

Outcomes of Transition-Age Youth Seeking Vocational Rehabilitation Services

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MATHEMATICA
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- **Research funded through NIDILRR's VR Practices and Youth Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (<http://vrpracticesandyouth.org/>)**
- **The Center conducts research and technical assistance to improve VR service delivery to youth**
- **The findings and conclusions expressed are solely those of the authors and do not represent the views of NIDILRR or any agency of the federal government.**

VR Agencies Deciding How to Implement WIOA

- **WIOA requires VR agencies to focus more resources on youth**
 - Deliver pre-employment transition services
 - Target both in-school and out-of-school youth
 - Improve workplace skills
 - Provide supported employment opportunities
- **WIOA requires tracking new outcomes**
 - Employment and earnings after program exit
 - Skill and credential gain

VR Agencies Offer Many Programs for Youth with Disabilities

Review of 2015 VR state plans:

- Identified 186 programs for youth with disabilities
 - Two-thirds of programs emphasized employment
- Evidence of evaluation activities was limited

Source: Swankoski, K., Hulette, S., & Sevak, P., (Forthcoming). "State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs for Transition-age Youth." VR and Youth RRTC issue brief.

Little Evidence of Using Data for Youth Program Evaluation

Review of peer-reviewed literature (13 articles, 7 programs) found:

- Little rigorous evidence on program effectiveness
- Common themes:
 - Targeted specific youth populations
 - Involved multiple agency partners

Source: Mann, D. (2015). "Employment Programs for Transition-Age Youth with Disabilities that Feature Vocational Rehabilitation Services and Supports: A Literature Review." VR and Youth RRTC issue brief. Available at <http://vrpracticesandyouth.org/resources/briefs>

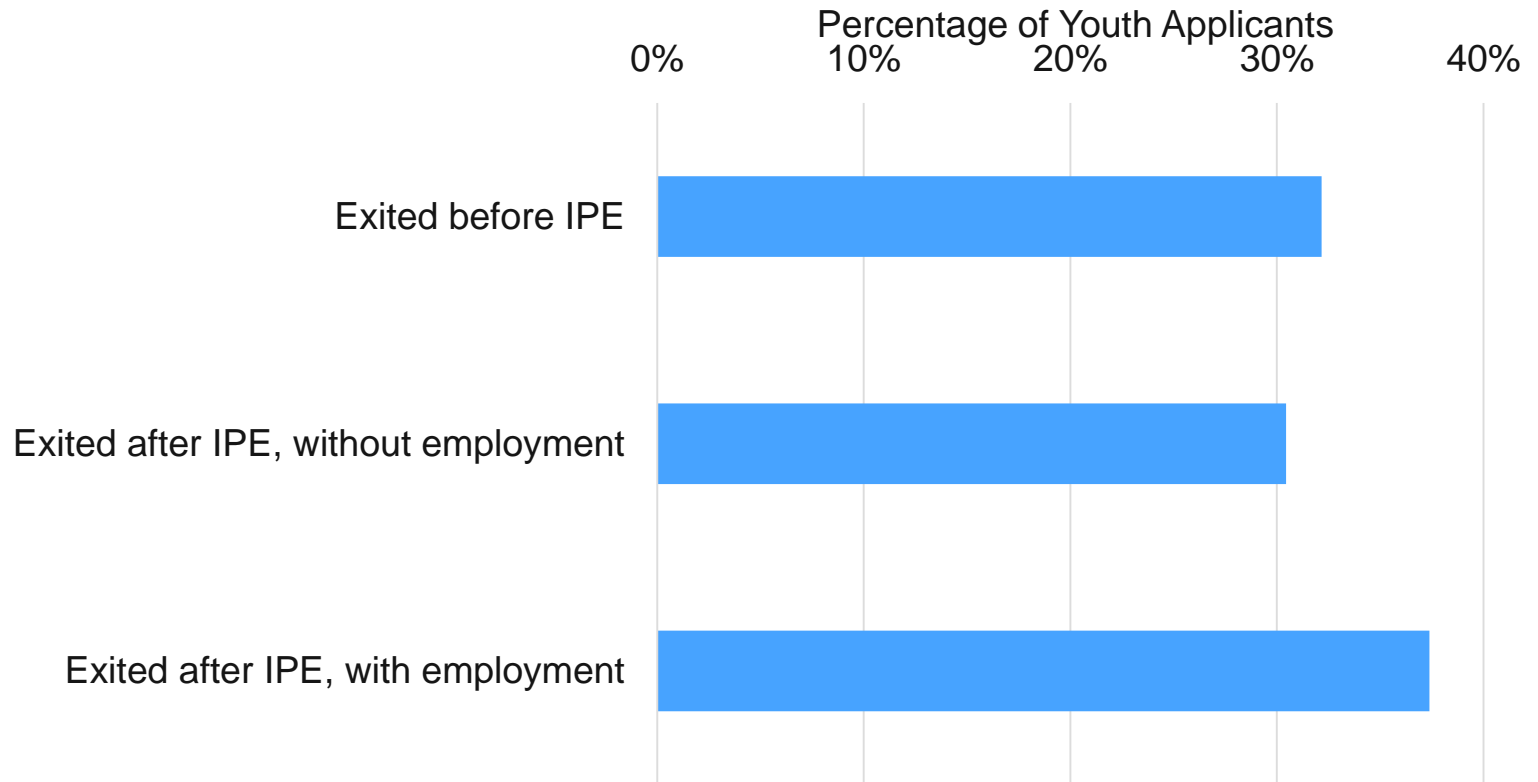
Research Goals

- **Identify long-term employment and program outcomes for transition-age VR customers**
- **Examine variation in outcomes across initial educational attainment and employment status, as well as for other critical individual- and agency-level characteristics**
- **Use findings to inform WIOA implementation**

Research Used Linked RSA and SSA Administrative Data

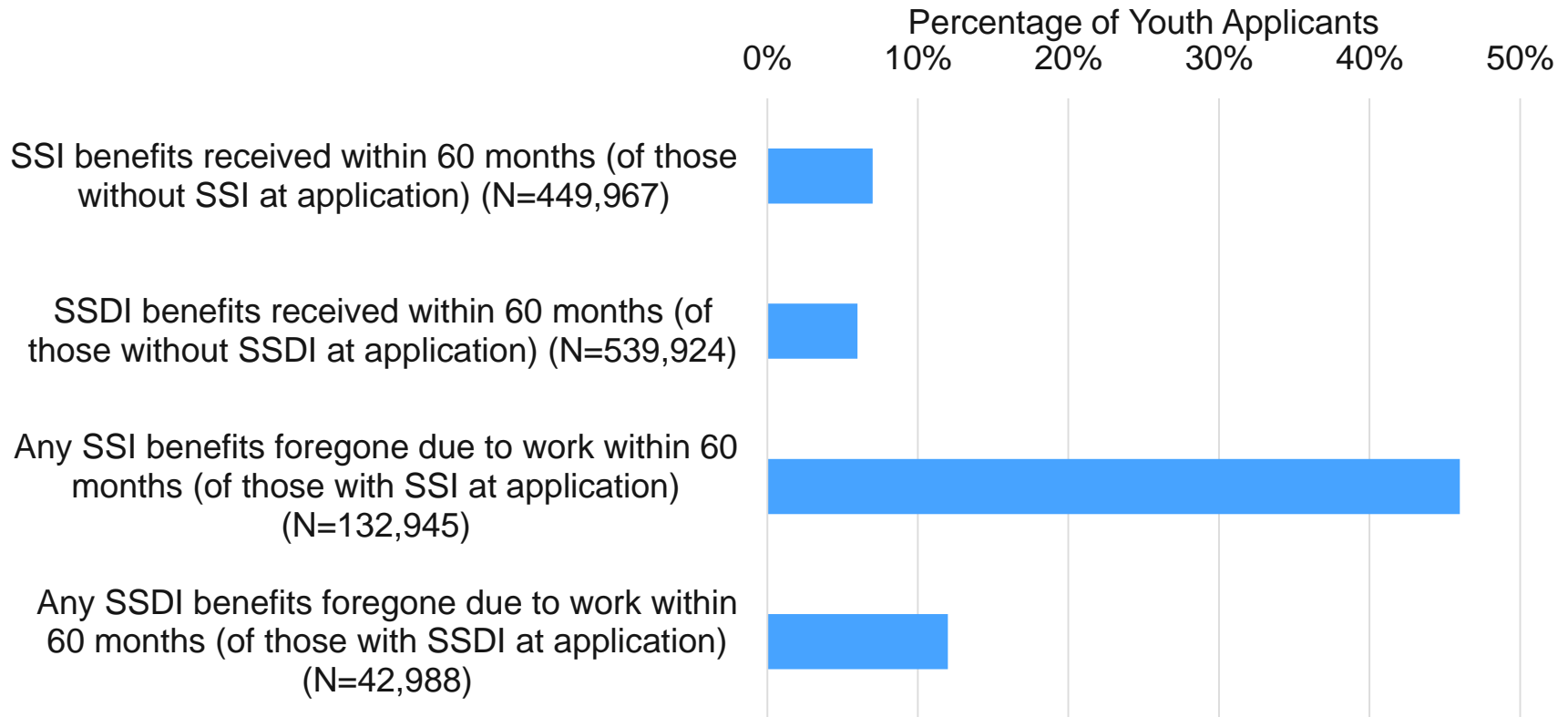
- **Analysis sample included all transition-age youth who applied from 2004 through 2007**
- **Data sources:**
 - **Rehabilitation Services Administration data from fiscal years (FYs) 2004 through 2013**
 - **Social Security Administration's Disability Analysis File (DAF)**

Similar Numbers of Youth VR Applicants Exited at Different Points



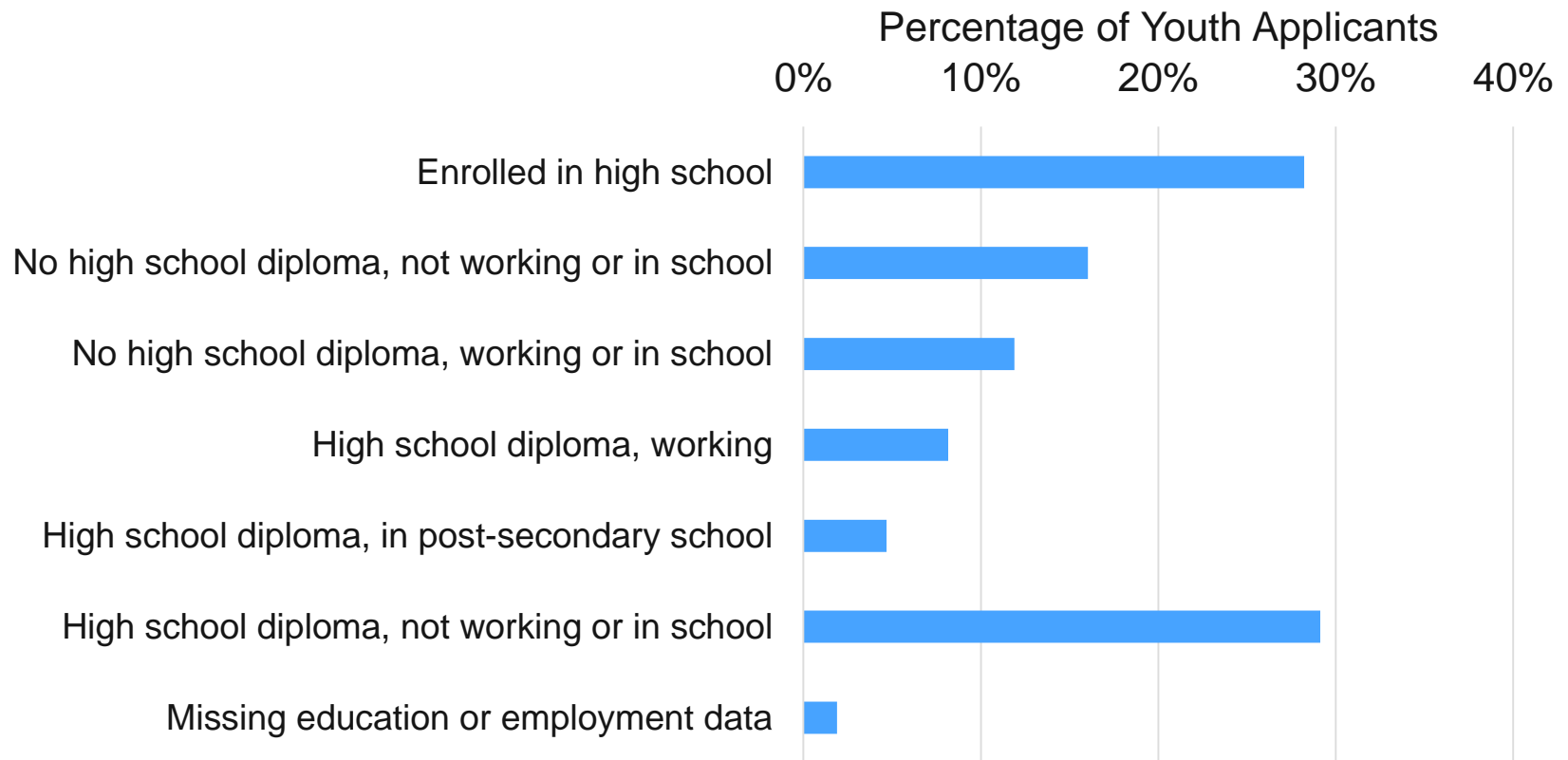
Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 582,912. IPE=Individualized plan for employment.

Less than 10 Percent of Non-SSA Youth Received SSA Benefits within 5 Years



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. SSI=Supplemental Security Income. SSDI=Social Security Disability Insurance.

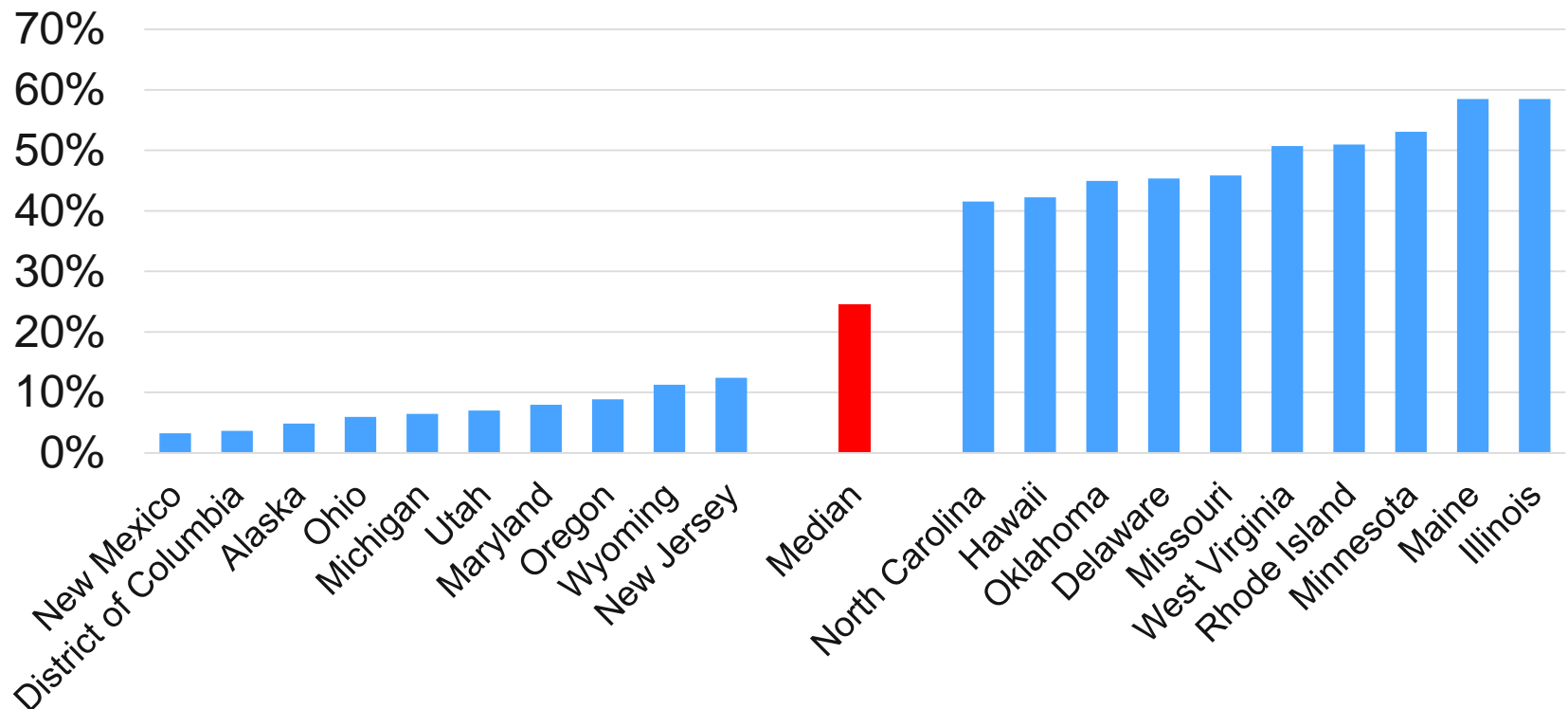
Most Youth VR Applicants Were Enrolled in High School or Not Working But Had High School Diploma



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 582,912.

VR Agencies Varied Widely in Youth Applicant Types

Percentage of Youth Applicants in High School



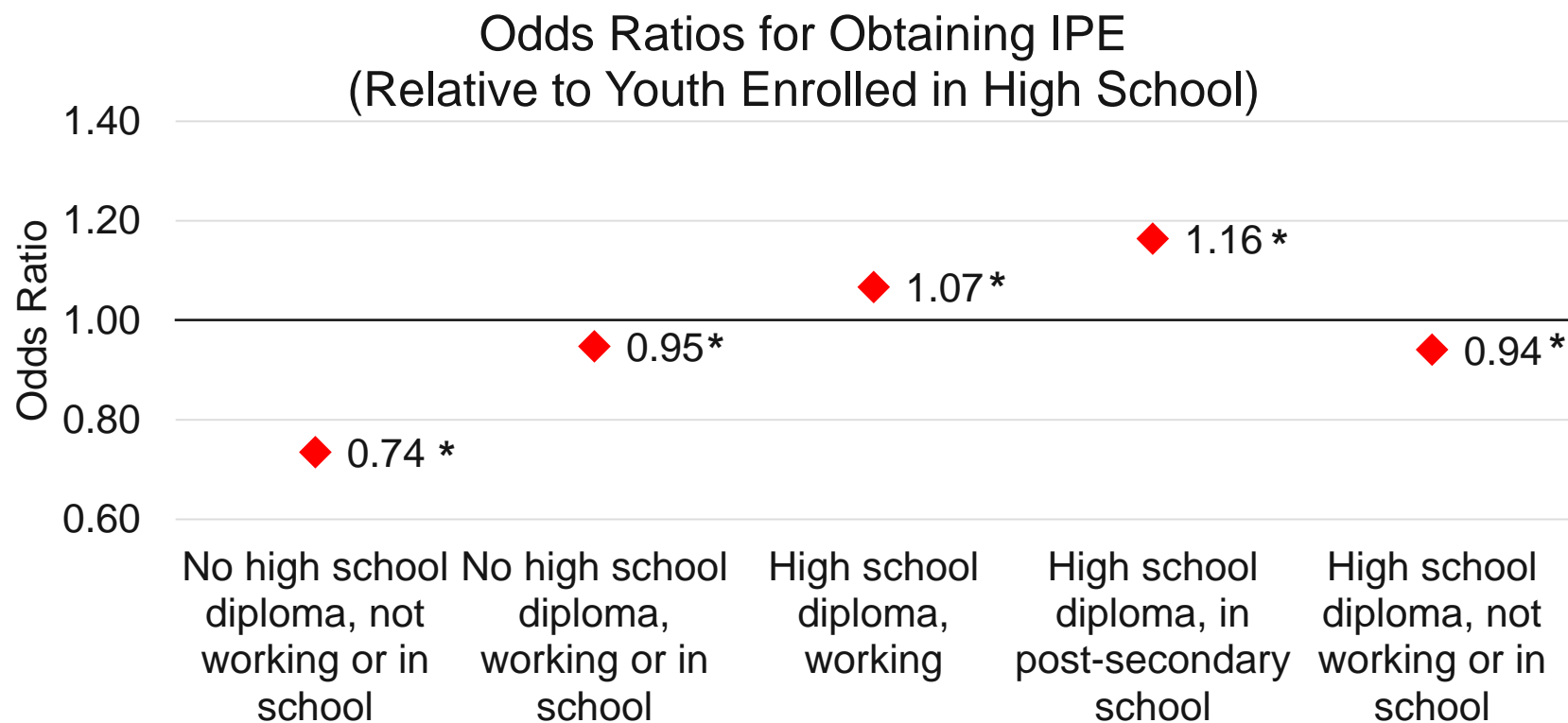
Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 582,912.

High School Dropouts Not Working Had Characteristics that Present More Barriers to Employment

Variable	All youth (%)	Enrolled in high school (%)	No high school diploma, not working in school (%)	No high school diploma, working in school (%)	High school diploma, working (%)	High school diploma, in post-secondary school (%)	High school diploma, not working in school (%)
Female	40	39	38	39	45	45	41
White	73	73	66	76	83	72	72
Age							
14 to younger than 19	53	86	50	79	23	50	21
19 to younger than 22	28	14	29	17	41	37	42
22 to younger than 25	18	0	20	4	36	12	37
Impairment							
Learning/cognitive	38	49	35	48	35	43	27
Mental health	17	10	23	13	17	14	23
Development/intellectual	24	29	22	22	19	21	24
Other physical disability	11	7	9	9	16	14	15
SSA benefits at VR application	27	22	28	17	15	24	37

Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 582,912.

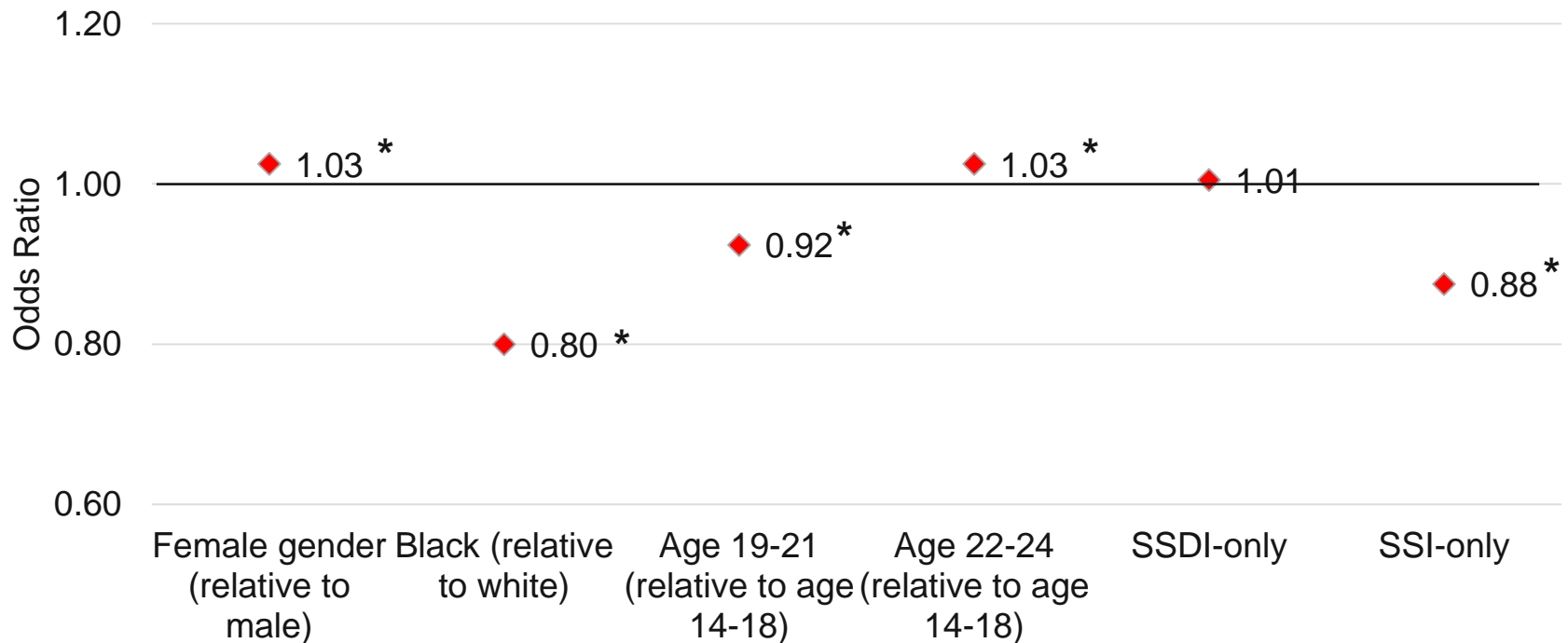
High School Dropouts Not Working Were Least Likely to Receive Services



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013 and DAF, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 582,912. * $p < 0.05$. Odds ratios adjusted for individual and agency characteristics.

Black or SSI-only VR Applicants Were Least Likely To Receive Services

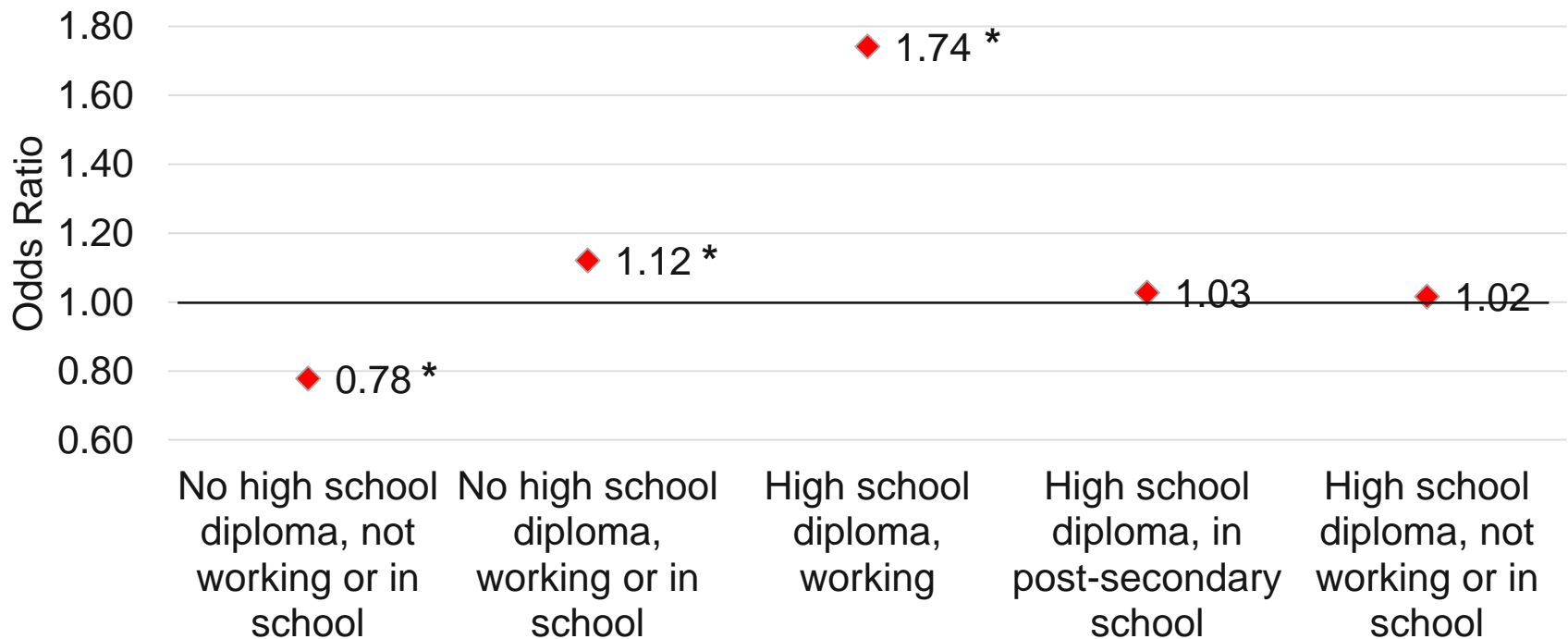
Odds Ratios for Obtaining IPE
(Select Individual Characteristics)



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013 and DAF, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 582,912. * $p < 0.05$. Odds ratios adjusted for individual and agency characteristics.

Youth Working at Application Were Most Likely To Exit with Employment

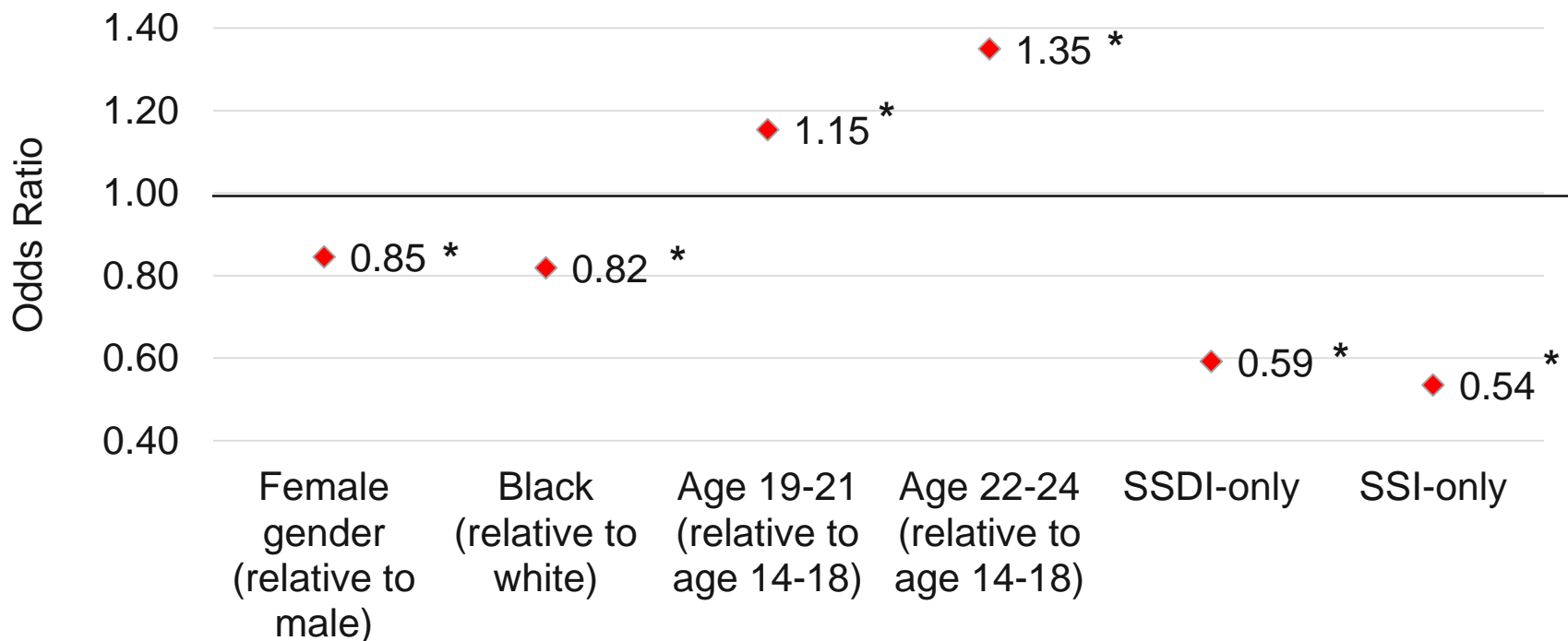
Odds Ratios For Exiting with Employment
(Relative to Youth Enrolled in High School)



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013 and DAF, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, who received services. N = 395,407. * $p < 0.05$. Odds ratios adjusted for individual and agency characteristics.

SSA Youth Were Least Likely to Exit with Employment

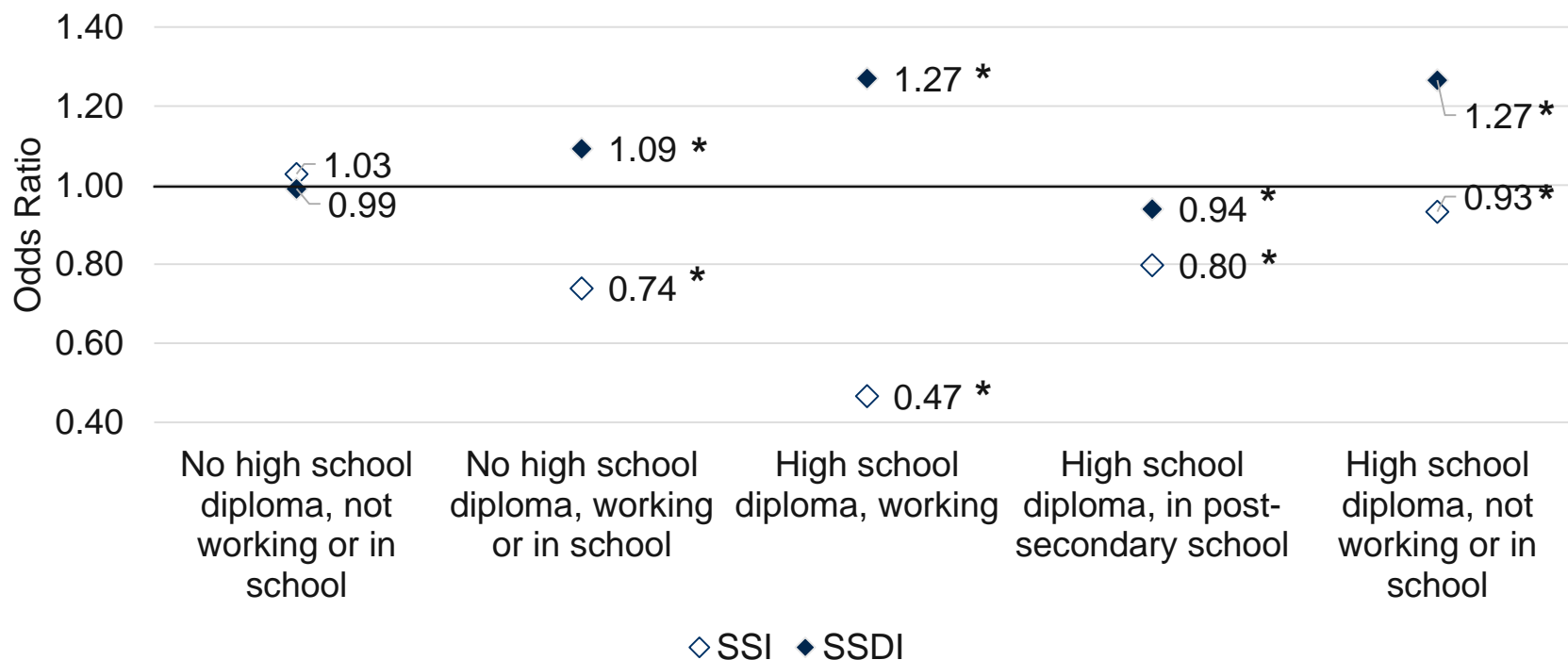
Odds Ratios For Exiting with Employment
(Select Characteristics)



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013 and DAF, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, who received services. N = 395,407. * $p < 0.05$. Odds ratios adjusted for individual and agency characteristics.

Youth with High School Diplomas Were More Likely to Receive SSDI and Less Likely to Receive SSI

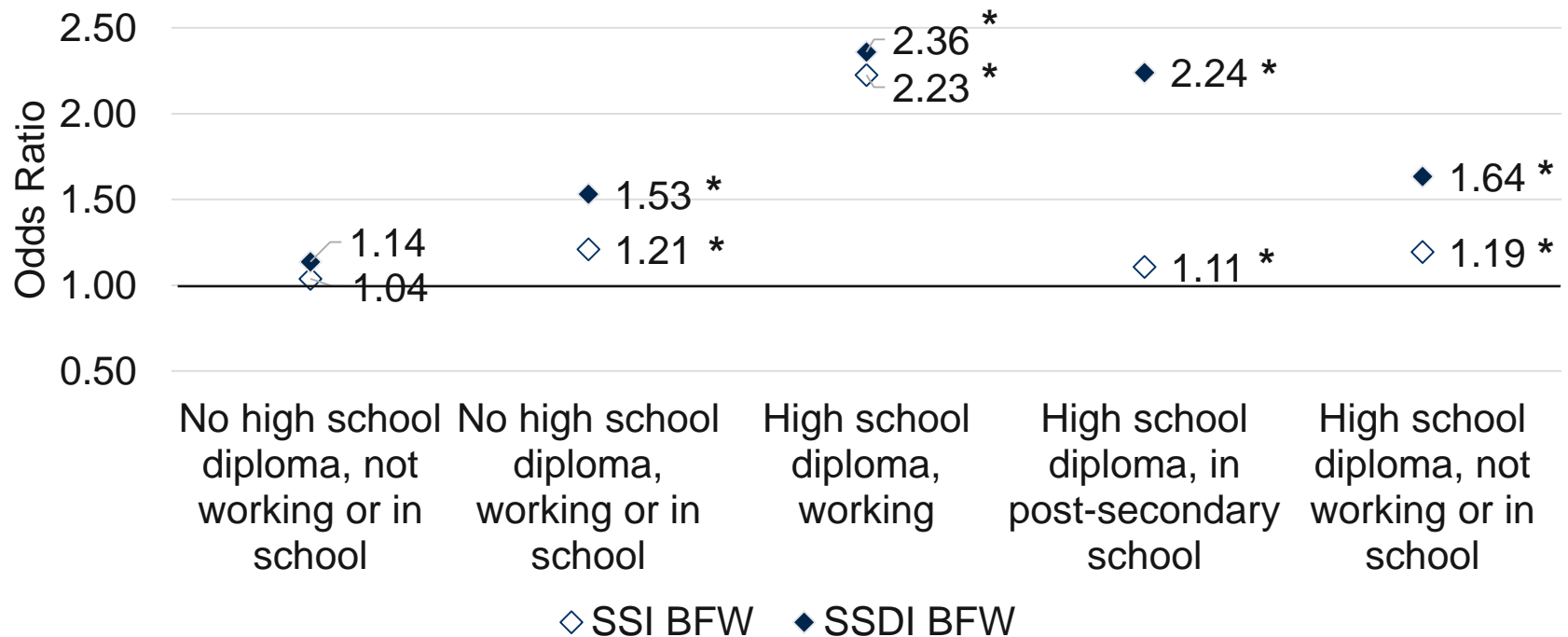
Odds Ratio Predicting SSI and SSDI Receipt
(Relative to Youth Enrolled in High School)



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013 and DAF, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 449,967 for SSI receipt and 539,924 for SSDI receipt. * $p < 0.05$. Odds ratios adjusted for individual and agency characteristics.

Youth with High School Diploma and Working Were Most Likely to Have Benefits Forgone Due To Work (BFW)

Odds Ratios Predicting SSI and SSDI Benefits Foregone Due to Work (Relative to High School Youth)



Note: Data from RSA-911, FYs 2004-2013, for VR applicants from 2004 to 2007, ages 14 to 24, eligible for services. N = 132,945 for SSI benefits forgone within 60 months and 42,988 for SSDI benefits forgone within 60 months.

* $p < 0.05$. Odds ratios adjusted for individual and agency characteristics.

Agency Characteristics Associated with Outcomes

- **Odds of receiving services higher**
 - Not being in order of selection
 - Shorter times for services (application to eligibility and eligibility to having a signed IPE)
- **Odds of exiting with employment higher**
 - Being in order of selection
 - Serving a higher proportion of youth applicants
 - Accepting fewer youth applicants for services
- **Few agency characteristics associated with SSA outcomes**

Implications for VR and WIOA

- **Some agencies may be better prepared to deliver pre-employment transition services**
 - They already work with large proportions of high school youth
- **Targeting in-school youth risks crowding out services to other types of youth (or adults)**
- **Increasing service provision to in-school youth or out-of-school youth could result in different employment outcomes overall for the agency**

Considerations for VR Service Provision

- Youth in high school or high school dropouts not working typically had poorer outcomes
- Agency processes correlated with serving more youth (lower times to eligibility and employment plan) and exiting with employment (volume of youth)
- We can identify outcomes for different types of youth but still have little information on what specific services and programs might result in better outcomes

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