



EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH TIPS AND RESOURCES

OACAS continues its advocacy regarding enhancing outcomes for children and youth in care. **In support of better educational outcomes for children and youth we offer some concrete ideas for improving their opportunities to succeed in school and maximize their academic potential.**

Legal Support Services

The following legal resources may be helpful for children and youth from elementary all the way to post-secondary who encounter barriers such as denied the right to go to school, barriers to enrollment, access to special education services and/or unfair suspension or expulsion.

- **Child Advocacy Project (CAP)** of Pro Bono Law Ontario offers free legal services to children, youth, foster parents and CAS staff to help deal with barriers
<http://www.childadvocacy.ca/>
- [Justice for Children and Youth](#) – a legal clinic for youth that offers legal information on school rights.
- [Settlement.org](#) provides newcomers with information and resources to settle in Ontario. Services available in a multiple languages.

Elementary School

A child's academic future is shaped early. Success in elementary school is critical to life-long learning and achievement. Some resources related to elementary school include:

- [Think Literacy](#) and [Leading Math Success](#) ensure teachers have the resources they need to help students build a solid foundation in reading, writing and math. These resources are available to all and may be useful to foster parents.
- [Elementary To Secondary School Transition Program](#) helps students succeed in high school through individual profiles, customized timetables and other programs.

Back to School Tips for Parents by Ministry of Education:

- http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/backtoschool_tips.pdf
- <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/abc123/eng/tips/>
- [FAQs](#) for parents/guardians of elementary and secondary students

Secondary School

Support is also provided to high school students so they can stay on track to graduate.

- Every secondary school has a **Student Success Team** (principal, student success teacher, guidance counselor, special education teacher and other educators) to provide extra

attention to students who would benefit from additional support. **CASs may ask that Student Success Teams review children in care to ensure their educational needs are being met.** <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/pathways/> and <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/studentsuccess/strategy.html>

- **Lighthouse projects** help students refocus on graduation through unique opportunities developed by their local school boards.
- [Specialist High Skills Majors](#) allow students to focus on a future career through a bundle of classroom courses, workplace experiences and sector certifications.
- [Expansion of Cooperative Education](#) allows students to count hands-on learning towards two compulsory high school credits.
- [E-Learning](#) provides students with online courses and allows teachers to share resources across the province.
- [Dual Credits](#) count towards a student's high school diploma as well as a college certificate, diploma or apprenticeship certification.

Post-Secondary

There are many new programs across the province for students pursuing university, college, apprenticeships or the workplace after graduation. In addition to the above programs, there are special programs for Crown Wards and former Crown Wards. They include:

- Ontario YouthCAN developed a toolkit of [Resources Supporting Youth in Transition](#) containing a variety of topics that are helpful for both youth and professionals such as: education, life skills, finances, health and well-being, accessibility, housing, employment, and more. (Remember RSYT, or pronounce “our site” <http://ontarioyouthcan.org/rsyt/>)
- Financial Aid: Instructions on [completing OSAP form](#) for post-secondary studies.
- In August, 2009, the provincial government launched a new website, [Ontario.ca/iCan](#), dedicated to supporting Crown wards in reaching their postsecondary education goals. The website contains information regarding attending college or university, apprenticeships and employment opportunities. All Crown wards and their caregivers are encouraged to visit [Ontario.ca/iCan](#)
- [Ontario Crown Ward Postsecondary Application Fee Reimbursement Program](#) provides reimbursement of application fees to Crown wards and former Crown wards who are entering their first full-time college diploma, university degree or OSAP-approved private career college. Application fees may be reimbursed retroactively. The program provides application fees up to five college/university choices from Ontario Colleges (OCAS) or Universities (OUAC). And up to \$100 for private and out-of-province post-secondary institutions.

- [Ontario Access Grants for Crown Wards](#) provides tuition grants for current and former Crown wards completing their first full-time degree/diploma program at an OSAP approved postsecondary institution, starting September 2008 or later. 50% to 100% of your tuition up to a maximum of \$3,000 per academic year for a maximum of four years. For current and former Crown wards in one year programs, the Ontario Access Grant for Crown Wards will cover 100 percent of your tuition, to a maximum of \$3,000.

To see frequently asked questions for the Ontario Access Grants for Crown Wards, please see attached.

- **Crown Ward Education Championship Teams** bring together representatives from child welfare, school boards and postsecondary institutions to build networks and leverage existing knowledge to create and improve opportunities for Crown wards and former Crown wards to help them maximize their academic potential.
<http://news.ontario.ca/tcu/en/2009/11/more-support-for-crown-ward-students.html>
- **Increased Exemption of Bursaries and Scholarships for Crown Wards.** In 2009, the provincial government increased the exemption amount Crown wards are entitled to for combined scholarships and bursaries to \$3500. By simply applying for OSAP and identifying that you are or have been a Crown ward, you will automatically be considered for this exemption.
- [Independent Learning Centre](#) This organization helps adults who left high school without a diploma to obtain their GED. Their helpful [handbook](#) can explain what the GED test is, if you're eligible to take it and how to prepare for and apply for the test.
- [Canlearn.ca](#)
The Canlearn website has lots of helpful information about saving for school, planning what type of career you'd like, student loans and how to apply, how to pay those loans back, and even how to continue your education after post-secondary.

Many Children's Aid Societies have implemented innovative programs to help improve educational outcomes. In addition to using ONLAC, they include mentoring, private and volunteer tutoring services, educational "navigators"/ experts (volunteers and/or staff), peer homework programs, special classrooms and youth Ambassador programs. If your CAS is offering innovative services, please contact youthcan@oacas.org
