

Investing in Canada's youth

The Government of Canada recognizes that young Canadians face particular difficulty in breaking into the job market. That is why, over the next three years, the federal government will spend \$315 million on youth employment. This year the amount of money available for student summer job placements will double to \$120 million.

The funds are expected to enhance job opportunities for Canadian youth in emerging growth areas of the economy such as information and environmental technologies, tourism, culture, and international trade and development.

The private sector is also expected to do its part in creating summer jobs for students. To assist employers, the Student Summer Job Action Program provides wage subsidies to employers who create summer jobs for students, and also offers loans to help young entrepreneurs start summer businesses. The Summer Career Placements Program provides wage incentives to private, public and non-profit organizations that create career-related jobs for students.

The Connect with a Student program will help young people to gain work experience; at the same time it will help businesses gain access to strategic information to improve their prospects for growth and job creation. Under this program, 2 000 students will be hired to show some 50 000 small and medium-sized businesses how to use the Internet.

Since 1993, the federal government has launched a number of other youth initiatives. For example, Youth Service Canada funds community service projects involving youth, and the Youth Internship Program helps in the transition from school to work.

The Minister of Human Resources Development is slated to announce a comprehensive Youth Strategy in the fall.

Improving access to post-secondary education

In today's global economy, a highly skilled labour force is essential to foster a climate of growth and job creation. While education is a provincial responsibility, the federal government provides financial assistance to students under the Canada Student Loans Program. The government recently made a series of reforms to this program; the aim is to direct assistance to those who need it most while improving efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

To assist youth in pursuing post-secondary education, the federal government has increased education and tuition fee tax credits. The amount that parents can contribute to tax-free Registered Education Savings Plans has also been increased.

To improve tax benefits for low-income working families with children, by 1998 the Government of Canada will double the Working Income Supplement of the Child Tax