

Enhancing Access to Post-Secondary Education in Canada: An Exploration of Early Intervention Initiatives in Selected Countries

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Glossary of Key Terms

Early intervention – For the purposes of this paper, early intervention will refer to in-school, community-based, or web-based initiatives that provide students with opportunities to develop their skills, knowledge, confidence, aspirations, and overall preparedness for post-secondary education early enough in their schooling so as to influence their ultimate educational attainment (adapted from Perna and Swail, 2001).

First generation students – First generation students are those whose parents have not participated in post-secondary education (Educational Policy Institute, 2008).

Higher education – A term used primarily in the United Kingdom to refer to a level of education that is provided by universities, vocational universities, community colleges, liberal arts colleges, institutes of technology, and other collegiate level institutions (e.g. vocational schools, trade schools, and career colleges) that award academic degrees or professional certifications.

NEET – This acronym was coined in the United Kingdom to refer to young adults “not in education, employment or training.”

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Post-secondary education (PSE) – Any formalized education after secondary school, including university, community college, apprenticeship programs, and private colleges (EKOS, 2009).

Tertiary education – A term used to describe post-secondary education, typically provided by colleges and universities. According to the OECD, tertiary *Type A* programs are largely theory-based and are designed to provide sufficient qualifications for entry to advanced research programs and professions with high skill requirements (e.g. medicine, architecture). Tertiary *Type B* programs are typically shorter in duration and focus on practical, technical, or occupational skills for direct entry into the labour force (OECD, 2002).

Executive Summary

The accessibility of post-secondary education (PSE) has been identified as a key component of the social, economic, and cultural well-being of societies. A significant body of research has focused on the identification of PSE access barriers in the Canadian context; however, what governments, their partners, and PSE institutions might do to mitigate or overcome these barriers – particularly for those groups typically under-represented in PSE – is less understood. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) notes that “governments are paying increasing attention to international comparisons as they search for effective policies that enhance individuals’ social and economic prospects, provide incentives for greater efficiency in schooling, and help to mobilise resources to meet rising demands” (OECD, 2009: 3). Thus, the purpose of this report is to explore and describe early intervention initiatives that have been implemented in other countries as a means to highlight innovative ideas and initiatives that might inform and stimulate policy and program development in Canada.

Our review focuses on national PSE access initiatives in six OECD member countries: Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. These countries were selected based on their perceived similarities to the Canadian experience (i.e. similar governmental structures, geographical challenges, and/or Indigenous populations). A small number of Canadian initiatives are also described for comparative purposes. Government documents and websites were examined for descriptions of the most recent programs and initiatives relating to PSE access in the selected countries. Other sources were also examined, including documents published by well-known international organizations, independent research agencies, and peer-reviewed journals.

The following questions were considered:

- What are the objectives of the most recent PSE access initiatives in the target countries?
- What agencies are funding, coordinating, and/or delivering PSE access initiatives?
- What specific early intervention strategies do these initiatives employ?

We analyzed 17 in-school and community-based PSE access initiatives in the target countries using the six program components that were identified in a framework developed by Gándara (2001) (*counselling, academic enrichment, parental involvement, personal enrichment and social integration, mentoring, and scholarships*). Since we discovered a number of initiatives with web-based components, we surveyed an additional 14 web-based initiatives and described them using our own framework of characteristics (*interactivity, personalization, specialized content, accessibility, and social applications*).

The following key learnings were identified:

1. PSE access is an emerging issue in many countries as evidenced by the number of recent initiatives designed to address various barriers to PSE access and to support the needs of groups currently under-represented in post-secondary institutions.

2. Increasingly, government agencies and departments at various levels are collaborating with industry, community organizations, PSE institutions, and educators to provide a range of programs using a variety of delivery modes (i.e. in-school, community-based, web-based, or a combination).
3. For the programs studied, goals varied widely but focused around these major themes:
 - to provide information on careers, guide career selection, and to identify potential learning paths
 - to establish an awareness among youth that they are to participate in society by working and that part of their responsibility as youth is to determine or at least explore career goals and learning paths
 - to increase access opportunities for talented individuals from disadvantaged groups
 - to raise student achievement and graduation rates
 - to reconnect youth not in education, training, or employment with learning paths
4. The majority of programs we surveyed targeted individual high school students. Some programs targeted specific groups currently under-represented in PSE (i.e. students from low-income backgrounds, “first generation” students, Indigenous peoples, “at risk” youth, and those not currently in education, training, or employment), while other programs targeted a more general audience. The length of the in-school programs we surveyed varied from a few months to six years.
5. Our analysis of 17 in-school and community-based initiatives by program component revealed that all of the programs surveyed included some form of mentoring as identified by Gándara (2001). The vast majority of programs surveyed included *academic enrichment*, *personal enrichment and social integration*, and *counselling* opportunities for youth. *Parental involvement* was identified as a program component in roughly half of the initiatives we reviewed. Interestingly, only two of the initiatives offered *scholarships* for participants, though many of the programs did provide financial counselling.
6. Our review of 14 current web-based PSE access initiatives in the target countries indicates that several government agencies have invested in sophisticated websites designed to appeal to a younger, more technologically skilled population. For example, more than half of the initiatives included interactive applications (e.g. quizzes, searchable databases). Four of the websites were supported by “live” career counsellors available by phone, online chat, or webcam. Eight of the web-based initiatives allowed users to register on the site and build personalized “portfolios.” The vast majority of web-based initiatives included specialized information for parents and/or educators.

A secondary objective of the environmental scan was to determine the efficacy of the various initiatives in facilitating PSE access. As many of the initiatives reviewed in this report are relatively new, limited evaluative data were available. The preliminary findings of four program evaluations are presented. In addition, six key features of programs found to raise PSE participation in under-represented groups, as identified by Gándara (2001), are highlighted.

Based on existing literature, this environmental scan of a total of 31 in-school, community-based, and web-based initiatives in the selected countries, and available evaluative data, we propose a number of “next steps” to be considered by Canadian policy-makers and administrators with regard to the development of future PSE access initiatives. A recommendation for future research is also included.

Key Words

Access, comparison, early intervention, evidence, government policy, post-secondary education (PSE)

Enhancing Access to Post-Secondary Education in Canada: An Exploration of Early Intervention Initiatives in Selected Countries

1. Introduction

The accessibility of post-secondary education (PSE) is a key component of the social, economic, and cultural well-being of societies (Educational Policy Institute, 2008; OECD, 2009). A measurable societal benefit of PSE is the economic growth associated with the enhanced productivity of a highly trained workforce. For individuals, the long-term benefits of PSE participation include higher lifetime earnings, a more fulfilling work life, and longer life expectancy (Perna and Swail, 2001).

Given the societal and individual benefits of post-secondary education, it is hardly surprising that facilitating access to PSE has become an important focus for researchers, governments, and social agencies around the world. Canada is no exception, as evidenced by the number of studies and reports in this area (e.g. Hango and de Broucker, 2007; Finnie, Laporte, and Lascelles, 2004; Finnie and Mueller, 2008; R.A. Malatest and Associates, 2007; McElroy, 2008; Statistics Canada, 2009a, 2009b). Although a significant body of research has focused on the identification of PSE access barriers in the Canadian context, what governments, their partners, and PSE institutions might do to mitigate or overcome these barriers – particularly for those groups typically under-represented in PSE – is less understood. Thus, the purpose of this report is to explore and describe early intervention initiatives that have been implemented in other countries in order to highlight innovative ideas and initiatives that might inform and stimulate policy and program development in Canada.

1.1 Background

Canada has long prided itself on having one of the highest post-secondary participation rates in the developed world. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009) reported that, in 2007, 56% of Canadians between the ages of 25 and 34 had attained a post-secondary credential (i.e. college diploma or university degree) in comparison with 33% of their age peers in OECD member countries. However, the OECD's *Education at a Glance 2009* report suggests that Canada's relative position in the world may be on the decline, particularly with regard to university participation and completion rates. In 2007, the percentage of Canadian students who were estimated to have completed a tertiary Type A¹ program was 30.6%,

Box 1. Graduation Rates in Tertiary Type A Education for Selected OECD Countries (2007)

Australia	49.8%*
New Zealand	47.6%
Denmark	47.3%
Sweden	39.9%
United Kingdom	38.7%
<i>OECD average</i>	38.7%
United States	36.5%
Switzerland	31.4%
Canada	30.6%*
Hungary	29.4%
Germany	23.4%
Austria	22.1%
Greece	17.8%

* 2006 data

Source: *Education at a Glance 2009: OECD Indicators* (OECD, 2009: 73).

¹ Tertiary Type A programs are defined as largely theory-based, leading to qualifications for entry into advanced research programs and professions with high skill requirements. These programs typically take three to five years to complete.

well off the OECD average of 38.7% for their age peers (see Box 1; note that 2006 data was used for Canada and Australia). Canada ranked 20th out of 24 member countries in this educational indicator, ahead of Hungary (29.4%), Germany (23.4%), Austria (22.1%), and Greece (17.8%). Graduation data for tertiary Type B programs (those typically associated with community college and CEGEPs) were not available for Canada.

With regard to the percentage of adults who had attained a tertiary Type A qualification, Canadians in the 55 to 64-year-old cohort ranked fourth among their OECD age peers (21%). Although a higher percentage of the 25 to 34-year-old cohort had attained a university degree (29%), Canada ranked 12th overall on this indicator, tied with Japan and the United Kingdom.

Box 2. 15 to 19-Year-Olds Not in Education for Selected OECD Countries (2007)

Turkey	55.4%
New Zealand	26.9%
United Kingdom	23.8%
Spain	22.2%
Australia	20.4%
Canada	19.8%
Portugal	19.6%
<i>OECD average</i>	<i>15.7%</i>
Switzerland	15.6%
Denmark	15.2%
United States	14.8%
Sweden	13.1%
France	8.9%

Source: *Education at a Glance 2009: OECD Indicators* (OECD, 2009: 349).

Perhaps a more troubling statistic is that, among OECD member and partner countries, Canada had the sixth highest proportion of 15 to 19-year-olds who were no longer pursuing an education (19.8%), surpassed only by Australia (20.4%), Spain (22.2%), the United Kingdom (23.8%), New Zealand (26.9%), and Turkey (55.4%) (see Box 2).

A recent report by Statistics Canada (2009a) further explored this phenomenon, noting that the proportion of 15 to 19-year-olds no longer in education varied significantly across the provinces, ranging from 15% in Newfoundland and Labrador to 26% in Alberta. Although the 15 to 19-year-olds not currently pursuing an education seem to fare better in terms of securing employment than the majority of their OECD counterparts, the report cautions that, in the longer term, those without PSE are likely to experience wider gaps in income and employability. The report notes that, despite provincial legislation supporting compulsory education to age 16 (18 in Ontario and

New Brunswick), “a significant proportion of Canada’s youth leave the education system with the bare minimum (for some even less) as a basis for further learning through their workplace or through later reconnection with the education system” (Statistics Canada, 2009a: 63-64).

There is ample research to demonstrate that certain groups are less likely to access PSE than others. The following section provides a brief review of the groups found to be under-represented in Canadian post-secondary institutions:

Males

- For 2007, the rate of upper secondary graduation was 74% for males versus 83% for females (Statistics Canada, 2009a).
- More females than males are now enrolled in post-secondary institutions (see Bowlby and McMullen, 2002; Drewes, 2009; Finnie, Laporte and Lascelles, 2004; Shaienks and Gluszynski, 2007). This trend has also been noted in the Aboriginal population (Statistics Canada, 2009b).

Students with Disabilities

- In his analysis of data from the 2001-02 Canadian Undergraduate Survey Consortium (CUSC) and the 2002 Canadian College Student Survey Project (CCSSP), Holmes (2005) found that, when compared with a baseline group of “traditional” students, students with disabilities were less likely to attend university and more likely to attend community college.

“First Generation” Students

- Students whose parents have not attended PSE are less likely to attend PSE themselves (Finnie, Laporte, and Lascelles, 2004). Conversely, the offspring of highly educated parents are more likely to participate in PSE, particularly if their parents attended university (Knighton and Mirza, 2002; Krahn and Hudson, 2006).
- Hango and de Broucker’s (2007) analysis of Youth in Transition Survey (YITS) data for the 18 to 20-year-old cohort indicated a strong intergenerational education link between parents and their children. For example, 25% of the cohort whose parents’ highest level of education was less than high school followed the same educational path as their parents. In comparison, only 7.4% of youth with at least one parent who had completed a post-secondary program dropped out of high school.

Students from Lower-Income and/or Single Parent Families

- Students from the highest socio-economic quartile are more than twice as likely to go to university as their counterparts in the lowest economic quartile (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and Statistics Canada, 2000).
- Finnie, Laporte, and Lascelles (2004) used data from the School Leavers Survey (SLS) and YITS to analyze PSE participation rates in 1991 and again in 2000. They found that students in families headed by single mothers were less likely to attend post-secondary institutions than students from two-parent families. The authors noted that this gap is narrowing, particularly for students whose mothers have achieved a university education.
- Hango and de Broucker (2007) found that youth from single parent families appeared less likely to obtain a college diploma or a university degree than youth from intact (two-parent) families.

Aboriginal Students

- Although the Aboriginal population is much younger than the Canadian population as a whole, Aboriginal people are proportionately under-represented in PSE institutions. In 2001, 53.4% of non-Aboriginal people had post-secondary credentials (described as college, trade, or university) versus 38% of Aboriginal people (Mendelson, 2006).

A number of research projects have sought to identify the barriers experienced by Canadian youth in accessing PSE (e.g. Brunson, Butt and Déziel, 2002; Foley, 2001; Frenette, 2002, 2007; Looker, 2001). In one study Bowlby and McMullen (2002) presented the first results for the 18 to 20-year-old cohort of the 2000 YITS. Participants were asked to cite up to three barriers that they felt were preventing them from going as far in school as they would like. Of those who reported facing barriers (45.9%), the barriers listed most often were *financial situation* (65.9%), *not able to get into program/marks too low/not accepted* (11.6%), and *not enough interest/motivation* (10.5%). These three barriers were consistently identified by high school leavers, high school continuers, high school graduates with no PSE, PSE continuers, PSE leavers, and PSE graduates.

Similar findings emerged in a study commissioned by the Council for Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (EKOS, 2009) in which researchers conducted focus groups in six Canadian cities with high school students and their parents to explore students' perceived barriers to PSE. Participants included students who did not intend to pursue PSE or had not yet decided. The intrinsic and extrinsic factors and obstacles most commonly identified by students are presented in Box 3. In contrast to Bowlby and McMullen's (2002) findings, the EKOS study found that finances played a minor role in students' decision-making about whether or not to pursue PSE. Students' general indecision and inadequate information about PSE were perceived to be the greatest barriers to PSE participation.

Box 3. Factors and Obstacles Identified by Canadian High School Students Who Were Not Intending to Pursue PSE or Were Undecided

Intrinsic barriers

- general indecision
- pressures and anxieties/fear of failure related to PSE
- poor grades
- learning disabilities
- negative perceptions of school

Extrinsic barriers

- inadequate information about PSE
- varying levels of teaching quality
- costs of PSE
- PSE entrance requirements
- parents' lack of information about PSE

Source: EKOS (2009).

In summary, recent research has highlighted a number of emerging problem areas with regard to PSE access in Canada: the relatively high percentage of 15 to 19-year-olds not in school, the continued under-representation of disadvantaged populations in post-secondary institutions, and the apparent decline in university participation and graduation rates relative to other countries. The barriers to PSE access are varied and complex; however, research suggests that financial issues, lack of motivation, low marks, general indecision about a career path, and inadequate information about PSE options may be important factors.

2. Methodology

In this report, we examine national government initiatives designed to facilitate access to PSE in selected countries, with a focus on early intervention programs. In this section, the rationale used for the selection of the target countries is explained. The types of documents and resources included in the environmental scan, and the questions we considered, are discussed. Next, the definition of “early intervention” is established for the purposes of this report. Finally, we introduce the two typologies used to identify and analyze the components of PSE access initiatives in the target countries.

2.1 Countries Examined in This Report

A preliminary environmental scan focused on OECD member countries that were (a) selected by Statistics Canada for inclusion in the recent report *Education Indicators in Canada: An International Perspective* (Statistics Canada, 2009a)² and (b) deemed relevant to the Canadian context (i.e. countries with similar governmental structures, geographical challenges, and/or Indigenous populations).³ Following the preliminary scan, three countries were removed⁴ due to the lack of English language program information. In addition, Finland and Norway were eliminated because the programs found in these two countries were deemed sufficiently similar to those found in Denmark and Sweden as to be redundant. In the end, Canada, Australia, Denmark, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States were selected for inclusion in this report.

Government documents and websites were examined for descriptions of the most recent programs and initiatives relating to PSE access in the selected countries. In addition to government documentation, other sources were examined, including:

- documents published by well-known international organizations such as the European Union and the OECD;
- documents published by independent national research agencies (including program evaluations); and
- documents relating to identified initiatives published in peer-reviewed journals.

Our review focused on the following questions:

- What are the objectives of the most recent PSE access initiatives in the target countries?
- What agencies are funding, coordinating, and/or delivering PSE access initiatives?
- What specific early intervention strategies do these initiatives employ?

A secondary objective of the environmental scan was to determine the efficacy of the various programs and initiatives in facilitating PSE access, although existing research would suggest that evaluative data in this area are sparse.

² Australia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States.

³ Italy and Mexico were removed, while New Zealand, Denmark, and Norway were added.

⁴ France, Germany, and Switzerland.

It must be noted that our review is not meant to provide an exhaustive analysis of *all* early intervention initiatives in the selected countries. Moreover, although a few Canadian initiatives and examples are presented, the focus of this report is on what is being done *in selected OECD member countries* to facilitate PSE access as a means of highlighting innovative ideas and initiatives that might inform and stimulate policy and program development in Canada. Finally, we have focused our attention on national level initiatives. We acknowledge that many other PSE access initiatives have been implemented in the target countries – including Canada – at the state/provincial, regional, and local levels.

2.2 Early Intervention

The concept of early intervention is often associated with instructional programs for preschoolers, most notably, *Head Start* (Bronfenbrenner, 1974). However, the term has also been used in reference to programs for older students. For example, in their review of pre-college outreach programs, Perna and Swail (2001: 100) conceptualized early intervention as “programs designed to provide disadvantaged students with the opportunity to develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, aspirations, and overall preparedness for college early enough in their schooling so as to influence their ultimate educational attainment levels.” What is appealing about this definition is that early intervention is perceived as a developmental process relative to the individual rather than an event experienced at a particular time or place.

Perna and Swail’s notion of early intervention will provide the conceptual framework for this study, with two qualifications. First, for the purposes of this report, the term will be broadened to be inclusive of *all* students. Secondly, the word “opportunity” will be interpreted to mean the specific interventions that programs might implement (e.g. career counselling, financial support, mentoring) as a means of broadening PSE participation.

Our environmental scan will focus on PSE access initiatives designed for elementary, middle, and early high school-aged students as literature would suggest that educational and career path planning should begin well before senior high school (for more on the importance of early intervention, see Bell and Bezanson, 2006, and EKOS, 2009).

2.3 Gándara’s Framework of Program Components

In 2001, Patricia Gándara conducted a meta-analysis of 33 early intervention programs⁵ in the United States in an attempt to “map the field of K-12 bridge programs” designed to increase PSE access among under-represented youth. Gándara found that a number of program components were common across the initiatives, which may occur alone or in combination. The six most common program components and Gándara’s description of each follows below:

Counselling

College and/or financial advising, career advising, assistance with form and college application, personal

⁵ Gándara reviewed five types of initiatives: private non-profit, university-based, government-sponsored, community-based, and K-12 (school-based) programs.

Academic Enrichment

Tutoring, summer programs, college-based or college level courses/programs, high school or after-school academic preparation programs, assessment, test preparation

Parental Involvement

Orientation program for parents, parents as volunteers, programs for parents, parents as program designers, developers, staff

Personal Enrichment and Social Integration

Leadership, arts and cultural activities, field trips, speakers, peer component

Mentoring

Peer-based, university and/or high school staff and/or faculty, volunteers, corporate/professional

Scholarships

University, private/corporate, government (federal/state)

Gándara's framework of program components was used to identify, compare, and contrast the key elements of selected initiatives in the target countries. We acknowledge that this framework has its limitations. However, as the purpose of the report is to *describe* PSE access initiatives, Gándara's framework was felt to be a useful tool and one of the few available in the literature.

2.4 Framework Used to Analyze Web-Based Initiatives

In our review of PSE access initiatives in the target countries, it was noted that many of the in-school and community-based programs were supported by a companion website. Other initiatives were entirely web-based. The use of the Internet as a mode of delivery for PSE access initiatives was a significant finding of our analysis, though perhaps not a surprising one given the increasing reliance on the Internet as a means of accessing and engaging with youth.

As it was difficult to analyze the web-based initiatives using Gándara's framework of program components, we devised our own framework based on the following website characteristics:

Interactivity

Interactivity involves an exchange of information between the user and the website. Examples of interactive web-based applications include aptitude tests, quizzes, searchable databases, and web polls. In addition, user access to an online "expert" (e.g. career counsellor, youth worker) via e-mail, chat functions, and/or telephone is included in this category.

Personalization

The ability of a web user to create a unique profile (i.e. user name/password) that enables them to access certain applications, store personalized information, and/or collaborate with other users.

Specialized Content

Specialized content refers to the provision of web-based information geared to specific users (i.e. parents, educators and practitioners, or cultural groups).

Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the degree to which a website is accessible to a wide range of users (e.g. web content presented in multiple languages, applications for users with disabilities).

Social Applications

Social applications are those web-based features that encourage users to interact with their peers, such as chat rooms or message boards.

The remainder of this report is divided into the following sections:

- Section 3 outlines and describes PSE access initiatives in the target countries.
- Section 4 provides evaluative data for four PSE access initiatives.
- Section 5 summarizes key learnings.
- Section 6 presents possible next steps for Canadian policy-makers and administrators.

3. PSE Access Initiatives in the Target Countries

3.1 In-School and Community-Based Initiatives

In this section we present an overview of 14 national and 3 provincial initiatives that have been implemented in the target countries, first by country and then by program component. More comprehensive information for each initiative can be found in the “At a Glance” tables for each country, located in Appendix 1.

3.1.1 Description of In-School and Community-Based Initiatives by Country

Australia

Connections

The federally funded *Connections* program assists young people who have been disconnected from mainstream schooling for three months and face major barriers in returning to education (e.g. homelessness, disability, mental health issues or substance abuse). Through the one-on-one support of a *Connections* provider, youth receive personalized assistance to identify their strengths, personal goals, and possible “next steps” (e.g. re-entering school, vocational training, apprenticeship, or employment). The *Connections* program also delivers accredited education, life skills, and employability skills training in supported community settings. This recently expanded program will soon be available in up to 60 locations across Australia.

Youth Pathways

The objective of the *Youth Pathways* program is to support students aged 13 to 19 who are at risk of leaving school prior to completion of Year 12 or have already left. School-based *Youth Pathways* officers work closely with school administration teams to identify students who may require intensive support to stay on track within the school system. Identified youth receive a minimum of six hours of face-to face contact with a *Youth Pathways* officer, who supports and monitors their individual progress through goal setting, career exploration, and work experience.

- *Connections* and *Youth Pathways* are administered by *Career Advice Australia*, a national government initiative that works closely with existing career and transition programs to provide a national career development and transition support network for Australian youth. Through this initiative, local industries are encouraged to be involved in shaping their future workforce by actively participating in young peoples' career development, guidance, and training.

Mentor Marketplace

The main objective of the *Mentor Marketplace* initiative is to assist young people to stay connected to family, education, training, and work through the provision of mentoring services in their communities. The program aims to develop a mentoring culture in schools, businesses, and communities through the funding of "self-sustaining" projects that provide personal development opportunities for youth (e.g. reconnecting boys from disadvantaged backgrounds with male role models, preparing students for successful entry and retention in the workforce). Announced in 2002, federal funding for *Mentor Marketplace* was extended to June 2009. The current status of the program is unclear.

School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program

To be launched in January 2010, the *School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program* replaces the *Community and Education Engagement Partnership Program*. The new program encourages education providers to partner with stakeholders in their community (business and industry, community groups, parents and families) "to ensure all young people participate in challenging, relevant, and engaging learning that broadens personal aspirations and improves education and transition outcomes." How these partnerships will be leveraged to benefit students in practical terms is not yet clear.

Working Together for Indigenous Youth

A key aim of this strategy is the active engagement of students, parents, the school community and businesses to rapidly improve the educational outcomes for Indigenous youth. The program strives to bring together key local stakeholders to (a) identify and discuss the barriers to a successful education experience for Indigenous students and their families, and (b) devise culturally sensitive, collaborative strategies to overcome these barriers. Funding is allocated to community projects that serve to empower Indigenous young people and their communities.

Canada

As education is a provincial/territorial responsibility in Canada, we have included three provincial initiatives for comparison.

Future to Discover

The *Future to Discover* program was launched in September 2004 as a joint project of the governments of New Brunswick and Manitoba and the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Targeting students from low-income families whose parents have little or no post-secondary experience, the program aims to increase student interest and participation in PSE. To date the pilot project has been implemented with randomly selected volunteers in 30 New Brunswick high schools (4,400 students) and 21 Manitoba sites (1,050 participants).

Future to Discover (FTD) has two main components:

1. *Explore Your Horizons* is a classroom-based program that helps students to understand the range of occupational and post-secondary choices available to them and to make meaningful decisions about their futures.
2. *Learning Accounts* supports project participants who face financial obstacles to post-secondary education by offering a grant of \$8,000 to students who successfully complete high school and enrol in an accredited post-secondary institution. This financial incentive is available to students in New Brunswick whose family income is below the provincial median.

Explore Your Horizons comprises four classroom-based interventions:

- *Career Focusing* is an “innovative process in which students explore occupational choices based on passions rather than skills.” All post-secondary paths are explored, including vocational training and apprenticeships. This intervention is implemented in Grade 10 in New Brunswick and in Senior 2 in Manitoba.
- *Lasting Gifts* (for students in Grade 11 and Senior 3) is a workshop that brings parents/guardians into the school to work with their teens as “career allies” in exploring career options.
- The aim of *Future in Focus* is to help students in their final year of high school to build their resilience, develop support networks, engage with their communities, and learn how to work through “unexpected challenges” they may encounter.
- *Post-Secondary Ambassadors* are slightly older students currently enrolled in a provincial post-secondary program who are brought into the classroom to share their experiences with FTD participants.

Over the three-year span of the program, students receive about 50 hours of programming. The FTD program is supported by a dedicated website and a biannual magazine.

This Is Your Life: A Career Planning and Education Guide

Developed by Alberta Advanced Education and Technology in consultation with Alberta Education and Alberta Employment and Immigration, *This Is Your Life* is an in-school program for youth in grades 9 to 12 and beyond. A central component of the program is a 36-page resource

guide designed to help students consider the following questions: “What am I good at? How do I know my options? Should I take a year off or apply for some post-secondary program?” The guide is designed to work in conjunction with the High School Students “tab” on the Alberta Learning Information Service website (<http://alis.alberta.ca/hs/high-school.html>). In addition to the resource guide and website, the program brings “Learning Click Ambassadors” – students currently in college, university, or technical school – into the schools to talk to students about “why they love being a post-secondary student.” Ambassadors also demonstrate and distribute copies of the Learning Clicks CD-ROM, an interactive multimedia tool to help students prepare for education and training after high school.

Youth Career Discovery

The *Youth Career Discovery* program was launched by the Government of Saskatchewan in 2007. The program targets students in grades 6 to 12, with a particular focus on grades 6 through 9. The objective of the program is “to ensure that Saskatchewan’s young people graduate from high school with the essential skills and career management competencies that will assist them in achieving their potential on their personal pathways of learning, living and work.” *Youth Career Discovery* aims to augment the number of trained career development practitioners in the province and to increase the profile of career development through the creation of school-based action teams. Students in grades 6 through 9 receive a minimum of 30 hours of in-school Career Guidance. In Grade 9, students begin to build a Personal Career Portfolio based on their career interests, aspirations, and experiences. The *Youth Career Discovery* program seeks to establish and strengthen partnerships between school divisions, high schools, local business and industry, post-secondary institutions, community organizations, First Nations and Métis organizations, and others in order to provide career development opportunities for students through work experience, job shadowing, and mentoring. Parental involvement in the *Youth Career Discovery* program is encouraged via access to web-based career planning resources on a companion website.

Denmark

Youth Guidance Centres

Youth Guidance Centres are considered to be the first step in a lifelong guidance process that encourages Danish youth to explore their abilities, interests, and career possibilities, thus enabling them to make informed decisions about their education and employment options. *Youth Guidance Centres* work closely with area schools, businesses, and public employment services to determine local needs. Municipal councils determine the overall framework for guidance activities in their area and are obliged to post their local objectives and evaluative statistics online. Forty-five municipally funded *Youth Guidance Centres* provide services throughout Denmark for young people up to the age of 25, with a particular focus on students in forms 6 to 9 (ages 12 to 15), those with a “special need” for guidance, and youth not currently engaged in education, training, or employment. When a student leaves the school system early, a Youth Guidance practitioner is obliged to establish contact with that student to help them to re-engage with school, training, or employment opportunities. Youth guidance practitioners also organize guidance activities for students in transition (e.g. from compulsory school to youth education and from youth education to higher education). Classroom teachers are charged with the responsibility of general careers education for students in forms 1 to 9.

New Zealand

Te Kotahitanga

The *Te Kotahitanga* program works with teachers and schools to “create culturally responsive learning environments, to improve teaching and learning practices and to improve relationships between teachers and learners.” Started in 2001 as a collaborative research project and pilot program, *Te Kotahitanga* (which means “unity”) sought to raise the achievement of Māori students in mainstream schools. Drawing on feedback provided by Māori students, their parents, teachers, and principals, the research team developed the Effective Teaching Profile (ETP), which focuses on the quality of relationships and interactions between teachers and Māori students. Based on early positive results (see reports by Bishop et al., 2003, 2007), the Ministry of Education recently committed an additional \$20 million to expand the current program from 33 to 55 schools across New Zealand with the goal of reaching 20,000 Māori students.

Youth Guarantee

The *Youth Guarantee* initiative targets 16- and 17-year-olds not currently engaged in education, those who have achieved level 1 (Year 11) or less, and those for whom a vocational pathway is a preferred choice. The aim of the program is to facilitate a smooth transition between school, tertiary education, and work by enabling eligible students to participate in a range of vocational choices free of charge through approved partner organizations. *Youth Guarantee* participants work toward the achievement of National Qualifications in tertiary education. In addition to vocational training, students receive learning and cultural support, counselling, and career planning advice. The program also includes an orientation program and extracurricular activities with their program peers. Students are selected from communities of highest need, based on youth unemployment rates and access to suitable vocational training programs. This new \$53 million program will fund up to 2,000 full-time places, distributed across 11 regions, for the 2010/2011 school year. Twenty-eight service providers have been approved by the Tertiary Education Commission to deliver the *Youth Guarantee* program.

Sweden

Difficulties in accessing program information in English precluded the inclusion of an in-school or community-based initiative for Sweden. However, two web-based initiatives (*Utbildningsinfo.se* and *Vagledningsinfo.se*) are presented in Section 3.2.

United Kingdom

Aimhigher

The purpose of the *Aimhigher* initiative is to widen participation in higher education by raising awareness, aspirations, and attainment among young people from under-represented groups. Funded by the Higher Education Funding Council of England (HEFCE) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, the *Aimhigher* program is administered by Action on Access, an arm’s length organization. The program sponsors activities across 44 local areas in the United Kingdom designed to expose high school-aged students to university through campus visits and open days, residential summer programs, master classes, and mentoring opportunities. *Aimhigher* also encourages those who teach, guide, and support upper secondary students to work in partnership to devise more effective progressions and pathways for potential applicants to higher education.

Connexions

Established in 2001 by the Department for Schools, Children and Family, *Connexions* is an integrated, community-based initiative that aims to provide high-quality, impartial information, advice, and guidance – including careers advice and guidance – to youth aged 13 to 19 and students considered to be “at risk.”⁶ Personal advisers identify and formally assess the needs of vulnerable young people and intervene on their behalf to help remove barriers to learning. In addition, personal advisers work with NEETs (students “not in education, employment, or training”) to re-engage with education and/or training opportunities in their communities.⁷ The *Connexions* initiative is supported by a dedicated website and youth helpline called *Connexions Direct* (further discussed in Section 3.2).

United States

In the 1960s, the Office of Post-Secondary Education launched the *TRIO* program, comprising three federal grant programs designed to motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds⁸ to progress through the academic pipeline from middle school to graduate school. Since that time, *TRIO* has expanded to include eight outreach and support programs to assist disadvantaged populations in accessing PSE.⁹ We will focus our attention on the three *TRIO* initiatives that target elementary school and/or secondary school-aged students (*Talent Search*, *Upward Bound*, and *Upward Bound – Science and Math*), and the *GEAR UP* program.

TRIO: Talent Search

The objective of *TRIO*’s *Talent Search* initiative is to identify students from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education and to support those students in completing their secondary and PSE. The program provides a wide variety of services for participants, including academic, career, financial, and personal counselling. The *Talent Search* program publicizes the availability of student financial aid and assists participants with the post-secondary application process (e.g. preparing for college entrance exams, completing college admissions and financial aid applications). Other services offered include aptitude assessment, tutoring, mentoring programs, college campus visits, and “special activities” for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders.

⁶ Young adults up to age 25 with learning disabilities/other disabilities, those not currently in school, and youth at risk of being socially excluded

⁷ As part of the *Education and Skills Act* (2008), providers of post-16 education and training are under obligation to inform the *Connexions* service if young people drop out of school so that they can be contacted as soon as possible and offered support to re-engage with education and/or training opportunities.

⁸ Defined as students who have limited English proficiency, students from groups that are traditionally under-represented in post-secondary education, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youth, students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students

⁹ Programs are planned, developed, and delivered by *TRIO* grant recipients, which may include institutions of higher education, public and private agencies, community-based organizations that have experience in serving disadvantaged youth, or a combination thereof.

TRIO: Upward Bound

Upward Bound targets high school students from low-income families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree. The program provides fundamental support to participants in their preparation for college entrance. Services offered through *Upward Bound* include academic instruction in mathematics, laboratory sciences, literature, and foreign languages; tutoring; mentoring; guidance counselling; cultural enrichment; and work/study programs. In addition, the program aims to improve the economic literacy of students by providing them with financial counselling and information about Federal Student Financial Aid programs and benefits.

TRIO: Upward Bound – Math and Science

As the name would suggest, this offshoot of the *Upward Bound* program targets students from disadvantaged backgrounds who demonstrate the potential to excel in maths and sciences. In addition to the services offered in the original program, *Upward Bound – Math and Science* offers summer programs with intensive math and science training, computer training, and the opportunity for students to participate in scientific research projects under the guidance and mentorship of university faculty members and/or graduate students. The goal of *Upward Bound – Math and Science* is to help students recognize and develop their potential in math and science, and to encourage them to pursue post-secondary degrees, and ultimately careers, in these fields.

GEAR UP

Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs, or *GEAR UP*, is a discretionary grant program that targets cohorts of students from high poverty middle and high schools. Funded by the US Office of Post-Secondary Education, *GEAR UP* grantees serve an entire cohort of students for six years, beginning no later than the seventh grade. The purpose of *GEAR UP* is to raise the academic expectations of low-income students and to increase their college attendance and success rates. Program services vary from state to state depending on local partnerships and state reform efforts; however, all *GEAR UP* programs must support an early intervention component and the provision of college scholarship funding. Since the inception of *GEAR UP* in 1998, grants have been awarded in 46 states and four territories.

3.1.2 Description of In-School and Community-Based Initiatives by Program Component

As discussed in Section 2.4, Gándara's typology of program components was used to analyze in-school and community-based initiatives in the target countries. To review, Gándara's six program components are *counselling*, *academic enrichment*, *parental involvement*, *personal enrichment and social integration*, *mentoring*, and *scholarship*.

For a visual representation of the in-school and community-based initiatives by program component, refer to Box 4 (p. 16). A discussion of the six program components follows.

3.1.3 Discussion of Program Components

Counselling

All but two of the 17 initiatives reviewed identified some form of counselling as a program component. When the types of counselling were specified, educational counselling and career path counselling were mentioned most often. All four of the US programs identified financial counselling as a program element. The UK *Aimhigher* initiative and the US *Talent Search* and *Upward Bound* programs offered more practical counselling assistance, such as helping students to complete college applications and student loan forms. Personalized counselling was highlighted in three of the initiatives we reviewed: Australia's *Youth Pathways* and *Connections* programs and the United Kingdom's *Connexions Direct*. Given that these three programs aim to reconnect "at risk" youth with education, training, and/or employment, personal counselling would seem a logical component of these initiatives.

Academic Enrichment

The majority of initiatives we reviewed included at least one type of academic enrichment as described by Gándara. For example, tutoring services are provided by *Connections* (in Australia), *Upward Bound*, *Upward Bound – Math and Science*, and *GEAR UP* (all in the United States). Several initiatives offer skills acquisition programs through workplace learning and vocational training (e.g. New Zealand's *Youth Guarantee*). Other forms of academic enrichment include exposure to PSE institutions through "master classes" (e.g. *Aimhigher*), college-based summer school programs (e.g. *Upward Bound – Math and Science*), and college entrance exam preparation (*Talent Search*). In the case of *GEAR UP*, academic enrichment comes in the form of a systematic and sustained effort to support a cohort of students in completing high school.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is a key component of the two programs for Indigenous youth (*Te Kotahitanga* and *Working Together for Indigenous Youth*). In both programs, parents are invited to actively participate in creating a collaborative and culturally responsive learning environment for their children. The community-based *GEAR UP* (United States) program relies on parental involvement and support over the course of the six-year initiative. Australia's *School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program* solicits parental involvement as part of the collaborative model. The *Youth Career Discovery Program* (Alberta) encourages parental involvement through online access to career planning resources. Parents are enlisted as "career allies" in the *Future to Discover* pilot program (New Brunswick, Manitoba) to support students in career exploration workshops.

Box 4. Summary of Program Components* of In-School and Community-Based Initiatives in Target Countries

Country	Program	Target Audience	Counselling	Academic Enrichment	Parental Involvement	Personal Enrichment/ Social Integration	Mentoring	Scholarship
Australia	Connections	Youth disconnected from school for 3+ months	√	√		√	√	
	Mentor Marketplace	Ages 12-25, "at risk" students		√		√	√	
	School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program	Ages 15-24	√	√	√	√	√	
	Working Together for Indigenous Youth	Indigenous youth	√	√		√	√	
	Youth Pathways	Ages 13-19 "at risk"	√	√	If student approves	√	√	
Canada	Future to Discover (NB, Manitoba)	"First generation" high school students from low-income backgrounds	√		√	√	√	√ (NB only)
	This Is Your Life (Alberta)	Youth in grades 9-12 and beyond	√				√	
	Youth Career Discovery (Saskatchewan)	Students in grades 6-12, with particular focus on 6-9	√		√		√	
Denmark	Youth Guidance Centres	Young people up to age 25	√			√	√	
New Zealand	Te Kotahitanga	Underachieving Māori students in years 9-11		√	√	√	√	
	Youth Guarantee	16- and 17-year-olds not in education	√	√		√	√	
United Kingdom	Aimhigher	Groups under-represented in higher education	√	√		√	√	
	Connexions	Students aged 13-19, students with learning disabilities up to age 24	√	√		√	√	
United States	Talent Search	High school students from disadvantaged backgrounds	√	√	√	√	√	
	Upward Bound	"First generation" high school students from low-income households	√	√		√	√	
	Upward Bound – Math and Science	"First generation" high school students from low-income households	√	√		√	√	
	GEAR UP	Cohorts of middle school students from high poverty backgrounds	√	√	√	√	√	√

* Framework adapted from Gándara (2001)..

Personal Enrichment and Social Integration

New Zealand's *Youth Guarantee* initiative encourages peer support through orientation and extracurricular activities. All of the TRIO programs reviewed (*Upward Bound*, *Upward Bound – Math and Science*, and *Talent Search*) provide field trips and cultural activities for participants. Cultural activities are an essential element of the programs designed for Indigenous youth (*Working Together for Indigenous Youth*, *Te Kotahitanga*).

Mentoring

All of the programs we reviewed included some type of mentoring activity. In the case of Australia's *Mentoring Marketplace* initiative, the development of a mentoring culture is the defining component of the program. Designated mentors could be a teacher or career counsellor (*Youth Guidance Centres*), university professor (*Upward Bound – Math and Science*), youth worker (e.g. *Connexions Direct UK*, *Youth Pathways*), or cultural leader (*Te Kotahitanga*). Two Canadian initiatives (*Future to Discover* and *This Is Your Life*) use students currently enrolled in post-secondary institutions as program “ambassadors.”

Scholarships

Only two of the initiatives (*GEAR UP* and *Future to Discover*) included the provision of financial support as a central program component. However, many of the initiatives we reviewed assisted students in accessing financial aid through various channels.

In summary, *mentoring* was the most commonly identified program component (17/17), followed by *counselling* (15/17), *personal enrichment and social integration* (15/17), and *academic enrichment* (13/17). *Parental involvement* (7/17) and *scholarships* (2/17) were identified least often. Of the 17 initiatives reviewed, only *GEAR UP* included all six of the program components identified by Gándara.

3.2 Web-Based Initiatives

A total of 14 web-based initiatives were explored; a brief summary and web link for each follows below. For more in-depth information pertaining to these initiatives, refer to the “At a Glance” tables for the target countries located in Appendix 1.

3.2.1 Description of Web-Based Initiatives by Country

Australia

Career Advice Australia (www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au)

Career Advice Australia is the government agency responsible for the community-based *Youth Pathways* and *Connections* programs for “at risk” youth aged 13 to 19. This companion website provides information for students and parents with regard to program eligibility and local service provision. Program information is available in 15 languages.

Job Guide (www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au/Your-guide-to-Job-Guide/Where-else-can-I-access-Job-Guide)

An initiative of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the *Job Guide* website is a companion to the resource guide of the same name distributed to all Year 10 students. The primary focus of the *Job Guide* program is to provide students with information relating to occupations and related learning pathways. A central component of this visually appealing website is the *Job Search* application, which allows users to search on hundreds of job profiles alphabetically, by job name or by field (the database is also accessible via mobile phone). Additional features of the site include a stepwise guide to getting a job and a personalized résumé builder.

Going to Uni (www.goingtouni.gov.au/)

Also funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *Going to Uni* is designed for students seeking information about higher education. The site includes a “Course Finder,” touted to be the first national, searchable online resource for courses offered by Australian universities and higher education providers. The Course Finder function enables potential students to (a) search for courses offered by Australian higher education providers, (b) find out about the cost of these programs, and (c) learn about minimum entrance requirements. Another interactive application, MyUniAssist, allows students with government-funded scholarships, loans, or bursaries to track their student entitlements. The website includes specialized information for Indigenous students.

myfuture (www.myfuture.edu.au/)

Myfuture is a joint initiative between federal, state, and territorial governments and is exclusively web-based. The purpose of this website is to provide up-to-date career information and resources to youth, parents, and educators. The interactive “My Guide” application steers students through a series of activities designed to help them explore possible career options, select career favourites, clarify their career direction, and ultimately create a career action plan. Results from these activities can be saved to the user’s personal profile. “The Facts” includes information on careers, work and employment, education and training, funding, and related contacts. Parents and career practitioners are directed to the “Assist Others” page, which includes information and training resources to help students explore and plan their careers. Resources are presented in a variety of multimedia formats (e.g. videos, audiocasts, PowerPoint presentations). *Myfuture* was selected the best Australian Government site by NetGuide in 2008.

Canada¹⁰

CanLearn (www.canlearn.ca/eng/preparing/index.shtml)

The *CanLearn* site was developed by the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments and with Canadian learning and career development organizations. According to the website, “CanLearn is the only online post-secondary education resource that provides Canadians with the information and services they need to decide what and where to study and how to cover the costs.”

¹⁰ In addition to the national and provincial initiatives described here, a number of school boards have implemented innovative web-based programs. Refer to “Canada at a Glance” in Appendix 1 for information on Halton District School Board’s *Pathways* initiative and Grand Erie District School Board’s *mypathway.ca*.

The website seems to focus on the financial aspects of PSE, as evidenced by the online student loan calculator, information for parents about Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs), and a video entitled *Learning about Grants, Bursaries and Scholarships*. An external link to the Working in Canada tool allows users to search job descriptions, wage rates, skill requirements, and training and job opportunities based on different occupations within Canada. The purpose of this tool is to assist Canadians in making informed decisions about their educational options and career paths through the provision of relevant information and government resources. Users may also access HRSDC's *National Occupational Classification* (NOC) and Service Canada's *Career Navigator* via external links.

Alberta Learning Information Service – High School Students (www.alis.gov.ab.ca/hs/high-school.html)

The *Alberta Learning Information Service* includes a “tab” specifically for high school students, which has been designed as a companion resource to the *This Is Your Life* guide. The website guides high school students through a stepwise path (*What am I good at? What occupations are out there? What education is right for me? How do I pay for my education? What are my next steps?*). In navigating the path, students are introduced to career planning tools, occupational profiles, “video career clips,” a wage and salary database specific to Alberta, PSE program information, and financial aid options. The website also includes tip sheets on various topics and “planning for post-secondary” checklists for students in grades 7/8/9, 10, 11, and 12. Hotline advisors are available via e-mail or telephone during business hours to assist students with career planning, occupation descriptions, education options, education funding, and job search skills.

Youth Career Discovery (www.gov.sk.ca/youth-career-discovery/)

The *Youth Career Discovery* website is a companion website to the in-school program of the same name. In 2001, the province of Saskatchewan adopted the “Blueprint for Life/Work Designs” as a means to integrate career development competencies into the core curriculum. The Blueprint consists of a matrix of 11 competencies grouped into three sections: personal management, earning and work exploration, and life/work building. The *Youth Career Discovery* website is designed to assist students in building their competencies in these three areas. The site includes information and activities related to the following topics: *Self-Assessment*, *Researching Your Career*, *Post-Secondary Education and Training*, and *Job Search Strategies*. A number of external links to relevant federal and provincial agencies are provided (e.g. Service Canada's Job Bank, Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour for Saskatchewan). Specialized content is provided for parents and educators.

Denmark

National Guidance Web Portal (www.ug.dk/)

Part of a comprehensive public guidance system, the National Guidance web portal provides up-to-date information about education, training, and careers for children, young people, and adults. Users may access information and resources related to youth education and training programs, higher education programs, occupations, and labour market conditions. The website features an interactive guidance tool to assist users with education and career path decision-making. Guidance counsellors may access a virtual resource centre that includes an electronic news service, a quarterly online journal, links to relevant legislation, information about best practices, and recent research activities within the field of guidance. The portal includes external

web links to youth guidance centres, regional guidance centres, educational institutions, and Denmark's electronic admissions system for upper secondary and post-secondary institutions (www.optagelse.dk).

New Zealand

Career Services/Srapurara (www.careers.govt.nz/)

Funded by the Career Services branch of the federal government, the *Career Services* site aims to provide all people living in New Zealand with access to “the best careers information, advice and guidance to achieve their life goals.” Although the website is designed to serve all citizens, much of the information contained on the site is geared toward high school-aged students (*Choosing school subjects, What do I want to be?, Leaving school, and Entering tertiary study*). Students can register on the site to access *My Career Space*, a virtual portfolio that allows users to save the results of various online activities. The *Career Services* website includes specialized content for Māori and Pasifika peoples, recent immigrants, educators and practitioners, and parents. The parent page includes a quiz entitled “How well do you know your child's career plans?” and offers advice about how to help children explore their career options. Parents may also participate in a quiz designed to evaluate their own work/life balance and career goals.

The *Career Services* website is supported by career advisers who are available via online chat, e-mail, or telephone from 8 am to 8 pm on weekdays, and 10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays.

Sweden

Utbildningsinfo (www.utbildningsinfo.se/)

Utbildningsinfo (Education info) is funded and maintained by *Skolverket*, the Swedish National Agency for Education. The purpose of this national portal is to provide neutral web-based information for students, parents, and professionals in the field of education. The website includes a description of the Swedish school system, an interactive tool to locate schools, and a web-based career guidance tool. The “Choose and Plan” guidance tool is designed to assist users in choosing a career by guiding them through a series of sequential exercises. This tool may be used independently or with the assistance of a career counsellor. The *Min Mapp* (my folder) application allows registered users to save the results of their web-based activities to a personal portfolio.

Vagledningsinfo.se – Guidance Info (www.vagledningsinfo.se/)

This national web-based guidance service is free and offers neutral advice to upper secondary school and mature students who are considering higher education. Trained career advisers are available Sunday through Thursday between the hours of 4 and 7 pm via telephone, e-mail, and web-based chat rooms. These services are offered as a complement to regular guidance counselling provided by municipalities and universities. In addition to counselling services, the website includes an interactive quiz (*Arbetsförmedlingen*, or “test your interests”) designed to expose students to a variety of occupations. *Valgledninginfo.se* is managed by the Östsam Regional Development Council and Nitus (network for municipal learning centres), in co-operation with municipalities and regional councils.

United Kingdom

Connexions Direct (www.connexions-direct.com/)

Connexions Direct is a web-based companion to the community-based *Connexions* initiative. The website aims to “provide high-quality, impartial, information, advice and guidance (including careers advice and guidance), together with access to personal-development opportunities to help remove barriers to learning and progression and ensure young people make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life.” The learning page of the website includes information related to the following topics: *Learning resources*, *Where you learn*, *What you learn*, *Qualifications*, *The skills I need*, *Help with study*, and *Learning outside school*. The website includes a number of interactive features (e.g. quizzes, a searchable “Jobs4U” career database, and a “Tell us your story” application). Registered members of the *Connexions Direct* community can access a moderated chat room and message board (as of November 4, 2009, the website had 3,472 registered users). Young people may access information, advice, and support via e-mail, text messaging, web chat, “advisercam,” or telephone. The *Connexions Direct* helpline is open from 8 am until 2 am, 365 days a year, and offers out-of-hours support to complement local service provision. All counselling services are confidential.

University and Higher Education (www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/index.htm)

This web page is accessible via *Directgov.uk*, the UK government portal that provides information and online services to the public. The *University and Higher Education* web page targets UK citizens who are considering university or other forms of higher education. Information related to higher education is presented under the following subheadings:

- *What can higher education do for you?*
- *Applying for a course*
- *Student life*
- *Where to go, what to study*
- *Student finance*
- *Graduate careers and postgraduate study*

The site is linked to the UCAS website (www.ucas.com/), the organization responsible for processing applications to higher education in the United Kingdom. Through this link, users can access a searchable database of universities and courses and find out specific information with regard to fees, bursaries, and financial support. Stepwise information is presented to assist students and their parents in navigating the university admissions process.

United States

Students.gov (www.students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/Public)

Under the leadership of the US Department of Education, *Students.gov* is a co-operative effort between federal agencies, students, and other parts of the education community. The *Students.gov* website aims to provide college students – and potential college students – and their families with easy access to information and resources relating to PSE, such as planning, career development, and financial support. *Students.gov* is primarily an information clearinghouse, connecting users to a multitude of government programs and departments via web links.

3.2.2 Description of Web-Based Initiatives by Characteristic

A total of 14 web-based initiatives were analyzed using our own typology, as described in the Methodology section. Websites were analyzed in terms of the following characteristics: *interactivity, personalization, specialized content, accessibility, and social applications.*

For a visual representation of web-based initiatives by characteristic, see Box 5 (p. 23). A brief discussion of the web characteristics follows on page 24.

Box 5. Summary of Features of Web-Based Initiatives in Target Countries

Country	Web-Based Initiative	Interactivity				Personalization	Specialized Content			Accessibility	Social Applications
		Quizzes, CV builders, etc.	Searchable database: careers	Searchable database: PSE institutions and courses	Access to live career counsellor by phone, online chat	User can register, log in, "save" information	For parents	For educators, practitioners	For diverse cultural groups	e.g. multiple languages, disability content	Chat room and/or message board
Australia	Career Advice Australia*		link to <i>Job Guide</i>				√	√		√	
	Going to Uni		link to <i>Job Guide</i>	√		√		√	√	√	
	Job Guide*	√	√			√	via external link			√	
	myfuture	√	√	√		√	√	√			
Canada	CanLearn	√	links to <i>Working in Canada</i> tool, <i>National Occupational Classification</i>	√			√			bilingual	
	Alberta Learning Information Service* (Alberta)	√	√	√	√			√			
	Youth Career Discovery* (Saskatchewan)	√						√			
Denmark	National Guidance Web Portal	√	√			√	√	√			
New Zealand	Career Services	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Sweden	Utbildningsinfo.se	√		√		√	√	√		bilingual	
	Vagledningsinfo.se	√		√	√	√				bilingual	
United Kingdom	Connexions Direct*	√	√		√	√				√	√
	University and Higher Education			√	√		link to resource guide			√	
United States	Students.gov		link to <i>Occupational Outlook Handbook</i>	link to <i>College Finder</i>			√				

* Website is companion to in-school or community-based initiative (see Section 3.1).

Interactivity – More than half of the web-based initiatives included interactive activities such as quizzes, polls, résumé builders, and decision-making tools. Searchable career databases were available on nine of the sites, and eight of the websites allowed users to search a database of PSE institutions and related courses. In some cases these databases were accessible via external links. Four websites were supported by “live” career counsellors who were available via phone, online chat, or webcam (*Career Services*, *Vagledningsinfo*, *Connexions Direct* and the UK’s *University and Higher Education* website).

Personalization – Of the 14 web-based initiatives reviewed, eight allowed users to register on the website. Six of those websites enabled users to save personalized information (e.g. résumés, quiz results, database search results, contact information) to a virtual folder or portfolio.

Specialized Content – Ten websites provided specialized content for parents (two via external links), and eight sites contained information specific to educators and practitioners. Australia’s *Going to Uni* included a page for Indigenous youth, while New Zealand’s *Career Services* site contained information specific to Māori and Pasifika peoples.

Accessibility – Four sites included content in two or more languages, and five sites made provisions for disabled users through audio feeds, increased font size, links to external sites, etc.

Social Applications – Only one website, *Connexions Direct* (UK), offered a community chat room and message board for registered users.

4. Evaluative Data for PSE Initiatives in Target Countries

A secondary objective of the environmental scan was to determine the efficacy of the various initiatives in facilitating PSE access. As many of the initiatives reviewed in this report are relatively new, limited evaluative data were available.¹¹ However, preliminary reports were found for four initiatives: *Youth Pathways*, *Mentor Marketplace*, *Future to Discover*, and *GEAR UP*. Key findings from each report are presented below.

Australia

Youth Pathways

The programs managed by *Career Advice Australia* (including *Youth Pathways*) are currently under review. Preliminary findings (Wyatt, Carbine, and Robb, 2009) indicate that the uptake of the Youth Pathways service has steadily increased since the program’s inception in 2006, with 30,819¹² youth participating in 2008. Roughly 90% of the participants were students engaged in school upon commencement of the *Youth Pathways* program. Those students who were in school when they started the program were far more likely to complete it than those who were already disengaged from the school system. Upon exit from *Youth Pathways*, most participants remained in school (76.6%) or some other form of training (10.9%). Only 6.2% of those who exited the program were not engaged in some form of employment, education, or training. The authors note

¹¹ In the case of web-based initiatives, we were unable to locate any evaluative information.

¹² 3,659 participants (11.9%) identified themselves as Indigenous.

that the proportion of students in “positive destinations” on exit has continued to increase since 2006. The vast majority of *Youth Pathways* participants reported that the program was useful to them and that they were satisfied with the experience.

The next phase of the evaluation will focus on what could be done to increase program participation and completion rates (80% in 2008), particularly for marginalized youth and those not currently in school. In addition, the report will seek to determine how the *Youth Pathways* program might be better integrated with state initiatives that share similar objectives.

Mentor Marketplace

The *Mentor Marketplace* program aims to improve transition support for young people who are experiencing difficulties¹³ by providing them with access to mentoring relationships in their communities. A program evaluation conducted in 2004 examined 27 community-based projects in an attempt to determine the effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriateness of the *Mentor Marketplace* program (Wilczynski et al., 2004).

As many of the *Mentoring Marketplace* programs are in the early stages of development, a key finding of the report is that it is too early to reach any firm conclusions about their outcomes for young people. However, the report states that “there was clear and consistently positive feedback from the qualitative consultations with project staff, external stakeholders, mentors, young people and family members about the value of the *Mentor Marketplace* projects and the positive impact they had made on the individual young people who participated in them”(Wilczynski et al., 2004: 52).

Positive outcomes were reported by participants, parents, and mentors in four target areas: *increasing youth participation in work, education, training, and community life; increasing self-esteem, resilience, and physical and mental health; and, to a lesser extent, improved relationships with family and peers, and improved skills in areas such as leadership and communication.* With regard to increasing youth participation in work, education, and training, a number of positive participant outcomes were reported by stakeholders, including enhanced retention in school, improved school attendance, development of better study skills and habits, improved school performance, and greater motivation for youth to identify and/or achieve education and/or career goals. No negative outcomes were reported for participants. This was considered a significant finding given that previous studies have indicated that mentoring programs can result in negative outcomes for participants, particularly if mentoring relationships are terminated prematurely (i.e. at less than six months).

Although these preliminary findings appear promising, the report cautions that further data collection is necessary to determine the effectiveness and efficiency of the *Mentor Marketplace* program.

¹³ Including those in foster care, young caregivers, young people with disabilities, Indigenous young people, and those from disadvantaged groups and localities, as well as those at greatest risk of disconnection from their families, community, education, and work.

Canada

Future to Discover (Manitoba, New Brunswick)

Interim evaluative reports for this pilot project were released in 2007 (Currie et al.) and 2009 (Smith Fowler et al.). Using an experimental design, students were randomly assigned to one of four groups: those who received only the *Explore Your Horizons* or the *Learning Accounts*¹⁴ intervention, those who received both interventions, and a comparison group that received neither intervention. The 2009 interim report suggests that career education and an early guarantee of financial aid for high school students can have significant impacts on the interest in PSE, particularly for certain subgroups. For example, among lower-income, lower education families, the *Explore Your Horizons* program was associated with:

- an increase in the proportion of students who planned to apply to university, from 32% to 47% (for New Brunswick students attending francophone schools); and
- a decrease in the proportion of Manitoba participants who felt that finances represented a barrier to PSE access, from 22% to 10%.

The *Learning Accounts* program guarantees New Brunswick students from lower-income families an \$8,000 bursary upon high school graduation to put toward post-secondary studies. Among first generation students from anglophone schools, participation in this initiative was associated with an increase in the proportion of students who aspired to obtain a post-secondary credential (from 87% to 96%).

As the participants were completing Grade 12 at the time of the 2009 interim report, continued tracking will be necessary to determine the proportion of *Future to Discover* program participants who graduate from high school, enrol in PSE, and complete their initial year of post-secondary studies relative to the comparison group. A final report is scheduled for release in 2011.

United States

GEAR UP

The purpose of the *GEAR UP* program is to foster increased knowledge, expectations, and preparation for PSE among low-income students and their families. *GEAR UP* was launched in 1998, with the first federal grants being awarded to cohorts of middle school students in 1999. A five-year evaluation of the program began shortly thereafter (United States Department of Education, 2008). The two major goals of the evaluation were to provide descriptive information regarding the early implementation of the program and to observe the association between *GEAR UP* participation and intended outcomes for middle school students and their parents. Evaluative data consisted of site observations, student and parent surveys, student transcripts, and school records for a sample of middle school *GEAR UP* participants and a matched comparison group of middle school students who did not attend a *GEAR UP* school.

¹⁴ The *Learning Accounts* program was offered to students in New Brunswick only.

Based on data collected near the end of eighth grade, attendance at a *GEAR UP* school was positively associated with:

- parents' knowledge of opportunities and benefits of PSE for their children;
- students' knowledge concerning PSE and opportunities available to them;
- parents' involvement in the school and their children's education; and
- parents' having higher academic expectations for their children.

However, the authors found no evidence of an association between attending a *GEAR UP* school and the strength of middle school students' expectations for PSE, intentions to attend college, or overall orientation toward college. As the students in this study were not yet college-aged, a subsequent study is planned to establish the rate of PSE attendance among the *GEAR UP* participants.

To summarize, all four evaluative reports note that, due to the lack of adequate, long-term data, it was not possible to determine the effectiveness of the various programs. However, all of the program evaluations reported positive outcomes for youth.

4.1 Key Features of Effective Early Intervention Programs

The relative lack of evaluative data for PSE access initiatives has been highlighted by a number of authors, including Oesterreich (2000), Perna and Swail (2001) and Gándara (2001). In Gándara's meta-analysis of early intervention programs in the United States, she notes that few programs had engaged in a thorough evaluation of their activities. Of the programs that *did* maintain rigorous evaluation data, Gándara purports that the most effective initiatives were capable of at least doubling PSE participation rates for under-represented youth. She contends that the programs that appeared to be the most effective in raising PSE participation share a number of important elements, which are presented in Box 6.

The single most important feature of effective programs geared to individual students was a "close, caring relationship with a knowledgeable adult who monitors the student's progress," preferably over an extended period of time (Gándara, 2001: 36).

Programs surveyed for this report included several of the key features identified by Gándara. For example, mentoring was a key component in all 17 of the in-school and community-based programs we surveyed. With regard to long-term investments, Denmark's *Youth Guidance Centres* are considered to be the first step in a lifelong guidance process.

Box 6. Key Features of Early Intervention Programs that Were Found to Raise PSE Participation Rates

1. A key person to monitor and guide individual students over a long period of time.
2. Universal student access to challenging courses, tutoring support, and curriculum adapted to meet student needs.
3. Long-term investments in students rather than short-term interventions.
4. Recognition of the cultural background of students.
5. A peer group that supports students' academic aspirations, and provides social and emotional support.
6. The provision of financial assistance and incentives.

Source: Adapted from Gándara (2001).

Recognizing the cultural background of Indigenous students is a fundamental objective of *Working Together for Indigenous Youth* and *Te Kotahitanga*. New Zealand's *Youth Guarantee* program provides peer group activities for youth who have become disengaged from school. Finally, the *GEAR UP* and *Future to Discover* initiatives offer financial support to graduating students who wish to pursue post-secondary opportunities.

We include Gándara's key features for two reasons: (1) to demonstrate that many of the initiatives we reviewed contain the program components found to be effective in raising PSE participation rates among under-represented youth and (2) to provide guidance for future program development.

5. Key Learnings

The purpose of this report was to explore and describe early intervention initiatives implemented in other countries to facilitate access to PSE. To highlight innovative ideas that might inform and stimulate policy and program development in Canada, we conducted a survey of national level PSE access initiatives (in-school, community-based, and web-based) in seven target countries: Australia, Canada, Denmark, New Zealand, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Below, we present the key learnings of our environmental scan.

1. PSE access is an emerging issue in many countries as evidenced by the number of recent initiatives designed to address various barriers to PSE access and to support the needs of groups currently under-represented in post-secondary institutions.
2. Increasingly, government agencies and departments at various levels are collaborating with industry, community organizations, PSE institutions, and educators to provide a range of programs using a variety of delivery modes (i.e. in-school, community-based, web-based, or a combination).
3. For the programs studied, goals varied widely but focused around these major themes:
 - to provide information on careers, guide career selection, and to identify potential learning paths
 - to establish an awareness among youth that they are to participate in society by working, and that part of their responsibility as youth is to determine or at least explore career goals and learning paths
 - to increase access opportunities for talented individuals from disadvantaged groups
 - to raise student achievement and graduation rates
 - to reconnect youth not in education, training, or employment with learning paths

4. The majority of programs we surveyed targeted individual high school students. Some programs focused on students as young as age 6 and as old as 25. Other programs targeted groups currently under-represented in PSE (i.e. students from low-income backgrounds, “first generation” students, and Indigenous peoples). Programs such as *Youth Connections* focused on the needs of “at risk” youth, particularly those not currently in education, training, or employment (NEETs). One program, *GEAR UP*, followed an entire cohort of students for a minimum six-year period.
5. Our analysis of in-school and community-based initiatives by program component revealed that all of the programs surveyed included some form of mentoring as identified by Gándara (2001). The vast majority of programs surveyed included *academic enrichment, personal enrichment and social integration, and counselling* opportunities for youth. *Parental involvement* was identified as a program component in roughly half of the initiatives we reviewed. Interestingly, only two of the initiatives (*Futures to Discover* and *GEAR UP*) offered *scholarships* for participants.
6. Several government agencies have invested in sophisticated websites designed to attract a younger, more technologically skilled population. For example, Australia’s award-winning *myfuture* site is visually appealing and uses multimedia (e.g. PowerPoint slide shows, videos, podcasts) to engage youth. In contrast, some web-based initiatives for youth (e.g. *Students.gov*) were not interactive and were not discernable from government websites designed for adult users. Service Canada’s *CanLearn* website offers some interactive capabilities; however, users do not have the capacity to register on the site or to contact a “live” career counsellor via phone, web chat, or e-mail.

Limitations:

- This report focused on national PSE access initiatives implemented in six target countries. Initiatives funded by regional governments, private foundations, school boards, community groups, and post-secondary institutions may provide additional insight and inspiration for policy-makers and administrators.
- Most of the PSE initiatives we surveyed have been implemented in the last five to 10 years. Although the preliminary program evaluations we reviewed suggested positive outcomes for youth, more ongoing, rigorous data collection is required to determine whether PSE participation rates increase as a direct result of the various initiatives.

6. Next Steps

Drawing on our review of the literature, our environmental scan of PSE access initiatives in seven target countries, and the available evaluative data, we suggest the following next steps for Canadian policy-makers and administrators:

1. *Develop a national strategy to facilitate PSE access for Canadian youth.*

A national strategy to increase PSE participation among Canadian youth should be developed. This strategy could build on the *Learn Canada 2020* document prepared by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC, 2008; see Appendix 2), in which PSE education is identified as one of the four pillars of lifelong learning. The framework document identifies the following goal for PSE: “Canada must increase the number of students pursuing postsecondary education by increasing the quality and accessibility of postsecondary education.”

Relevant stakeholders are to be involved in the development and implementation of a national strategy (e.g. Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Service Canada, PSE institutions).

Early intervention strategies should be integrated into the strategic plans of provinces, territories, and local school boards.

The development of a national strategy should include a multi-year commitment of funding because research has indicated that long-term, systemic PSE initiatives are the most effective.

PSE initiatives should strive to include the following program elements:

- Counselling (with focus on education/career path planning)
- Mentoring
- Web-based component appropriate to the target audience
- Parental involvement
- Training for educators

2. *Establish the needs of the target audience in relation to PSE access.*

The needs of Canadian youth may vary significantly depending on location, local demographics, and/or social and economic conditions. Within the broad framework of a national strategy, PSE access initiatives should be developed in consultation with the groups listed above (including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis groups) to identify specific local needs and challenges.

Special attention should be paid to the needs of those currently under-represented in post-secondary institutions in Canada, such as Aboriginal youth, students with disabilities, “first generation” students, youth from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, students from cultural and/or linguistic minorities, and “at risk” youth.

3. *Encourage collaboration in the development and delivery of local PSE access initiatives.*
Results of our environmental scan indicate that many PSE access initiatives involve the collaborative efforts of various stakeholder groups, including relevant government agencies, school boards, business and industry, community groups, social service agencies, parents, educators, and youth. Stakeholders at the various levels should be involved in the development of in-school curricula. Whenever possible, provinces/territories and school boards should be encouraged to work together, as with the *Future to Discover* pilot program in New Brunswick and Manitoba.
4. *Develop in-school curricula with a focus on career guidance and learning pathways.*
Ideally, PSE access initiatives should be delivered in school by trained teachers. School curricula should be infused with career information starting in elementary school, intensifying in the middle and high school years (for more on career development programs, see Bell and Bezanson, 2006). Students should be given the opportunity to become aware of their unique aptitudes and learning capabilities and to identify a range of possible career options. Next, students should further explore those options and map out the learning path(s) required to achieve their desired career goals (i.e. PSE programs and entrance requirements). Students' individual aptitudes, career goals, and identified learning pathways could be tracked over time using a portfolio system, as recommended by the OECD's *Career Guidance: A Handbook for Policy Makers* (OECD, 2004). The contents of these portfolios could be used to assist students and parents with high school course selection and PSE planning.
5. *Build connections between in-school curricula and the world of work.*
In-school PSE initiatives should be supplemented with opportunities for students to explore career options in a "real world" setting. Examples might include field trips to local businesses, work visit initiatives (e.g. *Take Our Children to Work Day*), and workplace learning¹⁵ opportunities. Wherever possible, mentoring opportunities should be explored and developed.

Parents could contribute by sharing their own career path experiences with students and by facilitating student workplace and/or volunteering opportunities at their places of work.

6. *Develop a range of resources.*
All program resources should be relevant, appealing, readily available, and of interest to the target audience. Materials should be sensitive to cultural and linguistic differences and accessible to students who have disabilities and/or learning challenges.

In-school initiatives should be supported by web-based resources. These resources should:

- appeal to the target audience in terms of design;¹⁶
- include interactive applications (e.g. quizzes, web polls, searchable databases);
- enable personalization (i.e. user registration, portfolio);

¹⁵ A report by The Conference Board of Canada (2008) notes that Canadian employers are "notably low investors in workplace training programs" and that Canadians would benefit from greater access to education and skills outside of the traditional school system.

¹⁶ For exemplary websites, refer to *myfuture* (Australia) and *Connexions Direct* (United Kingdom) websites.

- include specialized content for parents and educators;
- be rigorously maintained to include up-to-date information;
- be supported by career counsellors available via e-mail, web chat, and/or telephone; and
- be monitored for usage and improved based on user feedback.

Program resources should also include training materials for educators and mentors.

7. *Establish mechanisms for evaluation.*

The development of early intervention initiatives (in-school, community-based, and web-based) must include clear, measurable objectives and outcomes. Evaluation strategies should include baseline and ongoing data collection that includes both quantitative and qualitative information. Publication of evaluative research should be encouraged whenever possible to facilitate information sharing. For an example of an innovative research design, refer to the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation's interim evaluations of the *Future to Discover* program (Currie et al., 2007; Smith Fowler et al., 2009).

6.1 Conclusion

Canada has long prided itself on having one of the highest post-secondary participation rates in the developed world; however, there is evidence to suggest that Canadian youth are lagging behind their international counterparts. Although a significant body of research has focused on the identification of PSE access barriers in Canada, what governments, their partners, and PSE institutions might do to overcome these barriers – particularly for those typically under-represented in PSE – is less understood. The principal aim of this report was to provide a snapshot of early intervention initiatives that have been implemented in six target countries as a means to highlight innovative ideas and initiatives that might inform and stimulate policy and program development in Canada. The next steps suggested in this report may facilitate the identification of program elements, curriculum components, collaborative strategies, and/or modes of delivery that lead to increased PSE participation among Canadian youth. Programs that are deemed successful in raising post-secondary access in the Canadian context should be highlighted, shared, and built upon. With regard to future research, a meta-analysis of web-based PSE access initiatives is suggested because our environmental scan revealed an increasing reliance on Internet-based programming, both in Canada and the selected target countries.

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Government of Australia Websites

Career Advice Australia: www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au

Career Advice Australia – Connections Program:

www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au/connections/youth/default.htm

www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Documents/YouthConnectionsProgram.pdf

Career Advice Australia – Youth Pathways Program:

www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au/youthpathways/default.htm

Compact with Young Australians: www.misac.com.au/cgi-bin/download.cgi?id=66

Going to Uni: www.goingtouni.gov.au/

Job Guide: www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au/Your-guide-to-Job-Guide/Where-else-can-I-access-Job-Guide

Mentor Marketplace Program: www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/OfficeForYouth/YouthPrograms/Pages/YouthPrograms.aspx#the_mentor_marketplace_program

myfuture: www.myfuture.edu.au/

School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program: www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Documents/School_20Business_20Community_20Partnership_20Brokers_20_20outcomes_20framework.pdf

Working Together for Indigenous Youth: www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous_education/publications_resources/profiles/working_together_for_indigenous_youth.htm

Year 12 – What Next?: www.year12whatnext.gov.au/default.htm

Government of Canada Websites

Can Learn: www.canlearn.ca/eng/index.shtml

Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC) – National Occupational Classification: www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/

Service Canada – Career Navigator: www.jobsetc.gc.ca/toolbox/quizzes/quizzes_home.do?lang=e

Service Canada – Job Bank: www.jobbank.gc.ca

Government of Denmark Websites

National Guidance Portal: www.ug.dk/

Youth Guidance Centres: www.eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Educational%20and%20vocational%20guidance/The%20Danish%20guidance%20system/Youth%20Guidance%20Centres.aspx

Government of New Zealand Websites

Career Services: www.careers.govt.nz/

Te Kotahitanga: www.tekotahitanga.org.nz/

Youth Guarantee Program: www.tec.govt.nz/templates/standard.aspx?id=5941

Government of Sweden Websites

Utbildningsinfo.se: www.utbildningsinfo.se/

Vagleningsinfo.se: www.vagledningsinfo.se/

Government of the United Kingdom Websites

Connexions: www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/Youth/youthmatters/connexions/connexions/

Connexions Direct: www.connexions-direct.com/

Education and Skills Act (2008): www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2008/ukpga_20080025_en_1

UCAS: www.ucas.com

University and Higher Education web page: www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/index.htm

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Students.gov: www.students.gov/

Talent Search (TRIO program): www.ed.gov/programs/triotalent/index.html

TRIO programs: www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html

Upward Bound: www.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html

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Appendix 1. At a Glance Tables for Selected Countries

Australia at a Glance

Snapshot of Selected Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objective(s)	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
Career Advice Australia	Aims to help youth to connect to their future	Australian Government	Youth aged 13 to 19	<p>www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au</p> <p>Career Advice Australia initiative is designed to help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young people to move through school and into further, study, training, or work • parents to support and guide their children in career decision-making • schools to strengthen and increase their career education activities and services • businesses to shape and prepare their future workforce <p>These objectives are achieved through two special programs: Youth Pathways and Connections (see below).</p>
Career Advice: Connections	To assist youth in achieving their full potential	Australian Government	Youth who have been disconnected from mainstream schooling for more than three months	<p>www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au/connections/youth/default.htm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program aims to re-engage students with education and/or training. • Helps students to work through issues they may be facing, including homelessness, disability, mental health issues, or substance abuse. • Recently expanded program to be available in up to 60 locations across Australia and delivers accredited education, life skills, and employability skills training in supported community settings. • From website: “Your Connections provider will help plan for your future, find out strengths and identify your goals. Connections can also help you increase your life skills, employability skills, self-esteem and confidence.” • Connections provider can also help students to take the “next positive step,” i.e. moving back to school, TAFE (vocational training), apprenticeship, or a job.
Career Advice: Youth Pathways	To help “at risk” students to make it through school to the end of Year 12 (or its equivalent), and beyond that to further education,	Australian Government	Students aged 13 to 19 who are at risk of leaving school prior to completion of Year 12	<p>www.careeradviceaustralia.gov.au/youthpathways/default.htm</p> <p>To access program, students need to be an Australian citizen or permanent resident aged 13 to 19, and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ be at risk of leaving school before finishing Year 12 or have left school in the last year without completing Year 12 ○ think they will struggle to either go back to complete their schooling, or get into some sort of training or a job • Program uses school-based Youth Pathway officers to “provide ready

Name	Objective(s)	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
	training, or employment			<p>access for young people most at risk of disengaging from school.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The officers work closely with the administration team within each school to identify students who need intensive support to stay on track within the schooling system. • Each young person receives a minimum of six hours of face-to-face contact with a Youth Pathways officer and is closely supported and monitored to maximize their success through goal setting, career exploration, and work experience. • The Youth Pathways web page includes three case studies of students who have successfully engaged with the program.
Going to Uni	Web-based initiative to assist students seeking higher education placements	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations	Students seeking information about higher education	<p>www.goingtouni.gov.au/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes “Course Finder,” the first national, searchable online resource for courses offered by Australian universities and higher education providers. • <i>What should I study and where?</i> function allows potential students to search for courses offered by Australian higher education providers. Enables learners to find out about the cost and minimum entrance requirements. • Offers advice on how to apply to higher education institutions. • Provides information on scholarships, grants, and loan repayments. • Provides information on Indigenous Education Units (IEUs) and where they are located. • Includes information for students with disabilities.
Job Guide	To provide information to Year 10 students with regard to occupations and related education/training pathways	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations	Year 10 students	<p>http://jobguide.dest.gov.au/ – general information</p> <p>www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au/Your-guide-to-Job-Guide/Where-else-can-I-access-Job-Guide – companion website for youth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Job Guide is both a web page and a resource guide written and produced for a Year 10 audience (guide books and CD ROMs are distributed to schools with Year 10 students in April of each year). • Guide assists students in determining their interests and aptitudes and how to devise a “learning pathway” to achieve career goals. • Occupational profiles are a key component of the guide. The web page version includes hundreds of job profiles in a searchable database (by field, job name, or alphabetically, with advanced search options available). • Students can build personalized résumés online. • Includes “useful terms,” “useful addresses,” and “useful links.” • Website is “youth friendly,” i.e. bright colours, funky graphics, includes mobile phone access to occupations database.

Name	Objective(s)	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
Mentor Marketplace	To increase the mentoring opportunities available to young people by establishing new mentoring activities and assisting the growth of successful existing projects	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations	Young people aged 12 to 25, particularly those at greatest risk of disconnection from their family, community, education, training, and the workplace	www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/OfficeForYouth/YouthPrograms/Pages/YouthPrograms.aspx#the_mentor_marketplace_program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentor Marketplace develops a mentoring culture in schools, businesses, and communities that will result in the engagement of business and community sectors toward self-sustaining mentoring activities for young people. • Projects funded under the program provide access to mentoring for a wide range of young people, including those in foster care, young carers, young people with disabilities, Indigenous young people, and those from disadvantaged groups and localities. • Program was announced in 2002, with funding extended to June 2009. Current status of program is unclear.
myfuture	To provide up-to-date career information and resources to youth, parents, and educators	Joint initiative between Australian, state, and territorial governments	Anyone who needs information to support their own or others' career planning	www.myfuture.edu.au/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Australia's career information and exploration service," voted best Australian Government site by NetGuide (2008). • Includes virtual tour of website for new users. • "My Guide" guides user through activities to help explore possible career options. Students answer questions, explore career suggestions made by <i>myfuture</i>, select career favourites, clarify their career direction, and then, create an action plan to help them reach their career goals. Access to "My Guide" interactive features requires user registration. • "The facts" section includes information on careers, work and employment, education and training, funding, and contacts. • The "assist others" section includes information and training resources for career practitioners, parents, and community to help students explore and plan their careers. Feedback is encouraged via online survey. • Several resources on the site in multimedia formats (e.g. audiocasts, videos, PowerPoint presentations). • "Events" page lists career workshops, training, etc. by region. • Training workshops offered for educators, career practitioners, and community workers. • Note on the site says that <i>myfuture</i> and "My Guide" will "have a new look and feel in 2010" as a result of <i>myfuture</i> user feedback.

Name	Objective(s)	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
School Business Community Partnership Brokers Program	To improve community and business engagement with schools	Australian Government, states, and territories	Students aged 15 to 24	<p>www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/YouthAttainmentandTransitions/Documents/School_20Business_20Community_20Partnership_20Brokers_20_20outcomes_20framework.pdf</p> <p>Program to begin in January 2010. Four fundamental elements of program:</p> <p>Education providers partnering with stakeholders in their community to ensure all young people participate in challenging, relevant, and engaging learning that broadens personal aspirations and improves education and transition outcomes.</p> <p>Business and industry participating in sustainable partnerships that develop the skills and knowledge of the future workforce and improve young people's education and transition outcomes.</p> <p>Parents and families participating in partnerships that provide an informed and supportive environment for all young people to enable lifelong learning and career and pathway planning, and improve their education and transition outcomes.</p> <p>Community groups engaging with key stakeholders in partnerships that harness resources and build social capital to support young people to identify and achieve their goals and improve their education and transition outcomes.</p>
Working Together for Indigenous Youth: A National Framework	To assist 1,600 Indigenous students to stay on and complete Year 12 or move into further education, training, or paid employment for 2002 to 2004	<p>Australian Government, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations</p> <p>\$6 million budget</p>	Indigenous youth	<p>www.dest.gov.au/sectors/indigenous_education/publications_resources/profiles/working_together_for_indigenous_youth.htm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key aim of this strategy is the active engagement of students, parents, the school community, and businesses through local partnerships. The partnerships provide the opportunity for local leadership and cross-portfolio collaboration to rapidly improve the educational outcomes for Indigenous youth. • The overarching goals and guiding principles for the partnerships are made up of five key elements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ working together in partnership; ○ local commitment and ownership; ○ effective intervention strategies; ○ effective funding arrangements; and ○ measuring success and achieving accountability. • Program funding allocated to projects involving community, business, and education partnerships to empower Indigenous young people and their communities. It will bring key local stakeholders together to discuss the barriers to a successful education experience for Indigenous students and their families and try to work out culturally sensitive collaborative strategies to overcome those barriers.

Canada at a Glance
Snapshot of Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
<p>Alberta Learning Information Service (web page for high school students)</p>	<p>To assist high school students in planning their future</p> <p>Companion resource to <i>This Is Your Life</i> guide</p>	<p>Government of Alberta</p>	<p>Alberta high school students</p>	<p>www.alis.gov.ab.ca/hs/high-school.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website guides high school students through stepwise path (<i>What am I good at? What occupations are out there? What education is right for me? How do I pay for my education? What are my next steps?</i>). • Students are introduced to career planning tools, occupational profiles, “video career clips,” a wage and salary database specific to Alberta, PSE program information, and financial aid options. • Website also includes tip sheets on various topics and “planning for post-secondary” checklists for students in grades 7/8/9, 10, 11 and 12. • Hotline advisors are available via e-mail or telephone during business hours to assist students with career planning, occupation descriptions, education options, education funding, and job search skills.
<p>CanLearn</p>	<p>To provide all the necessary resources to Canadians facing important decisions when saving for, selecting, and financing their PSE</p> <p>To provide Canadian governments, learning institutions, and other organizations with the means to collaborate on the provision of information and planning tools for</p>	<p>Government of Canada</p>	<p>Canadians considering post-secondary education</p>	<p>www.canlearn.ca/</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The CanLearn site was developed by the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada in collaboration with provincial and territorial governments and Canadian learning and career development organizations. • “CanLearn is the only online post-secondary education resource that provides Canadians with the information and services they need to decide what and where to study and how to cover the costs.” • Links to various planning tools (i.e. loan calculators). • Link to “Working in Canada” tool allows you to search job descriptions, wage rates, skill requirements, and training and job opportunities based on different occupations within Canada. This tool displays information from a variety of Government of Canada resources and helps you make informed decisions about the best career path and educational options available to you. • Includes “interest quiz”

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
Future to Discover (pilot project)	Canadians To increase student interest and participation in PSE, particularly for “first generation” high school students from low-income families	Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, governments of New Brunswick and Manitoba	High school students from low-income backgrounds, students whose parents have no PSE experience	www.millenniumscholarships.ca/en/research/ppFTD.asp Two program components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Explore Your Horizons</i> helps students to understand the range of occupational and post-secondary choices and make meaningful decisions about their futures. • <i>Learning Accounts</i> supports project participants who face financial obstacles to PSE by providing an incentive of \$8,000, deposited to a trust account that can be accessed upon successful completion of high school and enrolment in an accredited post-secondary institution. This second component is being delivered only in New Brunswick and is available to students from families with incomes below the provincial median. Explore Your Horizons includes four classroom-based interventions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Career Focusing</i>, an innovative process in which students explore occupational choices based on passions rather than skills (Grade 10 in New Brunswick and Senior 2 in Manitoba) • <i>Lasting Gifts</i>, workshops where parents/ guardians work with their teens as career allies in exploring career options (Grade 11 and Senior 3) • <i>Future in Focus</i>, which builds students’ resilience, helping them develop support networks, explore the value of community engagement, and learn how to work through unexpected challenges (Grade 12 and Senior 4) • <i>Post-Secondary Ambassadors</i>, which introduces participants to slightly older students who are currently enrolled in a provincial post-secondary program to share their experiences • Students participate in 50 hours of workshops over three years dealing with career counselling and detailed information about the importance of post-secondary studies. • Program supported by designated website and bi-annual magazine.
mypathway.ca	Four-step program aims to increase student engagement with high school by building an individual “pathway plan” (destinations:	Grand Erie School Board, Brantford, Ontario	High school students	http://mypathway.ca/movie/index.html Includes 15-minute video targeting parents, students. Video notes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24% of high school students don’t graduate. • Nationally, 30% of high school dropouts have averages of 70% or more at age 15 (Statistics Canada). • In many cases students can do the work, but aren’t engaged in their courses.

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
	apprenticeship, college, university, or work)			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes the role of parents as the “strongest influence in their child’s path in life.” Program encourages experiential learning, co-op, volunteering, etc. to help smooth the transition between school and students’ chosen path in life. “Pathway plan” is a template for child’s high school experience in terms of course selection and experiential learning. <p>Four-step plan includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know yourself (strengths, learning style, interests) 2. Explore opportunities (support area of interest, explore career options) 3. Build pathway (develop a plan – guidance counsellors, teachers, view sample pathway plans online, visit local career centres to determine local labour market) 4. Get experience (provide taste of working world, Take our Kids to Work Day, job shadowing, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program) Website links to self-assessment tools (interest and ability quizzes at jobbank.gc.ca website) and Independent Learning Centre (distance education/e-learning).
Pathways	To provide an online resource for parents and students to discover and learn about available programs, pathways, post-secondary destinations, educational career planning, and unique programs in Halton	Halton District School Board, Ontario	Middle school, high school students, and their parents	www.hdsb.ca/Pathways/Pages/Home.aspx Wide range of information presented under the following headings: <p>Pathways Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Baccalaureate (IB) Program • New to Canada • Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP) • Other Ways to Earn Credits • Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) • Specialty School to Career Programs <p>Post Secondary Pathways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative Degree Options • Apprenticeship • College (includes information about college application process, admissions requirements) • University (includes information/links related to university application process, admission requirements) • Work

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				<p>Your Pathway</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Step 1 – Know Yourself • Step 2 – Explore Opportunities • Step 2 – Get Experience • Step 4 – Build Pathway <p>Choosing Course Levels How to Apply for Pathways Programs Parent Resources YOUR Future Career Options (external links to Job Futures, Youth.gc.ca, my blueprint) YOUR Skills and Interests (includes external links to quizzes at jobbank.gc.ca)</p> <p>Home page of website posts information about Pathways planning information evenings for parents/students in grades 7 to 12.</p>
<p><i>This Is Your Life: A Career Planning and Education Guide</i></p>	<p>Resource guide helps students consider the following questions: <i>What am I good at? How do I know my options? Should I take a year off or apply for some post-secondary program?</i></p>	<p>Alberta Education, 2009</p>	<p>Youth in grades 9 to 12 and beyond</p>	<p>http://alis.alberta.ca/pdf/cshop/aaet/YourLifeStudent.pdf</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36-page resource guide developed by Alberta Advanced Education and Technology in consultation with Alberta Education and Alberta Employment and Immigration. • “Focus tested with senior high school students, this guide represents the new standard in using online resources to lead youth in planning for their future.” • Companion guide to newly designed “High School Students” tab on the Alberta Learning Information Service Website. • Website guides students through “four easy steps” in career and education planning. • Guide includes budget worksheet for students and self-assessment quizzes to evaluate one’s life skills, interests, and personality traits. • Website includes checklists “to help you get organized”: <i>Entering apprenticeship, Planning for college, Considering university.</i> • Website includes link to Alberta Learning Information Service web page with searchable database of over 500 Alberta Occupational Profiles.
<p><i>Youth Career Discovery</i></p>	<p>To ensure that Saskatchewan’s young people</p>	<p>Government of Saskatchewan, 2007</p>	<p>Students in Grades 6 to 12 (with</p>	<p>Youth Career Discovery is an in-school career development program. The following six elements of success have been identified:</p> <p>1. Career Development Practitioners – Saskatchewan Learning will support</p>

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
	graduate from high school with the essential skills and career management competencies that will assist them in achieving their potential on their personal pathways of learning, living, and work		particular focus on 6 to 9)	<p>school divisions to increase the number of career development practitioners by September 2009. Practitioners will be supported in working toward the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners.</p> <p>2. Career Guidance Curriculum – By September 2008, all students in grades 6 to 9 will benefit from a minimum of 30 hours of Career Guidance instruction each year as part of the school division’s continuous improvement plan. This will include the initiation of a Personal Career Portfolio.</p> <p>3. Personal Career Portfolio – By September 2009, every Grade 9 student will begin to build a Personal Career Portfolio based on their career interests, aspirations, and experiences.</p> <p>4. Career Development Action Teams – All school divisions will establish a Career Development Action Team as part of their continuous improvement plan and will work with School Community Councils to strengthen the career development focus in every school.</p> <p>5. Education, Business, and Industry Partnerships – School divisions and schools will establish and strengthen partnerships to enhance connections among high schools, local business and industry, post-secondary institutions, trades, community-based organizations, First Nations and Métis organizations, and others, resulting in greater opportunities for students to try out career paths through work experience, mentoring, and job shadowing.</p> <p>6. Parent and Family Involvement – Parents and students will have online access to youth-friendly website resources for career planning to encourage and support families and youth to work together in planning and developing individual career paths. Initiatives such as the Saskatchewan Youth Apprenticeship Program, existing curriculum in Entrepreneurship, Career and Work Explorations, Practical and Applied Arts, Life Transitions, and work-study opportunities throughout the curriculum will continue as a strong support to this action plan.</p> <p>Program includes companion website with interactive functions.</p>

Denmark at a Glance
Snapshot of Selected Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
National Guidance Portal	To provide up-to-date, comprehensive information on education and training possibilities	Ministry of Education	Children, young people, and adults looking for information about education, training, and careers; guidance practitioners, teachers, educational consultants, and others dealing with guidance activities	<p>www.ug.dk/ (very little web content available in English)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The web portal provides information with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ youth education and training programs ○ higher education programs ○ occupations/professions ○ labour market issues ○ study programs taught in English at Danish colleges and universities • Furthermore, the portal includes an e-mail-based enquiry service, an electronic guidance tool facilitating the choice of education, occupation, and careers, as well as links to youth guidance centres, regional guidance centres, and educational institutions, and to the electronic admission systems (www.optagelse.dk). Additional facilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the possibility of personal log-on, which is available to all citizens ○ a virtual resource centre for guidance counsellors, which includes an electronic news service, a quarterly online journal, links to relevant legislation, and information about best practices, recent research activities, surveys, and analyses within the field of guidance
Youth Guidance Centres	To provide guidance related to the transition from compulsory school to youth education and from youth education to higher education	Government of Denmark, in co-operation with municipalities	Young people up to 25 years, with particular focus on students in forms 6 to 9, those not involved in education, training, or employment, and young people with a "special need" for guidance	<p>www.eng.uvm.dk/Uddannelse/Educational%20and%20vocational%20guidance/The%20Danish%20guidance%20system/Youth%20Guidance%20Centres.aspx</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Guidance centres are considered to be the first step in a lifelong guidance process that encourages people to become more conscious of their abilities, interests, and possibilities, thus enabling them to make informed decisions regarding their education and employment. • 45 municipally based youth guidance centres provide guidance services for young people up to the age of 25. • The municipal councils define the overall framework for guidance activities in their area and must post their objectives and evaluative statistics online. • Youth centres are obliged to work closely with primary/lower secondary schools and youth education institutions in their area, local businesses, and the public employment services. • Youth guidance practitioners organize guidance activities related to the transition from compulsory to youth education, personal education plans, and transition plans at pupils' schools.

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are responsible for the provision of general careers education, forms 1 to 9. • For those not involved in education, training, or employment, the centres are obliged to establish contact with these young people and to help them re-engage with school, training, or employment opportunities.

New Zealand at a Glance
Snapshot of Selected Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
Career Services/Srapuara Portal	To provide all people living in New Zealand with access to the best careers information, advice, and guidance to achieve their life goals	Government of New Zealand, Career Services Branch	Website is for all ages; however, much of the site is targeted at students in years 9 to 13	www.careers.govt.nz/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appealing website, with sub-pages for school students and leavers; parents, family, and <i>whanau</i> (extended family to Māori); educators and practitioners. • Also includes pages for Māori and Pasifika peoples and recent immigrants. • Web pages are designed to help students with educational decision-making, with sections on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ choosing school subjects ○ what do I want to be? ○ entering tertiary study ○ leaving school ○ entering trade training ○ world of work • Students can register for My Career space, an online “folder” that allows registered users to store “anything from the website,” including results from online tools, quizzes, and worksheets; “yourCV4MeCV;” or any of the nearly 700 detailed job profiles. • Web page designed for parents includes section on “how to help your kids make decisions” and a quiz entitled “How well do you know your child's career plans?” Parents are invited to take a quiz to determine their own work/life balance and career goals. • Students have the ability to “chat,” e-mail, or call career advisers, 8 am to 8 pm weekdays, and 10 am to 2 pm on Saturdays. • Website includes events calendar for career-related lectures, workshops, etc.
Te Kotahitanga	To raise Māori student achievement via collaborative professional development program for teachers	Ministry of Education, started as pilot in 2000	Underachieving Māori students in years 9, 10 and 11	www.tekotahitanga.org.nz/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent funding granted (\$20 million) to facilitate expansion of program from 33 to 50 schools across New Zealand to reach 20,000 students. • Collaborative research team developed Effective Teaching Profile based on suggestions made by Māori students, their parents, their teachers and principals, as well as international literature. • Program works with teachers and schools to create culturally responsive learning environments, to improve teaching and learning practices, and to improve relationships between teachers and learners.

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed in partnership with the University of Waikato. • Program found to be effective in raising achievement (Bishop, Berryman, Cavanagh, and Teddy, 2007).
Youth Guarantee	To ensure that students move smoothly between school, tertiary education, and work	Government of New Zealand, 2009	16- and 17-year-olds currently not engaged in education, who have achieved NCEA Level 1 (Year 11) or less, and for whom a vocational pathway would be a preferred choice	www.tec.govt.nz/templates/standard.aspx?id=5941 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible students participate in a range of vocational choices free of charge through approved partner organizations (institutes of technology and polytechnics, <i>wānanga</i>, private training establishments, and other tertiary education providers). • Students are selected from communities of highest need, based on youth unemployment rates and access to suitable vocational training programs. • Ultimately, students are working toward qualifications at levels 1 to 3 on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in tertiary education. • Students participate in an orientation program and extracurricular activities with their program peers. Students receive learning and cultural support, career planning advice, and counselling. • Initiative includes extensive performance monitoring and data reporting. • Up to 2,000 full-time places funded for 2010/2011 at cost of \$52.7 million.

Sweden at a Glance

Snapshot of Selected Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
Utbildningsinfo.se (Education info)	To provide web-based information for students, parents, and professionals in the field of education	Skolverket (The Swedish National Agency for Education)	Students, parents, and education professionals	<p>www.utbildningsinfo.se/ (not all sections translated into English)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National portal is a source for collected, current, and neutral information about education in Sweden, which is financed or supervised/monitored by the state. • Website comprises different sections, including a search tool for education (schools) in Sweden, a web-based career guidance tool, a description of the Swedish school system, a personal folder, and a special section for guidance practitioners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The “choose and plan” guidance tool includes information, exercises, and examples related to how to go about choosing a career. The structured web-based program can be used independently or with the assistance of a career counsellor. A companion guide can be downloaded from the site. ○ The personal folder, or <i>Min mapp</i>, allows registered users to save information and activities from the website (i.e. CV writing exercise, activities from “choose and plan,” contact info).
Vägledningsinfo.se (Guidance info)	To better meet new demands and conditions for guidance counselling and to make guidance counselling more accessible to the public	Östsam Regional Development Council and Nitus (network for municipal learning centres) in co-operation with municipalities and regional councils	Upper secondary school students and mature students interested in higher education	<p>www.vagledningsinfo.se/ (available in English)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This national web-based guidance service is free and offers “neutral” advice about how, what, or where to study (general and specific information is provided). • Web-based services are offered as a complement to the regular guidance counselling provided by municipalities and universities. • Guidance counselling is carried out via telephone, e-mail, and chat rooms and is staffed by guidance counsellors from several Swedish regions that co-operate in a national network. The counsellors at <i>Vägledningsinfo</i> work according to the Swedish Association of Guidance Counsellors’ Declaration of Ethics. • “Live” counsellors are available Sunday through Thursday between 4 pm and 7 pm. • The “Think and Plan” page links users to the <i>Utbildningsinfo</i> site and includes an interactive quiz, <i>Arbetsförmedlingen</i> (test your interests), designed to expose students to a variety of occupations. • Site includes links to the five regional “partner” organizations.

United Kingdom at a Glance
Snapshot of Selected Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
<i>Aimhigher</i>	To widen participation in higher education (HE) by raising HE awareness, aspirations, and attainment among young people from under-represented groups	Funded by HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council of England) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Program administered by Action on Access	Learners and potential applicants to higher education, particularly those currently under-represented in higher education	www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/DG_073697 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Aimhigher</i> helps learners and potential applicants to higher education, particularly those from groups under-represented in higher education, to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ raise their awareness and understanding of the opportunities open to them ○ raise their achievement and attainment ○ get supported transitions into higher education • <i>Aimhigher</i>-sponsored activities take place across 44 local areas in England, including visits to university campuses, residential summer schools, master classes and open days, and mentoring schemes. • Program also encourages those teaching, guiding, and supporting learners and potential applicants to higher education to come together to discuss and provide better, and better-supported, progressions and pathways. Practitioners have their own extensive web-based resource: www.Aimhigher.ac.uk/sites/practitioner/home/index.cfm.
<i>Connexions and Connexions Direct</i>	To provide a comprehensive service to meet young people's needs for information, advice and support	UK Government	All young people aged 13 to 19 Those up to 24 years of age with a learning difficulty or disability Those at risk of not being in education, employment, or training (NEET) or of being socially excluded	www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/Youth/youthmatters/connexions/connexions/www.connexions-direct.com/ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established in 2001 by the Department for Schools, Children and Family, Connexions is an integrated, community-based initiative that aims to provide high-quality, impartial information, advice, and guidance – including careers advice and guidance – to youth aged 13 to 19 and students considered to be “at risk.” Youth are provided with personal-development opportunities to help remove barriers to learning and progression and to ensure that young people make a smooth transition to adulthood and working life. • As part of recent <i>Education and Skills Act</i>, providers of post-16 education and training will be under a duty to tell the Connexions service if young people drop out of school, so that they can be contacted as soon as possible and offered support to re-engage. • Connexions is supported by the Connexions Direct website. The website is the “flagship” program for youth and has been designed to appeal to the target population. • Youth can find/search information on diverse subjects such as careers, learning, health, relationships, finance, and leisure activities.

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The learning page of the website includes the following subheadings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning resources ○ Where you learn ○ What you learn ○ Qualifications ○ The skills I need ○ Help with study ○ Learning outside school • The website includes a number of interactive features (e.g. quizzes, searchable “Jobs4U” career database). • Young people can access information, advice, and support via the telephone, text messaging, web chat, and e-mail. The helpline operates from 8 am until 2 am, 365 days a year, offering useful out-of-hours support to complement local provision. All counselling services are confidential. • Registered members of the Connexions Direct Community may communicate with other young people via a moderated chat room and message board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 3472 registered members as of November 4th ○ message board had 541 total posts • Information contained on the website is available in seven alternative languages. • The site offers a number of disability support options, including “bigger font,” and “listen to the website.”
<p>University and Higher Education web page</p>	<p>To provide information and online services to UK citizens who are considering university and/or higher education</p>	<p>UK Government</p>	<p>Students considering and/or applying to higher education.</p>	<p>www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/index.htm</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web page is part of Directgov.uk, the UK government portal that provides information and online services to the public. • Wide variety of information pertaining to university/higher education is presented, organized in the following sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What can higher education do for you? ○ Applying for a course ○ Student life ○ Where to go, what to study ○ Student finance ○ Graduate careers and postgraduate study • Includes link to UCAS website, the organization responsible for

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				<p>processing university applications in the UK. Via this site, one can search on universities and courses (including fees, bursaries, and financial support). Also includes stepwise information on how to navigate the university admissions process for students and their parents (i.e. admissions tests, entry requirements, how to apply to university, next steps, etc.).</p>

United States at a Glance
Snapshot of Selected Programs and Initiatives Currently in Place

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
<p>GEAR UP <i>(Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs)</i></p>	<p>To increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in PSE through the provision of six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high poverty middle and high schools</p>	<p>Federal, state, and local government collaboration</p>	<p>Selected cohorts of students from high poverty middle and high schools</p> <p>GEAR UP programs start no later than the seventh grade and follow the students through high school graduation</p>	<p>www.ed.gov/programs/gearup/index.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GEAR UP is different from the family of TRIO programs because it targets <i>cohorts</i> of students from low-income neighbourhoods (at least one half of enrolled students must be eligible for free or reduced lunch program, or reside in public housing). <p>GEAR UP offers state and partnership grants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ State grants are competitive six-year matching grants that must include both an early intervention component designed to increase college attendance and success and raise the expectations of low-income students, and a scholarship component. ○ Partnership grants are competitive six-year matching grants that must support an early intervention component and may support a scholarship component designed to increase college attendance and success and raise the expectations of low-income students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships must be in place between community, school, at least one institution of higher education, and at least two community organizations (businesses, philanthropic organizations).
<p>TRIO</p>	<p>To motivate and support students from disadvantaged backgrounds to progress through academic pipeline from middle school to graduate school</p>	<p>Department of Education, Office of Post-Secondary Education</p>	<p>Low-income, first generation college students and students with disabilities, middle school-aged and up</p>	<p>www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/trio/index.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launched in the 1960s, TRIO originally comprised three federal programs (Upward Bound, Talent Search, and Student Support Services). TRIO has since expanded to include eight outreach and support programs to serve disadvantaged populations, identified as students who are limited in English proficiency, students from groups that are traditionally under-represented in PSE, students with disabilities, students who are homeless children and youths, students who are in foster care or are aging out of the foster care system, or other disconnected students. <p>The eight programs are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talent Search* 2. Upward Bound* 3. Upward Bound Math – Science* 4. Veterans Upward Bound 5. Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement 6. Training Program for Federal TRIO Programs Staff

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				<p>7. Student Support Services (for students enrolled in two-year college programs)</p> <p>8. Educational Opportunity Centers (for adults)</p> <p>*As only the first three programs target elementary and/or secondary school-aged students (the focus of this project), these programs will be summarized below.</p>
TRIO: Talent Search	To increase the number of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds who complete high school and enrol in and complete their PSE	Department of Education, Office of Post-Secondary Education	Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education	<p>www.ed.gov/programs/triotalent/index.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Talent Search program provides academic, career, and financial counselling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to and complete their PSE. • The program publicizes the availability of financial aid and assists participants with the post-secondary application process. Talent Search also encourages persons who have not completed education programs at the secondary or post-secondary level to enter or re-enter and complete PSE. <p>Services provided by the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ academic, financial, career, or personal counselling, including advice on entry or re-entry to secondary or post-secondary programs ○ career exploration and aptitude assessment ○ tutorial services ○ information on PSE ○ exposure to college campuses ○ information on student financial assistance ○ assistance in completing college admissions and financial aid applications ○ assistance in preparing for college entrance exams ○ mentoring programs ○ special activities for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders ○ workshops for the families of participants
TRIO: Upward Bound	To increase the rate at which participants complete secondary education and	Department of Education, Office of Post-Secondary Education	High school students from low-income families and high school students from families in	<p>www.ed.gov/programs/trioupbound/index.html</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upward Bound provides opportunities for participants to succeed in their pre-college performance and ultimately in their higher education pursuits as well as “fundamental support” to participants in their preparation for college entrance. <p>Services provided by the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ academic instruction in mathematics, laboratory sciences, composition,

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
	enrol in and graduate from institutions of PSE		which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree	literature, and foreign languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ tutoring ○ counselling (including guidance and assistance on secondary school re-entry, alternative education programs, or entry into general educational development programs or PSE) ○ mentoring ○ cultural enrichment ○ work-study programs ○ education or counselling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of students (including information on the full range of Federal Student Financial Aid programs and benefits)
TRIO: Upward Bound – Math and Science	To help students recognize and develop their potential to excel in math and science and to encourage them to pursue post-secondary degrees in math and science and ultimately careers in the math and science profession	Department of Education, Office of Post-Secondary Education	High school students from low-income families and high school students from families in which neither parent holds a bachelor's degree	www.ed.gov/programs/triomathsci/index.html <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Upward Bound – Math and Science program is designed to strengthen the math and science skills of participating students. Program services include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ summer programs with intensive math and science training ○ year-round counselling and advisement ○ exposure to university faculty members who do research in mathematics and the sciences ○ computer training ○ participant-conducted scientific research under the guidance of faculty members or graduate students who are serving as mentors ○ exposure to academic programs and cultural events ○ instruction in reading, writing, study skills, and other subjects necessary for success in education beyond high school ○ tutorial services ○ mentoring programs ○ information on PSE opportunities ○ assistance in preparing for college entrance exams ○ assistance in completing college entrance and financial aid applications ○ academic, financial, or personal counselling (e.g. guidance and assistance on secondary school re-entry or alternative education programs, entry into general educational development programs or PSE, info on the full range of Federal Student Financial Aid programs and benefits)

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
Students.gov	To provide college students and their families with easy access to information and resources from all facets of the US government	A co-operative effort between federal agencies, students, and other parts of the education community, under the leadership of the US Department of Education	College students and their families	<p>www.students.gov/STUGOVWebApp/Public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students.gov is predominantly an information clearinghouse, providing students and their families with a set of comprehensive links to multiple US government programs and departments. • Interactivity is limited (i.e. no interactive quizzes or chat rooms, no real time or “live” guidance support). <p>The main education web page provides links to the following subsections:</p> <p>Plan your education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for college Choose a school College search directories College websites Educational and admissions testing Graduate students Career/vocational students Study abroad International students Online education Parents' guide <p>Career development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internships Government Non-government Student jobs Graduate fellowships Explore careers Job search <p>Online study help, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online research and information Study skills <p>Pay for your education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial aid overviews Scholarships and grants Research funding/fellowships Federal loan program information Repay your loan

Name	Objectives	Funding Source(s)	Target Audience	Program Features
				State financial aid Calculate college costs Campus life Relocating to college Student consumer info Healthy living Volunteer service Diversity resources

Appendix 2. Learn Canada 2020 – Joint Declaration, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Education

Introduction

Learn Canada 2020 is the framework the provincial and territorial ministers of education, through the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, will use to enhance Canada's education systems, learning opportunities, and overall education outcomes. The vision of *Learn Canada 2020* is *Quality Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All Canadians*.

Learn Canada 2020 recognizes the direct link between a well-educated population and (1) a vibrant knowledge-based economy in the 21st Century, (2) a socially progressive, sustainable society, and (3) enhanced personal growth opportunities for all Canadians.

Four Pillars of Lifelong Learning

Learn Canada 2020 encompasses the four pillars of lifelong learning from early childhood to adulthood and addresses the most pressing education and learning issues facing Canadians today. The ministers of education, in conjunction with their Cabinet colleagues as appropriate, will pursue the ambitious goals for each pillar as follows:

- ***Early Childhood Learning and Development***

All children should have access to high quality early childhood education that ensures they arrive at school ready to learn.

- ***Elementary to High School Systems***

All children in our elementary to high school systems deserve teaching and learning opportunities that are inclusive and that provide them with world-class skills in literacy, numeracy, and science.

- ***Postsecondary Education***

Canada must increase the number of students pursuing postsecondary education by increasing the quality and accessibility of postsecondary education.

- ***Adult Learning and Skills Development***

Canada must develop an accessible, diversified, and integrated system of adult learning and skills development that delivers training when Canadians need it.

Key Activity Areas

Within the four pillars of lifelong learning, ministers have identified eight specific activity areas and accompanying objectives:

- ***Literacy:*** Raise the literacy levels of Canadians.

- ***Aboriginal Education:*** Eliminate the gap in academic achievement and graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

- ***Postsecondary Capacity:*** Enhance and stabilize the long-term capacity of postsecondary systems to meet the training and learning needs of all Canadians seeking higher education learning opportunities.

- ***Education for Sustainable Development:*** Raise students' awareness and encourage them to become actively engaged in working for a sustainable society.
- ***International and National Representation:*** Speak effectively and consistently for education and learning in Canada in both pan-Canadian and international settings.
- ***Official Languages:*** Promote and implement support programs for minority-language education and second-language programs that are among the most comprehensive in the world.
- ***Learning Assessment Programs and Performance Indicators:*** Support the implementation of national and international learning assessment programs and performance indicators for education systems.
- ***Education Data and Research Strategy:*** Create comprehensive, long-term strategies to collect, analyze, and disseminate nationally and internationally comparable data and research.

Key Partners and Stakeholders

Learn Canada 2020 reflects the educational priorities of Canadians. Ministers will engage key partners and stakeholders in reaching the stated goals and objectives. Education in Canada is under the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces and territories. Ministers recognize the national interest in ensuring a healthy economy and the importance of education for economic development. To this end, Canada's education ministers will engage all those who can and must participate in meeting these goals — parents, educators, key stakeholders, and other orders of government. We will encourage the federal government to meet its constitutional obligation and work with provinces and territories to provide equality of opportunity for Aboriginal peoples.

Communicating with Canadians

Ministers will keep the public advised of Canada's progress on *Learn Canada 2020* by reporting on an annual basis.

Council of Ministers of Education, Canada

Ministers will pursue the goals of *Learn Canada 2020* through their Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC). CMEC has an enviable track record of having represented the education and learning interests of Canadians both domestically and internationally for over four decades.

15 April 2008

Source: www.cmec.ca/Publications/Lists/Publications/Attachments/187/CMEC-2020-DECLARATION.en.pdf



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