

ITbiz Pre-Apprenticeship Program + Housing Evaluation Report

February 18, 2025



LOVE NEVER FAILS



COMMUNITIES IN
COLLABORATION

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	3
Key Findings.....	3
Recommendations	4
Conclusion.....	5
Introduction	6
Project Background.....	6
EVALUATION overview	8
Evaluation Objectives.....	8
Evaluation Team.....	10
METHODOLOGY.....	10
Qualitative Data Collection	10
Quantitative Data Collection.....	11
Participant Compensation.....	12
Data Analysis.....	13
Data Limitations	13
Findings	14
Evaluation Objective 1: Track Program Outcomes	14
Evaluation Objective 2: Assess the Operational Effectiveness and Implementation of Paired Housing and Employment Programming.....	15
Evaluation Objective 3: Assess the Participant Experience of Paired Housing and Employment Programming.	22
Evaluation Objective 4: Identify Lessons for the Field	46
Recommendations	48
Enhance Adaptability in the Participant Journey	48
Implement a Strategic Process for Partner Engagement	48
Provide Ongoing Support and Structures for Staff	48
Capture and Communicate the Breadth of the Program.....	49
Conclusion	49
Appendices.....	50
Appendix 1. Program Evaluation Participant Demographics.....	51
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	55

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation examines the implementation and effectiveness of Love Never Fails' offering career readiness training through the ITbiz pre-apprenticeship program for participants who are also receiving shelter housing support. Together, these program elements integrate career readiness training with shelter housing, a stipend, and other services to empower survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. The evaluation seeks to understand participants' experience and assess how well the program operates to meet its goals, identify key strengths and challenges, and provide actionable recommendations for improvement.

This evaluation focused on participants in the program cohorts that began between April 2023 and April 2024, with a specific focus on 21 individuals who were concurrently enrolled in ITbiz and in shelter housing. The study tracked participants' progress through various stages of the program, including introductory courses, pathways modules, internships, and job placements.

The evaluation goals focus on measuring the impact and success of the ITbiz Pre-Apprenticeship Program for women experiencing homelessness. The program aimed to enroll 25 participants across multiple cohorts between April 2023 and April 2024, with a goal of successfully completing both the introductory and intermediate modules. Key outcome measures included the number of women who completed the program and transitioned into IT apprenticeships earning at least \$23 per hour or secured permanent employment with a starting wage of at least \$20 per hour.

Key Findings

Participant Outcomes

- *Program Enrollment.* 21 participants enrolled during evaluation period qualified to become members of the evaluation cohort (enrolling in ITbiz and housing concurrently).
- *Program Completion.* Of those 21 participants, 15 completed introductory and pathway courses in the ITbiz program.
- *Housing Stability.* Over half of participants (11 participants, 52%) exited the program with permanent housing, while 5 participants (24%) remained in shelter housing and 1 participant faced ongoing housing instability.¹
- *Economic Mobility.* 7 out of the 21 participants who secured employment by the end of the program met the goal of earning \$20 or more per hour.

Program Strengths

- *Empowering Participant Experience.* Participants benefited from a supportive learning environment with hands-on technical and social skills training. Regardless of program

¹The remaining 6 participants exited the program before the end of the study period and their housing status is unknown.

completion, most participants reported positive experiences, gaining valuable professional and personal growth that enhanced their confidence and career readiness.

- *Intentional Staffing.* A significant representation of LNF and ITbiz staff have similar lived experiences as the participants, fostering relatability, trust, and a deep understanding of the challenges they face. A key strength of the program is its commitment to hiring graduates, ensuring a continued pathway for success. By employing program alumni, the organization not only reinforces its mission but also provides tangible career opportunities.
- *Holistic Approach.* The integration of safe housing with career readiness training addresses both immediate needs and systemic barriers to success, creating an environment conducive to healing, skill development, and economic mobility.
- *Participant Progress.* Most participants demonstrated significant progress, with 95% completing introductory courses, 71% completing intermediate modules, and 57% completing internships. All participants who secured employment (apprenticeship or permanent employment) through this program entered jobs earning \$20 or more per hour.
- *Depth, Breadth, and Impact of Wraparound Supports.* Resources provided through this program, such as professional skills training, life coaching, case management, legal aid, and support navigating social and human services were pivotal in helping participants build confidence and overcome barriers, regardless of program completion.

Program Challenges and Barriers

- *Resource Limitations.* The program's ability to consistently provide adequate technology, such as laptops and Wi-Fi, is dependent on external partnerships and funding. This limits the number of participants who can be fully equipped to engage in the program.
- *Housing Partnerships.* Limited coordination and communication with external housing partners hindered participant recruitment, support, and program reach, leading to limited intervention during participant disengagement and missed opportunities to serve more individuals.
- *Perception of Program Focus.* While the program makes deep impact and wide community reach, the program's tech-focused branding was reported as intimidating by some participants and does not reflect the border career pathways available.

Recommendations

Enhance Adaptability in the Participant Journey

A participant's journey to and through the ITbiz and housing program is highly individual, shaped by trauma, mental health, and unique career goals. To better support participants, the program can foster flexibility in service delivery to accommodate the diverse needs of participants and allow them to progress at a pace aligned with their readiness and personal circumstances.

Implement a Strategic Process for Partner Engagement

Building and maintaining strong partnerships with external housing providers is crucial for recruiting participants and ensuring program sustainability. Strengthening inter-organizational ties, particularly with housing providers, can help better integrate external housing participants into ITbiz programming. Continuing to monitor the experiences and outcomes of participants from external housing programs can ensure equitable and effective support.

Provide Ongoing Support and Structures for Staff

Continue to equip staff members – especially those who have transitioned from LNF programming to staff roles – within ongoing professional development opportunities tailored to their roles and training on trauma-informed care. Provide access to personal development and wellness resources to help manage workplace challenges and prevent burnout. Continue to formalize and strengthen internal processes to support both staff and program participants.

Capture and Communicate the Breadth of the Program

While the program name reflects its initial focus on technology, its current offerings extend far beyond the tech field. To more accurately convey the program's scope and attract a broader participant base consider highlighting the full range of program offerings in outreach materials and reevaluating technology-focused branding to encompass other program offerings such as entrepreneurship pathways.

Conclusion

The ITbiz pre-apprenticeship program with safe housing support exemplifies a holistic, trauma-informed approach to empowering survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking by addressing their immediate housing needs and equipping them with the skills and confidence to achieve long-term economic mobility. While the program has demonstrated considerable success in participant outcomes, opportunities remain to refine its processes, strengthen partnerships, and expand resources to maximize its impact. Implementing these recommendations will ensure that the program continues to empower survivors on their journeys toward stability, independence, and growth.

INTRODUCTION

This evaluation examines the implementation and effectiveness of Love Never Fails' offering career readiness training through the ITbiz pre-apprenticeship program to participants who are also receiving shelter housing support. Together, these program elements integrate career readiness training with shelter housing, a stipend, and other services to empower survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. The evaluation seeks to understand participants' experience and assess how well the program operates to meet its goals, identify key strengths and challenges, and provide actionable recommendations for improvement.

In addition to an overview of the evaluation objectives, methods, findings, and recommendations, this report includes a special section on a photovoice project conducted with program participants to illustrate their experiences in the program, through their own eyes and voices.

Project Background

Research has shown that women encounter barriers in the workforce resulting in lower wages or decreased opportunities for career advancement. Women at risk or experiencing homelessness face additional barriers to securing long-term, family-sustaining employment while burdened with navigating the impacts of housing insecurity. Job loss and money issues were cited as key drivers (at 22% and 13% respectively) of homelessness among people in the 2022 Alameda County Point-In-Time count and survey. In addition, 17% of respondents were working full or part-time and 36% were looking for work.² Programs which offer pathways to employment with living wage jobs are clearly needed to support people to end their homelessness.

The IT industry is a major driver of the Bay Area economy and a sector that offers significant opportunities for professional growth with family-sustaining wages. Yet only 25% of the nation's IT labor force is women, with Black and Hispanic women representing just 2% and 3% of that population respectively.³ Many women from marginalized groups are not aware of opportunities in IT or do not see these fields as viable career options. With so few women of color employed in well-paying industries like IT, and with a larger share of people of color experiencing homelessness (in Alameda County, 43% of people experiencing homelessness are Black compared to only 10% of the general county population⁴), an opportunity exists to invest in strategies serving BIPOC women to improve workforce outcomes and prevent and end homelessness in Bay Area communities like Alameda County.

Love Never Fails (LNF), is a Bay Area-based nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence. With a

² Applied Survey Research. 2022 Alameda County Homeless Count and Comprehensive Survey Report. September 22, 2022.

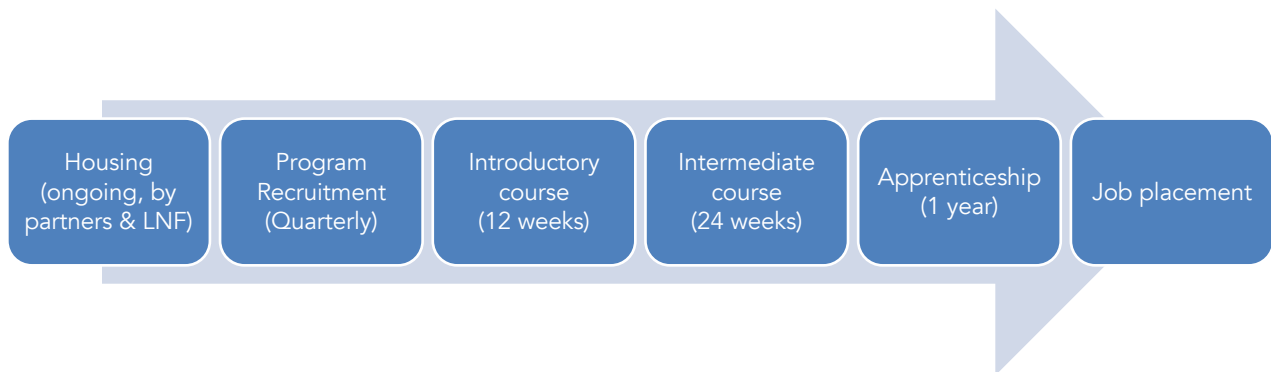
³ US Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey." Retrieved on March 16, 2023.

⁴ Applied Survey Research. 2022 Alameda County Homeless Count and Comprehensive Survey Report. September 22, 2022.

focus on fostering pathways to economic and social mobility, LNF provides comprehensive workforce readiness opportunities and safe housing that enable individuals to rebuild their lives and achieve sustainable success.

A cornerstone of LNF's workforce development initiative is the ITbiz Tech Academy, a Cisco Networking Academy and California state-certified Cybersecurity Pre-apprenticeship program. ITbiz offers both instructor-led and self-paced courses, using curricula from industry leaders such as Cisco, Microsoft, Google, and AWS. The program equips participants with post-secondary education, technical certifications, and skills tailored for the technology sector. Through technical skills training, participants are equipped with skills to pursue internships, apprenticeships, and entry-level positions in local technology companies. In addition to technical training, ITbiz also offers a substantial amount of training and preparation for participants to pursue professional pathways through entrepreneurship. By emphasizing digital equity, sustainable technical education, career readiness, and self efficacy, ITbiz plays a pivotal role in creating opportunities for survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence to enter and thrive in the workforce, as well as gain a greater autonomy in their life outcomes.

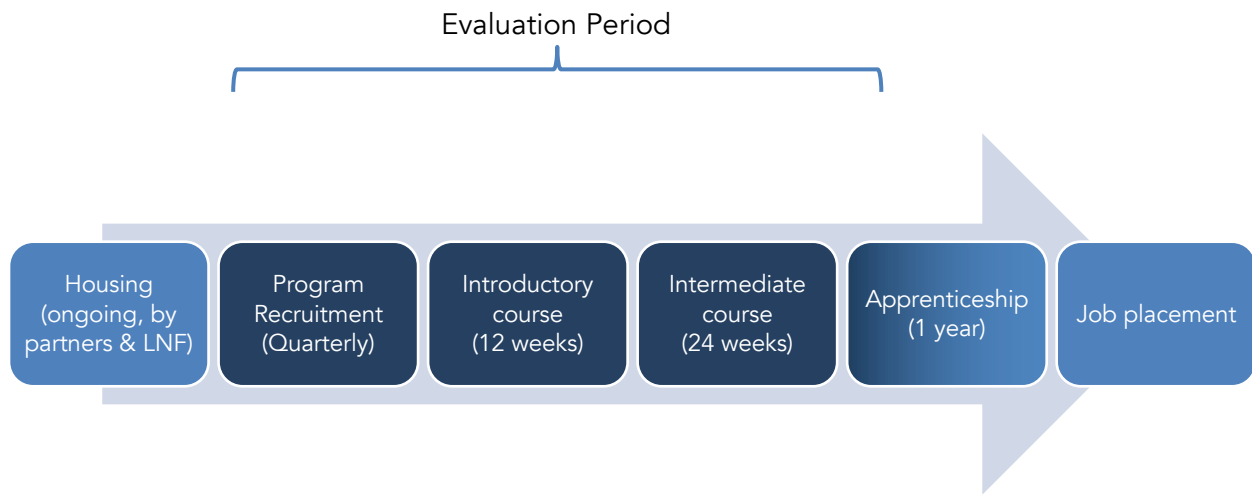
The ITbiz Pre-Apprenticeship program consists of two parts: four introductory modules, and completion of at least one intermediate module focused on a technology career pathway. Participants in this cohort will also receiving housing and related services through Love Never Fails or through one of four local shelters. Participants who complete the program are eligible for a year-long apprenticeship, with an earning goal of \$23 per hour. Those interested in other IT pathways are connected to job opportunities or internships with partner employers until securing a full-time job. The anticipated program trajectory for a participant is as follows:



However, access to employment is not enough. Without safe and stable housing, Survivors remain at risk of limited social and economic mobility and higher rates of recidivism. To mitigate these risks, Love Never Fails provides comprehensive housing solutions and wraparound restorative services, including case management, cognitive therapy, life coaching and mentorship, legal services, and family reunification support. These services are provided either in-house or through organizational partnerships.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The intention of this implementation evaluation is to begin to understand how the combination of housing, job training, and additional of wraparound services can support women experiencing homelessness in Alameda County to prepare to enter the IT workforce. While initially intended to follow three ITbiz cohorts, this evaluation followed participants in the cohorts that began between April 2023 and April 2024, to increase participation numbers. The evaluation examined participants' journeys from initial recruitment through the completion of intermediate courses and, in some cases, into apprenticeship or job placements.



For the purposes of this report, the term “ITbiz + Housing” is used to describe the program for individuals who are concurrently enrolled in the ITbiz Tech Academy and a shelter housing program. These individuals are referred to as the “ITbiz + Housing cohort” and their experience and outcomes are the focus of this evaluation.

Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation is specifically focused on the effectiveness of combining housing, the pre-apprenticeship program, and wraparound services in support of women experiencing homelessness. It is not intended as an evaluation of the ITbiz pre-apprenticeship program itself. And, although this report includes some data about housing outcomes, the evaluation did not set out to assess longer-term outcomes for participants as they complete their apprenticeships and move into permanent housing and employment.

The evaluation objectives (see table) were developed based on the initial goals of the evaluation as stated in the evaluation RFP and were refined following conversations with program staff at Love Never Fails and Tipping Point Community. These goals center on the implementation of the program and the experience of participants.

Evaluation Objectives	Evaluation questions
1. Track program outcomes	a. Number of women experiencing homelessness enrolling in IT Biz training b. Percentage of women who complete the program, as defined by completing the introductory and intermediate modules c. Number of women placed in IT apprenticeship earning \$23 per hour or jobs at a starting wage of at least \$20 per hour
2. Assess effectiveness and implementation of paired housing and employment programming	a. What worked well in the delivery of housing and employment programming together? b. What are barriers or challenges in implementation at each stage? c. Where are the opportunities to improve? d. What unique support is available to participants receiving both types of services? e. What is the role of LNF support staff (case manager job developer, coach, etc.) and their collaboration in participant success? f. What are the characteristics of a successful program partner?
3. Assess the participant experience of paired housing and employment programming	a. What are the characteristics of a successful program participant? b. What are the benefits of participating, regardless of completion? c. What were barriers or challenges to participation and completion at each stage? d. How are those barriers overcome? e. What elements of the program structure aided to participants' participation, learning, and outcomes? f. How do the different available services and supports influence participants' success in the program?
4. Identify lessons for the field	a. What are the implications for scale and replication of similar programs? b. What can be learned about the fit of the technology field for this population?

Additional areas that are of interest to the project team, but were not considered in this evaluation include:

- Cost analysis of services provided and their importance for program success

- Long-term outcomes for accessing and retaining stable housing
- Long-term outcomes for employment, employment retention, and economic mobility

These areas could be explored in the future as a continuation of this evaluation work.

Evaluation Team

An external evaluation team was contracted by Tipping Point Community to conduct this evaluation. The evaluation team is a partnership between Heather Imboden, Communities in Collaboration, Dr. Chaneé D. Hawkins Ash, Foresight Strategy Solutions, and Dr. Yoonyoung Kwak, YK Stats & Consulting. To their knowledge, this project team did not have any conflicts of interest in conducting this evaluation.

METHODOLOGY

This evaluation relied on a mixed-methods approach to collecting data regarding the program implementation and participant experience. Given the vulnerable nature of the program's population and the complexity of their lived-experiences, methods were chosen to prioritize participant comfort and safety, providing an opportunity for their voices to be heard and ensuring that their unique perspectives and insights contribute to the evaluation process in a meaningful way.

Qualitative Data Collection

Interviews. A total of 35 interviews were conducted with program participants, staff, and partners.

- **12 staff interviews:** focused on operational insights, internal coordination, and program delivery from the perspective of ITbiz and Love Never Fails (LNF) team members.
- **16 participant interviews:** including participants in the photovoice project, providing diverse accounts of the program's impact and opportunities for improvement.
- **7 Tipping Point staff interviews:** gathered insights from funders stakeholders, exploring opportunities for program alignment with organizational goals and broader impact.

Focus Groups. Two focus groups were conducted – one with LNF housing staff members, one with program participants participating in the photovoice project. These provided an opportunity for participants to engage in collective dialogue, share their experiences, and benefit from mutual learning, validation, and connection with peers.

- **Housing staff focus group:** explored staff experiences supporting ITbiz participants, challenges they faced, and opportunities for enhanced collaboration with program staff.
- **Photovoice project focus group:** created a space for participants to share perspectives, reflect on their journeys, and discuss common themes in their photographs.

Photovoice Project. This “special project” was added to the evaluation scope to gain a deeper understanding of participants’ lived experiences in the ITbiz + Housing Program. Participants were identified by ITbiz staff and the evaluation team based on their diverse experiences and perspectives, high responsiveness during the evaluation period, and a demonstrated willingness to share their stories. Of the six individuals invited, four committed to the project, representing different cohorts, housing statuses, and journeys within the program. The special project had four components:

- **Interviews:** Participants shared personal reflections and insights about their experiences.
- **Portfolio Submission:** Participants documented their journeys through photographs, offering a creative and impactful medium for storytelling.
- **Portfolio Review:** In one-on-ones reviews of their portfolios, participants shared the deeper meaning behind their photographs, enriching the context of their narratives.
- **Focus Group:** Participants came together to discuss shared themes, insights, and learnings, fostering a sense of community and collective understanding.

Photovoice

Photovoice is a participatory research method that empowers individuals to document and reflect on their lived experiences through photography. Frequently used with marginalized groups or those who may feel less comfortable in formal interviews, this approach allows participants to visually express their personal narratives, capturing emotions, contexts, and moments that may be challenging to fully articulate verbally.

By giving participants ownership over how their stories are portrayed, Photovoice fosters a sense of agency and validates participant perspectives. For individuals emerging from challenging circumstances such as domestic violence or human trafficking, Photovoice provides a creative and supportive way to explore and share the complexities of their journeys. Beyond personal empowerment, Photovoice generates rich insights, offering a personal, visually compelling lens on lived experiences that traditional methods may overlook. It is an ideal tool for driving transformative dialogue and highlighting the impact of programs like ITbiz.

Participants expressed enthusiasm for sharing their stories through a showcase in the future, viewing it as a powerful platform for public storytelling and healing. The evaluation team is collaborating with LNF leadership and participants to follow through on this idea.

Quantitative Data Collection

Quantitative data for this evaluation was gathered through surveys completed by ITbiz participants who enrolled in the program between April 2023 and April 2024. Additional data, including demographic, housing status, and socioeconomic information, was collected via LNF enrollment forms. LNF staff also collected and provided program performance metrics including information about program completion and job placement.

Two surveys were distributed to *all* ITbiz program participants – both those in the ITbiz + Housing cohorts and those enrolled only in ITbiz – to provide insights into the differences and commonalities between those who are receiving housing support and their peers.

- **Pre-Survey:** Administered to all ITbiz participants at the beginning of the program, the pre-survey assessed participants' motivations for enrolling, goals for the program, readiness for participation, potential barriers (e.g., housing instability or lack of resources), and levels of self-confidence, career confidence, ego resiliency, and social support.
- **Post-Survey:** Administered after participants completed their introductory course and/or intermediate modules (depending on their entry timeline), the post-survey measured changes in key metrics and outcomes compared to the pre-survey.

The table below shows participation in each of the surveys for the ITbiz + Housing participants as well as those participating only in ITbiz. Among the participants, 28 completed both the pre- and post-surveys, shown in the Matched column. Participants had an average time of 7.8 months between completing the two surveys.

	Pre-survey	Post-survey	Matched
ITbiz + Housing	12	14	11
Other ITbiz	45	62	17
Total	57	76	28

Additional Data Collection Activities. The evaluation team also maintained weekly check-ins with LNF and ITbiz leadership and team members. These meetings offered real-time opportunities to gather insights, address emerging themes, and collaboratively refine the evaluation approach. These meetings were also an opportunity review program data collected by the LNF team and discuss process improvements. As an example, conversations during these regular check ins led to LNF updating their data privacy agreement with program participants.

Site visits provided additional opportunities for less structured conversations with program staff and provided a deeper understanding of the program. This ongoing engagement ensured the evaluation remained adaptive and aligned with program needs.

Participant Compensation

In alignment with best practice, program participants who contributed to evaluation activities were compensated for sharing their insights and information commensurate with the time involved:

- Survey respondents received gift cards for their participation. Initial gift card amounts were set at \$5; this was increased to \$20 to improve response rates.
- Focus group participants received \$50 gift cards

- Photovoice participants received a \$500 gift card in recognition of the time involved in participating in the suite of activities.

Data Analysis

The evaluation employed a comprehensive analysis process to synthesize meaningful insights from all data sources. Thematic analysis was conducted for all qualitative data: transcripts and notes were systematically reviewed to identify key themes, patterns, and insights related to program implementation, participant experiences, and operational impact and challenges. Data was then coded and categorized in alignment with the evaluation objectives.

Quantitative data was merged and analyzed for ITbiz + Housing participants. Descriptive statistics such as averages, ranges, and percentages were calculated to summarize the findings presented in this report. Data from non-housing ITbiz participants was also analyzed to provide insights into the differences and commonalities between those who are receiving housing support and their peers. Participants were grouped based on their completion status, and outcomes were compared between groups. Due to the small sample size, statistical testing was not performed, and findings are presented descriptively. These data sets were then analyzed collectively to identify key themes.

Data Limitations

The evaluation team acknowledges several data limitations outlined here to provide transparency and contextualize the results.

Sample Size. The initial goal for this evaluation was 25 participants. A slow start to enrollment of ITbiz participants who are also housed in shelters led to a evaluation cohort of 21 people.

Representation. The evaluation team was unable to interview program participants who exited the program before completion and staff members from external housing partners, resulting in a gap in data about operational effectiveness from the perspective of these key parties. This omission leaves an important perspective unaddressed, particularly regarding inter-agency partnerships and the challenges that limit participant ability to complete the program.

Data Collection Methods. Challenges related to data collection arose due to the sensitive nature of some participant demographic information. Early in the evaluation process, additional consent had to be obtained from participants to protect participant privacy in compliance with best practice.

Cohort Comparisons. While the evaluation followed the journeys of ITbiz + Housing participants alongside non-housing ITbiz participants over a year, there are key differences between the two groups in terms of demographics, housing status, and life challenges. Because of these differences, outcomes between the two groups are not compared.

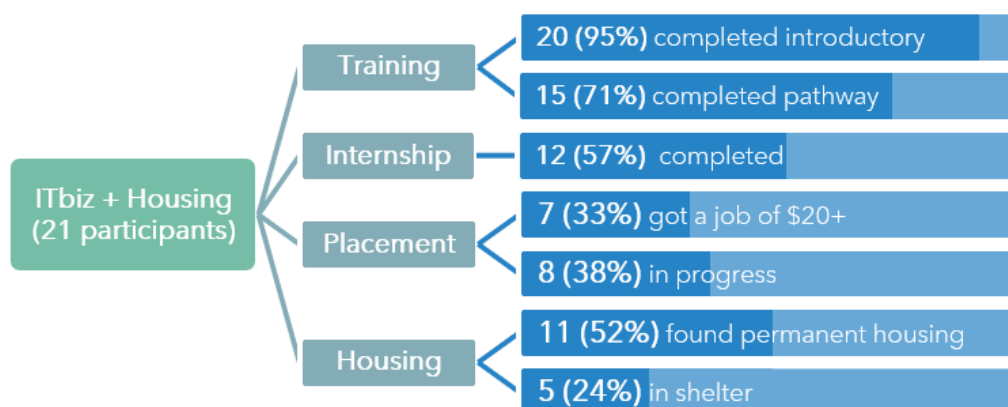
FINDINGS

The evaluation findings are organized by the four evaluation objectives. Demographic and other information about program participants can be found in Appendix 1.

Evaluation Objective 1: Track Program Outcomes

The ITbiz + Housing program offers year-round enrollment, with introductory and intermediate courses starting quarterly. The program aimed to enroll 25 participants during the evaluation period. A slow start to enrollment of ITbiz participants who are also housed in shelters led to a smaller than anticipated cohort. Key outcome measures included the number of participants successfully completing both the introductory and intermediate modules and transitioning into IT apprenticeships earning at least \$23 per hour or securing permanent employment with a starting wage of at least \$20 per hour. Figure 1 summarizes the outcomes for participants.

Figure 1. Summary of Participant Outcomes



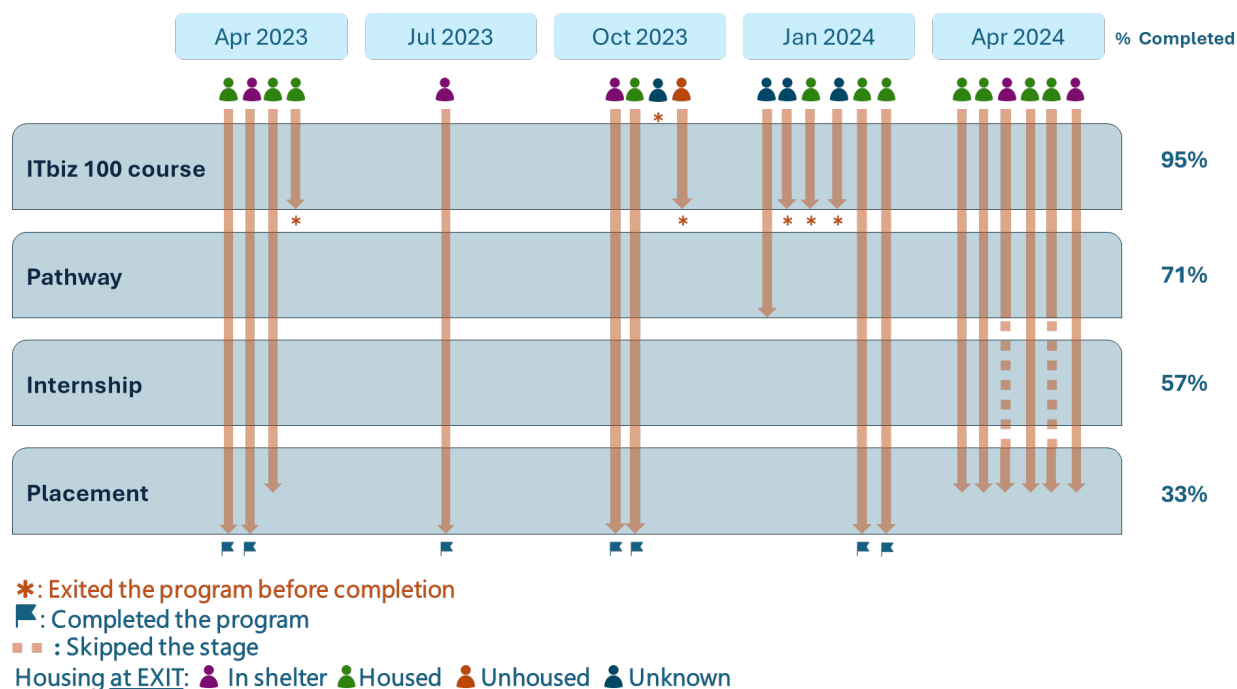
From April 2023 through April 2024, 21 participants enrolled in the ITbiz training program with housing support. As of January 2025, 20 participants (95%) had completed the introductory course, 15 participants (71%) had completed the intermediate modules, and 12 participants (57%) had completed the internship. Additionally, 7 participants (33%) had successfully completed placements, while another 8 participants (38%) were in progress for placement or an internship. Most participants still in progress began the program in Q2 of 2024 and had just completed their internship. It is anticipated that they will secure employment soon.

A total of 6 participants (29%) exited the program either immediately after enrollment or following the completion of the introductory course. Among the 7 participants who secured employment, all earned an hourly wage of \$20 or more, with wages ranging from \$20 to \$25 and an average hourly rate of \$21.50.

Figure 2 illustrates the journey of each program participant during the evaluation period. It should be noted that the journey through ITbiz programming is not always linear. To better understand the experience, the participant journey through ITbiz has been mapped for each of

the housing participants. Some participants skip steps, two have repeated levels to deepen their learning, and others have paused their learning and returned later, extending the time it takes for them to complete the program.

Figure 2. ITbiz + Housing Participants' Journey



Although the evaluation was not intended to track housing outcomes, program and survey data shows that 11 participants (52%) secured permanent housing by the time they exited the program. Meanwhile, 5 participants (24%) remained in shelter housing (4 with Love Never Fails and 1 with Building Futures), and 1 participant (5%) was unhoused.

Evaluation Objective 2: Assess the Operational Effectiveness and Implementation of Paired Housing and Employment Programming

ITbiz and Love Never Fails (LNF) is a powerful example of how addressing the multifaceted needs of survivors can lead to meaningful empowerment and sustainable transformation. Reflecting on the program's implementation, it is essential to identify both the aspects that have been effective and the areas where improvements can be made. By examining these elements, we can gain valuable insights into the program's strengths and uncover opportunities for enhancement.

What worked well in the delivery of housing and employment programming together?

When assessing the operational effectiveness of the ITbiz + Housing program structure, there were several key elements that lend to the program's deep impact and current success. Primary (not exclusive) among these strengths are the organization's unique staffing practices and the breadth and depth of wraparound support provided to participants.

Intentional Staffing Practices

Given the background of this population and the personal nature of the work, establishing trust and rapport between program staff and program participants is vital. One way that ITbiz and LNF have fostered high quality relationships between staff and participants is through the intentional hiring of staff who have similar backgrounds to participants – and in some cases ITbiz program alumni. Through

interviews, it was found that most of the interviewed LNF and ITbiz staff are survivors of similar traumas as those faced by participants, have gone through the ITbiz program themselves, or fall within both categories. This lends to the cultural competency of staff related to participant experience. This level of relatability can be leveraged during partnership development and participant recruitment to maximize the establishment of trust and credibility when conducting outreach with potential participants. Further, this similarity in personal background between program staff and participants, allows staff to more effectively intervene when participants may have a lapse in motivation or even risk revisiting former lifestyle experiences that would be counter to their recovery and career journeys.

Further, interview participants reported that program staff have been extremely supportive, caring, and direct contributors to success. ITbiz + LNF staff frequently go above and beyond to secure necessary resources for participants. When individuals require help beyond what the program typically offers, staff have been known to contribute personal time and resources and tap into their own networks to fill these gaps. A

particularly notable example observed during the evaluation period was when a staff member researched, leveraged her personal networks, and developed a series of workshops to guide participants through the expungement process.

“Almost all of us took ITbiz100 and took pathways. So, we hired some of our students. I personally got hired on, but I also enrolled into ITbiz100 at same time, so I was taking class while I was teaching or helping with enrollment... so I can connect with students on that level as well.”

- Program Staff Member

“We are all a tight knit family. When you join LNF we are here to help and give you resources. We all feel comfortable to reach out and get whatever resources participants need. We help one another.”

- Program Staff Member

“They are completely open. I know I can reach out to them at any point in time. I can tell they are 100% invested in their jobs, and in their purpose, and what they are doing for the community. The follow through and the encouragement are certainly there.”

- Program Participant

“I’m surprised I’m not paying \$40 billion for this program. The staff advocate for me and speak on my behalf. If they notice I’m doing better in one area than another, they make sure to advocate for me accordingly.”

- Program Participant

Holistic Wraparound Supports

At the outset of this evaluation, it became evident that a core driver of the program's success is its robust offering of wraparound support designed to address participants' diverse needs. Interviewed participants expressed a deep appreciation for the support provided through ITbiz /LNF staff, and the robust resource offerings. In some cases, participants who were initially enrolled in the housing program and matriculated to ITbiz later were unaware of the many supports (e.g. professional technical training, life coach, case managers, support with accessing external resources) that are available through the program and found these as unexpected "bonuses" to being in the housing program.

When asked about the program elements that most contribute to successful completion and positive outcomes, nearly every respondent—both staff and participants—cited life coaching as a pivotal first step. Described as the "front line" of support for establishing trust and rapport, life coaching provides participants with a safe space to examine and challenge any limiting beliefs that are rooted in past experiences—beliefs that might cause them to feel unprepared, incapable or undeserving of opportunities within the ITbiz/Love Never Fails program. This foundation of self-efficacy and confidence appears to amplify the overall benefits of the program, preparing participants for more specialized case management services and, ultimately, job placement.

"When I realized there were wraparound services, it was after I signed up for the class. I didn't realize I was getting more than the class. Realizing there was a team that not everyone gets, it really impacted my belief that this was going to be different. I knew I needed to do this, and I did it for my own physical and mental health. There were layers of support from Day 1.

- Program Participant

"Life coaches help shift participants' mindsets and overcome personal barriers."

- Program Case Manager

"Meeting with life coaches helps a lot because students are often shy and reluctant to share what's going on in their personal lives... life coaches help us understand those needs better."

- Program Staff Member

Beyond life coaching and secure housing, these supports include ongoing case management, job development services, and access to a community engagement center stocked with business attire, personal hygiene products, and interview preparation resources. By thoughtfully intertwining these services, the program creates a supportive infrastructure that helps participants address their immediate challenges as they pursue their longer-term goals of sustained employment, career advancement, and safe and stable housing.

In effect, these wraparound services empower individuals who have experienced significant trauma to reclaim their autonomy by meeting practical needs and nurturing personal resilience. As

"The ITbiz program is giving the community an option to gain training in places they've never thought about. Our main role is to help them with their barriers so they can get a job."

- Program Staff Member

participants benefit from the safety of stable housing, they can direct more energy toward career-building activities—attending classes, engaging in group projects, and honing essential professional skills. By having both housing and employment services woven together, participants reported experiencing greater stability and a clearer path toward personal and professional growth.

What are the barriers and challenges to effective implementation?

Barriers to implementation largely indicated the opportunity for better coordination and communication among staff of different programs, both internal and external.

Communication and Coordination Between LNF Housing Staff and ITbiz Program Staff

While the ITbiz + Housing program aims to provide holistic support to participants, a key barrier to its effective implementation is the underdeveloped systematic communication and coordination between LNF's housing staff and the ITbiz program staff. Although housing staff regularly interact with participants, they often lack insight into enrollment processes or participant milestones within the ITbiz component. Interviewees, from both housing and programmatic staff, indicated that they are sometimes unaware of what is happening with the other department. This has caused discrepancies with planning and scheduling. One housing staff member remarked, "At the housing, I would love to have the ITbiz equipment right here—headphones, schedules, equipment—to be more accountable to wrap it all together. How do you integrate ITbiz into the housing situation?" This statement underscores the need for tangible resources and information-sharing protocols that would empower housing staff to provide direct academic and logistical support.

Despite generally consistent day-to-day contact with participants, internal collaboration can still feel fragmented and siloed. These gaps become especially evident when participants fall behind on classwork; lacking inter-departmental pathways for intervention, housing staff may be unaware of how to help students who having academic challenges, and ITbiz program staff might not always have the best context to understand a students' performance

"I don't think I should be involved in day-to-day operations, although I should be involved and collaborate with [ITbiz leadership] for my team and for planning. Just like all [the] brainstorming that me and you are doing right now and talking in collaboration, we should be doing a lot more of that."

- Program Staff Member

challenges. Some staff noted that there is currently no formal protocol for tracking participant milestones – particularly across different touch points in their program journey, making it difficult to celebrate successes, coordinate services, and offer timely support as participants progress through each stage of the program.

Another challenge identified was staff sometimes didn't feel equipped or confident in delivering social services, particularly to participants who have experienced trauma. Both interviewees stressed the importance of wraparound services, prioritizing participants' health and well-being, and providing staff with additional training and resources to effectively aid participants in program completion.

Encouragingly, the program has already begun taking positive steps to address these issues. Midway through the evaluation period, staff reported an increase in internal team meetings as well as more formal and informal opportunities for housing and ITbiz staff to engage. As an example, housing staff attended an ITbiz informational session. These measures seem to be boosting enrollment and improving service alignment. "Now we're really process-oriented," one staff member noted. Nevertheless, the heavy workload and multiple program milestones remain a challenge: "Because there are so many action items and ways to complete milestones, I sometimes feel like we may be spread a little too thin." Further developing comprehensive communication channels, more regular cross-team meetings, and consistent tracking could help staff support participants more efficiently.

Coordination with Partner Programs

Another significant barrier reported and observed is the lack of strong, strategic partnerships with external housing and shelter programs. While Love Never Fails (LNF) operates its own housing program, it also recruits participants from other providers. In certain cases, rules at partner housing facilities prevent participants from attending classes or fully participating in ITbiz's offerings, as coordination and timing do not always align. When participants struggle with coursework or attendance, limited inter-agency communication can delay interventions—often resulting in premature disengagement from the program. Addressing these hurdles by strengthening collaborations and developing clearer communication protocols will help participants in partner housing take full advantage of ITbiz training and supports.

Another challenge is limited or unreliable availability of technology for participants, such as computers, stable internet, and Wi-Fi hotspots, which are essential for ITbiz participation and learning, as well as job searches. The program's capacity to provide these resources relies on funding from and partnerships with external organizations. In interviews, many participants noted that one of their biggest challenges in the program was using broken and out of date technology. To address this shortcoming, the program provides students access to technology at the Community Engagement Center. While this helps participants somewhat, it does not address their needs when they are offset and therefore does not fully mitigate the issue.

Intensive Staff Involvement

As shared in the previous section, one of the program's most defining characteristics is the deep personal investment shown by staff, who immerse themselves in

"I struggled with a student wanting to commit suicide, but I had a lot of support from Vanessa and other staff and was immediately given resources."

- Program Staff Member

participants' lives to offer hands-on assistance and creative solutions. This "all-in" approach has yielded tangible benefits—participants feel genuinely seen, heard, and valued, which significantly contributes to positive outcomes. At the same time, this level of involvement can lead to emotional fatigue and personal stress for staff. To ensure they can continue providing empathetic, hands-on support, the program may benefit from organizational strategies such as peer support groups or dedicated counseling, allowing staff to maintain their well-being and prevent burnout.

Opportunities to Improve Program Implementation

Staff and participants provided specific recommendations for improving program implementation, highlighting several areas where adjustments could enhance operational efficiency, participant outcomes, and overall program impact. While some of these opportunities have already resulted in noticeable improvements, as reported by staff and participants, others represent future areas for growth and refinement.

Enhancing Communication and Collaboration

Staff interview participants emphasized the need for stronger coordination between LNF staff, ITbiz program staff, and external housing partners. Specific recommendations included:

- **Introducing ITbiz early:** Engaging participants within the first 30 days of housing placement to foster early momentum and interest, while remaining intentional about participant readiness.
- **Aligning class and housing policies:** Adjusting program schedules to ensure participants can attend classes without violating curfews or other housing requirements.
- **Formalizing partnerships with housing and workforce providers:** Developing written agreements, such as memoranda of understanding (MOUs), to clarify roles, communication protocols, and service expectations. Additionally, establishing a professionally social rapport with leadership and staff from other housing programs to maximize partnership opportunities.

Expanding Staff Capacity and Training

Staff capacity emerged as a central theme for improvement, with several recommendations focused on expanding and equipping the team to better meet participant needs:

- **Increased staffing:** Since the start of the evaluation period, LNF has bolstered its staff by shifting roles and hiring new team members, including additional case managers.

This expansion has already resulted in noticeable improvements in responsiveness, according to program staff and the evaluation team.

- **Hiring a full-time IT Biz 100 instructor:** A dedicated instructor would enhance curriculum delivery, ensure consistency in teaching, and improve participant engagement.
- **Providing trauma-informed training:** Staff working directly with survivors of Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking would benefit from additional training to address participants' complex emotional and psychological challenges more effectively.
- **Maintaining manageable caseloads:** Keeping caseloads balanced would allow case managers to provide timely, individualized attention, reducing the risk of burnout and ensuring high-quality support.

Refining Financial and Logistical Systems

Streamlined financial and logistical systems were another area of focus. Recommendations include:

- **Systematize stipend distribution:** Ensuring stipends are delivered on time would alleviate unnecessary financial stress for participants.
- **Expanded partnerships for transportation and housing:** Collaborations to provide transit passes or ride-share opportunities could reduce logistical barriers.
- **Improved onboarding processes:** Additional support during assessments and program entry could ease participants' transitions into the program

Adjusting Program Flow

Recognizing that participants' journeys through the program are often non-linear, program leadership is exploring the impact of adjusting transition periods between program modules. Allowing for greater flexibility in these transitions would enable participants to progress at their own pace, ensuring a smoother and more supportive flow.

Notable Improvements Already Reported

Several improvements have already been implemented during the evaluation period:

- **Increased staffing** for case management and teaching roles has led to enhanced participant responsiveness and support.
- **Improved interdepartmental communication** has allowed for better resource allocation and coordination.
- **Enhanced follow-up processes** with external partners have helped ensure participant success and meet grant requirements.

These recommendations highlight staff- and participant-identified opportunities to build on existing improvements and address areas where additional refinement can enhance program implementation. Further recommendations are in the final section of this report.

Evaluation Objective 3: Assess the Participant Experience of Paired Housing and Employment Programming.

This participant experience was measured through interviews, surveys, and the photovoice project. What follows is a special section that dives deeply into the narratives of participants that emerged through the photovoice project. Because this special project provided such a unique and rich view into the participant experience, the outcomes are presented in their entirety here. Following that is a more detailed dive into the participant experience data in alignment with the evaluation's defined research questions.

In the Eyes of Participants – Learning through Photovoice

As part of the evaluation of the ITbiz + Housing program, four cohort members participated in a photovoice project to share their experiences through the powerful medium of photography. This creative approach also provided an opportunity to reflect deeply on their personal growth, challenges, and triumphs. Through their photographs, participants highlighted transformative moments, systemic barriers they've overcome, and the profound impact of the program on their lives. Their narratives showcase the program's strengths, as well as areas for potential enhancement, as told through their heartfelt stories and personal images.⁵

The Photovoice project demonstrated that the ITbiz+ Housing program is more than a pathway to career readiness—it is a holistic support system that nurtures resilience, builds community, and empowers participants to redefine what's possible for their lives. Through their photographs and reflections, participants painted a vivid picture of transformation, courage, and hope.

Illustrating a Journey of Personal Growth and Transformation

Participants expressed excitement about the professional development opportunities provided by the program, but it was their personal growth that truly stood out as the most impactful. Many described how the program became a catalyst for holistic transformation, helping them

"Learning to conduct retrospectives in Agile reminded me of therapy—looking back and learning from the past. It taught me that personal healing is just as important as professional growth."
- Program Participant

⁵ Photographs are shared with the permission of participants and were selected and/or modified to protect participant identity.

not only prepare for employment but also embark on journeys of emotional healing and self-discovery.

Participants mentioned gaining confidence, overcoming addiction, imposter syndrome, and experiencing mindset shifts that empowered them to redefine their identities and future aspirations. One participant shared how the program helped her reshape her thinking, saying, “I’ve always thought, ‘I can’t study, I’m not a reader,’ but this program helped me realize that’s not true. I am capable. I can learn and grow.” For others, the integration of professional skills and personal growth was transformative.

Participants frequently highlighted how the program’s core Christian values—compassion, integrity, and service—deeply resonated with their personal journeys. These principles have fostered an environment of safety and trust, allowing participants to grow not only professionally but also personally and spiritually. As one participant shared, “The program’s compassion and integrity helped me reconnect with my faith and reminded me of the importance of living with purpose.” This blend of faith-based support and practical resources has been instrumental in participants’ healing, growth, and renewed sense of direction in both their careers and personal lives. One individual described her journey as a process of rejuvenating the “soil” of her life, comparing her growth to a seed beginning to sprout. This metaphor captures the program’s profound impact on self-perception, empowering participants to break free from harmful cycles and envision a future filled with purpose and opportunity.



Building Community Through Peer and Staff Support

Participants emphasized the importance of the relationships formed during the program, highlighting how peer and staff support inspired and motivated them. Many noted that the shared journey fostered a sense of belonging, encouragement, and hope, which was pivotal in their growth.

For some participants, however, building trust and community was initially challenging due to their backgrounds and past experiences. One participant shared, “It’s really been a progression of just trusting people.” Despite these hurdles, the program’s intentional culture of care and consistency, rooted in the values of Love Never Fails and ITbiz, helped many overcome this barrier. By cultivating an environment of trust and mutual support, participants were able to embrace the community and lean on one another for encouragement and strength.

One participant reflected on how seeing others succeed gave her hope: “Seeing other women in the program succeed gave me hope. It showed me that if they could do it, so could I.” Another shared her gratitude for the unwavering support of the staff, saying, “The staff believed in me when I couldn’t believe in myself. They didn’t let me give up.”

“I agree about the staff reeling us back in because they realize we have a lot going on. They just reach out to make sure we’re good. Seeing consistency and having consistent mentors really helps me stay on top of things and improve. Even though I’ve heard it before, seeing it in action makes a big difference for me.”

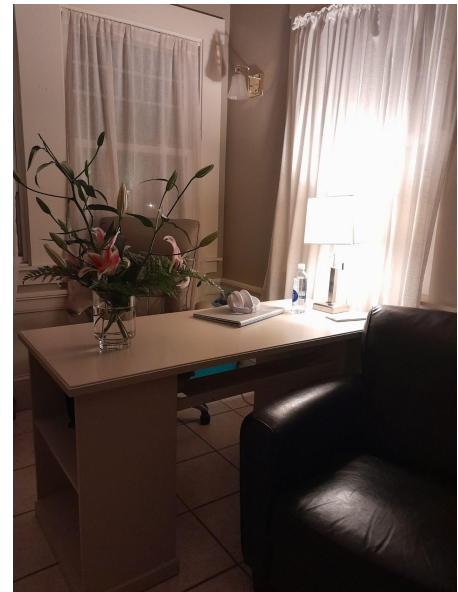
- Program Participant

The program’s consistency and mentorship were also key to fostering trust. This intentional focus on building relationships through trust, encouragement, and shared accountability allowed participants to see their own potential. As one participant expressed, “I knew I could trust her. She had the resources to help me, but I still had to do the work.” These bonds not only supported participants’ success in the program but also gave them a framework for building trust and connection in other areas of their lives.

Secure Housing as a Foundation for Success

Stable housing emerged as a cornerstone of participants’ success, enabling them to shift from survival mode to focusing on education and personal development. Participants described how housing provided a sense of safety and stability that allowed them to plan for their futures with confidence.

One participant shared, “Just having a safe place to be okay... I don’t have to be in survival mode. I have a place to go, process, and pray when I need to. That’s the foundation that allowed me to grow in this program.” Another reflected, “Before this program, I was constantly worried about whose couch I’d sleep on next. Now, I can focus on my goals.”



Another participant shared a photo of a desk space in one of the shelters, noting that simply having a desk and a chair to do her work allowed her to feel more confident in her ability to succeed in the program. Likewise, another participant shared that simply being able to choose where to study “whether it’s the floor, or at a desk, by a table, on your bed, it’s just so cool to be comfortable and prepared.”

Practical Resources as Essential Supports

Access to practical resources such as stipends, laptops, and internet connectivity was identified as critical to participant success. These supports removed significant barriers, enabling participants to fully engage with the program.

One participant highlighted the importance of financial assistance, sharing, “The stipend allowed me to focus on my classes without worrying about how I’d pay for transportation or food. It was a lifeline.” Another explained, “Having access to a laptop and internet made all the difference. Without them, I couldn’t have engaged in the program at all.”



Another participant used her program stipend to purchase a reliable car, alleviating the stress of her 1.5-hour daily commute on public transportation to the job she secured through the program.

“Two participants bought cars. This means they are safe at night. Some people are able to get their own apartments. The pride that comes with that. These are the things that make me say, this is beautiful.”

- Vanessa Russell, Founder & Executive Director, Love Never Fails

Redefining Success

Participants in the ITbiz+ Housing program are redefining success in ways that go beyond traditional measures of professional achievement. While professional development remains a critical aspect of their growth, participants frequently described success in terms of personal transformation, meaningful relationships, and the ability to lead fulfilling lives.

When asked how their participation in the program would impact their future success, participants acknowledged the professional gains but primarily emphasized the continued personal development they had achieved. For many, success now includes the ability to support themselves and their loved ones while pursuing their dreams and living with purpose.

One participant highlighted this shift, saying, “It’s not just about the paycheck anymore. I’ve learned to value things like being present for my family and building a life that feels meaningful.” Another participant noted, “I didn’t just gain technical skills—I gained the confidence to believe in myself and go after what I want, not just for me, but for my kids.”

This expanded definition of success also reflected a collective commitment to breaking cycles of instability and striving for generational change. Participants shared their visions of a future where they could achieve not only financial security but also personal fulfillment, stability, and the ability to contribute positively to their

communities. One participant beautifully described her journey as rejuvenating the “soil” of her life, explaining how the program allowed her to plant new seeds of hope and productivity.

Through this lens, success is no longer confined to monetary or material achievements but instead encompasses a holistic view of what it means to thrive—both professionally and personally. This shift underscores the program’s ability to not only equip participants with career skills but also inspire them to reimagine their lives with purpose and possibility.



What are the characteristics of a successful program participant?

Based on interviews, surveys, observations, and enrollment data, successful program participants tend to exhibit a powerful blend of resilience, intrinsic motivation, and openness to new possibilities. While a robust support system—including faith-based communities, family, friends, and dedicated program staff—can significantly enhance their capacity to thrive, it is not

“We can help anybody who comes to us for help. But if what you really want to do is start a career, you’re ready to turn your life around, get on the right track and get into the workforce, it helps to be at a certain point in your recovery. If they’ve only just recently been removed from a human trafficking situation. It’s not feasible to expect that they’re going to be able to enter the workforce in three months. So they have to be at a certain point on their journey.”

- Program Administrator

the primary prerequisite for success. Even participants with limited external support have demonstrated the ability to flourish in the program when they possess strong intrinsic motivation and a commitment to overcoming obstacles. Notably, program staff observed that a participant's readiness and intrinsic motivation often correlate with where they are in their healing and recovery journey. For example, participants who have been removed from domestic violence or human trafficking situations for longer periods appear better positioned to fully commit to the program.

Survey data further support and expand upon these observations by comparing participants based on their completion status: placement completed (n=7), placement in progress (n=8), and left the program (n=6). Due to limited survey responses from those who left the program, averages of survey measures and enrollment data were analyzed instead of percentages. Key differences emerged among the groups, highlighting potential predictors of success. For instance, participants who completed the program tended to be younger, without dependents, and with higher levels of education compared to those still in progress or those who left the program. Nearly all participants in progress for placement started the program in the final cohort of the evaluation period, while those who completed or exited the program were primarily from earlier cohorts. No notable disparities were observed across mental health issues, disabilities, race/ethnicity, or income, underscoring the importance of intrinsic motivation and timing in participants' recovery journeys as critical factors for program success.

Figures 3-5 illustrate trends in participant completion status based on several demographic factors.

Figure 3. Age Differences by Completion Status

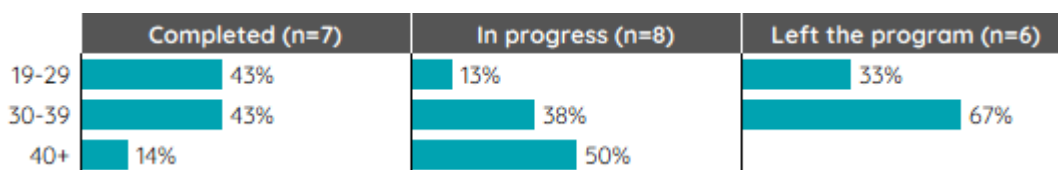


Figure 4. Those Having Dependent(s) by Completion Status

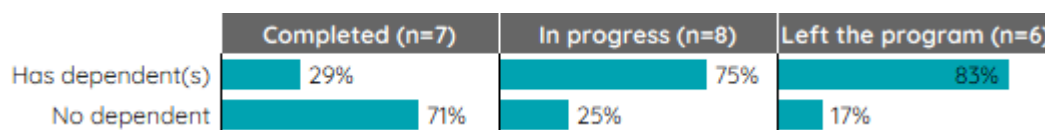
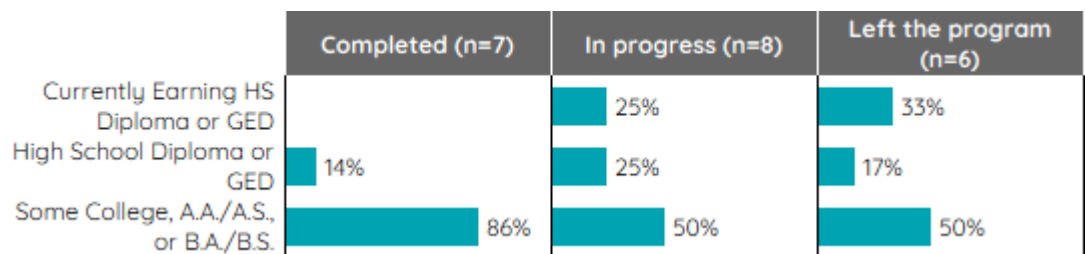


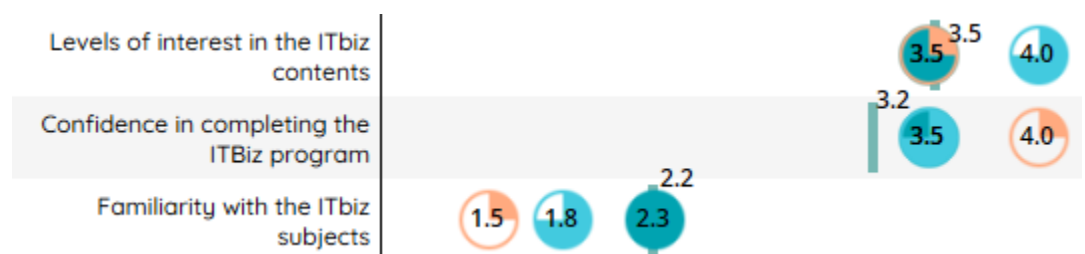
Figure 5. Educational Attainment at Entry by Completion Status



Participants’ levels of readiness for the ITbiz program, as assessed in the pre-survey, reveal important distinctions by completion status. Those who completed the program demonstrated similar levels of interest as those who left (moderately high) and comparable confidence levels to those still in progress (moderately high). However, they exhibited higher levels of familiarity with ITbiz subjects than both groups. Overall, participants who completed the program showed readiness levels—measured by interest, confidence, and familiarity—similar to those of non-housing participants in ITbiz.

While program elements like life coaching, case management, and other supports help lay the foundation for emotional readiness, confidence-building, and a clear vision for future stability, the key differentiator for sustained engagement lies in participants’ internal drive to persevere through adversity. Those who develop a growth mindset—marked by courage, fortitude, and determination to achieve educational and career milestones—become better equipped to secure sustainable employment and long-term stability. A shared commitment to learning, healing, and active participation not only facilitates program completion but also fosters lasting empowerment and meaningful economic independence.

Figure 6. Level of Program Readiness at Pre-Survey by Completion Status



Scale: 1=Not at all 2=somewhat 3=moderately 4=very
Key: ● Completed the program (n=4) ● In progress (n=6) ● Left the program (n=2) | ITbiz (n=45)

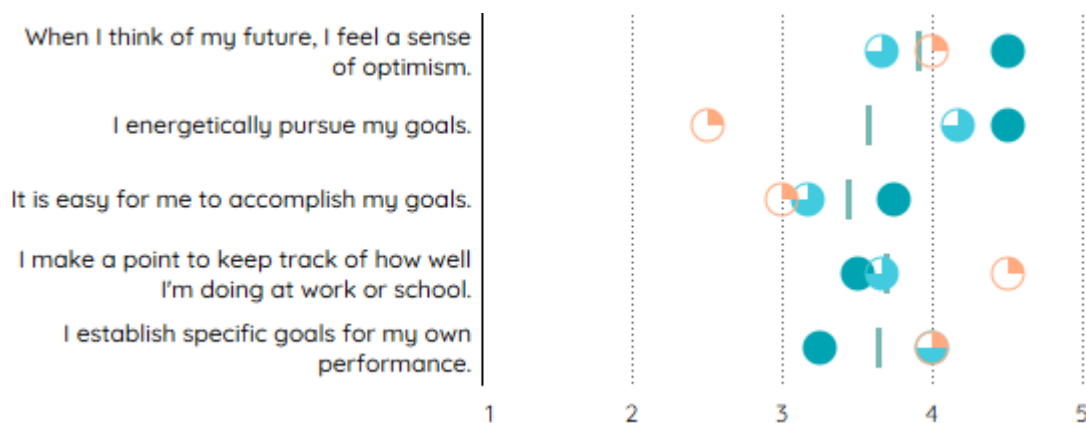
Participants who completed the program generally exhibited higher levels of optimism, enthusiasm, overall career confidence, and ego resilience compared to the other groups. In contrast, those who left the program reported the lowest levels of enthusiasm, resource-seeking, and social support in their pre-survey responses.

Figures 7-10 illustrate participants' pre-program levels of self-efficacy, career confidence, ego resilience, and perceived social support based on their completion status. In their enrollment applications, participants who eventually completed the program often outlined more specific goals (e.g., "continue my education and help with job placement" or "create the opportunity for myself to enter the tech industry to build a successful future for myself and my little one") than those who left the program, whose goals were broader or less detailed (e.g., "learning new skills" or "finishing"). Additionally, while participants in progress toward completion were less optimistic, less confident in their career advancement, and less resilient, they reported higher levels of perceived social support than other groups.

One of the things that we struggle with as instructors is that people who are recovering from trauma in their lives frequently have trouble committing to doing all of the work, to taking all of the tests you know; they sometimes just don't want to."

- Program Staff Member

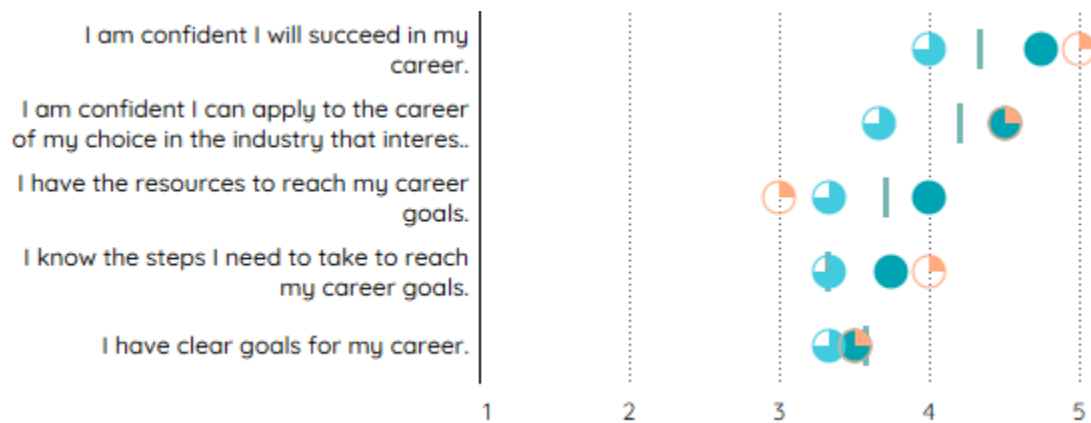
Figure 7. Level of Self-Efficacy at Pre-Survey by Completion Status



Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Key: ● Completed the program (n=4) ● In progress (n=6) ● Left the program (n=2) | ITbiz (n=45)

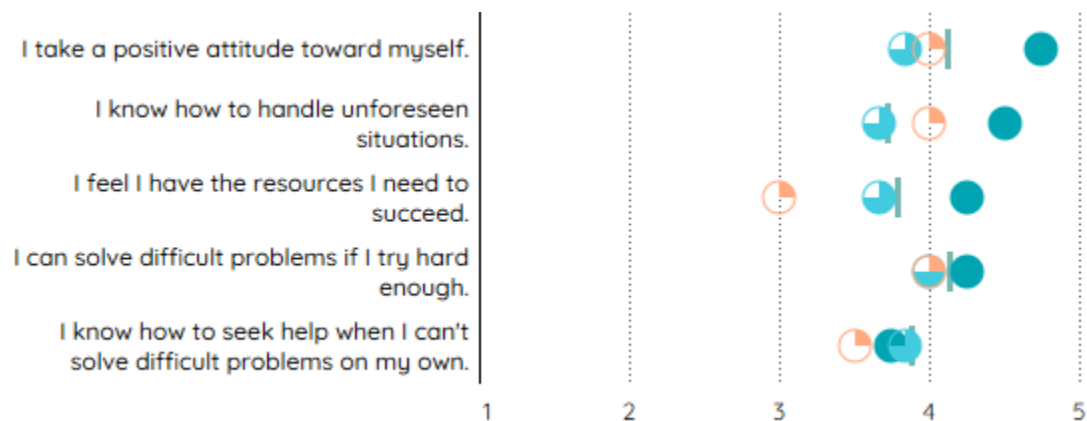
Figure 8. Level of Career Confidence at Pre-Survey by Completion Status



Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Key: ● Completed the program (n=4) ● In progress (n=6) ● Left the program (n=2) | ITbiz (n=45)

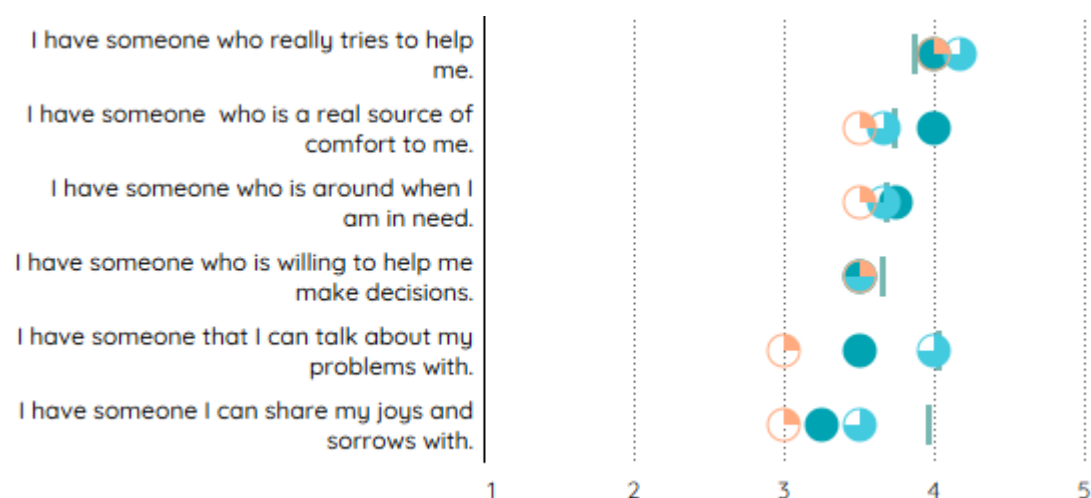
Figure 9. Level of Ego Resilience at Pre-Survey by Completion Status



Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Key: ● Completed the program (n=4) ● In progress (n=6) ● Left the program (n=2) | ITbiz (n=45)

Figure 10. Level of Perceived Social Support at Pre-Survey by Completion Status



Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Key: ● Completed the program (n=4) ● In progress (n=6) ● Left the program (n=2) | ITbiz (n=45)

This does not suggest that participants who initially lack characteristics like confidence, optimism, or resilience should be excluded or are incapable of thriving in the program. Rather, it underscores an opportunity to enhance support through more intensive and targeted personal development interventions, such as life coaching and case management, particularly during the early stages of their engagement. By addressing barriers to readiness—such as unresolved trauma, confidence challenges, or limited emotional resilience—participants can develop the foundational skills and mindset needed for success before enrolling in ITbiz.

In summary, successful program participants were more likely to be younger, without dependents, and have higher levels of education compared to their peers. They also demonstrated greater familiarity with ITbiz content, coupled with higher levels of optimism, enthusiasm, and career confidence, even when facing similar reported barriers. These intrinsic traits and readiness factors appear to have contributed significantly to their ability to complete the program.

In contrast, participants still in progress often faced greater challenges, including managing dependents, being older, having lower levels of education, and in some cases, living with disabilities. Despite these obstacles, their access to strong social support networks played a critical role in helping them navigate the program and stay engaged. These findings highlight the importance of both individual readiness and external supports in

“I made a commitment that I was going to do the whole program. I did not want to quit. I was going to do whatever I had to do to get my healing
- Program Participant

determining program outcomes and suggest opportunities to enhance resources and interventions tailored to participants facing greater barriers.

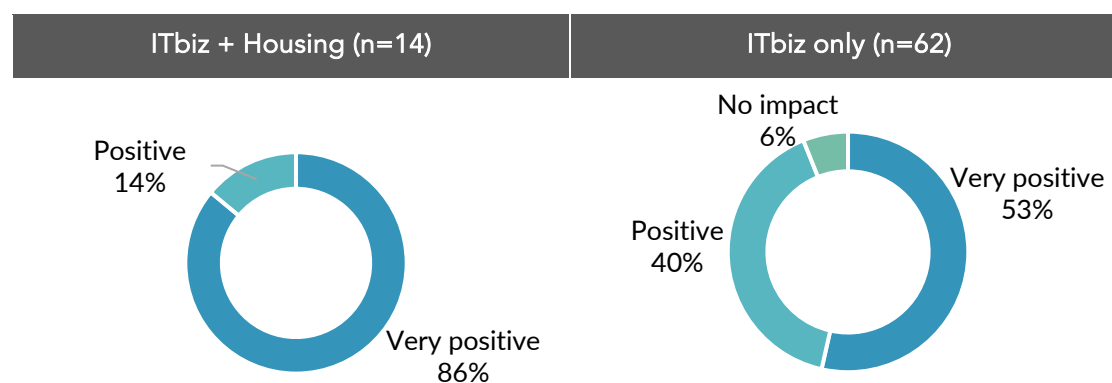
This is reinforced by observations by program leadership who see a strong correlation between housing stability and success in ITbiz. They have noted that participants who have spent a more time in the housing program (at least 1 to 3 months) are more likely to persist and thrive in the workforce development program. This suggests that ensuring participants reach a certain level of stability and healing before entering the pre-apprenticeship program may be critical to their long-term success. Addressing needs such as housing security, mental well-being, and trauma recovery first appears to enhance participants' ability to complete technical training and participate in career development.

As a result of these insights, program leadership is revisiting the enrollment timeline to better align with participants' readiness. This may involve adjusting intake procedures, providing additional support before workforce training begins, or creating flexible entry points based on individual progress in their healing journey. These adjustments aim to enhance overall retention and ensure participants are fully prepared to succeed in the program.

Benefits of Program Participation Regardless of Completion Status

Impact on Life. All ITbiz + Housing post-survey participants reported that the program had a positive impact on their lives, with 14% indicating a "positive" impact and 86% reporting a "very positive" impact, according to the post-survey. These results surpass those of non-housing ITbiz participants, among whom 53% reported a "very positive" impact and 40% reported a "positive" impact.

Figure 11. Impact of the Program on the Participants' Life



The respondents shared how the program impacted their life. The themes that were most mentioned by both housing and non-housing participants were new skills and knowledge, education and training, career progression and employment opportunities, and personal growth.

This table shows greater detail of the themes in their responses.

Theme	ITbiz + Housing	ITbiz only	Total
New skills and knowledge	4	17	21
Education and training	3	14	17
Career progression and employment opportunities	4	12	16
Personal growth	3	10	13
Hope and emotional support	2	8	10
Technology awareness and application		7	7
Community and networking	1	5	6
Entrepreneurship development		6	6
Program accessibility and support		4	4
Financial support	2		2

In interviews, ITbiz + Housing participants were asked what other parts of their lives have changed by participating in the program. Multiple people mentioned gaining confidence and hope, having a sense of purpose in life or changes in mind sets, and learning new skills for a better career. They are also hopeful for a better future with better career and income.

Housing. Of the 21 ITbiz + Housing participants, 11 (52%) had found permanent housing by the of the evaluation period, 5 participants (24%) remained in shelter (4 in LNF and 1 in Building Futures), and 1 participant was unhoused. The housing status of 4 participants was unknown. Similarly, among the 13 ITbiz + Housing participants who responded to the post-

“I did an apprenticeship for four weeks and it turned into a full-time job. I love my job. My job is amazing. I was able to buy my car with the stipend that I received, and I learned a lot.”

– Program Participant

“Free education provided me with the opportunity to stay relevant in today’s global IT-driven society and work toward earning a living wage. The program offered a positive foundation that supported me through a mental health crisis and homelessness and gave me hope for a brighter future. The trauma-focused, self-improvement-based learning approach supported my road to recovery. Additionally, the student stipend and program grant funding were helpful in easing socio-economic challenges.”

– Program Participant

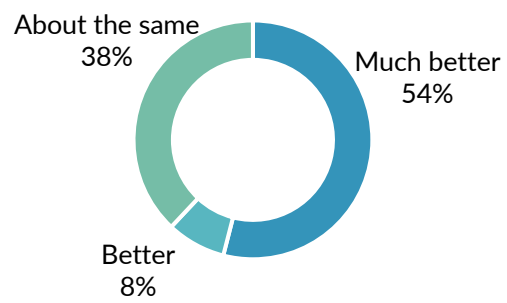
In the first 12 weeks, we learned about a little bit of everything. It's just knowing that I have a different direction now. It boosted my confidence knowing I didn't have to work hard – outside of being faithful and showing up and doing what I had to do – but it didn't feel like I was going to school, I just had to show up and learn some cool stuff and now have a certificate.

– Program Participant

survey, 62% said their current housing situations became better or much better than before participating in the program and 38% said it was about the same and none said it got worse. Their open-ended responses about how the program contributed to the changes in their

housing situations revealed multiple factors that contributed to those changes. These factors are individual mindset changes, financial support, connections to resources, and career support. By enrolling in the program and actively engaging in the ITbiz program while getting housing support, they experienced cognitive changes by setting up life goals and getting motivated, while receiving stipends, getting connected to resources through life coaching and other housing support programs, and receiving further career coaching support.

Figure 12. Changes in Housing Situation (N=13)



"I believe being actively enrolled and engaging in ITbiz education programs with Journey Ahead career placement services has positioned me to be able to continue healing and rebuilding journey with the goal and vision to sustain permanent housing received through Shelter + Care Program."

- Program Participant

"It helped me prove self-worth and got me started in life. I have a wonderful job and a studio that I waited eight months for. It all happened at the right time, especially after I graduated ITbiz."

– Program Participant

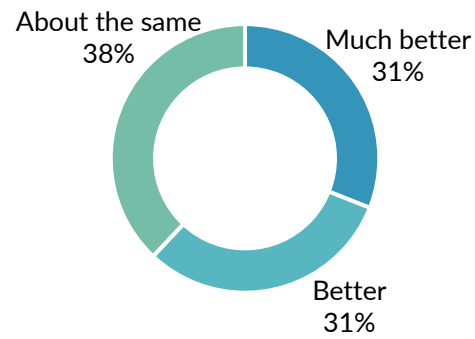
All participant interviewees noted that at the beginning of ITbiz they were fleeing unsafe and/or less than ideal living situations and reported that stable housing has been a key contributor to their success in the program. Participants in LNF housing and non-LNF housing programs stated that having stable housing alongside technical training provides a sense of security that makes program completion and success feel possible. Each expressed that if they

were still in their previous living situations, they would not be progressing through the ITbiz program at the rate they are.

Financial Stability. Most survey respondents reported that their financial situation got better (31%) or much better (31%). In their open-ended responses who said their financial situation got better, most said their situation got better because they had secured a full-time position and a few people pointed that they were aiming higher.

In interviews, when asked about the impact of the financial support offered through the program, all participants noted specific financial goals and intentions for the money received through the program including goals for savings, debt reduction, and giving back to loved ones who have supported them.

Figure 13. Changes in Financial Situation (N=13)



"If I was in that same situation I was in I probably wouldn't be checking off these milestones like I am as efficiently and effectively as I am. So I feel really good and excited about my whole future."

- Program Participant

"It gives me a sense of financial freedom and allows me to focus on school, even if unexpected challenges arise that might prevent me from completing the course. I have a stipend now so I'm motivated to finish and serves as a resource to help address any barriers that could get in the way. It's there as an additional support."

- Program Participant

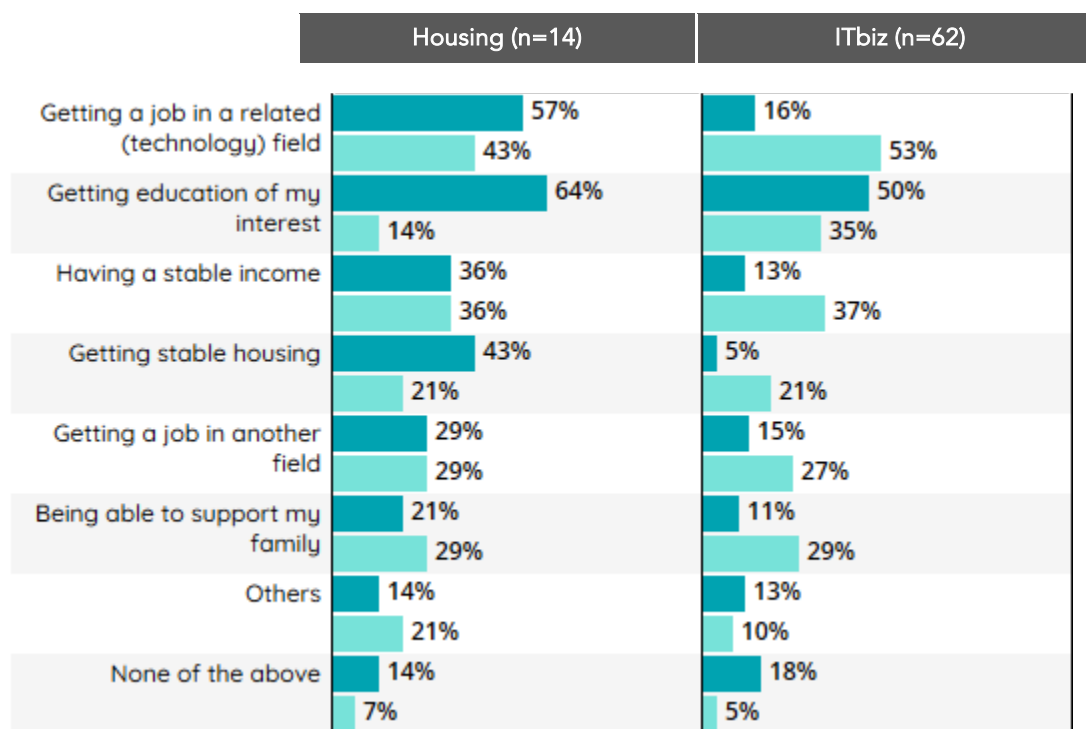
"It doesn't even seem real that last year I was literally homeless, I had just lost my baby, I was on so many drugs. And then today I'm just bettering myself, I feel like I'm in a really really good place for myself."

- Program Participant

Goals Achieved. Participants were asked whether they had achieved their goals since they started the ITbiz program or whether they anticipated achieving them in the next 12 months as the results of the program participation. Overall, higher percentages of the ITbiz + Housing participants reported having already achieved these goals than non-housing ITbiz participants. About 57% of the ITbiz + Housing participants had got a job in the technology field, while 16% of the non-housing participants did. Another 29% of the ITbiz + Housing participants in a different field, compared to 15% of the non-housing participants. Further, higher percentages of the ITbiz + Housing participants reported having stable income (36% vs. 13%), getting

stable housing (43% vs. 5%), and being able to support their family (21% vs. 11%), compared to the non-housing participants.

Figure 14. Goals Achieved (ITbiz + Housing compared to ITbiz only)



■ Have achieved since starting the ITbiz program ■ Anticipate achieving in the next 12 months

Among the ITbiz + Housing participants, there were significant discrepancies in the goals achieved between those who had completed the entire process and those in progress. Most of those who had completed the program cycle reported reaching goals such as getting a job, having a stable income, and getting stable housing. On the other hand, those in progress reported that they anticipated achieving these goals in the near future.

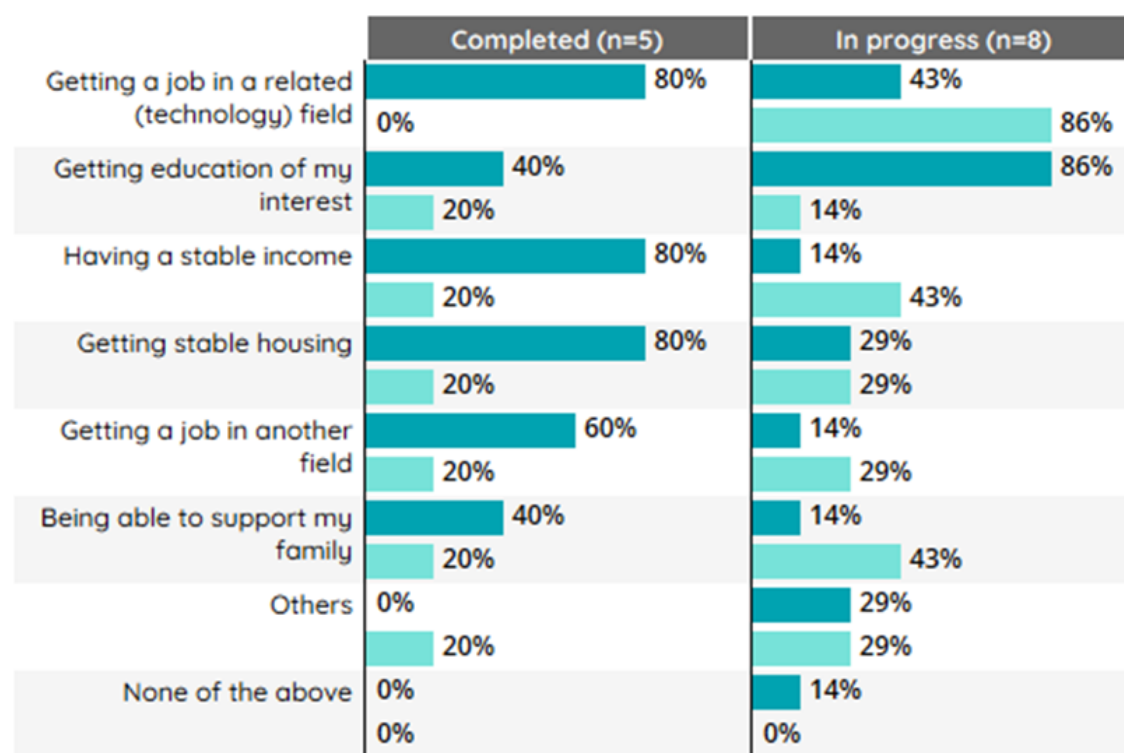
"The possibilities are endless because of my stability."

- Program Participant

"I have more freedom, more opportunities for employment."

- Program Participant

Figure 15. Goals Achieved (ITbiz + Housing completed compared to in progress)



■ Have achieved since starting the ITbiz program ■ Anticipate achieving in the next 12 months

Psychosocial Outcomes. Data of those who completed both the pre- and post-surveys were analyzed for these outcomes. The results of the pre-post changes showed that the ITbiz + Housing participants showed bigger increases in almost all items in self-efficacy and career confidence than the non-housing participants. That is, the housing participants became more optimistic, self-regulative, goal-oriented, confident about their accomplishments and career choices, and knowledgeable about resources available to them. However, their ego-resilience did not change much like the non-housing participants. Interestingly, the non-housing participants reported lower levels of social support in the post-survey while the housing participants showed slight increases.

"I feel like I'm being lifted up."

- Program Participant

"I can see me, and I can see where my future is taking me."

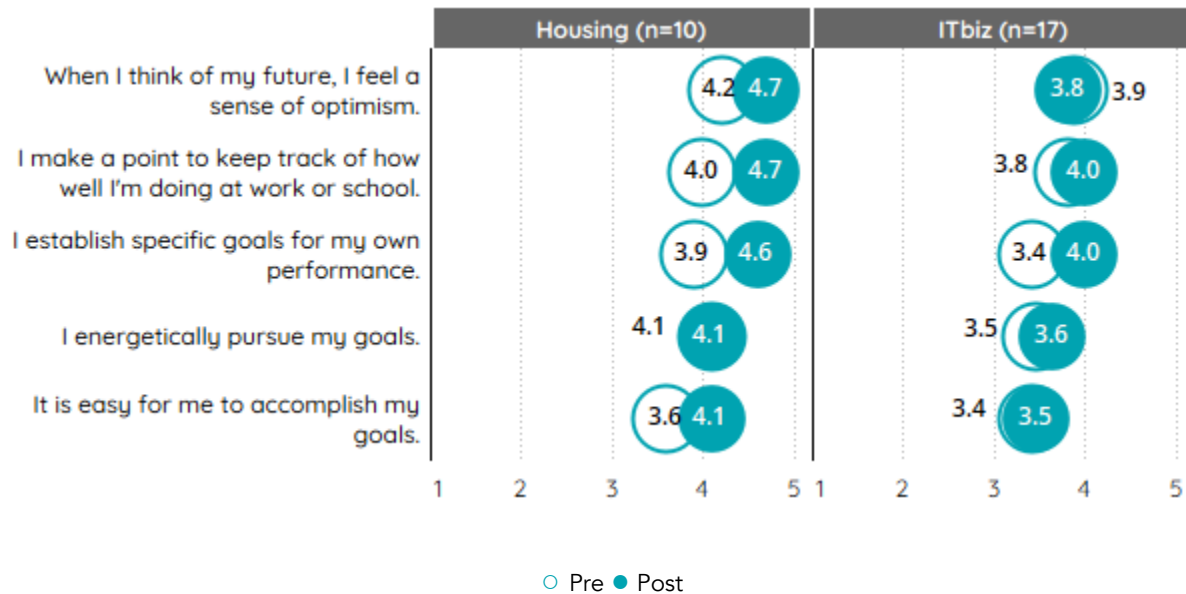
- Program Participant

"I have confidence now. I always beat myself for dropping out of college. I can still be the self-proclaimed college dropout but still be a future millionaire."

- Program Participant

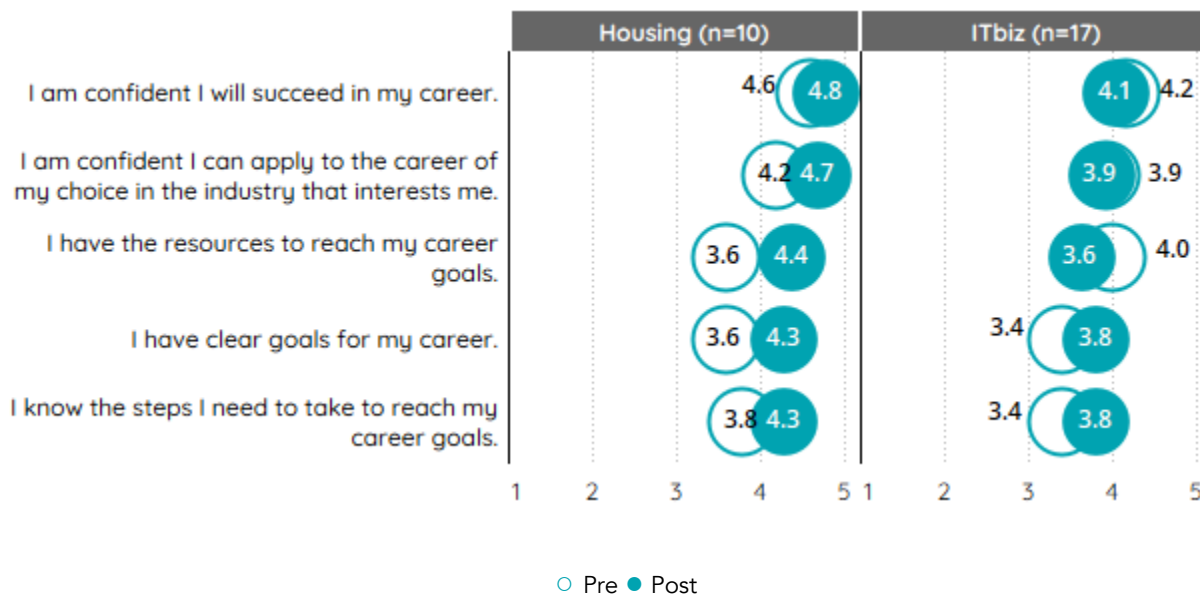
Those in progress showed big increases in career confidence, and small increases in self-efficacy, ego resilience, and social support. The non-housing ITbiz participants, during the same period, did not show such increases in most items in these measures, and instead they showed decreases in social support.

Figure 16. Changes in Self-Efficacy



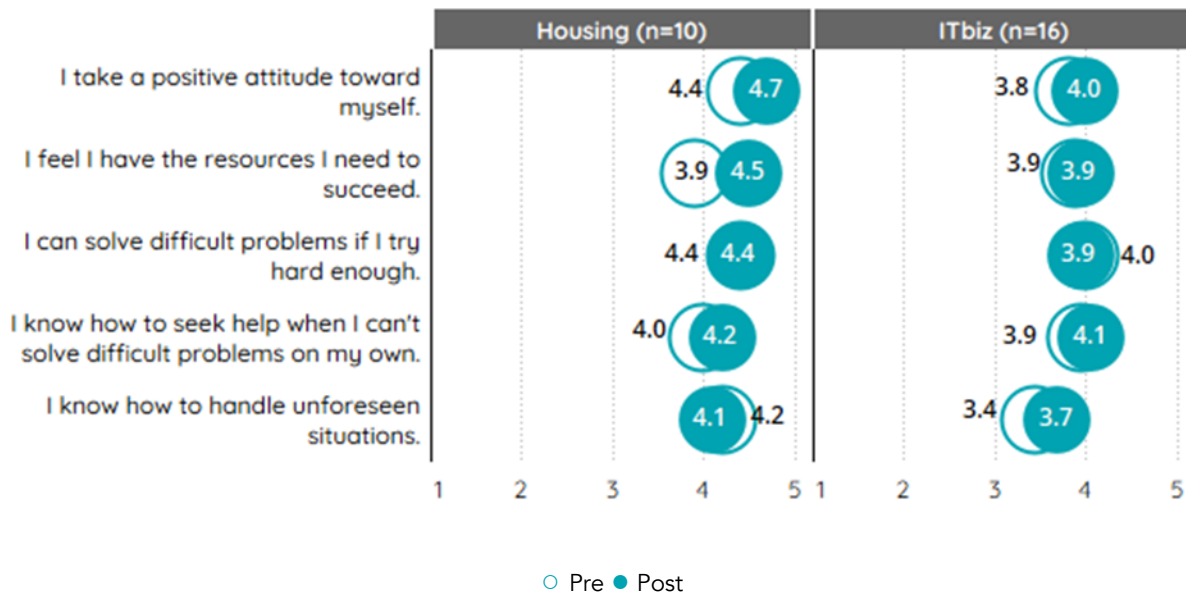
Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Figure 17. Changes in Career Confidence



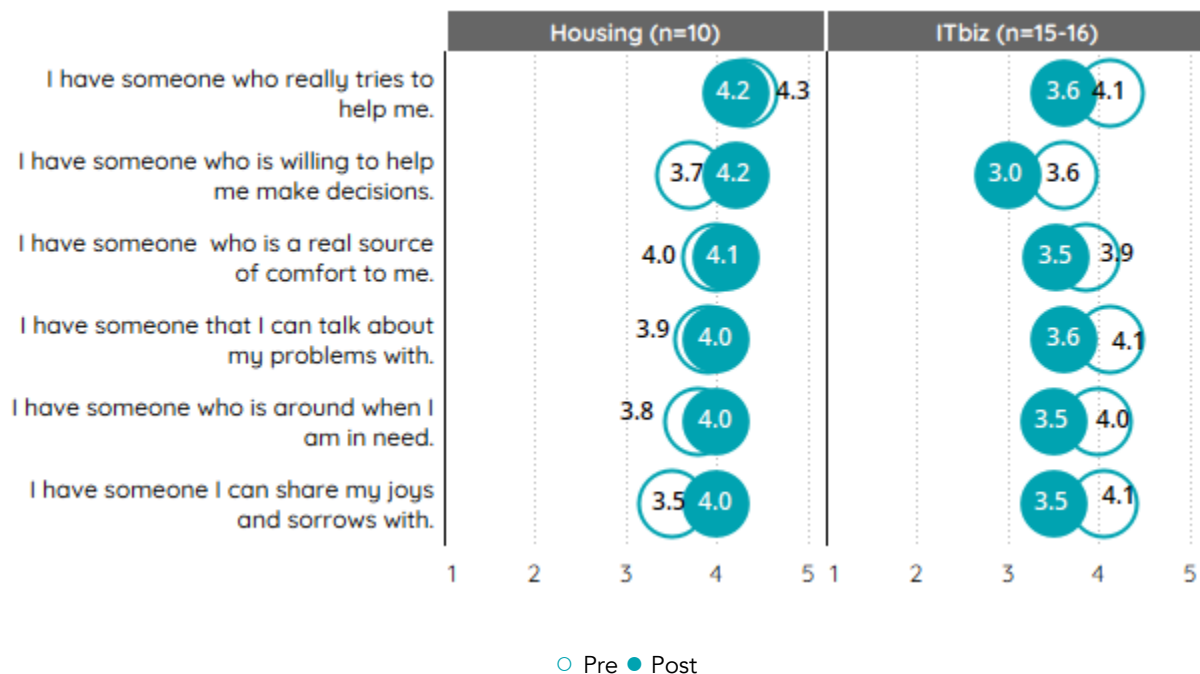
Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Figure 18. Changes in Ego Resilience



Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Figure 19. Changes in Social Support



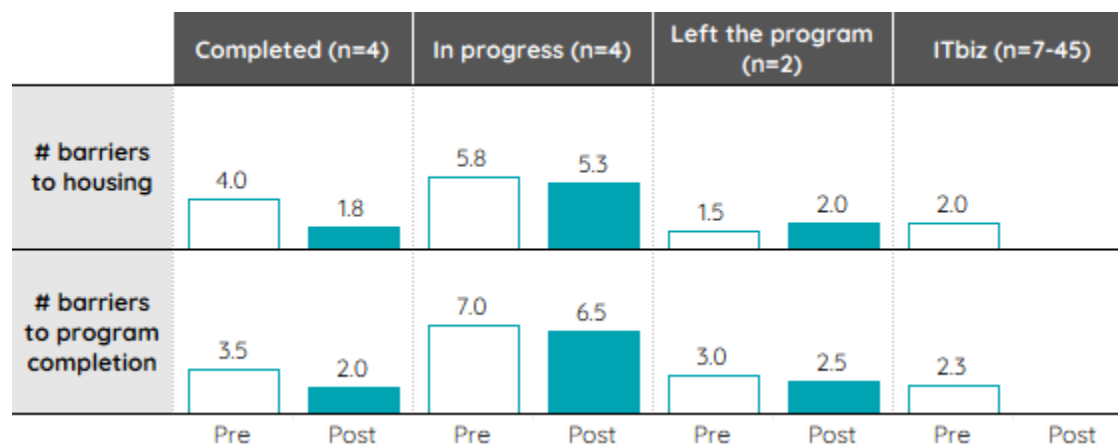
Scale: 1=Not at all true to me 2=a little true to me 3=somewhat true to me 4=true to me 5=definitely true to me

Barriers to Program Completion

In the pre- and post-surveys, respondents identified the barriers they faced in completing the program and securing permanent housing. For participants who completed the program, the average number of housing barriers decreased significantly from 4 at the start of the program to 1.8 by the end. In contrast, those who left the program reported fewer housing barriers at the outset, with an average of 1.5 barriers, and this remained unchanged at post-survey. Similarly, non-housing participants reported an average of 2 housing barriers at pre-survey. These findings suggest that the ITbiz + Housing program may be particularly effective for individuals with more significant barriers to securing permanent housing.

However, participants still in progress reported the highest number of housing barriers, with an average of 5.8 at the start and 5.3 at the post-survey. Since these participants were still awaiting job placements, their housing stability is likely to improve once they begin earning a stable income. The number of barriers to completing the program, on the other hand, was similar for those who completed and those who left the program at both pre- and post-survey. These levels were also consistent with non-housing participants and notably lower than those reported by participants still in progress.

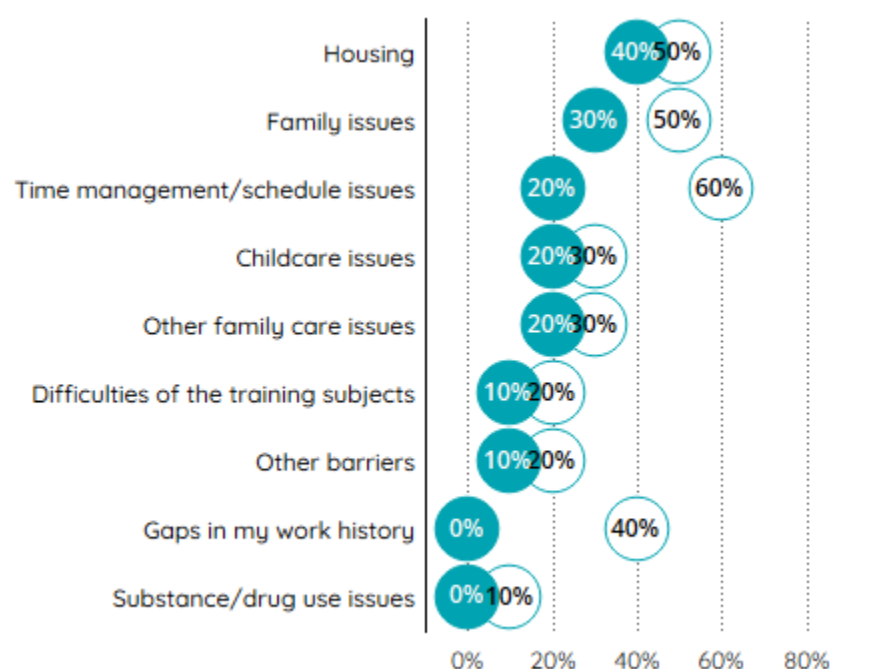
Figure 20. Number of Barriers at Pre and Post by Completion Status



Note. The results of the participants who completed both pre- and post-surveys are presented here except for the non-housing participants. These questions were asked only in the pre-survey for non-housing participants (ITbiz) and the pre-survey results of non-housing respondents are presented for comparison.

For participants who completed both the pre- and post-surveys (n=10), Figure 21 shows the barriers that were reported less frequently at post-survey compared to pre-survey.

Figure 21. Barriers to Program Completion - Improved



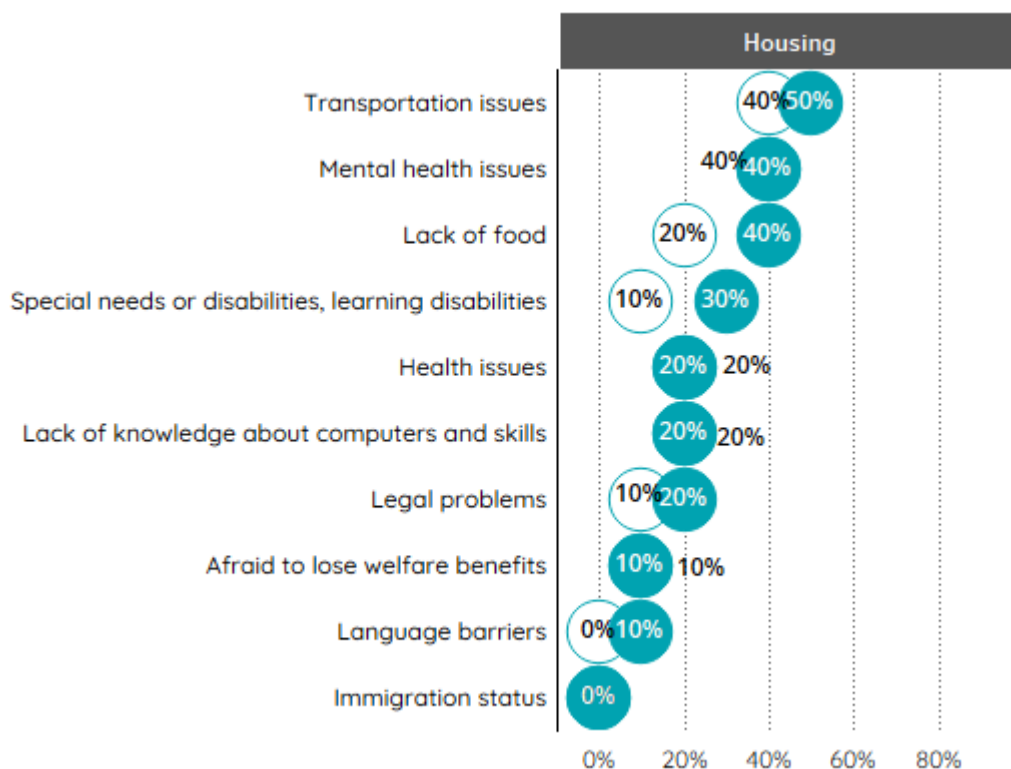
Despite the program’s multifaceted approach and commitment to holistic supports, several barriers and challenges emerged that significantly affected completion. Chief among these was housing instability, which the ITbiz + Housing initiative aimed to mitigate by providing participants with secure accommodations alongside career training. Once participants were successfully enrolled in housing programs, the impact of this barrier decreased substantially. However, even with stable housing in place, individuals still faced related hurdles such as limited quiet spaces for study, childcare needs, and the struggle to maintain a sustainable income while meeting program requirements. One participant expressed a desire to secure a part time job while participating in the program, however because she was in the first 30 days the housing program, program policy restricted her from doing so.

Another critical barrier was technology access and proficiency. Insufficient Wi-Fi or limited access to laptops made it difficult for participants to complete coursework or attend virtual sessions. Participants with minimal computer literacy struggled to navigate online platforms like Zoom. Funding constraints hindered the provision of mobile Wi-Fi, and the limited availability of computer donations left some students without the tools necessary to succeed.

In addition to these structural challenges, some financial and scheduling constraints placed undue strain on participants. While stipends were provided, the disbursement process could extend to three or four months, despite staff efforts to expedite payments. These delays exacerbated financial stress for participants, underscoring how even well-intentioned supports can fall short if not administered reliably. Meanwhile, scheduling conflicts arose as participants with religious or family obligations found consistent class attendance difficult. Some program

staff and participants suggested shifting class days to accommodate these commitments more effectively.

Figure 22. Barriers to Program Completion – Worsened or Unchanged



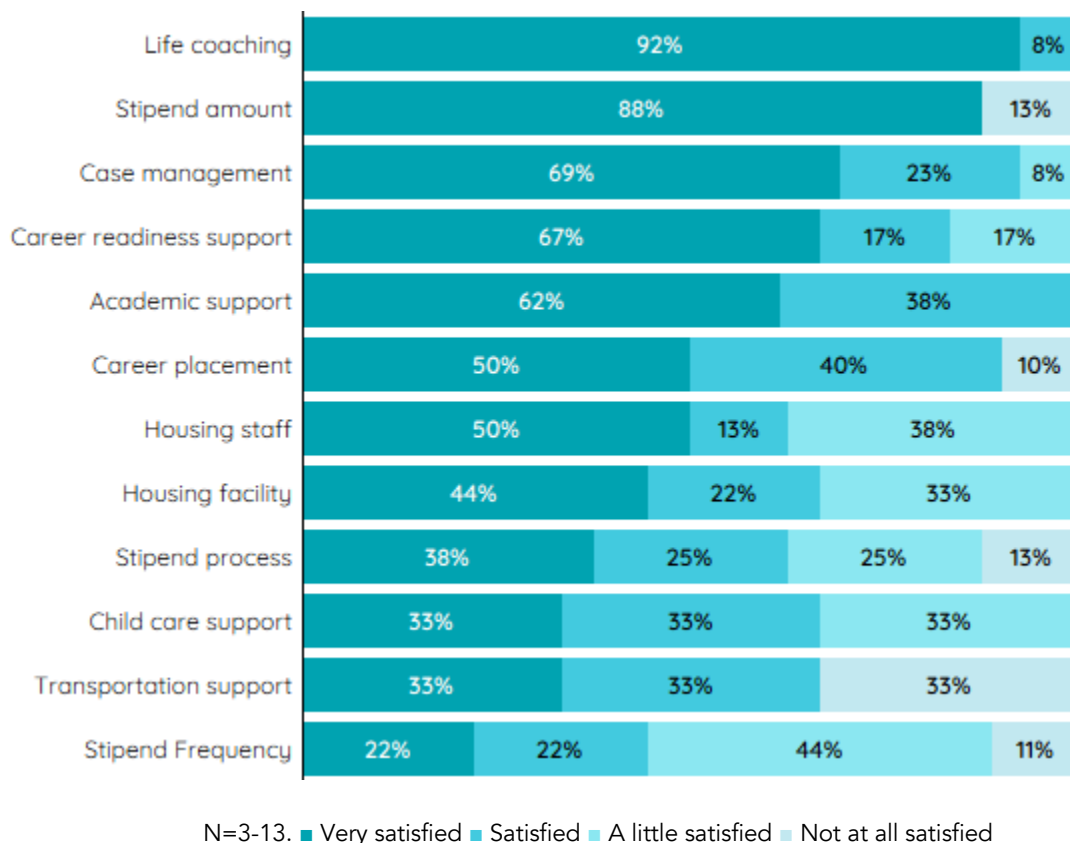
During interviews, both staff and participants reported that the post-COVID shift to a virtual-only class format sometimes limited engagement and hindered a sense of community. While online sessions offered convenience for some, several participants expressed a desire for face-to-face interaction to foster stronger peer support and closer relationships with instructors. Without the option for in-person classes, those who struggled with technology or preferred hands-on guidance found it challenging to stay motivated. Staff members also noted that an occasional in-person component could improve retention and encourage more meaningful collaboration among participants, ultimately enhancing the overall learning experience.

How did the program’s services, supports, and structure aid in participants' experience and success in the program.

The ITbiz + Housing participants rated their satisfaction with various service elements, as shown in the figure below. Participants who did not receive specific services were excluded from the analysis. The highest-rated elements were life coaching and stipend amount, with the majority expressing satisfaction. Additionally, 80% or more of participants reported being very satisfied or satisfied with case management, career readiness support (e.g., resume building and job preparation), academic support, and career placement. While slightly fewer participants reported high satisfaction with housing staff, housing facilities, the stipend process, childcare

support, and transportation assistance, most still expressed positive feedback. The lowest-rated element was stipend frequency, receiving the least satisfaction among participants.

Figure 23. Satisfaction Ratings on Program Elements



These results varied by completion status, with those who had completed the program generally reporting higher satisfaction with all elements compared to those still in progress.

Nearly all survey respondents said they would likely recommend the ITbiz program to others and about three-quarters of them said they would very likely do so. Further, about half (46%) of the housing participants said they would very likely recommend the housing program while another 38% said they would likely recommend it.

Overall, the program's comprehensive services, personalized support, and structured approach played a crucial role in participants' success by addressing both personal and professional barriers. Life coaching and case management provided consistent guidance, helping participants navigate challenges and build confidence. Wraparound services, including crisis prevention, therapy, and expungement workshops, contributed to emotional stability and long-term progress, while housing support created a foundation of security that allowed participants to focus on career development. The combination of professional training and personal development—such as grant writing and professional communication—equipped participants with essential skills for long-term success. Moreover, the program's deep investment in

participants' well-being fostered a strong sense of value and belonging, inspiring many to give back and support future cohorts. The program's holistic approach not only facilitated professional growth but also cultivated a lasting impact on participants' emotional resilience, self-sufficiency, and overall stability.

Opportunities to Improve Participant Experiences

To further enhance participant experiences, the program has opportunities to expand resources and support while fostering stronger peer and alumni engagement. By building on its existing services, the program can provide more tailored assistance to meet participants' evolving needs. Insights gathered from interviews and surveys with staff and participants highlight key areas for growth. Formal recommendations from the evaluation process will be provided later in the report.

Expanding Resources and Support. Participants identified several resource-related barriers that, if addressed, could improve their overall experience in the program:

- **Expanding laptop and Wi-Fi access:** To ensure participants have reliable technology in order reduce barriers to online learning and job readiness activities, funding for improved technology equipment can be added directly into grant funding requests.
- **In-person tech support workshops:** Providing hands-on workshops during enrollment could help participants overcome initial technical challenges.
- **Continuous life coach support post-completion:** Extending coaching services beyond program completion would help participants sustain progress during job placement and onboarding.
- **Clearer communication about wraparound services:** Introducing participants to available resources earlier in the program would ensure they can fully utilize the support provided.

Increasing Alumni and Peer Engagement. Participants and staff suggested strengthening alumni and peer networks to foster a sense of community and support:

- **Alumni speakers and mentorship:** Inviting program graduates to share their success stories could offer inspiration and relatable examples of achievement.
- **Peer-to-peer connections:** Facilitating workshops or group activities, particularly in person, would build community and encourage mutual support among participants.

In addition to these themes, participants provided specific recommendations for program improvements, enumerated in the table below. By addressing these opportunities, the program can continue to evolve and provide an even stronger foundation for participant success.

Theme	Suggestions	Total
In-Person Classes and Hands-On Training	● Desire for more in-person opportunities, hands-on training, and interactive classes	9
Program Structure and Length	● Suggestions for adjusting course duration, such as longer courses or reducing class times. ● Requests for extended timelines for group projects, more digestible schedules, and deadlines for coursework.	8
Communication and Support	● Improvement needed in communication with students and introducing new participants effectively. ● Suggestions for support during life challenges and better communication regarding internship opportunities.	6
Accessibility and Inclusivity	● Challenges faced by participants due to language barriers, life circumstances (e.g., homelessness), or technology access issues. ● Recommendations to improve accessibility for non-English speakers or single parents.	5
Job Placement and Career Readiness	● Requests for support in job placement, resume preparation, and real-world career readiness integration.	4
Interactive and Engaging Content	● Feedback for a more upbeat, energetic delivery style and creative, engaging teaching methods. ● Suggestions to focus less on reading slides and more on memorable, immersive activities.	4
Resources and Tools	● Requests for additional resources like laptops, headphones, or better Wi-Fi access. ● Suggestions for backup instructors to ensure smooth class delivery and network stability.	3
Life Coaching and Mentorship	● Appreciation for life coaching services and requests for extending such support beyond the program duration.	2
Positive Feedback or No Suggestions	● Many participants expressed satisfaction with the program, describing it as "perfect" or offering no recommendations for improvement.	16

What can be learned about the fit of the technology field as a focus for this program and population?

Feedback from both participants and staff indicates that the program's strong emphasis on technology, particularly as highlighted in its name, can sometimes be intimidating to potential and current participants. This intimidation often stems from individuals' self-perceptions regarding their abilities and self-efficacy in the tech field. While there is nothing inherent about this population that makes them unfit for a technology-focused career path, broadening the scope of the program's offerings could provide participants with more choices and attract individuals who might have been deterred by the program's tech-centric focus. By expanding into additional fields, the program can become more inclusive, offering diverse opportunities that cater to a wider range of interests and strengths within the participant population.

Notably, the program has already taken steps to broaden its focus. In addition to technology training, it offers an entrepreneurship pathway, equipping participants with the skills to start and manage their own businesses. Some participants have chosen to pursue careers in social services and non-profit sectors, with several even joining the staff at ITbiz. This diversification allows participants to align their career paths with their personal interests and strengths, thereby enhancing engagement and success rates.

By continuing to expand and promote these varied pathways, the program can mitigate barriers associated with a sole focus on technology and better serve the diverse aspirations of its participants.

Evaluation Objective 4: Identify Lessons for the Field

The findings from this evaluation provide valuable insights for organizations looking to replicate or scale similar programs that combine housing stability with career readiness, particularly for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. These lessons highlight key considerations for implementation, scalability, and sustainability.

Holistic Support Leads to Transformative Outcomes

Programs that holistically address the emotional, practical, and professional needs of survivors create an environment where genuine healing, skill development, and lasting career readiness can flourish. The integration of stable housing, wraparound services, and tailored career pathways fosters a foundation for participants to rebuild their lives. Future programs should prioritize this comprehensive approach to ensure participants' multidimensional needs are met.

Housing Partnerships are Critical

Strong, strategic partnerships with housing providers are essential for sustaining and scaling programs of this nature. Key lessons include:

- **Focus on Relationship Building:** Recruitment from external housing programs requires significant investment in relationship-building and trust.

- **Sustainability through Partnerships:** Designating a dedicated focus on housing partnership development can create a steady pipeline of participants and ensure ongoing enrollment opportunities.
- **Understanding Participant Experiences:** As programs expand their partnerships and services, it is essential to monitor the experiences and outcomes of participants coming from diverse housing environments to ensure equitable and effective support.

Readiness Measures and Transitional Support

Not all participants may be immediately ready to fully engage with intensive career readiness programs, especially when transitioning out of traumatic situations. Programs should:

- **Assess Readiness:** Implement readiness measures to identify participants who may need additional support before entering the full program.
- **Offer Intermediary Support:** Develop transitional services or preparatory phases to bridge gaps for participants who want to engage but need time to stabilize emotionally or logistically.

Flexibility and Individualized Support are Essential

The highly individual nature of participants' journeys underscores the importance of flexibility in program design and service delivery. Key considerations include:

- **Tailored Services:** Programs should avoid a one-size-fits-all approach, instead adapting services to participants' unique needs, goals, and circumstances.
- **Staff Training:** Comprehensive training is necessary to equip staff with the tools to address participants' varied challenges, including personal and career traumatic experiences and mental health needs.
- **Adaptive Delivery Models:** Flexible timelines and personalized pathways allow participants to progress at their own pace, enhancing retention and success.

Collaboration Enhances Program Effectiveness

Fostering robust inter-organizational networks can amplify the impact of programs by integrating stable housing, social services, and technical skills training. Collaborative efforts ensure participants benefit from a seamless continuum of care and support, addressing multiple facets of their recovery and development.

Offer in person learning and collaboration opportunities

Incorporating in-person learning and collaboration opportunities can significantly enhance the effectiveness of programs designed for survivors of domestic violence and human trafficking. While virtual learning offers flexibility and security, in-person interactions can also offer unique benefits that are particularly valuable for this population such as enhanced engagement and understanding from direct interactions, more opportunity to build community and develop social skills, and increased accountability and motivation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Building on the successes of the ITbiz + Housing program, this section outlines key recommendations to further enhance participant experiences, strengthen program outcomes, and address areas for growth. By implementing these strategic improvements, the Love Never Fails tandem offering of ITbiz and Housing can expand its impact, increase participant retention and success rates, and ensure long-term sustainability. The following recommendations focus on strengthening resources and support, refining program structure, and fostering deeper collaboration and engagement.

Enhance Adaptability in the Participant Journey

A participant's journey to and through the ITbiz and housing program is highly individual, shaped by trauma, mental health, and unique career goals. To better support participants, the program could:

- Tailor services to accommodate diverse needs and pathways.
- Provide comprehensive staff training to equip team members with the skills to navigate participants' multifaceted challenges.
- Foster flexibility in service delivery, allowing participants to progress at a pace aligned with their readiness and personal circumstances.
- Strengthen inter-organizational networks to integrate stable housing, social services, and technical skills training more effectively.

Implement a Strategic Process for Partner Engagement

Building and maintaining strong partnerships with external housing providers is crucial for recruiting participants and ensuring program sustainability. To optimize this process:

- Develop a strategic framework and process for engaging housing partners, focusing on consistent communication and mutual goals.
- Evaluate the recent success in recruiting participants from external housing programs to identify key factors that can contribute to improved representation and a wider reach of impact.
- Monitor the experiences and outcomes of participants from external housing programs to ensure equitable and effective support.

Provide Ongoing Support and Structures for Staff

To ensure staff members are well-equipped to support participants and navigate the complexities of their roles, the program could:

- Implement ongoing professional development opportunities tailored to staff roles and responsibilities.
- Provide personal development and wellness resources to help staff manage workplace challenges and prevent burnout.

- Offer targeted support for ITbiz graduates hired by LNF to help them transition successfully from program participants to staff members.
- Equip staff with training on trauma-informed care and participant engagement to enhance program effectiveness.

In addition, continuing to strengthen internal processes will support both staff and program participants.

Capture and Communicate the Breadth of the Program

While the program name reflects its initial focus on technology, its current offerings extend far beyond the tech field. To more accurately convey the program's scope and attract a broader participant base, the program could:

- Adopt a revised logic model that reflects the breadth of program activities as well as the program's focus beyond the IT field. (See appendix 2.)
- Reevaluate the branding and consider a name that reflects the diverse opportunities available, such as entrepreneurship pathways and career readiness in social services and non-profits.
- Highlight the full range of program offerings in outreach materials to reduce the intimidation some participants feel toward a perceived exclusive focus on technology.

CONCLUSION

The evaluation of the ITbiz + Housing program underscores the transformative potential of integrating career readiness training with secure housing support for survivors of gender-based violence. By equipping participants with in-demand digital skills, providing stable living environments, and offering wrap-around services, the program addresses both economic and personal stability, which are critical for long-term empowerment.

Participants have demonstrated significant progress, with many completing training modules, securing internships, and achieving gainful employment with competitive wages. These outcomes not only reflect individual success stories but also highlight the program's effectiveness in fostering economic mobility among a vulnerable population. Challenges such as limited access to technology and the need for strengthened partnerships with housing providers indicate opportunities for programmatic improvement. Addressing these challenges is essential for scaling the program's impact and ensuring its sustainability.

In conclusion, ITbiz + Housing's combination of technical education, housing, and other supports serves as a compelling model for holistic support. By building upon its successes and proactively addressing identified challenges, the program is well-positioned to continue making a profound difference in the lives of survivors, guiding them toward a future of stability, growth, and empowerment.

APPENDICES

1. Program Participant Demographics
2. Proposed Revised Program Logic Model
3. Evaluation Plan*
4. Quarterly Reports*
5. Data Collection Instruments*
6. Raw Pre and Post Survey Data*

*Note that appendices 3-6 are available in [this google drive folder](#).

Appendix 1. Program Evaluation Participant Demographics

The following data provides a demographic overview of the 21 ITbiz + Housing program participants that participated in this evaluation.

Housing Programs. Participants in the ITbiz + Housing cohort were recruited while sheltering in the following Bay Area programs:

- Love Never Fails – 11 participants (1 participant later moved to Open Door)
- A Safe Place – 1 participant
- Building Futures – 2 participants
- Community Solutions – 2 participants
- Cora – 2 participants
- Options Recovery Solutions – 1 participant
- Ruby’s Place – 2 participants

Race, Ethnicity, and Age. The ITbiz + Housing program serves a diverse group of participants. All participants are female, ranging in age from 19 to 53, with an average age of 33. The majority identify as Black or African American, followed by White, Indigenous, and Latino/a/x or Hispanic. 95% of participants speak English, while 5% speak Spanish, and another 5% speak Swahili and French.

Figure 1.1. ITbiz + Housing Participant Age at Enrollment (N=21)

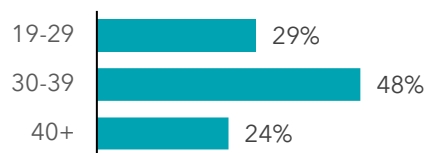
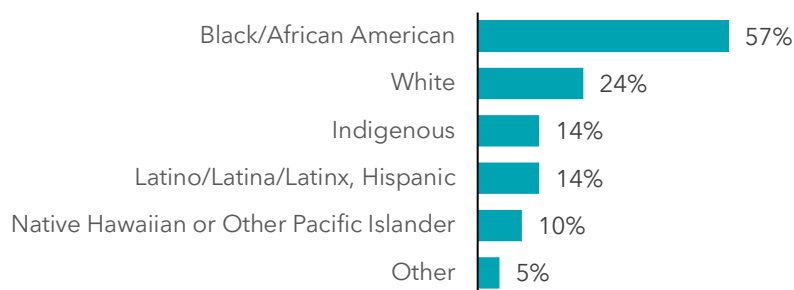


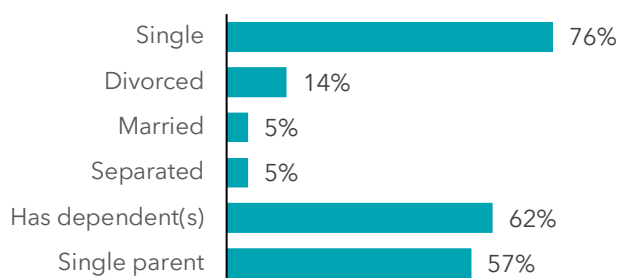
Figure 1.2. ITbiz + Housing Participant Race/Ethnicity (N=21)⁶



⁶ Participants were able to choose multiple Race/Ethnicity markers.

Marital Status and Dependents. Most participants were single (76%). More than half (57%) identified as single parents and 62% reported having at least one dependent, with the number of dependents ranging from one to four, averaging two.

Figure 1.3. ITbiz + Housing Participant Marital Status and Dependent(s) at Enrollment (N=21)



Educational Attainment and Income. Participants had a wide range of educational attainment with nearly half of participants (48%) having some college experience and 15% had earned an associate or bachelor's degree, but low reported annual incomes with about 80% of participants reporting annual incomes below \$15,000.

Figure 1.4. ITbiz + Housing Participant Education at Enrollment (N=21)

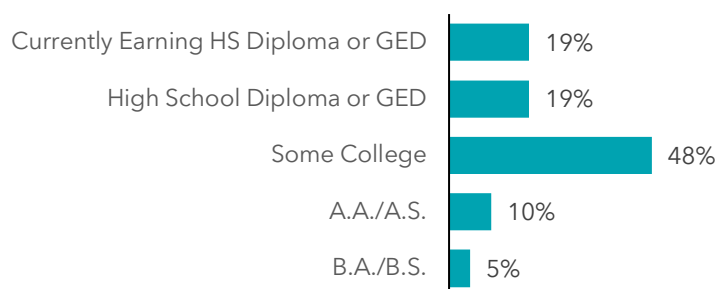
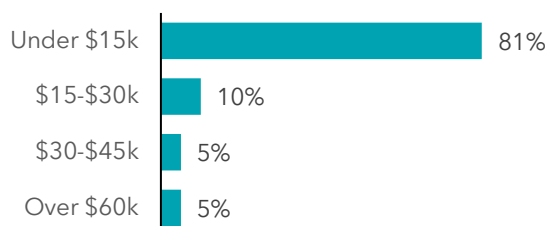


Figure 1.5. ITbiz + Housing Participant Income at Enrollment (N=21)



Social Challenges and Barriers. Participants face a wide variety of challenges and barriers. Nearly all participants (90%) had experienced interpersonal violence, and 57% had been involved in labor or sex trafficking. Additionally, 57% were dealing with mental health challenges, and 48% had been part of the foster care system. Most participate in public benefit

programs: 81% were enrolled in Medi-Cal or Medicare, 71% received CalFresh benefits, and 29% were beneficiaries of CalWORKs.

Figure 1.6. ITbiz + Housing Participant Barriers at Enrollment (N=21)

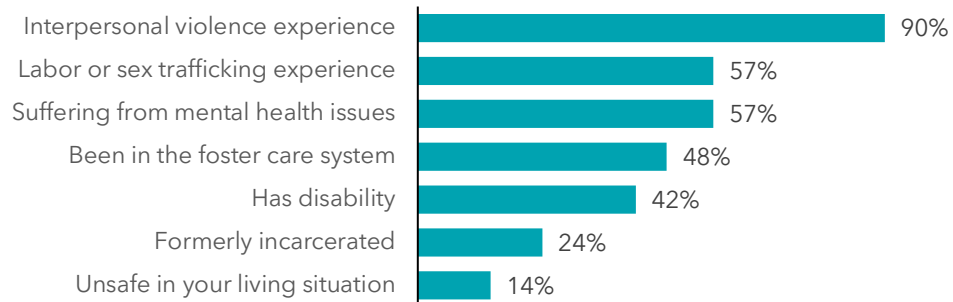
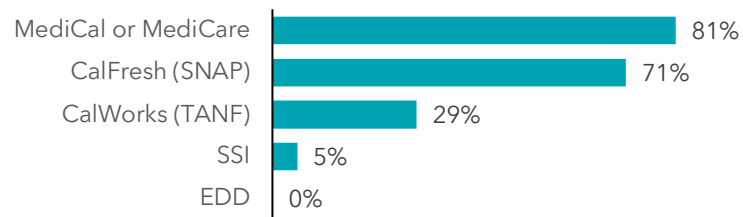


Figure 1.7. ITbiz + Housing Participants Receiving Public Assistance (N=21)



Love Never Fails Us

ITbiz + Housing Logic Model

Need

Survivors of gender-based violence need sustainable jobs and secure housing to eliminate economic dependence on unsafe people (exploiters, unhealed family, abusive partners, etc.). Many of the jobs they qualify for, such as retail customer service, do not provide a living wage.

Response

ITbiz + housing shelters survivors of gender-based violence and provides them with personal and professional skills that broaden their employment opportunities



Resources

- Culturally and experientially relevant trauma-informed programming
- Staff with lived experience
- Housing and partnerships with other housing providers
- Access to technology and other job-relevant resources, such as professional attire
- Fabric of partners to provide wraparound care and address barriers experienced by participants
- Funding
- Community engagement center



Activities

- Provide 35 weeks of tech and business training
- Provide professional skills development, including Junior College classes required for paid apprenticeships, internships, and placement
- Provide life coaching, case management and other support for personal and life skill development
- Provide resources for job readiness, such as interview training and professional attire
- Provide safe and stable housing



Outputs

- Number of participants who graduate the program with a technical certificate.
- Number of participants who acquire an apprenticeship or employment earning at least \$20 or \$23 per hour, respectively.
- Number of individuals who secure stable housing.



Short-Term Outcomes

- **Skill Acquisition:** Participants gain relevant technical and business skills, enhancing their qualifications for employment opportunities.
- **Increased Confidence:** Participants experience improved self-esteem and confidence in their abilities.
- **Job Readiness:** Participants become well-prepared to enter and navigate the professional workforce.
- **Housing Stability:** Participants experience immediate relief from housing insecurity and have a stable environment for focusing on personal and professional growth.



Long-Term Impact

Survivors of gender-based violence are empowered and equipped to enter and navigate a digitally-powered career path, attain greater economic mobility, and long-term stable housing, leading to sustained personal and professional growth, and greater well-being.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This evaluation was conducted in collaboration with the staff of Love Never Fails and the participants of the ITbiz Pre-Apprenticeship Academy. In particular, Vanessa Russell, Love Never Fails Executive Director, and Davina Kerrelola, Senior ITbiz and CEC Program Manager, have been invaluable resources. This evaluation was made possible through a generous grant by Tipping Point Community.