

Making Bridges Visible:

***An Inventory of Innovative, Effective or
Promising Canadian School-to-Work
Transition Practices, Programs and Policies***

Canadian Apprenticeship Forum Conference

Presentation

By

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Objectives of the Presentation

- ▣ To give you some background on how the inventory was developed;
- ▣ To talk about the state of school-to-work (STW) transitions in Canada;
- ▣ To look at what the research and what the inventory says about what makes for successful STW measures;
- ▣ To highlight a few programs related to the key elements of success, and;
- ▣ To discuss the recommendations made in the paper and ways to improve STW transitions.

Background

- The Work and Learning Knowledge Centre (WLKC) contracted with the Canadian Career Development Foundation in Spring 2007 to develop an inventory of current Canadian measures to improve school-to-work transitions.
- WLKC's Transition and Access Working Groups were the key informants for building the inventory.
- The aim of the inventory is to become a valuable reference for those who work with and employ youth.

Objectives for Building the Inventory

- Develop an inventory of current Canadian initiatives which improve school-to-work transitions for specific school-leaver groups:
 - Youth at-risk;
 - Students graduating from high school or graduating from PSE (university or college, private vocational); and,
 - Youth leaving high school or PSE without graduating.

Objectives for Building the Inventory

Definitions of Programs, Practices and Policies

- ▣ **Programs** are initiatives that are formally organized, regularly delivered and/or funded by governments, non-governmental organizations, employers or unions;
- ▣ **Practices** are initiatives that are informal and that may be more ad hoc in nature. (e.g. pilots); and,
- ▣ **Policies** are statements of principle or broad approach, most often used by governments, intended to guide the creation and operation of programs and practices.

Objectives for Building the Inventory

- ▣ Highlight Canadian initiatives which are particularly innovative, effective and/or promising.
- ▣ Identify potential target audiences to promote the inventory.

Approach and Method

Approach

- ▣ Identify initiatives;
- ▣ Provide full descriptions including details on positive outcome results;
- ▣ Provide contact information and all other pertinent details to enhance knowledge exchange.

Method

- ▣ Data Capture Template
- ▣ Access and Transitions Working Groups Survey
- ▣ Literature Review
- ▣ Data Analysis and Entry Categorization



Initiative Categories

- ▣ **Innovative** practices are able to achieve their objectives more effectively, efficiently, quicker, on a wider scale, or on a more sustainable basis than others.
- ▣ **Effective** practices are those which have evidence that they reliably achieve their objectives.
- ▣ **Promising** are newer practices which have not been evaluated or standing practices which have been only assessed informally or qualitatively; yet, their approach has the potential to achieve their objectives successfully.

WLKC's School-to-Work Inventory: Review

Policies

- ▣ Geographical distribution: 1 Alberta; 1 Nova Scotia; 1 Ontario and 2 national.
- ▣ Categorization: 2 promising; 2 innovative and 1 effective.

Programs

- ▣ Geographical distribution: 3 Alberta; 1 British Columbia; 3 Manitoba; 1 New Brunswick; 1 Nova Scotia; 8 Ontario; 2 Quebec; and 3 national.
- ▣ Categorization: 5 promising; 12 innovative; and 5 effective.

Practices

- ▣ Geographical distribution: 2 British Columbia; 2 Manitoba; 4 Newfoundland-Labrador; 1 Manitoba and New Brunswick combined; 2 Ontario; and 4 national.
- ▣ Categorization: 13 promising; 1 innovative; and 1 effective.



School-to-Work Transitions in Canada Overview

- ▣ Transition outcomes by education level:
 - School leavers: have multiple barrier in finding skilled employment
 - High school graduates: diploma has little impact on finding skilled employment (75% graduation rate in Canada vs. 82% OECD average)
 - College/ trades: 10-12% higher weekly salary
 - Undergraduate degree: 21% higher weekly salary; but many can't find work that matches their education.

School-to-Work Transitions in Canada Overview

- Length of transitions and quality of jobs post-transitions are key determinants of successful school-to-work transitions
 - Takes an average of 8 years (2 years more than 20 years ago)
- Impacts of global changes in the labour market and Canada's response are significant factors in lengthening STW transitions.

What is the state of school-to-work transitions in Canada?

- ▣ Increasing requirements in both technical and employability skills for most occupations require youth to stay learning longer (Canadian Learning Centre, 2005; Saunders and De Brouker, 2007);
- ▣ Increasing numbers of students deviate from linear education pathways (Krahn and Hudson, 2006; Thiessen, 2001).
- ▣ Lack of support for youth prior to and during this transition stage (Barr-Telford et al. 2003);

Canada's Response

- ▣ Career services are inconsistent, not known or rarely used (Taylor, 2007; Bell and Bezanson, 2006; Lehmann, 2005);
- ▣ A decentralized approach to STW programming which is less successful than centralized approaches in other countries (Taylor, 2007; Thiessen, 2001; Gross, 1998);
- ▣ A lack of viable education options such as Vocational Education and Training (VET) which have certifications or credentials that are valued by employers (Taylor, April 2007, de Broucker, October 2005).

Components of Successful School-to-Work Initiatives

10 Key Elements of Success

1. Highly visible and well-organized transition pathways;
 - ▣ Canadian youth are overwhelmed by too much choice.
2. Consultations and involvement of key stakeholders;
 - ▣ Most programs and practices in the inventory consult stakeholders, including youth.
3. Techniques to address attitudes of stakeholders;

10 Key Elements of Success

4. Involvement of employer and labour as key partners;
 - ▣ E.g. Aero-safe High School Co-op
5. Governments at all levels provide commitment and leadership;
 - ▣ Canada's key challenge

10 Key Elements of Success

6. Financial Viability and Sustainability;

▣ E.g. Career Trek

7. Career Education Integrated into the Curriculum and Made Visible to Support Better Student Access;

▣ E.g. Windsor Park Collegiate

8. Occupational Learning Connected with Academic Learning

▣ E.g. Centres de Formation en Entreprise et Récupération

10 Key Elements of Success

9. Professional development and occupational awareness for educators;
10. Solid bridging and mobility between vocational, apprenticeships and PSE.
 - ▣ Mobility between pathways and evaluation for equitable access is crucial.
 - ▣ E.g. Youth Apprenticeship Program (YAP), New Brunswick

Sustainability Qualities

1. Transferability

- ▣ The Real Game

2. Programs that are supported by associated policies

- ▣ Learning to 18

Sustainability Qualities

3. Evidence base to demonstrate results

- ▣ Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation
Research Project
([http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/research/
Pilot.asp](http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/research/Pilot.asp))

4. Extraordinary and Highly Committed Leaders

Discussion of Recommendations and Inventory

Discussion # 1

1. Select 3 people: a reader, a recorder and a presenter
2. Read the recommendations
3. Discuss and add any that are missing
4. Choose 1 or 2 to discuss in terms of how you could put them into action.

Discussion of Recommendations and Inventory

Discussion # 2

- ☐ Look at the inventory list on pps. 5-8 of the Executive Summary
- ☐ Are there initiatives you know about not on the list?
- ☐ Have recorder write down suggestions

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<http://www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/AboutCCL/KnowledgeCentres/WorkandLearning/>

