

# Outlook on Business

## FUTURES puts young people to work

A new FUTURES option which offers unemployed young people a chance to go back to school for half a day and work for the other half was among three new initiatives to expand FUTURES announced here today.

Gregory Sorbara, Minister of Skills Development, says the new part-time work/part-time school option offers "a second chance to unemployed young people who want to go back to school."

"A core of employment-disadvantaged youths exists despite the economic upswing and the increasing number of job opportunities in the province. Lack in formal and basic education plays a large role in their problems. It affects their job stability and advancement. Nearly 45 per cent of the young people between 15 and 24 in today's full-time workforce do not have a high school diploma.

Tackling the problem of both

youth unemployment and a high dropout rate from secondary school has been a priority for the Ontario government. The Ministry of Skills Development has worked closely with the Ministry of Education and the result is the part-time work/part-time school option. It is the first time such a program has been offered in Canada.

Qualified unemployed youths who choose the part-time work/part-time school option will receive \$100 a week while attending school, as well as the minimum wage for part-time hours worked. Participants must work 16 to 20 hours a week and attend school to earn at least three high school credits.

The option will be available to youths who have less than a Grade 12 education, have been out of school for at least a year and have been unemployed for at least 12 consecutive weeks or have accumulated

a total of 16 jobless weeks in the past year. Local school boards will be closely involved in implementing the new FUTURES option.

The new part-time work/part-time school option is expected to attract 7,000 participants during the next year.

Mr. Sorbara emphasizes that youths who choose the new option must be well-motivated and prepared to work hard.

"It will be a challenge for them, there is no doubt. But the reward is progress toward a high school diploma, so critical for secure employment in today's society," he says.

"We needed a more aggressive stance to reach those unemployed youths who were unlikely to seek or get educational upgrading. The new part-time work/part-time school option offers these young people work experience, financial security and time to study," Mr. Sorbara

says. FUTURES, a province-wide program started nearly two years ago by the Ministry of Skills Development, helps unemployed youths gain skills upgrading, training and work experience so that they can find, and keep, a job. To date, more than 70,000 young people have participated in the program since it began in November, 1985.

Mr. Sorbara also announced a new option under FUTURES to increase opportunities for on-the-job training. Under the enhanced training option, an extension of up to 10 weeks of the present 16-week work placement will be allowed where employers can offer more intensive training.

Mr. Sorbara says some employers are able to offer participants a more intensive type of training but have been limited by the shorter time period.

"We are looking for a greater return on the investment we make for these young people and for society as a whole. Employers are an important resource for training our young people. This option uses the expertise of employers to help young people gain working skills. It is part of our objective to place more emphasis both on training and education," says Mr. Sorbara.

More than 5,000 youths are expected to participate in the extended training option annually. FUTURES eligibility requirements have also been altered so that youths with less than Grade 12 education can qualify if they have accumulated a total of 16 weeks unemployment in a one-year period. Previously, the program was limited only to those who had been unemployed for 12 or more con-

secutive weeks. However, it left out the group of young people who changed jobs two or three times a year, took any short term job they could get, and were therefore unemployed only about an average of nine consecutive weeks between jobs.

The new rules will allow another 3,000 employment-disadvantaged young people to participate in FUTURES annually. These initiatives will go into effect province-wide during August and September, and will have an anticipated annual cost of \$10 million.

"We have focused assistance on the most severely disadvantaged group of unemployed youths to help them get upgrading and useful on-the-job training so that their employment chances will be increased," Mr. Sorbara says.

**BACK  
TO THE  
FUTURES  
SINCE  
1985**

More than 70,000 young people and 30,000 employers across the province have participated in Futures, since it began in November, 1985.

Almost 60 per cent of youths participating in Futures have less than a Grade 12 education.

60 per cent of Futures participants no longer live with their parents.

Almost one-third of the participants approach Futures on their own. The other two-thirds are referred to the program by social agencies, employers or other sources.

26 per cent of work experience participants opt for the One-Year Guarantee option which provides 52 weeks of work. These participants must commit to take at least one high school credit on their own time during the year.

Almost 90 per cent of employers taking part in Futures are small businesses with fewer than 50 employees.

83.5 per cent of employers involved in the program are from the private sector.

The major employers of Futures participants are service (42 per cent), retail (23 per cent) and manufacturing (13 per cent) industries.

131 Futures centres are located across the province in 87 communities. These include 77 at community colleges, 51 at community-sponsored Youth Employment Counselling Centres and two special project offices.

\$139.5 million is budgeted for Futures for 1987-88, an 8.1 per cent increase over 1986-87.

## Credit: what does it mean?

Everybody talks about credit, but what does it really mean?

Credit may be defined as the advance of goods and/or services in exchange for a promise to pay at some future date. In short, "Buy now and pay later."

When you think about credit, remember these factors:

- Credit is a mutual expression of faith between the lender and the borrower.
- Credit is a privilege extended by the lender, not a right owed to every consumer.
- Credit is a form of debt.

As a consumer, you must make marketplace decisions every day. Among the most important are credit choices, beginning with this question, "Shall I use Credit?" If so, "What type of credit should I use?"

Credit itself is neither good nor bad. The key to making wise credit decisions is to consider all the factors, weigh them against personal needs and values and then make a balanced decision that suits your circumstances.

Using credit offers several advantages, such as allowing you to have the immediate use and benefit of goods and services even when your cash is limited. Credit can also help you to meet the expenses of unexpected emergencies, allow you to take advantage of sales or special bargains; help keep track of expenses with receipts from credit transactions; let you make a convenient single payment instead of several; and eliminate the necessity of carrying large amounts of cash.

On the other hand, you have to remember that using credit involves an obligation on your part to keep up with your payments. You should stick to your budget. Otherwise your credit purchases may result in an unpleasant surprise when your monthly statement arrives. Finally, although credit cards are not cash, they should be treated with the same care and safeguarded to prevent fraudulent use by others.

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