

Human capital, early childhood development and economic growth: An economist's perspective ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpted from speech:

It is a great pleasure to be here with you today and to share the program with a number of former colleagues, associates, and friends. I must say, it is rather intimidating to be asked to kick off this seminar, knowing that everyone here knows more about the subject of child development than I do. I am sure I will learn much more from listening to the discussion today than you can learn from my talk. Indeed, I spent a fair bit of time wondering about just what I could contribute to your seminar. After much head scratching, I decided that the best I could do was to give you an economist's perspective on the links between investment in human capital, Early Childhood Development (ECD), and economic growth. I will also set out some of the implications of that perspective for the programs and policies that you are charged with developing and administering. I hope that, in all this, there will be something of interest to you.

I will divide my remarks into three parts. First, I will try to set out for you the analytic perspective-based on the economic literature on human capital development and its contribution to economic growth. I will then focus specifically on the contribution of ECD to the development of human capital. Finally, based on these perspectives, I'll try to set out some considerations for improved policies.

Related link: Newspaper article: "Investing in the very young pays dividends to all", by D. Crane, Toronto Star ^[5]

Region: Canada ^[6]

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