



Services *for* Children

**Guide to Government of Canada Services
for Children and their Families
Second Edition**



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada 

To find out more about Government of Canada services for you:

- **1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)**

If you use a TTY, call 1 800 465-7735.

- **canada.gc.ca**

If you don't have access to the Internet at home, call 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232) to find out where there is free access to computers and the Internet in your community.

- Visit a **Service Canada Access Centre**

To find out where the nearest centre is:

- 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)
- www.servicecanada.gc.ca and click on "In Person" and then on your province or territory on the map of Canada.

This guide is also available in large print, on audio cassette, in Braille and on computer diskette by calling 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232).



 **1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232)**
TTY: 1 800 465-7735
 **canada.gc.ca**
 **Service Canada Access Centres**

The material herein is published for reference purposes only. For further information or for any questions, please contact departments as referred to in this document.

Introduction

Our children are our future. They deserve every opportunity to lead happy, healthy and productive lives. If you're a parent or other caregiver, the Government of Canada offers many services for children and their families. We provide useful information on child health, safety and nutrition. We have many educational resources for learning and schoolwork. To help with the costs of raising children, we offer tax savings and benefits. We also offer programs to help you pay for your child's post-secondary education. If your child or family has special needs, we also provide services. This guide can help you find out what's available and how to get more information.



Using this guide

This guide covers topics relevant to the basic needs of children and topics of main concern to parents and other caregivers.

- Topics are in **bold** text.
- Titles of booklets, pamphlets and forms appear in *italics*.
- Toll-free telephone numbers and Web site addresses are provided at the end of each description. These will allow you to access services and obtain copies of publications.
- If there is no toll-free number, just call 1 800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232). Information officers are available to answer your calls, Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., Eastern time.

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Preparing for parenthood




The Government of Canada has increased parental benefits. If you are expecting a baby or plan to adopt a child, you may be eligible for **employment insurance maternity and parental benefits** for up to one year. In addition, you now need only 600 hours of insured work to qualify for benefits. You will find more information in the pamphlet *Employment Insurance: New Maternity, Parental and Sickness Benefits*.

 **1 800 206-7218**


 www.hrdc.gc.ca/ei
and click on "Types of Benefits"

If you drink alcohol while you are pregnant, your child could be at risk for **fetal alcohol spectrum disorder** — a range of disabilities causing health and behaviour problems. It is one of the leading causes of birth defect. It can be prevented by not drinking while you are pregnant.


 **1 800 559-4514**

 www.healthcanada.ca/parents

Canadian law allows you to **adopt a child from another country** if you are a Canadian citizen or permanent resident. To do this, you must sponsor your child for immigration to Canada. You can sponsor a foreign-born child adopted inside or outside Canada. For more information contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada.


 **1 888 242-2100**

(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)

 www.cic.gc.ca
and click on "To Immigrate" in the menu on the left, then scroll down to "International Adoption"

The **Live-in Caregiver Program** brings workers to Canada on a temporary basis to work as live-in caregivers when there is no one in Canada to fill these jobs. A live-in caregiver is someone who provides care to children, seniors or persons with disabilities in a private home.

 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)

 www.cic.gc.ca
and click on "To Work" in the menu on the left

Child support guidelines set the basic amount that parents providing child support should pay. This amount is based on their income, the number of children involved and the province or territory where the parents live. For more information, call or go online.


 **1 888 373-2222**


 canada.justice.gc.ca
and click on "Programs and Services" in the top menu, then on "Child Support"


Tax savings and benefits

Some families get a monthly payment called the **Canada Child Tax Benefit**. The money helps families with the cost of raising their children under the age of 18. It is tax free. To receive this benefit, you have to apply for it. You and your spouse or common-law partner also have to file an income tax return. You will find more information in the pamphlet *Your Canada Child Tax Benefit*.




 **1 800 959-2221**
(for the pamphlet)

 **1 800 387-1193**
(for information on the Canada Child Tax Benefit)

 www.cra.gc.ca/benefits

The **National Child Benefit Supplement**

is a monthly payment for low-income families with children. It is included in your Canada Child Tax Benefit. With this supplement, a low-income family with two children can receive up to \$5,055 each year.

 www.nationalchildbenefit.ca

The **Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax credit**

(GST/HST credit) is a tax-free payment to help low- and modest-income individuals and families to get back part or all of the GST or HST they pay. To receive the credit, you must file your income tax return each year. The credit is based on your marital status, the number of children you have and your family income.


 **1 800 959-1953**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/benefits

Did you know that the Canada Pension Plan offers **benefits for children**?


Canada Pension Plan benefits are available to dependent children of disabled or deceased contributors. For more information, call or go online.

 **1 800 277-9914**

 www.hrdc.gc.ca/isp

Beginning on January 4, 2004, **Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefits** will allow eligible workers to provide temporary care to a gravely ill or dying family member without fear of sudden income or job loss.


 **1 800 206-7218**

 www.hrdc.gc.ca/ei
and click on "Frequently Asked Questions" at the left of your screen, then scroll down to "Compassionate Care Benefits"


The Government of Canada offers **other tax savings**, to help Canadian families with children. These tax savings reduce the amount of tax you have to pay. When you file your tax return, make sure you claim all the credits and amounts to which you are entitled. Here is a list of the tax savings for children:

- **Child care expenses:** If you or your spouse or common-law partner paid for someone to look after your child so you could earn income, go to school or do research during the year, you may be able to claim the child care expenses on your tax return. Fill out form T778, *Child Care Expenses Deduction*, and attach it to your tax return.
- **Eligible dependant amount:** If you are single, divorced, separated or widowed and you support a child, you may be able to claim this amount on your tax return.
- **Amount for a dependant with a disability age 18 or older:** If your child or your spouse's or common-law partner's child or grandchild is 18 or older and is mentally or physically disabled, you may be able to claim this amount on your tax return.
- **Caregiver amount:** You may be able to claim this amount on your tax return if, at any time during the year, you:
 - maintained a home, and
 - lived with a child or grandchild, age 18 or over, who is dependent on you due to his or her mental or physical disability.
- **Disability amount transferred from a dependant other than your spouse:** You may be able to claim all or part of any disability amount for which your dependant qualifies. Fill out form T2201, *Disability Tax Credit Certificate*.
- **Medical expenses:** You may be able to claim the following expenses:
 - eligible medical expenses you or your spouse or common-law partner paid for you or your spouse's or common-law partner's child or grandchild who depended on you for support;
 - the cost of travelling to get medical treatment if the treatment is not available locally.

 **1 800 959-2221**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/forms

- **Tuition and education amounts transferred from a child:** Students who do not need all their tuition and education amounts for the year to reduce their federal income tax to zero may be able to transfer the unused part to a parent or grandparent. Fill out form T2202, *Education Amount Certificate*, or form T2202A, *Tuition and Education Amounts Certificate*.

 **1 800 959-2221**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/forms


Need tax help?


If you need help claiming the benefits, credits or amounts you are entitled to, the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency offers the following services:

- You can get help with your **general tax enquiries** on the phone or in person at tax services offices across Canada. For addresses and telephone numbers of tax services offices, consult the Government of Canada section of your telephone directory.
- The **Tax Information Phone Services (TIPS) and TIPS Online** can help you determine whether you are eligible for the Canada Child Tax Benefit or the GST/HST credit.


 **1 800 959-8281**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/contact

 **1 800 267-6999**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/tips

- If you need help with your personal income tax return and you are unable to pay, the **Community Volunteer Income Tax Program** may be able to help you. Specially trained volunteers can help you complete your income tax return. The service is free.

 **1 800 959-8281**

 www.cra.gc.ca/volunteer

- If you are visually impaired you can get Canada Customs and Revenue Agency information and order publications in **Braille, large print, on audio cassette or computer diskette**. Please call Monday to Friday between 8:15 a.m. and 5 p.m., Eastern time.


 **1 800 267-1267**

Child safety




If you have questions about **buying or installing a child seat** in your car, the video *Car Time 1-2-3-4* and its companion booklet, *Keep Kids Safe*, have the answers. Use these resources to learn how to choose and properly use a child seat. The booklet and video are free.


 **1 800 333-0371**

 www.tc.gc.ca
and click on "Child Safety" in the menu on the left



Making sure your home is a **safe place for children** is a big concern for parents. All the information and resources you need are available online. You will also find information in the guide *Is Your Child Safe?* The guide is also available as a printed pamphlet.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)
 [www.healthcanada.ca/
servicesforchildren](http://www.healthcanada.ca/servicesforchildren)


You will find reliable **consumer information about your child's safety** online at the Government of Canada's consumer information Web site. The site covers everything from child care and nutrition to safety and accident prevention.

 www.consumerinformation.ca


Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is sometimes called crib death. SIDS is the sudden and unexpected death of an apparently healthy baby who is less than a year old. For more information about how to reduce the risk of SIDS, go online or order a copy of the pamphlet *Back to Sleep*.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)
 [www.healthcanada.ca/
servicesforchildren](http://www.healthcanada.ca/servicesforchildren)



Food recalls and allergy alerts are an online service that offer allergy and recall warnings to help you protect your family's health. To subscribe go online.

 www.inspection.gc.ca
and click on "Food Recalls/Allergy Alerts"



By learning about **food safety** when they are young, your children will develop safe food-handling skills for life. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency has a series of fact sheets to help you teach your children how to handle food safely.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)
 **www.inspection.gc.ca**
and click on "School Outreach Program" in the menu on the left


The **Kidz Printz** program provides parents with child identification kits. If your child goes missing, your completed kit becomes a vital investigative tool for the police. The pocket-sized kit includes an ink strip so you can record your child's fingerprints. It also has a space for you to attach a recent photo and DNA identification of your child.

 **1 800 834-9221**
 **www.rcmp.gc.ca/youth**

Our Missing Children is one of the many programs that protect children. At the border, immigration officers and customs inspectors work to rescue missing or abducted children. In the 15 years since its creation, Our Missing Children has helped with more than 6,000 missing children cases. Our Missing Children also provides information on safety in cyberspace, Internet luring and keeping your child safe.

 **1 877 318-3576**
 **www.ourmissingchildren.ca**



Child abductions are even more complicated when they involve other countries. Parents in these circumstances need to work closely with government officials to improve the chances of getting their children back. You will find more information in the publication *International Child Abductions: A Manual for Parents*.

 **1 800 267-8376**
 www.voyage.gc.ca


The **Canadian Strategy to Promote Safe, Wise and Responsible Internet Use** gives families the tools, information and resources to surf the Internet safely. You can order a copy of the pamphlet *Illegal and Offensive Content on the Internet*.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)
 cyberwise.ic.gc.ca


The **National Crime Prevention Strategy** supports the healthy and safe development of children and youth. Find out how this strategy can help young people, while also improving the health and safety of your community. Resources include grants, tools and general information.

 **1 877 302-6272**
 www.prevention.gc.ca
and click on "Just for You"

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police's (RCMP) **National Youth Strategy** promotes crime prevention through working with young Canadians. One part of the strategy includes a Web site for children and youth to learn more about safe lifestyle choices from other young people.

 www.rcmp.gc.ca/youth
and scroll down to "deal.org"

The **Hug a Tree and Survive** program teaches children basic survival skills. Children aged 5 to 12 learn how to avoid getting lost in the woods, and what to do if they do become lost. The program offers a video and learning materials, including a colouring book for kids.

 www.rcmp.gc.ca/ccaps/hug_e.htm

Be Bright – Think Right teaches children about school bus safety, bullying, safe Internet use and how to respect one another in our diverse society. Developed in partnership with Scouts Canada, this program is taught to school children by police officers or scout leaders. It includes an interactive video which presents scenarios for children to discuss and learn from.

 **1 888 726-8876**

 www.rcmp.gc.ca/youth

New rules make boating and related water activities safer in Canada. To learn about the latest **boating safety regulations** and how to obtain a pleasure craft operator card for you and your children, ask for a copy of the *Safe Boating Guide*.

 **1 800 267-6687**

 www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/obs-bsn

By **preparing for emergencies**, such as floods, tornadoes, toxic spills and power failures, you can help keep your family safe. Get information on preparing for and coping with emergencies, find out what goes into a survival kit and create an emergency communication plan for your family.

 **1 800 830-3118**


 www.ocipep.gc.ca

Child nutrition and health care

Keep track of **important facts about your child's development** with the *Child Health Record*. This pocket-sized booklet provides an easy way to keep track of details about your child, including health check-ups, weight and immunizations.




 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)


 www.healthcanada.ca/parents

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating offers practical guidelines to make **wise food choices** for you and your family. In addition, Canada has new regulations about nutrition labels on prepackaged foods. Use the new nutrition facts table on food labels to make wise food choices.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)

 [www.healthcanada.ca/
servicesforchildren](http://www.healthcanada.ca/servicesforchildren)


If you or your children suffer from **asthma, allergies or other environmental illnesses**, you will find *The Clean Air Guide: How to Identify and Correct Indoor Air Quality Problems in Your Home* useful. The guide also includes a personal action plan. It costs \$5.95.

 **1 800 668-2642**

 www.cmhc.ca
and click on "Order Desk"

Keeping your children active is the best way to help them stay healthy. *Canada's Physical Activity Guides for Children and Youth* and other resources are available to parents, caregivers, educators, physicians and community leaders. The booklets offer tips to help keep your kids active. Order the booklets and other resources for parents and teachers.


 **1 888 334-9769**


 [www.healthcanada.ca/
paguide](http://www.healthcanada.ca/paguide)


If you want to **quit smoking** you don't have to do it alone. Quit 4 Life is a program for high-school students that gives them the tools they need to quit smoking. The program offers positive, supportive, realistic advice that recognizes the challenges of quitting. Quit 4 Life is also available as a booklet. A facilitator's guide is also available to help teachers, nurses and other interested adults work with groups.

The **Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being** work to increase our understanding of the physical and mental health needs of children. They provide research-based information on different aspects of child and youth health.

 **1 866 318-1116**

 **www.gosmokefree.ca**
and click on "Quitting" in the menu on the left, then scroll down to "Quit 4 Life for Smokers Under 19"

 **1 800 815-8979**

 **www.healthcanada.ca/parents**

Learning, educational activities and school projects



Exchanges Canada gives young Canadians the chance to meet new friends from across the country and experience Canada's languages and cultures. The program can bring groups of young Canadians together in one location, or encourage participants to invite new friends to visit their community. Exchanges Canada also provides information on hundreds of exchange programs and activities throughout Canada and abroad.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)

 www.exchanges.gc.ca

Canada's **SchoolNet** is a valuable Web site for parents and students who need accurate, up-to-date information for school projects. The Web site provides access to more than 7,000 online learning resources.

 **1 800 575-9200**


 www.schoolnet.ca


Through online **learning resources from Statistics Canada**, students can find free information for school projects and homework assignments on just about everything that is Canadian. Explore Canada's land, people, economy and culture.

 **1 800 263-1136**


 www.statcan.ca/english/edu

Do your children want to know more about **Canada's role in the world?** Students can use the Internet to check out Canadians in the world and learn about Canadian achievements in international relations, business, culture and sports.

 www.dfait.gc.ca
and click on "Culture, Education and Youth" in the menu on the left, then on "Youth" in that same menu and click on "Canadians in the World"

 www.cida.gc.ca
and click on "Youth Zone" in the top menu

Computers for Schools is a program that collects and upgrades donated computers. The computers are then distributed free-of-charge to Canadian schools and libraries so that young people can gain information-technology skills.


 **1 888 636-9899**

 cfs.ic.gc.ca



The **symbols of Canada** are important to our identity as Canadians. Visit the Canadian Heritage Web site to learn more about the national flag and other symbols. The Web site also provides a wealth of information about Canada's heroes whose achievements have made Canada and the world a better place. Explore the Path of Heroes, a series of routes through Canada's capital that celebrates our heroes.

 **1 866 811-0055**


 www.pch.gc.ca/symbols

 www.pch.gc.ca/poh-sdh



Canada's Digital Collections are home to hundreds of Web sites produced by young people celebrating Canadian history, culture, geography, science and technology.

 **1 800 465-7766**
 collections.ic.gc.ca



Have your children ever wanted to see Canada from outer space? Make their own map? Take a virtual tour of the Arctic? **NRCat's Scratching Post** has plenty of activities to help them learn about Canada's geography, forests, minerals, metals, energy, geology and more.

 www.nrcan.gc.ca/kids

Canada's **national parks, historic sites and marine conservation areas** are special places to learn about our heritage. Now you can visit them online and find information on Canada's ecology and our shared heritage.

 **1 888 773-8888**
 www.parkscanada.gc.ca

Trying to find a good Canadian book for the child in your life? Order your copy of *Read Up On It*, the **Library and Archives Canada's** annual guide to Canadian children's literature. Library and Archives Canada also offers information to help your children with their projects on genealogy or Canadian history.


 **1 877 896-9481**
 www.nlc-bnc.ca/ruoi

Looking for Canadian resources to stimulate your kids to read, write and create art? Call the **National Film Board of Canada** for videos for kids of all ages, or visit the Web site where you'll find lots of fun activities.


 **1 800 267-7710**

 www.nfb.ca/kids


Visit **Kids' Stop** to learn more about First Nations and Inuit communities. You'll find historical and contemporary information, hear Aboriginal languages, learn about famous Aboriginal people, and more. Teachers can also order free classroom materials.

 **1 800 567-9604**

(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)


 www.inac.gc.ca/ks

KidSpace is your source for everything space-related. This online network offers interactive games for young space enthusiasts and a variety of easily accessible information for older students and educators. Learn about space farming in a Martian environment or get connected with the Canadian Space Agency's world-renowned scientists, engineers and astronauts.

 www.space.gc.ca

The **Virtual Museum of Canada** is your family's online gateway to a wide variety of Canadian museums. Learn about hundreds of attractions across Canada, experience multimedia productions, see fascinating museum treasures, play interactive games and explore many other learning resources.

 **1 800 520-2446**


 www.virtualmuseum.ca

Every year, students across Canada can take the **Canada Day poster challenge** and design a poster that shows their pride in Canada and in being Canadian. The winning artwork becomes the official poster for Canada Day. All 13 provincial/territorial finalists win a trip to Ottawa to join in the official Canada Day celebrations on Parliament Hill. The deadline for entries is in February each year.

 **1 866 811-0055**

 [www.pch.gc.ca/
affiche-poster](http://www.pch.gc.ca/affiche-poster)


One flap. Global impact. That's the idea behind **butterfly 208**, an art and writing contest. This program invites young Canadians between the ages of 14 and 18 to express their views on global issues and how they would make a "flap" to change things. Win one of the top prizes, and you'll travel to places like Africa as a special youth ambassador. Even if you don't win the top prize, you're still in the running to win outstanding electronic gear.

 **1 800 230-6349**


 www.bp208.ca


Although Canada's Citizenship Week falls in October, **citizenship** is a concept that deserves to be celebrated throughout the year. Year-round resources are available for teachers and youth leaders working with children between the ages of 5 and 18.

 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)

 www.cic.gc.ca
and click on "Citizenship" in the menu on the left, then on "Education and Activities"

Resources you can use to teach children and youth about **remembrance, Canada's veterans and military history** are only a phone call or a click away. You will find materials about Canada's involvement at home and abroad during the First World War, the Second World War, the Korean War and current peacetime efforts.


 **1 877 604-8469**

 www.vac-acc.gc.ca/youth

Looking for an educational activity on the environment? Sign up for the **Biosphere's educational workshops**. Through these workshops, elementary and high-school students can become water, climate or ecosystem keepers.


 www.biosphere.ec.gc.ca

A wide variety of educational resources on **sustainable development** are available online. You can also access videos, produced in partnership with the Discovery Channel, and accompanying teacher's guides. The videos are ideal for science, geography, environmental studies and social studies classes in grades 7 to 12.


 www.durable.gc.ca

Did you know that the everyday actions of Canadians produce more than 25% of our country's total greenhouse gas emissions? The Government of Canada is calling on all Canadians to reduce individual emissions by about one tonne. There are many ways you and your children can take action at home, at school and on the road. To find out more about the **One-Tonne Challenge**, call or go online and order your climate change kit. There are also many resources for teachers.

 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 662-6232)

 www.climatechange.gc.ca

The **Cadet Program** is open to youth between the ages of 12 and 18. It promotes leadership, public speaking, citizenship, physical fitness and an understanding of Canada's military roles and missions. Cadets perform many community services, including environmental cleanup, fundraising for charities and assistance at fairs and other events. They also reap the personal benefits of increased self-confidence, initiative-taking, decision-making and teamwork.

 **1 800 627-0828**

 www.cadets.forces.gc.ca

The **Junior Canadian Rangers Program** offers activities for 12- to 18-year-olds in Canada's remote and isolated communities. The program respects and promotes the traditional lifestyles, healthy living and skills of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. It offers young Canadians opportunities to develop important life and Ranger skills, including navigation, safety and first aid, and search and rescue.


 www.rangers.forces.gc.ca

Planning for post-secondary education

The **Canada Education Savings Grant** helps Canadians save for a child's post-secondary education. If you purchase a Registered Education Savings Plan (RESP) for a child, the Government of Canada will contribute an extra 20% for the child's savings plan. This could add up to as much as \$7,200 by the time the child is ready for post-secondary education. For more information, order your copy of *Canada Education Savings Grant: Helping You Save for Your Child's Education*.



 **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232)

 www.hrdc.gc.ca/cesg

Every year, the **Canada Student Loans Program** helps over 330,000 post-secondary students pay for their education by providing student financial assistance in the form of Student Loans and Canada Study Grants to eligible full- and part-time students.

Canada Study Grants provide financial assistance to post-secondary students with permanent disabilities, high-need part-time students, women in certain doctoral programs (Ph.D), and students with dependants.

The \$2.5-billion **Canada Millennium Scholarships** program helps Canadians pay for their post-secondary education and reduce their student debt. The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, which manages the fund and administers the scholarships, assists some 100,000 students each year.


 **1 888 815-4514**

(for loan and grant information related to public institutions: universities, community and technical colleges)

 **1 866 587-7452**

(for loan and grant information related to private institutions: trade schools, vocational institutions and career colleges)

 www.canlearn.ca

 **1 877 786-3999**

 www.millenniumscholarships.ca


The **Summer Language Bursary Program** offers young Canadians the opportunity to learn either English or French, Canada's two official languages. To participate, you must:

- be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident,
- have completed at least Grade 11 or Secondary V, and
- have been enrolled as a full-time student for at least one semester during the current academic year.

Students receive grants so that they can participate in a five-week English or French immersion program during the summer at an accredited post-secondary institution.

Interested in an **exciting career as an officer in the Canadian Forces**? The Royal Military College of Canada prepares young Canadian men and women for the challenges faced by leaders. If you want to develop your leadership skills and athletic abilities, and you are looking for an enriching university experience, call or go online.


 **1 877 866-4242**

 **www.pch.gc.ca/progs/lo-ol**
and click on "Bursaries and Exchanges" in the menu on the right, then on "Summer Language Bursary Program"

 **1 866 762-2672**

 **www.rmc.ca**


Need more information on post-secondary education in Canada? **CanLearn** is a one-stop, online resource for information and tools to help students decide what and where to study and how to cover the costs. Tools like the student planner and the financial planner will help you explore schools and programs, as well as plan, pay and budget for your post-secondary education.


 www.canlearn.ca

Employment programs for youth

Canada's **Youth Employment Strategy** helps young people between the ages of 15 and 30 prepare for the world of work. It provides them with information and opportunities to get the skills, knowledge and work experience they need for a successful career. The strategy also helps employers who hire youth. For more information, order your copy of *Youth Link*, a detailed guide to Government of Canada employment programs and services for youth, or contact the nearest Human Resources Development Canada office.



 **1 800 935-5555**

 www.youth.gc.ca

Keep the **Post-Secondary Recruitment Program** in mind if your child is considering a university degree. This program leads to employment opportunities in the Public Service of Canada.

 **1 888 780-4444**


 www.jobs.gc.ca

Under the **Federal Student Work Experience Program**, full-time high-school, college, CEGEP and university students are eligible for more than 8,000 temporary jobs year-round with the Government of Canada. This program helps students gain valuable work experience.

 **1 888 780-4444**

 www.jobs.gc.ca


If your child plans to pursue post-secondary education in a co-op/internship program, consider a work term with the **Cooperative Education Program** of the Public Service of Canada. The program provides students with on-the-job experience related to their field of study.

 **1 800 645-5605**


 www.jobs.gc.ca

The **Federal Public Sector Youth Internship Program** offers young unemployed or under-employed Canadians a nine-month internship at Government of Canada work sites. The program is a partnership with the YMCA. If you are a high-school graduate, or if you are a young person who does not have a high-school diploma, you can contact the YMCA for more information on available internships. Internship opportunities for university and college graduates are listed on the Web site.


If you're interested in working overseas, there are many programs available, such as the **International Youth Internship Program** and **Young Professionals International**. These programs give young people aged 18 to 30 a chance to experience international cultures and to broaden their skills.

 **1 800 495-8775 (YMCA)**

 **www.yip.gc.ca**

 **1 800 230-6349**

 **www.cida.gc.ca/youth**


 **1 800 559-2888**

 **www.dfait.gc.ca**


and click on "Culture, Education and Youth" in the menu on the left, then on "Youth"

Challenging opportunities await you in the **Canadian Forces Primary Reserve**. Members of the naval, army and air Primary Reserve are able to pursue a wide range of part-time military careers and academic studies or civilian careers. The skills you develop in the Primary Reserve will last you a lifetime. To apply, you must be at least 17 years old and a Canadian citizen.

 **1 800 856-8488**


 www.recruiting.forces.gc.ca

Are you 18 or older and looking to make a difference in the lives of young Canadians? Why not become a youth leader by joining the **Cadet Instructors Cadre**, part of the Canadian Forces.

 **1 800 627-0828**

 www.cadets.forces.gc.ca

You may be eligible for a **job in the Canadian Forces**. The Canadian Forces has more than 100 different trades and occupations with full- and part-time jobs available. All Canadian citizens may apply. If you are a landed immigrant, you may apply to the reserves as a non-commissioned member.

 **1 800 856-8488**

 www.recruiting.forces.gc.ca


Services for Aboriginal families with children



While the services in this guide are available to all Canadian families, the following services are specifically for Aboriginal families. You can find more information online. On the **Aboriginal Canada Portal**, you'll find information on economic development, learning and employment, health, culture, justice and urban life.


 www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca

The **First Nations and Inuit Child Care** program provides parents living in First Nations and Inuit communities with affordable, quality child care while they work or take training. The program also promotes healthy child development through day-care programs that reflect First Nations and Inuit beliefs and values.

 www.hrdc.gc.ca/aro
and click on "Child Care" in the menu on the left

Aboriginal Head Start consists of two programs designed to give Aboriginal children the best possible start in life. One program is for First Nations, Inuit and Métis children living in urban and Northern communities. The other program is for First Nations children living on reserve. Both programs focus on culture and language, education, health promotion, nutrition, social support programs and parental involvement.

 **1 866 225-0709**

 [www.healthcanada.ca/
servicesforchildren](http://www.healthcanada.ca/servicesforchildren)

■ For First Nations families and their children living on reserve

First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment provides communities with resources to design and implement programs and services that help low-income families and children. Projects include hot-lunch programs, cultural enrichment activities and skills training. For more information, contact your local health centre or band office, or your regional Indian and Northern Affairs Canada office.


 **1 800 567-9604**

(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)

 www.inac.gc.ca


and click on "Programs and Services," then on "Social Services" and on "Children's Programs"


The **First Nations Child and Family Services Program** provides culturally sensitive child and family services on reserve to children at risk and their families. For more information about services in your community, contact your band administrator or your regional Indian and Northern Affairs Canada office.

 **1 800 567-9604**
(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)


 **www.inac.gc.ca**
and click on "Programs and Services," then on "Social Services" and on "First Nations Child and Family Services Program"

Children who live on reserves and attend an elementary or secondary school on a reserve can have their education costs covered by the **Elementary/Secondary Education Program**. Costs may also be covered if your child is First Nations and attends a provincial or territorial public school. Contact your band office to see how to apply for funding.

 **1 800 567-9604**
(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)

 **www.inac.gc.ca**
and click on "Programs and Services," then on "Education"

If you are an Aboriginal student, you may be able to get financial support for tuition, books and other education costs. Every year, the **Post-Secondary Education Program** gives more than 27,000 First Nations students the money they need to attend universities, colleges or other recognized post-secondary institutions. There are also hundreds of scholarships, bursaries and awards available to all Aboriginal students.

 **1 800 567-9604**
(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)

 **www.inac.gc.ca**
and click on "Programs and Services," then on "Education." Also go to "Scholarships, Bursaries and Awards Guide for Aboriginal Students"


The Family Violence Prevention


Program gives operational funding to shelters to provide culturally appropriate services in First Nations communities. This program also funds community-based programs that aim to prevent incidents of family violence on reserve. For more information, contact your local health centre or band office, or your regional Indian and Northern Affairs Canada office.

If you are a First Nations family in need of social assistance, you may be eligible for help with your food, clothing and shelter needs. The **Social Assistance Program** enables First Nations communities to help those in need. For more information, contact your band office or your regional Indian and Northern Affairs Canada office.


 **1 800 567-9604**

(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)

 **www.inac.gc.ca**
and click on "Programs and Services," then on "Social Services"

 **1 800 567-9604**

(TTY: 1 866 553-0554)

 **www.inac.gc.ca**
and click on "Programs and Services," then on "Social Assistance"

Support for families with special needs

If you support a child with a disability, you may be able to claim the **disability amount** (or disability tax credit). This is a tax credit for people who have a severe and prolonged mental or physical disability. If you care for a child under 18 who has a severe and prolonged mental or physical disability you may be eligible to claim an additional amount.


If you have a low or modest income and you care for a child under 18 who has a severe and prolonged mental or physical disability, you may also be eligible for the **Child Disability Benefit**. This benefit is a tax-free addition to the Canada Child Tax Benefit. It is paid for children who are eligible for the disability amount described above. The first payments of the Child Disability Benefit will start in March 2004 and will include a retroactive amount for the period from July 2003 to March 2004.



 **1 800 959-8281**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/disability

 **1 800 387-1193**

 www.ccra.gc.ca/disability

The **Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program for Persons with Disabilities** helps homeowners and landlords make homes safer for children or for low-income adults with disabilities.

 **1 800 668-2642**

 **www.cmhc.ca**
and click on “Programs and Financial Assistance” in the menu on the left

Looking for information on meeting the **housing needs of a member of your family who has a disability**? Two publications are available to help answer your questions. They are: *Housing for Persons with Disabilities* (\$11.95) and *Housing Choices for Canadians with Disabilities* (\$7.95). You can order your copies online or by phone.

 **1 800 668-2642**


 **www.cmhc.ca**
and click on “Order Desk”

The **Military Family Services Program** fosters individual, family and community wellness for Canadian Forces families. Some services include:


- casual, temporary relief and emergency child care,
- referrals to other services,
- special needs information,
- deployment support, and
- special events and activities for all age groups.


The program is offered at all Canadian bases. It is also offered in some foreign locations.

 **1 800 866-4546**

 **www.cfpsa.com/dmfs**

If you are expecting a child and need support, the **Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program** can help. The program helps community organizations provide services to at-risk pregnant women. Services may include help with nutrition and breastfeeding, infant development and substance abuse problems.


 **1 866 225-0709**


 www.healthcanada.ca/parents

The **Community Action Program for Children** funds community groups to help children at risk. Children at risk include:


- children who live in low-income or teenage parent families,
- children with social, emotional and behavioural problems,
- abused and neglected children.

Nobody's Perfect is a support and education program for parents of children from birth to age five. If you are young, single, or living in isolation or on a low income, this program may help you. A trained assistant can help you develop the skills you need to cope with the pressures of raising a child.

 **1 866 225-0709**

 www.healthcanada.ca/parents


 **1 866 225-0709**

 www.healthcanada.ca/parents

Services for immigrant families with children



If you are a newcomer to Canada, ask about *The Newcomer's Guide to Canadian Housing*. This free information guide helps newcomers to Canada **find a comfortable, safe place to live**. The guide is available online. You can also order a printed copy.

 **1 800 668-2642**

 **www.cmhc.ca**
and click on "Buying or Renting a Home" in the menu on the left, then on "Buying a Home"


If you are already living in Canada, you can **sponsor family members** who wish to immigrate to this country. To be a sponsor you must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, age 18 or over. You must also be able to provide for housing, care and other needs of your family member for a period of 3 to 10 years. For more information, contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)


 **www.cic.gc.ca**
and click on "Sponsor Your Family" in the menu on the left


The Government of Canada provides information about **visa requirements and work permits** to ensure that international visitors have the right documentation when they come to this country. If you are expecting visits from family or friends from other countries, you can contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada. The information is also available online.

 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)

 www.cic.gc.ca
and click on "To Visit" in the menu on the left

Besides helping newcomers apply to become Canadian citizens, **citizenship programs** help Canadians who were born outside Canada, or who have children who were born in another country. Citizenship programs also help Canadians who hold citizenship from more than one country. Kits and pamphlets are available from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.


 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)


 www.cic.gc.ca
and click on "Citizenship" in the menu on the left

The **Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada** program provides basic language training to adult newcomers. Language training is available in both English and French, Canada's two official languages. The training is available in most provinces and territories. If you live in Quebec, Manitoba or British Columbia, please contact your provincial government for information. Elsewhere, contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Through the **Host Program**, Canadian volunteers help newcomers get access to local services, practise English or French, look for employment, and participate in community life. In return, host volunteers make new friends, learn about other cultures and contribute to building Canada. For more information, contact Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)

 **www.cic.gc.ca**
and click on "After You Arrive" in the menu on the left, then on "Programs for Newcomers"

 **1 888 242-2100**
(TTY: 1 888 576-8502)

 **www.cic.gc.ca**
and click on "Community Involvement"

Sports, recreation and travel for families





Children now need their own valid **passport**. However, if your child's name is on your own passport, the passport will remain valid for you and your child until it expires. But if your child travels without you, he or she will need his or her own passport.

 **1 800 567-6868**


 www.ppt.gc.ca


These dogs sniff and tell... but they won't bite! When you last came back from a family vacation outside Canada, you may have noticed **detector dogs** at the airport. They are specially trained to stop illegal plant and animal products from entering Canada. Before travelling outside Canada with your family, find out which products you can or can't bring back to Canada with you.

 **1 800 442-2342**

 www.inspection.gc.ca


More than 220 **reports on travel and foreign destinations** are only a phone call or a click away. If you are a woman travelling alone or with children, the pamphlet *Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller* also provides practical tips and safety measures. Young people taking their first trip outside Canada, or planning an “eco” or “extreme” holiday should take a look at *Out on a Limb: Advice for the Adventure Traveller*.

 **1 800 267-6788**


 www.voyage.gc.ca

Canada provides **consular services** to all its citizens through a worldwide network of consular offices. These consular offices include Government of Canada embassies, high commissions and consulates. If you plan to travel outside Canada, you can consult the list of the Government of Canada offices in foreign countries in the publication *Bon Voyage, But...*

 **1 800 267-6788**


 www.voyage.gc.ca


From National Aboriginal Day on June 21, through Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day on June 24 and Canada Day on July 1, communities across Canada organize concerts, street parties, socials, dances, parades, and lots more to **Celebrate Canada**. There is something for everyone in the family.

 **1 866 811-0055**

 www.pch.gc.ca/special/canada

Few spectacles are more breathtaking than the flying displays of the **Canadian Forces Snowbirds** and the parachute demonstrations of the **SkyHawks**. Every summer the Snowbirds demonstrate their incredible flying skills at air shows across the country. You can learn more about the Snowbirds and SkyHawks online and find out where and when you can take your family to see them.

 www.snowbirds.forces.gc.ca

 www.skyhawks.forces.gc.ca

The RCMP's **Musical Ride** is an intricate set of horseback-riding drills and movements set to music. The Musical Ride thrills children and their parents every summer from coast to coast. To find out when the Musical Ride will be in your area, go to the RCMP Web site.

 www.rcmp.gc.ca/musicalride/tour_e.htm

Check out the **Sport Canada** Web site and keep track of major games and events. You can also look for Canada's Olympic/Paralympic results or explore links to all the major national sports organizations.

 www.pch.gc.ca/sportcanada

■ Family-friendly destinations

Whether you want to travel into our country's past, experience our diverse cultures and traditions, or enjoy our spectacular outdoor landscapes and wilderness, Canada has the perfect vacation for you. Here are just a few ideas.

Be prepared for unforgettable experiences at any of our 40 **national parks** across Canada. Children and their families can join enthusiastic naturalists on guided tours or explore on their own. Our parks offer camping facilities for every level of adventure, from fully serviced to primitive sites. Order a vacation planner and start planning your family vacation today.

Canada's history and stories come alive at Canada's nearly 900 **national historic sites**. Your children will love the hands-on activities and displays, which cover everything from the daring adventures of heroes to the everyday lives of ordinary citizens.

 **1 888 773-8888**

and ask for operator 111

 **www.parkscanada.gc.ca**

and click on "National Parks of Canada"


 **1 888 773-8888**


and ask for operator 111

 **www.parkscanada.gc.ca**

and click on "National Historic Sites of Canada"

Explore **national marine conservation areas** and experience Canada's aquatic natural heritage. Families can hike along the shorelines and learn about the enormous variety of wildlife found in our wetlands, islands and coastal areas.

 **1 888 773-8888**
and ask for operator 111

 **www.parkscanada.gc.ca**
and click on "National Marine Conservation Areas of Canada"

Located in the heart of Quebec City, the **Plains of Abraham** is a wonderful family playground. Don't miss the Canada Odyssey exhibition, a high-tech trip through the history of Canada. Your family can also attend a multimedia show, visit the Martello Towers, meet past historical figures, view a military encampment, and more.

 **www.ccbn-nbc.gc.ca**

At the **Biosphere** in Montreal, a team of experienced guides will help you discover water and the great ecosystems with your heart, head and senses. There's something for every member of the family at this leading-edge information centre.

 **www.biosphere.ec.gc.ca**

Rediscover **Canada's capital region**. The region will tempt you with events, festivals and attractions for every member of your family. The many benefits of vacationing in our capital include visiting our national museums and art galleries. Find out more about their special shows, programs and exhibits for children:

The **National Gallery of Canada** and its affiliate, the **Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography**

(www.national.gallery.ca) 1 800 319-2787

The **Canadian Museum of Civilization**

(www.civilization.ca) 1 800 555-5621

The **Canadian Museum of Nature**

(nature.ca) 1 800 263-4433

The **Canada Agriculture Museum**

(www.agriculture.technomuses.ca)

The **Canada Aviation Museum**

(www.aviation.technomuses.ca) 1 800 463-2038


The **Canada Science and Technology Museum**


(www.sciencetech.technomuses.ca)

The **Canadian War Museum**

(www.warmuseum.ca)

1 800 555-5621

 **1 800 465-1867**

 www.canadascapital.gc.ca

Key publications

If you're interested in the following publications, you can get them with one phone call to **1 800 O-Canada** (1 800 622-6232):

Back to Sleep

Bon Voyage, But ...

Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating

Child Health Record

Her Own Way: Advice for the Woman Traveller

Illegal and Offensive Content on the Internet

Is Your Child Safe?

Out on a Limb: Advice for the Adventure Traveller

Series of Fact Sheets on Food Safety



If you have comments about this guide, you can write to us at:

Canada Enquiry Centre (Services for Children)

Communication Canada

Ottawa ON K1A 1M4

E-mail: guide@communication.gc.ca

Please be sure to include your address so we can get back to you.