

BUILDING ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

SEDI

Issue 4 - Spring 2004

SEDI Travels to the UK to Learn More About Asset-Building Abroad

Jennifer Robson-Haddow
SEDI

In November 2003, SEDI (Social and Enterprise Development Innovations) took part in a three day study tour to gather information that may inform the development of asset-building policy and practice in Canada. SEDI proposed this series of meetings between Canadian and British representatives to increase awareness and understanding of UK asset-based welfare as a broad approach to public policy. The UK is currently in the process of implementing two ambitious savings programs, the Saving Gateway and the Child Trust Fund.

The Child Trust Fund (CTF) was announced by the British government in its April 2003 budget as part of the government's strategy for saving and asset ownership. Available to all children living in the UK and born after September 1, 2002, the program will provide an endowment locked-in until the child is 18 years of age. The initial endowment is £250 (roughly CAD\$600). Children of low and moderate income families will also be eligible for an additional endowment of £250. Measures to ensure consumer financial education are also expected. HM Treasury estimates that roughly 700,000 children in the UK will

account matched at a fixed rate (£1 for £1) to a maximum ceiling of £375 in available matching funds. However there are also important differences to North American IDA programs. First, there are no restrictions on how the account funds, including the matching funds, can be spent. Second, financial literacy training is not a condition for participation in the project or receiving the matching funds. Finally, accountholders will receive a direct lump sum payment of the matching funds at the end of the 18-month project based on the highest account balance at anytime during the project.

Based on our observations from the trip, SEDI believes that:

- Financial inclusion is a precondition to any successful asset-building strategy. Low-income Canadians need both accessible and affordable choices in financial products and services and adequate knowledge to make informed choices and decisions as consumers of financial services and participants in public programs. This is particularly true in Canada where mainstream consumer financial services and products are far less regulated than in the UK.
- Political leadership in Canada, as in the UK, will be critical to the adoption of a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to social policy that includes asset-building. Any Canadian politician with the leadership and vision to make a firm commitment to asset-based policy can look forward to greater and pre-existing support among non-government stakeholders than their UK colleagues.
- Crafting a new social policy architecture is the goal of an ambitious project lead by many of the best minds in Canada's social policy community. The new architecture will need new methods and asset-building methods (in their full range) lend themselves well to a more integrated approach to social policy.
- Progressive universalism, in which all citizens are entitled to some benefit but the benefit is distributed in a progressive way, would enable policy-makers to meet both horizontal and vertical equity objectives. This does not necessarily mean a return to high cost, blunt universal policy instruments. But it should encourage policy-makers should take a broader view of social policy and aim for both greater inclusion and progressiveness.
- Evidence-based policy-making could be a major contribution of the Canadian asset-building field. By investing in a broader asset-building policy research agenda, Canada has an opportunity to contribute and even lead internationally in this field.



This picture was taken outside the Prime Minister's Office in London, UK. From left to right: Reid Cramer (New America Foundation), Jennifer Rankin (Institute for Public Policy Research), Peter Nares (SEDI), Ray Boshara (New America Foundation), Lenore Burton (Human Resources and Skills Development), Jennifer Robson-Haddow (SEDI)

receive the CTF each year. The cost of the government endowment is projected at £235 million (roughly CAD\$571 million) annually. Legislation to enable the CTF has been introduced in Parliament and is currently at Third Reading in the House of Commons. The first CTF payments are expected to be made in April 2005.

The Saving Gateway (SG) was launched in August 2002 as a series of pilots projects in 5 communities across England. The program offers a matched savings account similar in some respects to the matched savings Individual Development Account programs across North America. Eligible low-income adult participants open a savings account with a financial institution and have the deposits in that

A full copy of SEDI's report is available on our website at www.sedi.org or by contacting SEDI's office at 416.665.2828 or by email at info@sedi.org

Asset-Building Agenda Moves Forward on Federal and Provincial Fronts

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In the recent federal budget, the Government of Canada committed to a new learning bond to help low-income parents save for their children's education. In Alberta, the provincial government has promised to start the legislative session with a new *Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan*. SEDI believes these two initiatives could improve the futures of many Canadian children.

The Canada Learning Bond

The commitment to provide the Canada Learning Bond to low-income eligible families announced in the federal budget is important for three reasons. First, it is the first time that a Canadian government has acknowledged both that poverty is an issue of assets as well as income and that savings and assets are as important for low-income Canadians as they are for middle and upper income Canadians. Second, it will provide a much needed cash incentive to encourage children from low-income families to pursue post-secondary education. Third, it will propel Canada into the forefront of a growing number of countries that are developing similar asset-building policies.

The Learning Bond contains many positive features for low-income earners. First, by providing a \$500 endowment to a RESP for a child at birth, with annual \$100 top-ups, the investment can take advantage of years of compound interest to generate far greater returns relative to the initial expenditure. Second, paired with a more substantial and progressive annual grant than the CESG, the bond will leverage additional deposits from family and friends. Third, the act of saving itself can have powerful psychological and behavioral effects. Children who receive the learning bond will have a greater incentive to stay in school and to strive for and plan toward higher education. Finally, the Government's recognition of the need to enhance "awareness and use of" existing RESPs creates a concrete opportunity to develop a national financial capability strategy so that all Canadians, regardless of their ability to pay for the services of a financial planner, have the knowledge and the tools they need to make informed choices about their savings plans and overall financial well-being. The success of the bond will not only depend on the attractiveness of the financial incentives but also on the Government's commitment to work with trusted community intermediaries who can provide the information and supports low-income families will need to participate in this initiative.

The Canada Learning Bond is an innovative idea whose time has come. We applaud the federal government's commitment to ensuring that all Canadian families will have the opportunity to save and invest in their children's future.

Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan

The government in Alberta has taken a giant step forward in placing asset-building on the provincial social policy agenda. In February, it was announced that the Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan would be placed on the government agenda. The Alberta program will deliver a \$500 post-secondary education savings grant to Alberta children born on or after January 1, 2005 and additional \$100 grants as the children reach ages 8, 11 and 14.

Federal Conference Finds Promise in Asset-Based Policy

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In December 2003 the federal government's Policy Research Initiative (PRI) lead a two-day workshop on asset-building. The goal of the event was to review the best theory and research on asset-building to assess its promise as a new approach to address poverty and exclusion in Canada. Other federal departments and agencies, including the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, (the former) Human Resources Development Canada and the National Secretariat on Homelessness, also lent their support to the event.

With SEDI's assistance, the PRI brought together speakers from the United Kingdom, the United States and across Canada to present their views to 150 senior government officials, scholars, social policy experts and community representatives from Canada. Speakers included Dr. Michael Sherraden, author of *Assets and the Poor*, Munir Sheikh, Assistant Deputy Minister at Finance Canada, Robert Cornell, former Deputy-Secretary General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Dr. Gavin Kelly, Senior Policy Advisor to UK Prime Minister Tony Blair. Rodd Myers from MCC-Employment Development and Louise Simbandumwe from SEED Winnipeg spoke about their organizations' local IDA programs. Peter Nares, Barb Gosse, Jennifer Robson-Haddow from SEDI and John Greenwood from SRDC were also featured on the agenda.

The conference stimulated a lively debate about several key questions raised by asset-building ideas and practice. While some conference attendees debated whether or not savings strategies like IDAs are the most effective and efficient strategy to build assets among disadvantaged Canadians, there was general agreement on at least three points:

- That savings and assets are at least as important as adequate income and social services to end poverty.
- That asset-building can offer useful ideas for social policy and is worth further attention.
- That as a priority, governments should look at ways to eliminate penalties for low-income Canadians in current programs to building savings and assets.

During the closing panel discussion, Cynthia Williams (then Assistant Deputy Minister for Strategic Policy at HRDC), called on social policy experts to include asset-building in their on-going work. SEDI's Peter Nares also noted that "it is now clear that sufficient evidence exists to warrant further research and demonstration into what an asset policy for low-income Canadians should comprise and that any such policy must be accompanied by a financial literacy strategy that is fully accessible."

The Policy Research Initiative has since announced that it will invest more heavily in its own research on asset-based policy. Results from this work will help to shape the PRI's conclusions and recommendations on a major federal project to find new ways to address poverty and social exclusion.

A post-conference report is available online at
<http://policyresearch.gc.ca>

IDs for Housing: An Update

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Independent Living Accounts

Based on results from the initial *Home\$ave* consultations, it was identified that, while there is strong support for a homeownership IDA, other uses derived from IDAs or derived through similar projects utilizing the IDA methodology were also supported, including assisting tenants in transitional or supportive housing to gain access to appropriate and stable housing in the private rental market. In order to address this support, SEDI has proposed a form of an IDA, called an Independent Living Account, or ILA, which could provide the necessary mix of financial incentives and services needed to increase the self-sufficiency of people living in transitional housing.

The proposed ILA project is designed as a research demonstration that will gather the evidence necessary to inform future policy and program development within the broader context of homelessness.

As of February 2004 SEDI is working in conjunction with the National Secretariat on Homelessness and four communities, namely the City of Toronto and Seaton House; The City of Edmonton, the Edmonton Housing Trust Fund and the Edmonton Community Loan Fund; the City of Montreal, Le Chainon and the Old Brewery Mission; and the City of Fredericton and the Fredericton YMCA to implement the demonstration project.

The project will incorporate five program elements: matched savings, financial management training (FMT), community partnerships, organizational capacity building and research and evaluation. An ILA project aims to collect data in order to:

- Determine whether providing matched savings and FMT has a positive influence on savings behaviour - will the poor save their own money to access the incentive?
- Determine whether providing matched savings and FMT increases access to basic banking services for the project target group.
- Determine whether matched savings and FMT contribute to the target population accessing sustainable (over the duration of the project) affordable rental accommodation.
- Assess the nature of any links that may occur between accessing affordable rental accommodation and securing employment or self-employment.
- Assess the extent to which FMT contributes to personal development.
- Determine if community partners can have their capacity built in the area of FMT and to determine what difference (if any) this produces in the nature of their relationship to their clients and the community at large.
- Assess the impact of the project on the local community particularly with respect to other social agencies who may be working with the project target group.

- Determine if the project partnership created between the NSH, SEDI, Financial Institutions and local Community Partners contributes to the success of the project, value to participants and overall longer-term policy formation.
- Identify policy and regulatory issues (Provincial Social Assistance that impact on the project.

It is hoped that this demonstration project will commence in April of 2004 with project results being available in May of 2006.



*Home\$ave**

In July of 2003 CMHC published the results of SEDI's comprehensive research undertaking that was sponsored by both CMHC and the National Secretariat on Homelessness. This consultation was undertaken on a national scale and has identified the realistic implications, and possible applications, of designing and delivering a national asset-based IDA pilot project for housing.

Based on this research, SEDI has begun taking the initial steps towards implementing a *Home\$ave* project, which would grant eligible low-income Canadians the opportunity to open an IDA and utilize their savings, as well as the matched contributions, towards a downpayment on a first home.

To date SEDI has received much interest respecting a possible *Home\$ave* demonstration project from municipal governments as well as from Provincial Government departments. We are currently in the process of preparing for discussions with the Honourable Andy Scott, Minister responsible for CMHC, in order to discuss this details of a possible national demonstration.



For more information on the proposed *Home\$ave* or ILA demonstration projects or to receive a copy of the *Home\$ave* research reports, please contact **Barbara Gosse** at **416.665.2828 x 236** or via e-mail at **bgosse@sedi.org**



An Update on *learn\$ave*

SEDI

It's been a busy year for the *learn\$ave* project. The end of 2003 marked the close of the recruitment phase and the beginning of 2004 lead us into a new phase - participant savings, processing cash-outs and releasing research data.

In November 2003, the final site completed their recruitment and the project reached full enrollment. As each participant has enrolled, they have opened their account, made monthly deposits and attended financial management courses. The highlight of participation, however, has been the cash-out phase. As of the end of February 2004, well over 500 participants have cashed out and used their savings and matched contributions to purchase post-secondary education courses, upgrades in skills training or start-up products for their small business.

As 2004 continues more participants will complete the requirements and cash-out their savings, moving them one step closer to reaching their goals. These participants are the stories of *learn\$ave*. With each cash-out and each new purchase, low-income earners across Canada are showing that this concept of asset-building for the poor does work. But these stories are not the only proof, formal research results will also be needed. Research is a key element of this next phase of the project and Spring 2004 marks the publication of the first research report, *Helping People Help Themselves: An Early Look at learn\$ave*.

With the combination of personal success stories from participants and formal research and examination, 2004 will be another big year for *learn\$ave*!

Coming Soon:

First *learn\$ave* Research Report

The Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (SRDC), the official research partner in *learn\$ave*, will publish the first project research report in May 2004.

Helping People Help Themselves: An Early Look at learn\$ave will outline the background of *learn\$ave*, the concept of IDAs, and will provide an overview of the main operational features of the project. It will give readers a glimpse into the recruitment phase of the project - examining methods and results, take up rates, as well as participant profiles. The report will also feature a section on key activities of the participants including opening accounts, savings and matched credits earned, completion of financial management training, case management services and participant "cash outs" (purchase of assets).

Number of Participants Enrolled:
3,626 (maximum enrollment)
4,827 (including comparison group)

Number of Accounts Open
3,254

Average Savings/Month
\$51

learn\$ave

Project Details

As of February 2004

Total Savings
\$2.3 million

Total Matched
Credits Leveraged
\$6.9 million

Cash-Outs
\$1.5 million in matched contributions used
573 participants earned maximum credits
1,300 cheques issued to date

To learn more about SRDC or to obtain a copy of the report,
visit www.srdc.org

The Soap Lady A Montreal Success Story

Georges Ohana
Montreal YMCA

Olive oil, Coconut oil, Shea butter, Lavender, Coriander, Lemongrass, Dried mint, Coffee, Calendula flowers, Bees wax.... in a old part of Montreal, on the top of a turn of the century apartment under constant renovations, a woman is realizing the dream of supporting herself by making soap with the help of **learn\$ave**. *"After three years in University working on a computer, I needed to work with my hands. I felt cold and sterile, I needed to work my senses...soap was an expression of creating something sensual and alive."*

With a Masters in media studies from Concordia University Sheryl Shore was still having problems making ends meet. She wanted to branch out and try something different but didn't know where to begin. **learn\$ave** gave her a new option - the option of starting a small business producing and selling unique artisan soaps and candles.

As a part of the project, Sheryl also attended financial management training sessions at the Notre Dame de grace YMCA, during which she discovered other ways of saving and understanding money. *"It's an amazing project, but I needed to be disciplined to get to the point where I could cash out and also encourage good habits of savings and planning ahead."*



With the support of her family and friends, she felt that she had a good chance of making a living with her small business venture. And after 12 months of arduous savings and making plans for the launch of her business, she finally cashed out the total of \$5,400 in October 2003 for the purchase of bulk products for the production of soaps and candles. *"Wow it felt great!! I cashed out in 12 months, a great accomplishment, it was very exiting!"*

In the words of the Soap Lady herself: *"before learn\$ave it felt like what I was doing was going to take a long time before becoming a real business and now I am able to have enough raw materials to supply many stores which is how I'm making a living. It gave me a great boost!! It helped me straighten my savings skills and provide a structure, which encourages personal and financial growth."*

"I'm expecting a baby in June and now that I have created my own home based business, I'll be able to work from home and take care of my baby. I feel more empowered than before to make a difference in the community. Its has been a unique and precious experience."

Goucher Photo & Graphic Services A Digby Success Story

James Goucher
learn\$ave Participant, Digby

I'm not really sure how I heard about the **learn\$ave** program, although I'm very pleased that I did and took the effort to pursue it.

I opened a new bank account and started to save money in the hopes of being able to help purchase items that I'd need for the start up of my new business in Photography and Graphic Design.

In December of 2003 I made the commitment to start my business, so I registered the name, Goucher Photo & Graphic Services. In January I had saved enough money in my **learn\$ave** account along with the matching funds to make a withdrawal to purchase two items for my business a Toshiba Laptop computer and three studio lighting sets for my portrait studio.



I'm running my business from my home in Cornwallis, Nova Scotia. I have taken one of the bedrooms for my office and have turned half of the basement into a portrait studio. In the future I hope to be able to purchase a few other items from the business, a multi function printer, portrait backdrops, a custom matt cutter, and head press, just to mention a few.

My business is based around my 20+ years of experience working in and around the photography and graphic design industries. In the photography line of the business I plan to do weddings, portraits, landscape and seascape prints, matting of photos, special events (graduations, anniversaries, birthday and pet portraits). In the graphic line I will be doing web page creation business cards, letterhead, custom logos, CD production, brochures, forms, posters, labels, etc.



I'm very pleased and excited about my experience with the **learn\$ave** program and I would and do recommend this program to friends, family and the people that I do business with. It is a program that I hope has a long lasting effect on the people in this area, those who have taken the program and those who are served by those who have participated.

Best wishes to all involved with the **learn\$ave** program!

Awareness Clothing A Fredericton Success Story

Caroline White
learn\$ave Participant, Fredericton

My name is Caroline White. I am a 26 year old aspiring entrepreneur from Fredericton, New Brunswick, who has had the very good fortune of becoming involved with the **learn\$ave** Program. I am a passionate clothing designer and manufacturer, working hard to establish a small business in my community. I construct my line of clothing using natural fabrics such as silk, hemp, cotton, and linen, which I dye by hand. I design my own patterns, and personally assemble each garment in my studio at home. The product is a simple, colorful, natural, lively garment that is very proudly made in Canada.



I came across the **learn\$ave** advertisement in our local newspaper by chance. The caption read 'Wanted: 50 people looking to change their lives.' I had just moved back to Fredericton after 5 years of traveling, schooling and working around North America. I was a typical twenty year old searching out adventures, experience and direction in life. I had always wanted to pursue a path in life with meaning and purpose. I wanted a career that would allow me to be creative, that would express my values, and that would be able to provide for a family someday. When I discovered that I had a talent for making clothing, I knew instantly it was worth exploring. I acquired all the

skills I could and, when the time was right, I came home to Fredericton with the goal that I would start putting my newfound talent and skills to use, and build a small business in my hometown. Six weeks later I became one of those 50 very lucky people 'looking to change their lives.'

I committed to myself that I would work hard to meet my savings goal in the minimum time required. I wanted to get the ball rolling as soon as possible. I took on two jobs, and sewed whenever possible, and by September 2003, I had met my savings goal. Savings, however, was not the only task at hand, nor was it the most difficult. I attended financial management training courses, which were very well organized and provided us with tools which were new to me. As well, I picked up some literature on my own, spoke to some professionals in my community, and attended business seminars my **learn\$ave** co-ordinators made me aware of. This combination provided me with the resources and guidance I needed to take on the enormous task of preparing a business plan.

I had grossly underestimated the time and effort required to write a business plan. This task was by far the most challenging, and by far

the most rewarding experience of my entrepreneurial life. It required projection, calculation, imagination, realistic visualization, research, logic and a lot of late nights. When I had finally completed it, I had it reviewed by an economic development officer in my community, who gave me valuable positive feedback.

I submitted my plan to my **learn\$ave** co-ordinators Jim Wilson and Ellen Whalley who were eager to read it over. I was their first micro-enterprise case to cash out, so we were all very excited, and a little nervous too. They were enthusiastic about my work. They asked questions, made comments, and suggested a few final revisions. I was very proud of the copy I finally submitted to them. They have been very supportive, patient and accommodating. They have very positively contributed to the huge sense of accomplishment that I feel.

I am now making withdrawals, and beginning to invest the money. I am acquiring fabrics, dyes, sewing equipment, and a new computer. I will be developing a website over the next few months, to sell my clothing online. I have my sights set on trade shows in the next coming years, and will be investing in retail space at our great local market. I envision to someday spread my colorful, natural style to customers across the country.

My participation in **learn\$ave** has made me feel earnest, accomplished and inspired. It has encouraged me to work harder, has helped me clarify my vision. It has provided me with an opportunity that I never would have dreamed of, and for which I am deeply grateful.

Towards a Better Future A Fredericton Success Story

Julie Boyce
learn\$ave Participant, Fredericton

A better future for myself and my son - that is what **learn\$ave** means to me. I am at the beginning of a great journey that I would never have been able to begin if it were not for this program.

I have been putting some money aside every month for about 18 months. With help from **learn\$ave**, I have begun a course to secure my Pilot's License. My future in the world of flight was helped off the ground by **learn\$ave**.

learn\$ave will help me teach my son that you can follow your dreams and that our government cares about us. This program is helping me to change my life for the better and for always. For that I am really grateful.

To read more success stories,
visit our website at www.sedi.org

MIND ONE

A Toronto Success Story

Archana Jaiswal
learnSave Participant, Toronto

The universe was looking after me several days ago, when I was asked to write this "success story".

The call came at the perfect time. Earlier that day, a very big door had closed in my face. It was one of those painful chunks taken out of my ego. I was being reminded that I really don't have much it belongs to the universe. People are free spirits, moving sparkles in a beautiful kaleidoscope of energy. It's hard to develop a business when the ego feels bruised, and I was looking for hope. Fortunately, another door was opening, and I was asked to contribute this piece to SEDI's newsletter.

With the good wishes and support of FSA, SEDI and the YWCA, my business is growing! More people and organizations are awakening to inner strength, and unlocking their creative potential at work and at home.

MIND ONE™ was registered as a sole proprietorship in 2003. **MIND ONE™** offers corporate seminars, virtual executive coaching and community service to relieve stress and chronic pain.

I specialize in simple, powerful techniques to relax your body, energize your mind, and consciously connect with your Source.

Just two minutes!! Redefine yourself: transform your awareness and take control of your destiny. Return to wellness. Enjoy mental clarity and boundless creativity. Work faster and smarter - come home earlier!!!

You wonderful people listened to my needs, and *now I listen to yours*. I develop fully customized programs that are medically and scientifically proven for your success. Here are some highlights:

MIND STAR SEMINARS:

- 70 physicians attended my seminar on Physician Health that was accredited with the Canadian Medical Association. Topics include:
 - ◆ balance of body-mind-soul,
 - ◆ the science of breath
 - ◆ quantum physics of healing/leadership,
 - ◆ time management and
 - ◆ work-life balance.
- Evaluation was positive:
 - ◆ 94% of physicians rated the seminars as very good or excellent.
 - ◆ 80% reported that they would change their personal or professional practice as a result of what they learned.
 - ◆ Comments include: "Archana's presentation was the highlight of the seminar", "I will use your techniques with my patients", "fabulous, spectacular"
- Other seminars include:
 - ◆ Stress Reduction for Top Executives,
 - ◆ Quantum Leader,
 - ◆ Holo-Soul,
 - ◆ Policy Development, and
 - ◆ Leadership and the Joy of Being

INNER SMILE - Virtual Executive Coaching:

- I served as an expert advisor on CTV's "Balance" special on Managing Pain. I helped a 33 year old arthritic patient relieve pain using meditation. She openly stated to the camera that she did not believe meditation would relieve her pain. After 30 minutes, she thanked me with tears in her eyes. She rolled her wrists in amazement and exclaimed "colors look brighter!".
- A CEO in England says he is more persuasive and better able to build consensus, allowing his company to save valuable time during meetings
- A president of a small company is healing relationships during a painful divorce
- An engineer found the courage to change jobs so she could spend more time at home
- Immediately, clients feel more energized and responsive. In a month or two, surface changes begin: they walk more freely, and improve relationships. In two months, clients notice that they work faster and come home earlier. Within three months, clients report better decision making, and eliminate self-destructive habits (ie smoking and drug use). Chronic pain conditions are usually alleviated within 6 to 9 months.

OM HOME - Community Service:

I offer free consultations at the Parkdale United Church on Monday evenings. Donations are used to feed and clothe people living on the streets.

MIND ONE is a team effort. My Advisory Board is comprised of leading psychiatrists, pain management and community development specialists, as well as traditional healers.

Top Ten Tips for Stress Reduction:

- 10 - Enjoy the drama take the balcony view
- 9 - Feel the sunrise in your heart
- 8 - Breathe
- 7 - Straighten your spine: squeeze your shoulder blades together
- 6 - Perform random acts of kindness
- 5 - Unclutter your life, your heart and mind
- 4 - Listen to your lover's heartbeat
- 3 - Give more, expect less
- 2 - Take yourself lightly
- 1 - Simple living, high thinking



To learn more about
MIND ONE, call
416-532-0892
or visit
www.mindone.ca



Web Links

www.sedi.org

Haven't been to our new website yet? Visit www.sedi.org for all the latest on SEDI and our ground-breaking work in the asset-building field.

www.assetbuilding.org

New website established by the US-based New America Foundation provides updates on asset-building activities, programs and policies in the States with some focus on work outside the US, including Canada.

www.learning.gov.ab.ca/aces

For more information on the Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan.

http://policyresearch.gc.ca

Visit the official site of the Policy Research Initiative to read about emerging issues highly relevant to the federal government's policy agenda, including asset-building.

www.srdc.org

SRDC is a pioneer in the use of social experiments in Canada. Visit the website and learn more about SRDC's role as the official research partner in *learn\$ave*.

www.ippr.org

IPPR is the UK's leading progressive think tank. Visit their website and learn more about asset-building initiatives in the UK.



New Reports / Publications

SEDI's Annual Report

The year 2003 saw SEDI build important momentum in many areas. Our Annual Report profiles our work, including highlights from the Asset-Building team.

SEDI's Asset-Building Guide

Provides the reader with background info on all of SEDI's asset-building work as well as a brief overview of asset-building activities outside of Canada.

Savings and Asset-Based Policy in the UK: Observations for Canada

This report presents the major findings from a November 2003 review of savings and asset-based welfare policy in the United Kingdom. SEDI initiated and took part in this three-day study tour to gather information that will inform the development of asset-building policy and practice in Canada.

Asset-Building and Fairer Tax Treatment of Savings

In the 2003 federal budget, the Government of Canada pledged to review the tax treatment of private savings in Canada and specifically to explore whether or not Tax Pre-Paid Savings Plans (TPSPs) might be a mechanism to expand tax-efficient savings opportunities. Beginning in late 2003, the Department of Finance held a series of informal meetings to consult on these issues. SEDI took part in one such consultation. This document is a copy of SEDI's submission to the Finance.

To obtain a copy of any of the above, visit the publications section of our website or contact Kathryn Verhulst at 416.665.2828 x.240 or via email at kverhulst@sedi.org



Save The Date

Upcoming Conferences



March 29, 2004
Ottawa, Ontario
**Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA)
Leadership Conference**



May 19 - 22, 2004
Trois-Rivières, Québec
**Communities Creating the World We Want,
National CED Conference**



September 21 - 24, 2004
New Orleans, USA
**IDA Conference,
CFED**

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