination	
Moderate	At Risk of Becoming Non- Lease Compliant Recent Unemployment (less than 6 months) Immediate Supportive Service Needs to obtain/maintain housing or employment. (Childcare, Transportation, Food, Clothing, etc.)	A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, M, N Monitoring biweekly for 1 month, additional 3 months of monthly follow-up before termination	
Minimal	Employed (less than 6 months) Lease Compliant (less than 6 months)	A, B, C, D, F, G, I, K, L, M, N Monitoring monthly 30, 60, 90 days, up to 120 days before termination	
Stable	Employed (6 months or more) Lease Compliant (6 months or more)	A, B, C, D, F, K, L, M, N Monitoring monthly 30, 60, 90 days up to 120 days before termination	

The services at the Near South Employment Center programs are to be specifically accessible and available for public housing residents, particularly those residing in Raymond Hilliard and Harold Ickes developments. The Tenant Advocates and Employment Specialists will refer non-public housing residents to MOWD One Stop

Employment Centers and supportive services through the United Way-Central Information Center.

The model anticipates clients presenting diverse service needs based upon the degree of intensity of crisis and family needs experienced by clients and their ability to plan and manage services and opportunities to improve their lives. Clients or families with **acute** service needs will be immediately referred to community based providers of *intervention* services to reduce crisis. If appropriate referrals will also be made to providers of *case management* services consisting of counseling, service planning, referral, advocacy and frequent monitoring for families needing intensive support over a short period of time. Clients with acute needs may be experiencing a spell of unemployment for 6 months or more, non-lease compliance, *or* are in immediate risk of harm to the physical, mental or behavioral health of themselves or others.

The reduction of crisis and initial stabilization will be the goal for clients with acute service needs, and appropriate referrals will be made prior to specifically addressing employment needs. Once the crisis has been reduced these clients will be targeted for job readiness training and related opportunities.

Clients with **moderate** service needs may be experiencing a spell of unemployment of less than 6 months, are at risk of becoming non-lease compliant, *or* need immediate referrals for family support services such as childcare, transportation, or recreational activities. These clients will be referred to case management services. Based upon their assessment, Near South staff will also engage these clients in job search and referral or job training services with activities focused on enhancing their life skills and ability to advocate, coordinate and plan for their long term needs.

Clients with **minimal** service needs are those who have been employed less than 6 months and are lease compliant. These clients will also receive supportive service coordination *and* referral services, but Near South staff will also provide these clients with post employment services that include linking them job clubs and other support groups.

Clients with the least service needs are characterized as being relatively **stable** over time. These clients and families are lease compliant, have been employed 6 months or more, and have demonstrated the ability to identify and link their families to services when needed. These families will primarily require some monitoring, encouragement and assistance to begin planning for future opportunities that may improve their quality of life such as career advancement, moving toward more permanent housing, or identifying schools/college for their children. Post employment services will also be available for these clients at Near South.

This model assumes that clients' service needs will fluctuate between acute and stable over time, and those most recently unemployed and employed should be supported to the greatest degree necessary by Near South staff to enable them to obtain or sustain employment.

All clients should have access to on-site or community-based activities and training to enhance life skills, leadership skills, lease compliance, housing mobility, budgeting and job readiness. On site services should also include motivation and peer support groups and job clubs. All clients will also have access to immediate employment and supportive service referral at the Mayor's Office of Workforce Development One Stop Employment Centers and the United Way/Central Information Center.

Approximate caseload by staff. Job Coach 50, Employment Specialist 75, Tenant Advocate 100

The reminder of the document presents the flow chart of services included in the Near South model.

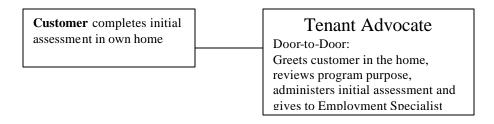
Figure 3: NEAR SOUTH EMPLOYMENT CENTER MODEL

SCENARIOS FOR PROGRAM ENTREE & REFERRAL

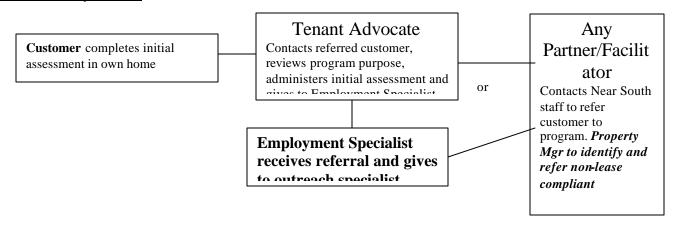


II. Outreach

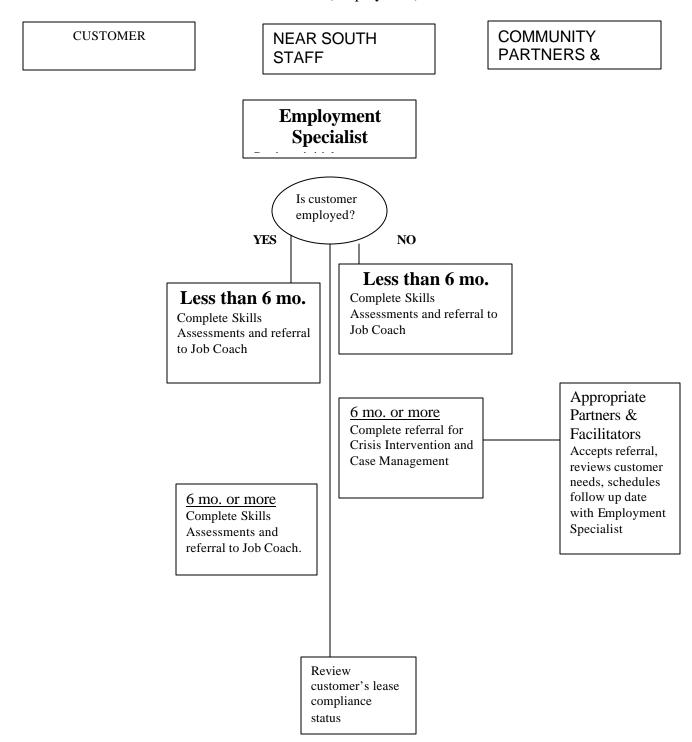
assessment in office



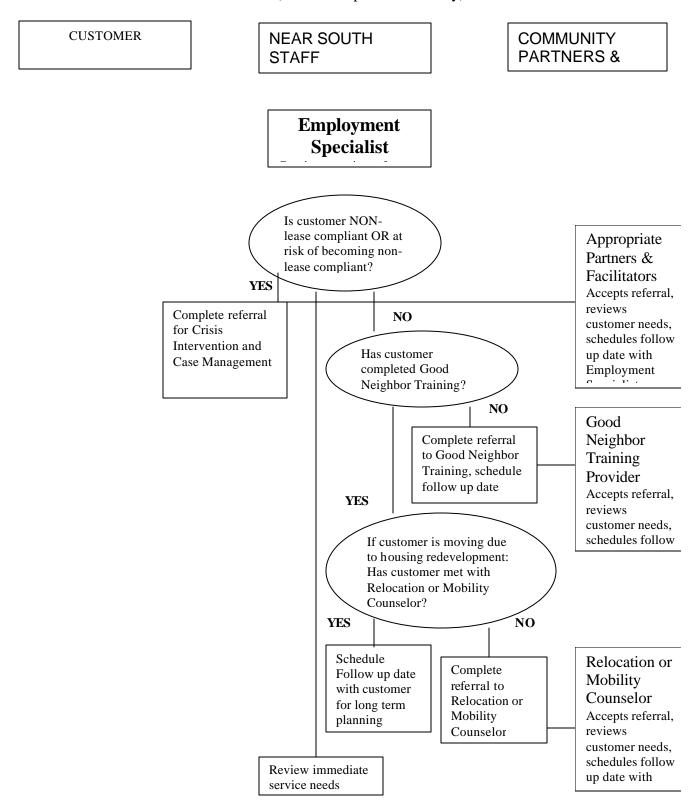
III. Community Referral



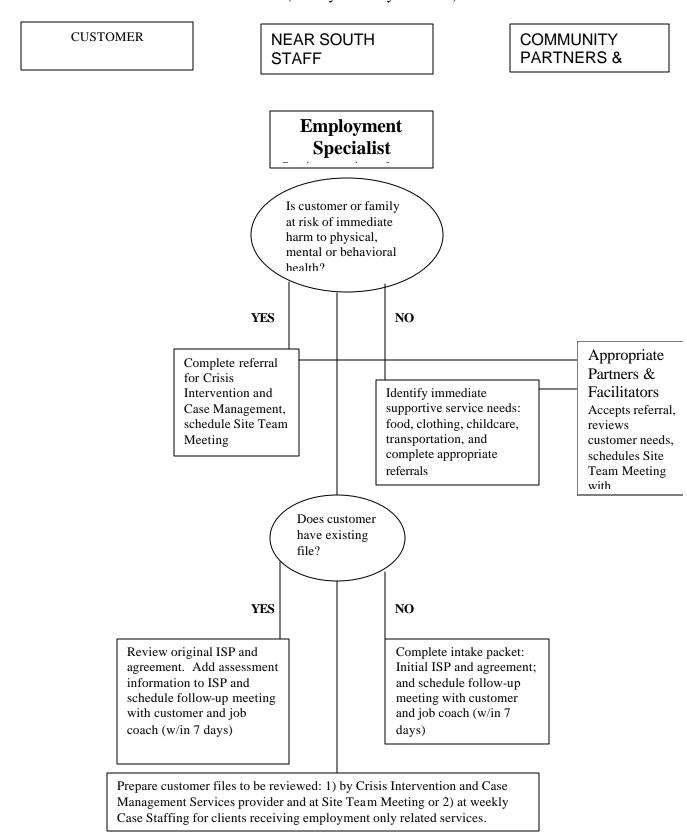
PROGRAM INTAKE (Employment)



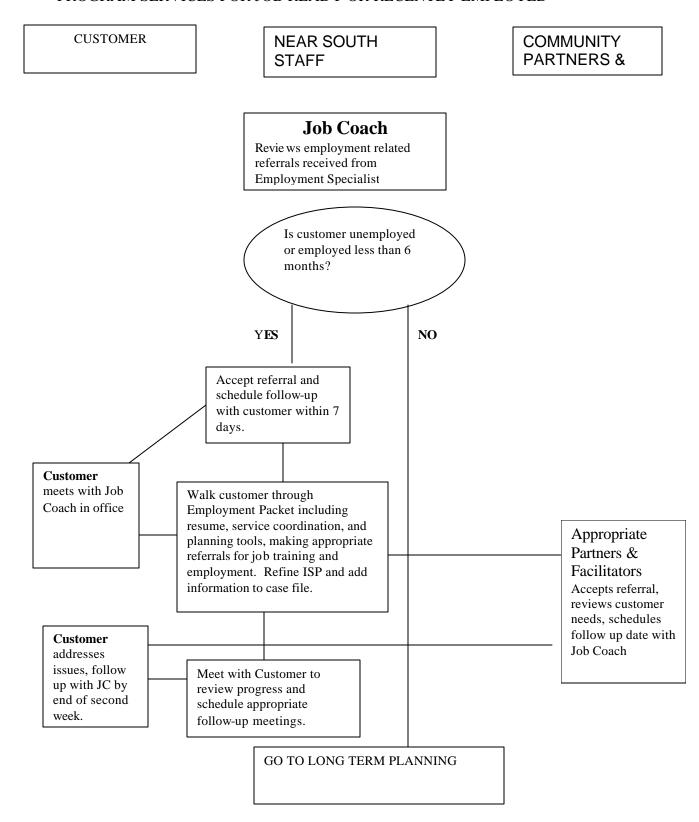
PROGRAM INTAKE (Lease Compliance/Mobility)



PROGRAM INTAKE (Family Stability Services)



PROGRAM SERVICES FOR JOB READY OR RECENTLY EMPLOYED



PROGRAM LONG TERM SERVICE PLANNING FOR EMPLOYMENT STABILITY

