

Daycare plan key to job skills: Dodge [CA] ^[1]

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Source: National Post

Format: Article

Publication Date: 31 Mar 2005

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

David Dodge, governor of the Bank of Canada, said yesterday Canada needs to build an "infrastructure for early childhood development," appearing to give his approval to the Liberal Party's national day care plan.

Mr. Dodge's comments were part of a speech yesterday in which he once again drilled home the need for Canada to improve lagging productivity growth even though it may mean job losses in certain sectors.

"The first step to improving skills is to build an excellent infrastructure for early childhood development, feeding into a school system that effectively teaches basic skills," Mr. Dodge said in a speech at Humber College Institute of Technology & Advanced Learning in Toronto.

The government agreed late last year to pour \$5-billion into provincial coffers to create daycare spaces over the next five years and has put \$700-million into a trust fund for this year.

Mr. Dodge has recently strayed from monetary policy to speaking on such policy issues as bank mergers, securities regulation and his favourite topic -- Canada's lagging productivity record.

Training and education is key, the central bank governor said.

"For some students, especially boys, school can feel like incarceration," Mr. Dodge said. "One reason why drop-out rates are high is that some students don't see the connection between what they're being taught in school and what they want to do when they leave school."

Students need a first-hand look at career options and colleges and industries need to provide the motivation and leading-edge technology and training through classic apprenticeships, especially to replace a glut of retiring skilled craftspeople, Mr. Dodge said.

- reprinted from the National Post

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