



The Cookie Cart

*An evaluation of an innovative youth
employment program*

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Introduction

The Cookie Cart is a nonprofit employment program that serves youth living in or near North Minneapolis. This is an area that has been designated as an Empowerment Zone because of its high unemployment rates, an area where youth frequently have to compete with adults for jobs. In addition, student achievement and graduation rates in North Minneapolis schools are substantially lower than in other metro area schools.

The Cookie Cart offers young people age 14 to 17 an opportunity to develop life, leadership, and job skills through training and employment at a retail and commercial bakery. The business model provides a first paid job experience for youth, and helps participants gain the job and life skills necessary to transition to traditional employment in the community.

Evaluation approach

In order to assess the effectiveness of the Cookie Cart strategy for helping youth to gain skills, Cookie Cart contracted with Wilder Research to design and complete an evaluation of the program. The evaluation plan requires Cookie Cart participants to complete a self-administered survey, and their parents to complete a telephone survey describing experiences at Cookie Cart and opinions about the value of the Cookie Cart employment experience. Youth are eligible to complete this evaluation after 90 days of continuous experience in the Cookie Cart program. Parents are asked to complete a telephone interview after their child has completed at least 90 days of work experience.

This is the fourth year Wilder Research has summarized the results of surveys completed by youth and their parents. In the first year of the evaluation, (2006-2007), 37 youth and 18 parents completed surveys. During the second evaluation period (mid-2007), survey participation was significantly higher, with 64 youth and 30 parents completing surveys. In 2008, 49 youth and 19 parents completed surveys, and in the current evaluation period (2009), 44 youth and 17 parents completed surveys.

Participating youth completed their surveys on-site at the Cookie Cart facility. Parents completed telephone surveys conducted by a Cookie Cart volunteer. All surveys were returned to Wilder Research for review and analysis.

2009 youth survey results

The 2009 survey included youth who have participated in the program for at least three months and up to three years. More than half of the youth surveyed were female, and just under half were male. The majority (86%) of youth were in the 10th or 11th grade. Fifty percent of the youth surveyed were African American, 23 percent mixed race, and 12 percent were Hmong. The remaining youth participants identified themselves as Asian, Native American, and Latino. There has been a notable increase in the percentage of mixed race youth participants since the first year of the evaluation (11% in year one, compared to 13% in year 2 and 10% in year 3). The following table shows a complete breakdown of youth characteristics for the most recent study period.

1. Characteristics of 2009 youth survey participants (N=44)

	Characteristic	Percent
Gender	Female	52%
	Male	48%
Grade level	9th grade	14%
	10th grade	41%
	11th grade	46%
Racial/ethnic background	African American	51%
	Mixed racial background	23%
	Hmong	12%
	Asian	9%
	Native American	2%
	Latino	2%

Skills and attitudes of youth

In 2009, as in previous years, youth were asked questions about their skills and attitudes and whether they thought they had increased, stayed the same, or decreased on any of these attributes during their period of employment with Cookie Cart. The following table shows trends over all evaluation periods for youth participants.

2. Youths' self ratings of change in their skills and attitudes during their employment at Cookie Cart

Skills and attitudes	Percent reporting positive changes			
	Year 4 (2009) N=44	Year 3 (2008) N=49	Year 2 (mid-2007) N=64	Year 1 (2006-2007) N=37
Readiness to find and keep a job after Cookie Cart	86%	85%	81%	69%
Willingness to carry out responsibilities	80%	85%	78%	89%
Ability to interview for a job	80%	80%	76%	71%
Comfort talking to a potential employer	57%	80%	77%	70%
Ability to work as a team member	84%	79%	79%	89%
Ability to present yourself as an experienced employee	77%	77%	81%	89%
Willingness to help others	75%	76%	67%	70%
Ability to see yourself as a role model for younger youth	72%	69%	64%	64%
Skills in serving customers	72%	67%	73%	63%
Ability to solve problems on own	66%	67%	61%	60%
Ability to make good decisions	61%	65%	70%	76%
Understanding the consequences of your behavior	68%	65%	68%	58%
Ability to set goals	72%	65%	67%	75%
Knowledge of how to dress for an interview	86%	65%	65%	78%
Ability to keep scheduled commitments	59%	63%	69%	66%
Involvement in leadership activities	57%	63%	65%	74%
Skills in getting along with other kids	74%	61%	58%	68%
Ability to manage own money	66%	59%	44%	63%
Ability to get along with adults	58%	57%	61%	68%
Self-control when frustrated or angry	55%	51%	48%	43%
Feelings of self-esteem	52%	51%	45%	53%
Use of peaceful means to resolve conflicts	54%	46%	51%	49%
Time spent thinking about or planning for college	49%	38%	48%	60%
Enthusiasm for school	32%	37%	33%	44%
Getting along at home	28%	35%	34%	42%

The table above shows that youth ratings of their ability to interview for a job, find and keep a job, willingness to carry out responsibilities, and work as a team, remained steady or showed improvement across the four evaluation periods. Additionally in the current year, 21 percent more youth (86%) than year three (65%), reported having greater knowledge of how to dress for an interview. Eighty-four percent reported they are able to work as a team, and 72 percent reported being better able to set their own goals.

This year, there was a decline in ratings reported by youth related to their level of preparedness to find a job. Fifty-seven percent of youth say they do not feel comfortable talking to a potential employer, compared to 80 percent in year three. Other areas where youth ratings declined were, enthusiasm for school from (44% in year one compared to 32% in year four), involvement in leadership activities declined from (74% in year one compared to 57% in year four), and getting along at home (42% in year one compared to 28% in year four). And while the first three study periods showed a decline in time spent thinking about or planning for college, this year showed some growth; 49 percent of youth said they have thought about college compared to 38 percent in year three. While these areas are less likely to be directly affected by participation in Cookie Cart employability, they represent activities and interests that are relevant to the long-term success of youth and may merit some additional attention by program staff.

Best things about Cookie Cart work experience for youth

To learn more about the perceptions and experience of youth, they were asked to say in their own words what they liked most about Cookie Cart. All of the 44 participants provided comments. Responses were categorized and are shown below:

3. Best things about Cookie Cart work experience for youth

	Number	Percent
Working with/having fun with peers/meeting new people /nice people	19	43%
The managers/having helpful and understanding managers	11	25%
The environment (like family)	10	23%
A good job experience; learned a lot	4	9%
The 360 class	4	9%
The cookies	3	7%

Note: Percentages do not total 100%. Youth were allowed to name more than one "best thing" about their experience at Cookie Cart.

Other things that youth liked the most about working at the Cookie Cart (mentioned by fewer than three youth) were helping customers, having access to opportunities and skills to support themselves, and the fact that Cookie Cart cares for the community.

The following comments by youth are illustrative:

My team of employees is easy to work with. We are like family. We all get along.

The one thing I like about the Cookie Cart is the staff and my supervisors in which I interact with on a daily basis. They make the task of labor easier as well as fun.

While I have been in the Cookie Cart, I have been getting along with others. I feel very comfortable and I feel as I could act myself. The Cookie Cart has been helpful with my personal life and I have gained a lot of experience (job). I love the 360 class.

One thing I like most about the Cookie Cart is that it's not just a bakery. It's actually a door way to the future as in jobs, college, etc., and we get to learn life skills in the 360 class.

One thing about the Cookie Cart that I liked most was the 360 program. It really helped me out on improving my communication skills and my readiness skills on to getting a new job.

I love working with the people I work with and those good cookies.

Perceptions of supervisors

Youth place high value on the relationships they have with their Cookie Cart supervisors this year. When asked what they thought of their supervisor as a teacher, over three-quarters (77%) reported that their supervisor was a great teacher compared to two-thirds (65%) from year three. The remaining 18 percent reported that they were good or okay teachers. Also 90 percent of youth (90%) said that they definitely could ask their supervisor for help if they needed it compared to 73 percent from year three.

Impact on grades

Youth were also asked whether they thought their work experience at the Cookie Cart had any impact on their grades in school. This year, nearly two-thirds (64%) said working at the Cookie Cart had no impact on their grades compared to 71 percent in year three. Thirty-six percent said their work had improved their grades.

Differences in skills and attitude changes by gender, grade level, and length of time in the program

The analysis also examined the skill and attitude differences by gender, grade level in school, and length of time in the program.

The 2009 survey results show that more “older youth” compared to “younger youth” reported positive changes in the following skills and attitudes:

- Readiness to find and keep a job after Cookie Cart (95% vs. 79%)
- Ability to present themselves as experienced employees (85% vs. 71%)
- Willingness to help others (90% vs. 63%)
- Skills in getting along with others (85% vs. 65%)

“Veterans” of the program, those who had worked at Cookie Cart the longest, tended to report more positive changes compared to “newcomers” in the following skills and attitudes:

- Ability to interview for a job (87% vs. 64%)
- Willingness to help others (80% vs. 64%)
- Skills in getting along with other kids (80% vs. 62%)

Females reported more positive changes compared to males in the following skills and attitudes:

- Ability to work as a team member (91% vs. 76%)
- Ability to present themselves as experienced employees (91% vs. 62%)

The table below shows the most frequently reported positive changes in skills and attitudes by gender, grade in school, and length of time in the program.

4. Most frequently reported positive changes in skills and attitudes by gender, grade in school, and length of time in the program (N=44)

Skills and attitudes	Male N=22-24		Female N=22-24		9th-10 th graders N=29-31		11th-12th graders N=16-17		3 months N=19-21		1 year or more N=26-28	
	Number positive	Percent positive	Number positive	Percent positive	Number positive	Percent positive	Number positive	Percent positive	Number positive	Percent positive	Number positive	Percent positive
Knowledge of how to dress for an interview	18	86%	20	87%	20	83%	18	90%	11	79%	27	90%
Readiness to find and keep a job after Cookie Cart	17	81%	21	91%	19	79%	19	95%	11	79%	27	90%
Ability to work as a team member	16	76%	21	91%	20	83%	17	85%	11	79%	26	87%
Willingness to carry out responsibilities	16	76%	19	83%	18	75%	17	85%	12	86%	23	77%
Ability to interview for a job	16	76%	19	83%	20	83%	15	75%	9	64%	26	87%
Ability to present yourself as an experienced employee	13	62%	21	91%	17	71%	17	85%	11	79%	23	77%
Willingness to help others	16	76%	17	74%	15	63%	18	90%	9	64%	24	80%
Skills in getting along with other kids	17	81%	15	68%	15	65%	17	85%	8	62%	24	80%
Ability to set goals	16	80%	15	65%	20	83%	11	58%	10	77%	21	70%

Cookie Cart Captains

The Cookie Cart offers eligible youth in the program the opportunity to develop and strengthen their job skills by promoting them to a Cart Captain position. This position is earned by those youth who have demonstrated leadership skills to engage them in peer-to-peer learning experiences.

As a Cart Captain, youth are initially trained by staff to ensure the quality of the bakery products of their peers by checking cookie orders, and reading packaging slips for accuracy. Cart Captains in turn train their peers on how to prepare the orders and how to package them. They also have the responsibility of helping their peers follow the guidelines of the baking area by keeping it clean and free from contaminants.

Additionally, Cart Captains work with new employees to ensure customer service standards are met by assisting with tasks such as taking orders, handling the cash register, and communicating appropriately for timely delivery of the product and customer satisfaction.

Finally, Cart Captains report back to staff about the status or progress of their peer trainings for the purpose of making changes or improvements where they are needed.

Cookie Cart staff have reported that this peer-to-peer leadership approach is making a positive impact on the program participants. Youth appreciate the help that they receive from others who are their own age and being able to work together.

Although this component was not a specific focus of the year 4 evaluation, the following comments may reflect the value of the Cart Captain model:

What I like the most is helping each other by understanding what they need help for – “new experience.”

One thing I like is getting to know others and work as a team.

What I like most is the will to help others and be a leader.

It feels like a family so you're not under the pressure of trying to be better than anybody. Everyone helps each other.

Parent results

As in previous evaluations, parents reported on the same questions youth were asked regarding the skills and attitudes of their children. Surveys were completed by 17 parents during the 2009 period. The following table shows trends over time for parent participants and that their ratings are generally more positive than youth ratings.

5. Parents self ratings of change in their child’s skills and attitudes during their employment at the Cookie Cart

Skills and attitudes	Percent reporting positive change			
	Year 4 (2009) N=17	Year 3 (2008) N=19	Year 2 (mid-2007) N=30	Year 1 (2006-2007) N=18
Readiness to find and keep a job after Cookie Cart	88%	94%	93%	94%
Willingness to carry out responsibilities	82%	94%	83%	77%
Ability to interview for a job	87%	100%	96%	79%
Comfort talking to a potential employer	94%	78%	81%	80%
Ability to work as a team member	88%	95%	97%	82%
Ability to present yourself as an experienced employee	100%	100%	90%	94%
Willingness to help others	77%	90%	86%	82%
Ability to see yourself as a role model for younger youth	94%	90%	93%	75%
Skills in serving customers	93%	89%	89%	80%
Ability to solve problems on own	80%	84%	82%	69%
Ability to make good decisions	94%	79%	66%	75%
Understanding the consequences of your behavior	81%	90%	77%	69%
Ability to set goals	71%	95%	72%	69%
Knowledge of how to dress for an interview	100%	83%	83%	69%
Ability to keep scheduled commitments	94%	90%	57%	82%
Involvement in leadership activities	93%	84%	72%	63%
Skills in getting along with other kids	77%	84%	73%	56%
Ability to manage own money	65%	79%	63%	65%
Ability to get along with adults	82%	94%	80%	65%
Self-control when frustrated or angry	65%	79%	66%	53%
Feelings of self-esteem	82%	100%	79%	77%
Use of peaceful means to resolve conflicts	81%	74%	43%	71%
Time spent thinking about or planning for college	75%	82%	66%	65%
Enthusiasm for school	71%	79%	50%	59%
Getting along at home	59%	90%	62%	77%

During the 2009 study, parents and youth showed similar rates in the most frequently reported areas that impact overall youth preparedness for work outside of the Cookie Cart. The areas where parents and youth had similar ratings were:

- Readiness to find and keep a job (88% vs. 86%)
- Willingness to carry out responsibilities (82% vs. 80%)
- Ability to interview for a job (87% vs. 80%)
- Ability to work as a team (88% vs. 84%)
- Willingness to help others (77% vs. 75%)

The table below itemizes those skills and attitudes that were similarly rated by both parents and youth.

6. Parents and youth self ratings of most frequently reported positive changes in skills and attitudes in 2009 period

Skills and attitudes	Parents Year 4 (2009) N=17	Youth Year 4 (2009) N=44
Readiness to find and keep a job after Cookie Cart	88%	86%
Willingness to carry out responsibilities	82%	80%
Ability to interview for a job	87%	80%
Ability to work as a team member	88%	84%
Willingness to help others	77%	75%
Ability to set goals	71%	72%
Skills in getting along with other kids	77%	74%
Ability to manage own money	65%	66%

Areas that have shown the most improvement across the four study periods according to parents include the ability to make good decisions, comfort talking to a potential employer, and the knowledge of how to dress for an interview. However, 59 percent of parents this year compared to 90 percent of parents in the third year felt that Cookie Cart had improved the likelihood that their children would get along at home. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of parents in year four compared to the majority (95%) in year three believe their youth are able to set goals. Year four parents (82%) compared to year three parents (100%) believed that their child's self-esteem had increased.

To learn more about parents' perceptions of the Cookie Cart, they were asked what they liked the most about it. Forty-four percent of parents reported that the job experience for youth was the best thing, followed by a safe environment, a place where young people can learn new things, and a place where youth are understood and given a chance.

The majority of parents (16) responded to this question. Responses were categorized and are shown below.

7. What parents liked the most about the Cookie Cart program

	Number	Percent
Provides a job experience/opportunity to work	7	44%
Keeps child out of trouble/safe environment	3	19%
Teenagers are understood and given a chance	3	19%
Young people can out into the world and learn new things	3	19%
Gives my child self-esteem	2	13%
Provides structure in my child's life/clear expectations	2	13%
Another Cookie Cart program - 360	2	13%
Helps my child with job search, resume application preparation	1	6%
Supports what parents teach at home	1	6%

Note: Percentages do not total 100%. Parents were allowed to name more than one "best thing" about the Cookie Cart program.

The following are examples of parent's comments:

The teens get job experience. The Cookie Cart teaches them about the value of money, how to interview, and how to be better people in society.

It keeps the youth employed and out of trouble.

It makes her busy and allows her to serve the public and get along with others and respect people.

The Cookie Cart is willing to give teens a chance with regard to personal challenges (e.g., speech impediment). They accommodate personal challenges. The Cookie Cart gives 14 year olds a chance at work.

The learning experience. There is room to make mistakes. There is room to grow and teens can be promoted. The teens also receive good feedback.

The structure provided for the youth positively keeps the youth in order and focused. No nonsense is tolerated at the Cookie Cart, so it backs up what parents are teaching at home.

My child is prepared for work readiness. The 360 program has helped the teens improve their work skills. Cookie Cart introduced my child to other opportunities.

Recommendations for improvement

Parents and youth had similar views about what might be done to strengthen or improve the Cookie Cart experience. In keeping with their positive reception of the program, 38 percent of the parents surveyed this year said they do not want to change anything about the program. However, almost one-third (31%) would like Cookie Cart to provide opportunities for their children to gain more hours or stay longer until they find other employment.

Examples of some of the parents' comments include the following:

Longer hours during the summer because they want a lot of things and they can't afford it. They need to work long hard hours.

It would be beneficial for them to work longer hours.

It would give them more of an opportunity to stay in their community at a positive outlet for themselves. If they are happy with their jobs, they should be able to stay at that job.

Keep the youth until they have another job lined up.

For the youth, 14 percent (14%) said they would not change anything about the Cookie Cart. Additionally, 30 percent suggested having more hours to work, more pay and having a set work schedule. More than half (56%) of youth mentioned changes they would like to see in themselves.

The following list includes some behaviors that youth wanted to improve in themselves:

If I could improve one thing about my work experience it'll be for me to work at a faster pace at packing cookies. It's because I feel like I need to move faster and more accurately.

If I could improve one thing about my work experience at the Cookie Cart, it would be learning the cash register. I feel as though many other jobs will need a requirement to know skills as cashier to get the job. (41%)

I would improve my people skills because if no one is mean why do you have to be mean to them. (5%)

The way I act towards others sometimes they might get a negative vibe. (5%)

If I could improve one thing about my work experiences it would be coming to work on time and stop calling in. I would change that because that's the reason why I don't have a job now. (5%)

Conclusions and issues to consider

The results of this year's Cookie Cart survey show that both parents and youth find considerable value in the program. Parents and youth value it for the employment and social skills training it provides, and also for the increased job readiness that they feel after the training and work experiences in the bakery. Youth benefit from working closely with others from their peer group, and feel well supported by staff and the environment. Positive changes in skills and attitudes were most often reported by females, older youth, and youth who had participated in the program for one year or more.

While it does not appear that the program has significant impact on participants' enthusiasm for school or grades, parents believe it produces an interest in post-secondary training and educational experiences (75% of parents vs. 49% of youth).

Overall, the findings of the survey suggest that Cookie Cart is successful in helping North Minneapolis youth gain work experiences, positive relationships with adults in a work setting, positive team experiences while working, and solid leadership experiences. Longer work experiences with Cookie Cart result in more positive benefits for youth.

Changes in survey results from year one to year four of the evaluation

This year's youth (86%) are consistent in reporting increased feelings of being ready to find and keep a job after working at the Cookie Cart and this rating has increased each year of the evaluation. Other areas that strongly support their feelings of job readiness include greater willingness to carry out responsibilities, feeling able to interview for a job, presenting as an experienced employee, serving customers and a willingness to help others. Additionally, a significant change from the last two study periods was an increase in knowledge of how to dress for an interview.

An important issue to consider however is the percentage of youth during this year's evaluation period who felt comfortable talking to a potential employer. The percentage has decreased significantly from previous years. Seventy percent of youth surveyed in year one were comfortable talking to a potential employer, compared to 77 percent in year two, 80 percent in year three, and 57 percent in year four. According to program staff, one possible explanation for this finding is that fact that youth were likely feeling discouraged in their current job search efforts. Staff report that more youth in the current study phase are coming up short in job searches because of the scarcity of employment

opportunities, especially for youth. During the same time, however, the program has placed more focus on preparing youth to talk to potential employers about jobs. Given these facts, there is likely to be a discrepancy between youth who feel ready to find and keep a job and those who actually feel comfortable talking to potential employers, given the current job market. This finding may be worth further discussion among program staff and youth.

There are other areas that do not necessarily impact the success of youths' participation at the Cookie Cart, but which may impact their overall success in other ways. While it is difficult to influence these outcomes given the focus of Cookie Cart services, it is worth discussing any ways in which other youth experiences could align with these goals. In particular, ratings by youth regarding their enthusiasm for school, and getting along at home have decreased or remained unchanged since the first year. Enthusiasm for school in year one was 44 percent compared to 32 percent in year four. Feelings of being able to get along at home have decreased from 42 percent in year one to 28 percent in year four.

Other possible ways to improve our understanding of the Cookie Cart experience might include a more in-depth look at youth and their work experience through the addition of survey questions regarding the 360 class and a focus on how that experience enhances skill development and job performance. Cookie Cart may also want to consider getting survey ratings from staff who work closely with the youth. This would involve creating a survey with specific job related questions for staff to rate, such as willingness to carry out responsibilities, ability to work as a team member, ability to serve as a Cart Captain, and ability to attend to details.

Finally, it is worth considering ways in which it may be possible to boost the participation rates of parents in the overall evaluation process.

Appendix

Follow-up interviews

Open ended responses

Youth interview

Employee ID#: _____

THE COOKIE CART YOUTH INTERVIEW

1. Please tell us about yourself.
 - a. You are a: Male Female (CIRCLE ONE)
 - b. What grade are you in? (IF SUMMER, GRADE IN PREVIOUS SCHOOL YEAR) _____
 - c. When is your birthday? (Month/Day/Year) ____/____/____
 - d. How would you describe your race or ethnicity? _____
 - e. What is the zip code of the place where you sleep most often? _____

2. Since you started to work at The Cookie Cart, has your...

	Would you say...			
	Increased,	Stayed about the same, or	Decreased?	Don't know
A. Comfort with talking to a potential employer	1	2	3	8
B. Ability to present yourself as an experienced employee	1	2	3	8
C. Ability to solve problems on your own	1	2	3	8
D. Ability to manage your money	1	2	3	8
E. Ability to get along with adults	1	2	3	8
F. Self-control when frustrated or angry	1	2	3	8
G. Understanding of the consequences of your behavior	1	2	3	8
H. Willingness to carry out responsibilities	1	2	3	8
I. Enthusiasm for school	1	2	3	8
J. Ability to keep scheduled commitments	1	2	3	8
K. Skills in serving customers	1	2	3	8
L. Ability to interview for a job	1	2	3	8
M. Knowledge of how to dress for an interview	1	2	3	8
N. Willingness to help others	1	2	3	8
O. Skills in getting along with other kids	1	2	3	8
P. Involvement in leadership activities	1	2	3	8
Q. Ability to see yourself as a role model for younger kids	1	2	3	8
R. Feelings of self-esteem	1	2	3	8
S. Ability in getting along at home	1	2	3	8
T. Use of peaceful means to resolve conflicts	1	2	3	8
U. Ability to make good decisions	1	2	3	8
V. Ability to set goals	1	2	3	8

	Would you say...			
	Increased,	Stayed about the same, or	Decreased?	Don't know
W. The time you have spent thinking about/ planning for college	1	2	3	8
X. Ability to work as a team member	1	2	3	8
Y. Readiness to find and keep a job after working at The Cookie Cart	1	2	3	8

3. What is the one thing about The Cookie Cart that you like most?

4. If you could improve one thing about your work experience at The Cookie Cart, what would you change and why?

5. Would you say working at The Cookie Cart has ...

- Hurt your grades at school,..... 1
- Had no impact on your grades, or,..... 2
- Improved your grades?
- Refused 7
- Don't know..... 8

6. When you think of your Supervisor at The Cookie Cart, would you say she or he is...

- A poor teacher,..... 1
- An okay teacher, 2
- A good teacher or,..... 3
- A great teacher, 4
- Refused 7
- Don't know..... 8

7. Do you feel that you can ask your Supervisor for help if you need it? Would you say...

- Definitely yes,..... 1
- Probably yes,..... 2
- Probably not, or 3
- Definitely not? 4
- Refused 7
- Don't know..... 8

That is the end of the survey. Thanks for your time. We really appreciate your help.

Parent interview

Employee ID#: _____

THE COOKIE CART PARENT INTERVIEW

Project Code: 71245

INTRODUCTION:

Hi, (PARENT NAME). This is _____, from The Cookie Cart. If it's okay with you, I'd like to ask you a few questions over the phone about your child, (YOUTH EMPLOYEE'S NAME) experience working at The Cookie Cart to learn how you feel about it. It will only take a few minutes and your answers will be used to help us improve The Cookie Cart. Would you be willing to participate? If this is a good time for you we can do it now.

IF PARENT IS WILLING TO PARTICIPATE NOW, BEGIN INTERVIEW.

IF NOT A CONVENIENT TIME, ARRANGE CALLBACK AND NOTE CALLBACK TIME/DATE ON FACESHEET.

IF PARENT REFUSES TO BE INTERVIEWED NOTE CIRCUMSTANCES ON FACESHEET AND PUT IN REFUSAL FOLDER.

Thank you for your time.

**THE COOKIE CART
PARENT INTERVIEW**

1. I am going to ask you a series of question about your child. Our goal is to understand ways that he/she has changed as a result of his/her employment at The Cookie Cart.

Since working at The Cookie Cart, has your son's or daughter's...	Would you say...			
	Increased,	Stayed about the same, or	Decreased?	Don't know
A. Comfort with talking to a potential employer	1	2	3	8
B. Ability to present himself/herself as an experienced employee	1	2	3	8
C. Ability to solve problems on his/her own	1	2	3	8
D. Ability to manage his/her money	1	2	3	8
E. Ability to get along with other adults	1	2	3	8
F. Self-control when frustrated or angry	1	2	3	8
G. Understanding of the consequences of their behavior	1	2	3	8
H. Willingness to carry out responsibilities	1	2	3	8
I. Enthusiasm for school	1	2	3	8
J. Ability to keep scheduled commitments	1	2	3	8
K. Skills in serving customers	1	2	3	8
L. Ability to interview for a job	1	2	3	8
M. Knowledge of how to dress for an interview	1	2	3	8
N. Willingness to help others	1	2	3	8
O. Skills in getting along with other kids	1	2	3	8
P. Involvement in leadership activities	1	2	3	8
Q. Ability to see himself/herself as a role model for younger kids	1	2	3	8
R. Feelings of self-esteem	1	2	3	8
S. Ability in getting along at home	1	2	3	8
T. Use of peaceful means to resolve conflicts	1	2	3	8
U. Ability to make good decisions	1	2	3	8
V. Ability to set goals	1	2	3	8
W. Time spent thinking about /planning for college	1	2	3	8
X. Ability to work as a team member	1	2	3	8
Y. Readiness to find and keep a job after working at The Cookie Cart	1	2	3	8

3. What is the one thing about The Cookie Cart that you like the most?

4. If you could improve one thing about The Cookie Cart, what would you change and why?

5. Since your child started working at The Cookie Cart, would you say your son's/daughter's grades in school have....

- Gotten worse, 1
- Stayed the same, 2
- Improved a little, or 3
- Improved a lot? 4
- Refused 7
- Don't know 8

That is the end of the survey. Thanks for your time. We really appreciate your help.

Youth open-ended responses

What is the one thing about the Cookie Cart that you like the most?

My co-workers

I love working with the people I work with and those good cookies.

Meeting new people!

That I work with others and being around people my age.

While I have been in the Cookie Cart, I have been getting along with others. I feel very comfortable and I feel as I could act myself.

I like how people get along and the kindness.

I like being able to come in and my co-workers help me when I am doing wrong.

My team of employees is easy to work with. We're like family. We all get along.

Talk to other workers about problem you don't understand.

I like getting to know every employee a little more about themselves.

Teens can communicate and keep in touch and it's a great way to keep up with friends from the past.

I like the youth staff.

I would say meeting the new people and making new friends.

One thing I liked most about the Cookie Cart is working with different kinds of people and getting to know them.

The managers

I like my managers because they are so nice and they make me want to come to work and have a nice day.

I like being able to come in and Ms. Boyd being so nice.

I like seeing my bosses.

The one thing I like about the Cookie Cart is the staff and my supervisors in which I interact with on a daily basis. They make the task of labor easier as well as fun.

I enjoy the managers! My managers are always so friendly and understanding of me! Most managers or supervisors are not.

That you can talk to your supervisors about anything.

I like the management team and supervisors.

Ms. Richardson and Ms. Boyd's complete honesty and how cool they are. I'm very comfortable with them and my co-workers.

Ms. Richardson and Mrs. Boyd! It's hard to find AAUHS who will accept adversity and make accommodations especially in a busy work environment. I am more than pleased.

The Cookie Cart has been helpful with my personal life and I have gained a lot of job experience.

The leadership. Everyone always has a positive attitude.

One thing I like the most about the Cookie Cart is when my supervisor Ms. Boyd puts the cookie dough on a pan, into the oven and the fresh smell later that comes out making me crave for some cookies.

360 program

I love the 360 class.

One thing I like the most is the 360 class because I learn a lot in that class.

That the Cookie Cart will work with your schedule if you have another main job.

One thing about the Cookie Cart that I liked most was the 360 program. It really helped me out on improving my communication skills and my readiness skills on to getting a new job.

The Cookie Cart experience

One thing I like most about the Cookie Cart is that it's not just a bakery. It's actually a door way to the future as in jobs, college, etc. We get to learn life skills in the 360 class.

I love to pack orders the most of anything but I also like to scoop depending on the Cookie type.

One thing I like about the Cookie Cart is that I get along with everyone and customer service people. I love helping others.

It gives teenagers their first paying job and it teaches kids how to get along with a lot of different people.

What I like most is the will to help others and be a leader.

I would say that it is meeting new people and making new friends. Learning how to be a leader.

I like 'Scoop the Cook' and I like to work for the Cookie Cart.

The one thing about Cookie Cart that I like most is that I like having classes to teach me about different things like how to dress for an interview and what's safe for foods.

I like the cookies and getting to know different races. One thing that I love about Cookie Cart is the togetherness and also the skills that you develop working at the Cookie Cart.

How the Cookie Cart is a non-profit organization and the care for kids and the community.

One thing that I like most about the Cart was pay day to tell the truth.

There are many things that I like about working at the Cookie Cart. One thing would be I like getting to know others and work as a team. Cookie Cart is a very nice experience and place to work.

One thing about the Cookie Cart that I liked the most was the fact that it's a job to help teenagers gain work skills.

What I like the most is helping each other by understanding what they need help for - "new experience."

The environment

I like the environment with everyone around.

The one thing at the Cookie Cart I liked most was getting to know different people.

How everybody is nice and how I can eat as many cookies as I wish. Also how I can come in and have a person to talk to.

The one thing I like most about working at the Cookie cart is it's a comfortable work place, meaning everyone is easy to get along with.

The thing I like working at the Cookie Cart is that they build a personal relationship with you as a person, and take time out to get to know you and help you.

It feels like a family so you're not under the pressure of trying to be better than anybody. Everyone helps each other.

I like coming into the Cookie Cart because it seems like I have two adults to talk to and to keep them updated with what's going on with me. So, I like that about the Cookie Cart.

If you could improve one thing about your work experience at the Cookie Cart what would you change and why?

Improvement in skills

Cashier experience to be qualified at places like Target and Best Buy.

One thing I could improve is my customer service because that is still my skill that I want to improve.

I would improve my people skills because if no one is mean why do you have to be mean to them.

Cleaning, because when I clean I do my best, but I don't like to because I do the same when I go home.

If I could improve one thing about my work experience at the Cookie Cart, it would be learning the cash register. I feel as though many other jobs will need a requirement to know skills as cashier to get the job.

One I would change about my work experience is the way I talk because sometimes it makes me sound ghetto in the work place.

Talk less. It slows me down.

I would improve my communication because I barely talk at work.

Working faster

I would change my speed of doing things. It is because I think I am working at a slow pace and I want to speed up.

I have a hard time working fast. I'd say I work a good pace to ensure I am getting all the details. I could work faster. The lobby.

Scooping because I think I'm kind of slow at doing that.

I need to be more focused on the task at hand and do it quick and efficient.

If I could improve one thing about my work experience it'll be for me to work at a faster pace at packing cookies. It's because I feel like I need to move faster and more accurately.

One thing I would like to improve on is to scoop the cookie dough faster and quicker, because sometimes I admit, I do sometimes scoop fast but not fast enough like other employees. I would like to improve more on this or change the fact how I scoop slow and change it to scooping the cookie dough faster, because if I or other employees scoop it fast we can start on a new one again.

If I can change one thing about working at the Cookie Cart and improve is speed up a lot more in cleaning and getting things done on time before shift end.

I would improve my speed at scooping up the cookie dough.

Change in hours/scheduling

If I could improve one thing about my work experience at the Cookie Cart, it would be the schedule in which we get to work. I feel like we as teenagers need this work experience so they should give us more hours on the clock.

Well I would change the amount of hours because I feel that we are old enough to make more money.

I would say asking for more hours to earn more.

I will like to work every day.

Well yeah, I would change to having more hours because I really dislike being broke.

I would probably ask for more hours so my work ability can really be up to par.

Wish I could stay and work longer.

I would change the scheduling system. Instead of being scheduled for any day, I would have preferred to have a specific day to come to work each and every week.

Better wages

The wages we get paid because we kind of don't get paid enough on are checks.

I would improve the pay at the Cookie Cart. Otherwise than that, the work experience is great. I learn a lot.

Relating to others

The way I act towards others sometimes they might get a negative vibe.

I would change how I talk to people not that I talk to them bad; it's just that I need to keep my comments to myself some times.

Doing better at things

All the times I did something incorrect, because that makes me panicky.

Have more confidence in my work.

I would like to have a better understanding of things and how to act on it. I don't always have a good understanding about things.

I would like it if I could try to understand myself more.

Don't hesitate too much on stuff.

I would change calling into work – can't make the schedule when it's due.

One thing I would have changed is just do more besides what I would do.

Do even better than I have tried.

If I could improve one thing about my work experiences it would be coming to work on time and stop calling in. I would change that because that's the reason why I don't have a job now.

I would change nothing but I would want to come out to the customer service desk more often because that's a big part of the work place environment.

No change

I would say that I wouldn't change anything because I think that I am doing great here.

I don't think there is anything to say. The Cookie Cart is a great job.

Nothing. I would do it all over again.

Other

I think I would change the glove thing because I think as long as we wash our hands; we should be able to touch the cookies.

One thing I would change is the age rate because I don't think some teens are ready for a job as high as this one.

Parent open-ended responses

What is the one thing about the Cookie Cart that you like the most?

Good job experience

Keeping the youth employed.

The teens get job experience. The Cookie Cart teaches them about the value of money, how to interview and how to be a better person in society.

It teaches the teens skills about future jobs.

It prepares him for work readiness.

The Cookie Cart introduced my child to other opportunities.

I like it because it teaches them about self management and how to complete a resume.

It offers employment at a young age.

The environment

Keeping the youth employed so they do not hang with the wrong crowd.

Keeping the youth out of trouble.

Excellent job with the youth. You helped open my child up. She was very shy and reserved prior to working here.

The learning experience – there is room to make mistakes. There is room to grow. The teens can be promoted. The teens also receive good feedback – room to grow with their self-esteem.

They are excellent with youth.

The structure provided for the youth and positively keeps the youth in order and focused. No nonsense is tolerated at the Cookie Cart, so it backs up what parents are teaching at home.

Teach kids how to be open-minded and to explore all options.

Gives youth a chance

It gave him a start and a chance at working.

The Cookie Cart is giving 14 year olds a chance at work.

The Cookie Cart is willing to give teens a chance in regards to personal challenges (e.g., physical challenges).

360 program

I like the 360 program and all that it does for the youth.

360 has helped the teens improve his work skills.

If you could improve one thing about the Cookie Cart what would you change and why?

Longer hours

Longer hours during the summer because they want a lot of things and they can't afford it. They need to work long hard hours.

Provide longer hours because it would be beneficial for them to work longer hours.

The hours. He didn't get many hours. My son is kind of lazy. He would be more enthused about work if he worked more hours.

Remain at Cookie Cart

Age limit – it would give them more of an opportunity to stay in their community at a positive outlet for themselves. If they are happy with their jobs, then you should be able to stay at your job.

Keep the youth until they have another job lined up.

Maybe bigger and provide more positions for more youth.

Location change

The location. Broadway has a lot of activity.

Consider a location in St. Paul.

Other

Training the Cookie Cart captains on an employee's personal challenges. The Cookie Cart should educate other staff on others personal challenges.

I would make a set time for parents to come pick up their kids so they aren't waiting.