Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent Savings Program

Financial Literacy Program

Program Framework

Child Welfare Secretariat
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To improve outcomes for children and youth in and leaving care, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) is implementing a broad strategy that supports higher educational achievement, higher degree of resiliency and smoother transition to emerging adulthood.

As a key part of this strategy, MCYS is providing new funding equivalent to the Ontario Child Benefit (OCBE) to children’s aid societies (CASs) that will provide children and youth in care and in formal customary care with:

- access to educational, recreational, cultural and social opportunities; and
- a savings program for older youth in care to support them as they transition to independent living.

As set out in the Addendum to Policy Directive CW 002:08, the OCBE Savings Program will assist older youth who have been in care or in formal customary care for an extended period of time in recognition of their need for transition planning and supports to transition to independent living. The Savings Program will provide all eligible youth with the opportunity to obtain:

- financial skills to help prepare them for independent living; and
- savings to assist with the costs of their basic needs upon leaving care.

A youth is eligible to participate in the Savings Program when the youth:

- Is age 15, 16 or 17; and
- Has been in the care of a CAS or in formal customary care for 12 or more consecutive months.

Youth participating in the Savings Program are expected to meet the following Savings Program Requirements:

- Acquire financial skills and demonstrate financial competency relevant to independent living;
- Establish a personal bank account, or an alternative savings mechanism to receive funds where banking is not feasible;
- Develop an appropriate plan for the use of the savings; and
- Secure stable housing.

A youth’s ability to meet the Savings Program Requirements will determine how funds are disbursed to youth. If a youth is able to meet the Savings Program Requirements, the savings will be disbursed directly to them. If a youth is unable to meet all of the Savings Program Requirements, the CAS will meet with the youth to establish a plan for the disbursement of savings: either disbursed in full to third parties on behalf of youth or a portion to third parties and the remaining portion to youth directly.
CASs will help youth meet the Savings Program Requirements by making available a Financial Literacy Program in accordance with the ministry’s Financial Literacy Program Framework.

The Financial Literacy Program Framework provides direction to CASs on the ministry’s expectations for:
- Program delivery; and
- Assessment process to determine whether youth have acquired financial skills to meet the Savings Program Requirements.

CASs may choose to directly deliver the Financial Literacy Program to eligible youth and/or work with an appropriate community partner with expertise in financial literacy to deliver the program to youth on their behalf.

For youth eligible to participate in the OCBE Savings Program, the Financial Literacy Program is a “learning journey” to help them prepare for their transition to independence by building their financial knowledge, confidence and skills related to financial matters. It should begin no later than when the youth becomes eligible to participate in the OCBE Savings Program (for the best results, it is encouraged that youth start building financial skills earlier) and continue until the youth leaves care.

2.0 FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM GOAL

To prepare youth for their successful transition to emerging adulthood by building their financial knowledge, confidence and skills to set and achieve goals, make informed choices and respond effectively to their evolving financial circumstances.

3.0 FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

Eligible youth will acquire financial skills and demonstrate financial competency appropriate to their cognitive and developmental skills.

4.0 FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

The Financial Literacy Program is to be guided by the following principles.

*The youth is encouraged to lead his/her learning process in conjunction with an adult mentor and/or CAS worker.*
- Youth identifies his/her strengths and needs and has a hands-on, self-directed role in the learning process.
- Youth develops a learning plan that incorporates structured self-reflection and goal setting.
- Youth and CAS worker and/or adult mentor work collaboratively to help youth meet his/her learning goals and required competencies.
- Learning goals are discussed at the outset and over the course of the program.

**Activities to build financial literacy are age-appropriate, experiential, and relevant to a youth’s learning level and cultural and ‘lived’ experiences.**
- Hands-on, practical activities are relevant to the realities of the youth and enable him/her to apply skills to daily life.
- Content is adaptable to a youth’s learning level and style as well as cultural, geographic, and linguistic realities.
- Delivery approach may combine small group, facilitator-led discussions and self-directed learning.

**Financial literacy experts, adult mentors, caregivers and/or community partners are available to provide additional support.**
- Financial literacy experts who have experience working with youth are made available to address specific questions, if required.
- Community-based mentors (financial planners, banks, credit counsellors, etc.) are available to provide additional, individualized support.
- Caregivers are engaged to help youth apply skills to daily living.

## 5.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

By participating in the Financial Literacy Program, youth will be able to:
- Access and apply reliable information to personal financial decisions;
- Organize personal finances and use a budget to manage cash flow;
- Develop a savings plan to achieve personal goals;
- Understand basics of banking and investing;
- Plan for employment and further education; and
- Manage credit and debt.

The process for how the youth will learn the skills to achieve these outcomes should be adapted to his/her learning profile (i.e., achievement, readiness, learning styles, learning preferences, and social/emotional strengths and needs).
6.0 REQUIRED FINANCIAL LITERACY COMPETENCIES

The *National Standards in K-12 Personal Finance Education*, created and maintained by the Jump$tart Coalition® for Personal Financial Literacy¹, identify competencies youth should have to increase their personal finance knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Youth will:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Financial responsibility and</td>
<td>Youth will be able to access and apply reliable information to personal</td>
<td>▪ Find and evaluate information about the cost of living (utilities, rent,</td>
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<tr>
<td>decision-making</td>
<td>financial decisions</td>
<td>phone, internet, incidentals, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Make financial decisions by considering alternatives and consequences</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Protect themselves against fraud and safeguard their money</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money management</td>
<td>Youth will be able to organize personal finances and use a budget to</td>
<td>▪ Demonstrate they are able to develop and implement a budget to live</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>manage cash flow</td>
<td>independently based on their expected monthly expenses and income</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Demonstrate they are able to apply consumer skills to purchase decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Demonstrate they have a personal financial plan to achieve their goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saving, Banking and Investing</td>
<td>Youth will be able to develop a savings plan to achieve personal goals</td>
<td>▪ Understand basic concepts of saving (how much to save, different products)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and understand basics of banking and investing</td>
<td>▪ Understand the different types of bank accounts, services and fees</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Understand basic concepts and risks of investing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment and further education</td>
<td>Youth will be able to plan for employment and further education and</td>
<td>▪ Demonstrate they have researched different education and career options</td>
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<td></td>
<td>how to earn an income</td>
<td>▪ Write a resume and understand how to apply and interview for a job</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Identify sources of income to assist their transition to independent</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Understand payroll deductions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Understand responsibilities for annually reporting income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credit and debt</td>
<td>Youth will understand the risks of credit and debt</td>
<td>▪ Calculate the cost of paying interest on purchases made with a credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Describe the risks of credit cards and other high interest loans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Established in 1995, the Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy is a Washington-based coalition of 180 organizations and 47 affiliated state coalitions dedicated to improving the financial literacy of youth from kindergarten through college age by providing advocacy, research, standards, and education resources. Information on the National Standards in K-12 Personal Finance Education is available on their website: [www.jumpstartcoalition.org](http://www.jumpstartcoalition.org)
7.0 FINANCIAL LITERACY PROGRAM DELIVERY

The Financial Literacy Program is a ‘learning journey’ for youth that takes place from the time the youth is eligible to participate in the Savings Program, or earlier in some cases, to the time he/she leaves care.

As the youth begins the Savings Program and when he/she is leaving care, there will be assessment interviews: a pre-program assessment to set a benchmark and establish the extent of a youth’s financial knowledge (suggested assessment questions provided in Appendix A) and a post-program assessment before the youth leaves care to determine if the youth has successfully met the Savings Program Requirements (suggested assessment questions provided in Appendix C).

Over the course of the program, the youth and CAS worker(s) will meet regularly to discuss progress and determine what additional resources are required to help the youth meet the Savings Program Requirements and his/her related goals. The youth is expected to develop and implement a learning plan, in conjunction with the CAS worker (suggested guide for youth to develop a learning plan is provided in Appendix B) and participate in learning activities to acquire and apply financial skills relevant for independent living.

The detailed process for program delivery is outlined below.

7.1 Initial Meeting: Introducing the Savings Program and Pre-Program Financial Literacy Assessment Interview

Objectives of initial meeting and pre-program assessment interview are for the CAS worker to:

- Inform youth about the Savings Program and its requirements;
- Identify the extent of the youth’s current financial knowledge and gaps in knowledge; and
- Understand the youth’s pattern of behaviour related to financial matters.

Aligned with the youth’s annual plan of care meeting, the CAS worker will meet with the youth when the youth turns 15 and/or becomes eligible to participate in the Savings Program to provide information about the monthly OCBE payments to be saved on his/her behalf, the Savings Program Requirements and the options for disbursement of funds at the end of the Program. The CAS worker will also inform the youth about the goals of the Financial Literacy Program.
To help understand the youth’s pattern of behaviour related to money matters and determine youth’s learning needs, the CAS worker and youth should discuss the youth’s relationship to money, what has influenced values, what his/her short and longer term goals are, and what kind of help he/she may need to achieve goals. Suggested questions are provided to help the CAS worker with this interview (see Appendix A), including open-ended interview questions (“Thinking About Money Management”) and a questionnaire (“What Do You Know about Finances?”).

The pre-program assessment is not a determinant of whether the youth meets the Savings Program Requirements but a starting point from which to develop a learning plan, aligned with the youth’s plan of care, to help the youth meet the Savings Program Requirements and a benchmark to help the CAS worker assess the youth’s progress in building financial skills for when the CAS worker conducts the post-program assessment.

Expected output/deliverable of the initial meeting:

- Completion of a Pre-Program Assessment Interview (Appendix A).

### 7.2 Follow up Meeting: Developing a Learning Plan

Objectives of the follow up planning meeting are for the CAS worker to:

- Outline the expectations for youth to acquire and demonstrate financial competencies relevant for independent living;
- Initiate a youth-led process, where possible, for youth to meet their learning goals related to acquiring and demonstrating required financial competencies; and
- Encourage youth to record their learning goals, activities, and experiences (for instance, in a reflective journal or portfolio).

At a follow-up to the initial meeting (e.g., when the CAS worker meets with youth to discuss a quarterly savings statement), the CAS worker and youth will discuss the results of the pre-program assessment, review the financial literacy competencies relevant for independent living and discuss how the youth will build these skills over the course of the program.

Based on this discussion, the youth and CAS worker will establish a learning plan to help the youth meet the Savings Program Requirements. A guide to help the youth develop his/her personal learning plan is provided in the Framework, which the CAS worker can adapt or provide to the youth as is (see Appendix B).

The youth’s learning plan should be based on his/her learning goals to meet the required financial literacy competencies and include a process to meet the
Savings Program Requirements. Youth should include a role for additional resource people, for instance his/her foster or kinship care family, caregivers and/or adult mentors, to help him/her learn and apply financial skills.

The CAS worker will encourage the youth to lead the learning process and suggest tools, such as a reflective journal or portfolio, to help youth track their experiences and guide the post-program assessment interview (possible interview questions provided in Appendix C). Following this planning meeting, the CAS worker and youth will meet regularly (as determined by the youth and the CAS worker, based on youth’s needs) to discuss the youth’s progress in building skills and determine what additional skills building resources may be required.

Expected output/deliverable of the planning meeting:

- Creation of a plan for youth to meet their financial literacy learning goals

### 7.3 Ongoing Progress Update Meetings and Resource Requirements

Objectives of ongoing progress update meetings are for the CAS worker to:

- Determine whether youth are acquiring financial skills relevant for independent living;
- Determine if additional supports are required to help youth acquire and demonstrate financial skills;
- Arrange additional resources, if required, to help youth acquire and demonstrate financial skills to meet the Savings Program Requirements; and
- Provide ongoing encouragement and support to youth.

Over the course of the program, the CAS worker and youth will meet regularly (e.g., during plan of care meetings, etc.) to discuss the youth’s progress in achieving his/her financial literacy goals and determine whether additional supports are needed. Where appropriate, the youth’s foster or kinship care parents, adult mentor(s) and/or other caregiver(s) should be involved in these discussions to provide additional input and support.

Should the youth and CAS worker determine additional supports are required to help youth develop financial skills, and achieve the goals established in their learning plan, the CAS worker will make the appropriate arrangements. Supports may include enrolment in financial literacy workshops, partnering with adult ‘money mentors’, tools provided to their foster or kinship care family or other caregiver, and/or activities with community partner(s) with expertise in building youth’s financial literacy skills. Youth may also be encouraged to use web-based
or other self-directed learning tools, as appropriate. (See Appendix D for detailed descriptions of possible learning resources)

**NOTE:** The CAS may draw upon the OCBE Activities Fund to pay for the youth’s financial literacy training, if required.

The youth is encouraged to track his/her experiences in achieving goals for financial literacy, which he/she could do through a portfolio, reflective journal, or other creative method determined by youth.

In the youth’s file, the CAS worker will record discussions with the youth regarding the Savings Program and will document the youth’s progress in meeting the Savings Program Requirements (as per Requirement 13 of the Savings Program Addendum).

Expected output/deliverables of ongoing progress update meetings:

- Learning plan for youth that evolves over time, supported by the youth’s financial literacy portfolio/journal;
- Youth’s enrolment in financial literacy workshop(s) or other supports, if required; and
- An ongoing record of youth’s progress in acquiring financial skills to meet the Savings Program Requirements.

### 7.4 Post-Program Financial Literacy Assessment

Objectives of the post-program financial literacy assessment are for the CAS to:

- Determine whether youth are able to demonstrate that they have acquired financial skills relevant to independent living;
- Determine if youth have successfully met the Savings Program Requirements; and
- Determine how OCBE savings will be disbursed.

To determine whether the eligible youth has successfully met the Savings Program Requirements, the CAS worker will conduct a post-program financial literacy assessment with the youth as the youth prepares to transition from care. The assessment may include input from the community partner(s) who have worked with the youth on independent living and financial literacy skills.

The assessment will be based on the required financial literacy competencies outlined in the program framework. Interview questions to help the CAS determine whether the youth have acquired financial skills are provided (Appendix C) and should be adapted according to the youth’s learning profile. It
is advisable that the CAS worker provides the questions to youth in advance to guide the youth’s learning plan and help youth prepare for the interview.

The CAS worker will conduct an interview with the youth, to give youth the opportunity to demonstrate his/her financial literacy skills. The youth is encouraged to draw on the experiences he/she has gained over the course of the program and tracked in his/her reflective journal, portfolio or other method.

In assessing whether the youth is able to demonstrate that he/she has acquired financial skills, the CAS worker will consider changes in the youth’s behaviour and skill level established in the youth’s pre-program assessment, as well as based on the youth’s learning plan, plan of care, and the ongoing progress meetings over the course of the program. The CAS will complete a Savings Program Requirements Check List to document whether the youth meets the Savings Program Requirements (See Appendix E for the Savings Program Requirements Check List).

Expected output/deliverables of post-program financial literacy assessment:

- Completion of Post-Program Financial Literacy Assessment Interview;
- Completion of Savings Program Requirement Check List; and
- A plan for the disbursement of savings, based on whether the youth has successfully met the Savings Program Requirements.

### 8.0 SHARED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CAS and the youth have a shared responsibility: the youth is responsible for driving his/her own learning process to meet the Savings Program Requirements and the CAS worker is responsible for working with and supporting youth to meet his/her goals and engaging the youth’s caregivers to help youth apply skills to daily life.

**Responsibilities of the CAS worker:**

- Conduct a preliminary interview with each eligible youth to assess his/her financial knowledge, confidence and skills;
- Outline the goals of the Financial Literacy Program and the Savings Program Requirements;
- Support youth in developing a learning plan, in conjunction with the youth’s plan of care, to build required competencies in order to meet the Savings Program Requirements;
Participate in regular meetings with youth to monitor his/her progress in implementing the learning plan, discuss youth’s lessons learned, and determine if additional supports are required;

Be knowledgeable about services and supports in the community to help youth build skills and stay informed of new tools and resources that may become available;

Enable youth to meet program goals by providing additional financial literacy supports, where necessary, such as financial skills building workshops, web-based learning aids, tools for foster parents, and/or community ‘money mentor’ volunteers (e.g. bankers, teachers, financial advisors, etc.);

Inform CAS staff, foster parents, kinship care parents, residential care operators, and probation officers/case managers (where applicable) about the purpose of the Savings Program and encourage them to discuss this program and the youth’s progress with respect to the Savings Program Requirements as opportunities arise;

Conduct a post-program assessment, with input from community partners who have worked with the youth on independent living and financial literacy skills, where appropriate, to determine if youth can demonstrate that they have acquired financial literacy skills, and meet all the Savings Program Requirements;

Complete and sign a Savings Program Requirements Check-list; and

Determine the method of disbursing savings for each eligible youth, depending on whether the youth has successfully met the Savings Program Requirements.

Responsibilities of youth participating in the Savings Program:

Develop a learning plan, in conjunction with the CAS worker, according to the program goals and financial skills relevant for independent living;

Participate in programs and activities to build required financial skills, as appropriate;

Record experiences and lessons learned in a portfolio or journal, or other method determined by youth, to track process of gaining required financial skills;

Maintain his/her financial literacy portfolio or journal and learning plan;
o Participate in regular meetings with the CAS worker to discuss progress in implementing his/her learning plan, lessons learned, and experiences building financial skills;

o Inform the CAS worker when additional supports are required to build financial skills;

o Present his/her financial literacy portfolio or binder to the CAS worker during the post-program assessment interview; and

o Prepare for and participate in a post-program assessment interview to demonstrate the extent to which he/she has acquired financial skills.

9.0 SAVINGS PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

As set out in the Addendum to Policy Directive CW 002:08, an eligible youth is required to meet certain requirements of the Savings Program to determine the method of disbursing the OCBE savings.

During the post-program financial literacy assessment interview, the youth is expected to demonstrate how he/she has met each of the four Savings Program Requirements. A Savings Program Requirements Check List is provided (Appendix E) to help the CAS document the outcome of the assessment.

REQUIREMENT 1: ACQUIRE AND DEMONSTRATE FINANCIAL SKILLS RELEVANT TO INDEPENDENT LIVING

The youth is expected to acquire and demonstrate financial skills and demonstrate financial competency relevant to independent living.

The CAS will establish a process to assess whether the youth is able to demonstrate the financial competencies outlined in Section 6.0 through a post-program assessment interview. The assessment process may include input from the community partner(s) who have worked with the youth on independent living and financial literacy skills. Possible questions for conducting the post-program assessment interview are provided (see Appendix C).

The interviewer should give the youth the opportunity to demonstrate what he/she has learned, where he/she accessed information to build the competencies and how he/she will apply these competencies in the future. The interviewer should consider changes in the youth’s behaviour and skill level established in the youth’s pre-program assessment, as well as based on the youth’s learning plan, and the ongoing progress meetings over the course of the
program. The youth should be encouraged to refer to his/her financial literacy binder or portfolio to illustrate his/her experiences and lessons learned.

It is advisable to provide the youth with the interview questions well in advance.

**REQUIREMENT 2: ESTABLISH PERSONAL BANK ACCOUNT**

The youth is expected to have established a personal bank account, or an alternative savings mechanism to receive funds where banking is not feasible.

During the post-program assessment interview as part of the financial skills assessment, the youth will be asked to demonstrate that he/she understands the different types of bank accounts, services and fees. The youth will be asked how his/her account (or alternative savings mechanism) compares against other types of accounts and banks. The youth will be asked to explain why they chose this particular bank and account.

**REQUIREMENT 3: DEVELOP PLAN FOR SAVINGS**

The youth is expected to develop a plan for how they will use the OCBE savings.

A personal financial plan is a step by step outline (usually written) describing how someone intends to accomplish a goal. Several financial education resources provide financial planning templates that youth could adapt for their own plan. For instance, *The City, A Financial Life Skills Planning Resource*, Financial Consumer Agency of Canada, has a section on building a personal financial plan (Module 10). For these and other resources to help youth build financial skills, see Appendix D.

To demonstrate that he/she has a plan for the use of the OCBE savings, the youth must be able to:

- Identify his/her personal goals, education goals and career goals;
- Demonstrate he/she has researched the costs of achieving the goals; and
- Describe how he/she will pay for these goals (i.e., how the OCBE savings will contribute as well as what other resources or assets they will generate to achieve goals).

**REQUIREMENT 4: SECURE STABLE HOUSING**

The youth is expected to secure stable housing.

To demonstrate that he/she has secured stable housing, the youth must:
• Be in stable housing, or can describe where and how he/she is going to secure stable housing if he/she has not already.
• Describe how he/she will maintain this housing, including:
  o How he/she will pay the rent and monthly utility bills; and
  o How he/she will take care of the property and his/her belongings.
• Understand the terms of the lease and his/her rights and responsibilities as a tenant and the rights and responsibilities of the landlord.
• Describe how long he/she plans on staying in this housing and what he/she would do if he/she had to find another residence.
APPENDIX A: 
Pre-Program Financial Literacy Assessment

Getting Started: Thinking about Money Management

The Pre-Program Financial Literacy Assessment is intended to help the CAS worker understand the youth’s behaviour related to financial skills and determine learning needs. The suggested questions below are value-based (i.e., what youth feel about their relationship to money matters) and behavioural. There are no right or wrong answers. The intent is to start the conversation with youth and build on the financial skills the youth may already have.

Based on the youth’s responses, the youth and CAS worker will determine areas to focus on for developing a learning plan for the youth over the course of the program.

These questions are provided as a guide and can be adapted by the CAS worker according to the unique situation of each youth. These questions should also be adapted according to the youth’s learning profile.

Possible discussion questions:

1. How do you manage your money to save for something you want to purchase?

2. What do you do if you want something and realize you don’t have enough money to buy it?

3. Do you ever have to save your money or limit your expenses? Explain.

4. What does saving money mean to you? What do you think has influenced your values about money?

5. Can you identify a personal goal? An education goal? A career/job goal? Do you have a plan to help you achieve these goals?

6. What type of career are you interested in pursuing in the future? Do you know what education you may require for this job? What more would you like to learn about to help you pursue this career goal?

7. As the OCBE Savings is an investment in your future, what do you think may be the best way to invest in yourself to help you achieve your goals?

8. Is there anyone in your life who could help you to build your financial literacy skills to help you achieve these goals?
9. “When I think about money in my future I feel …”

10. What are some creative ways you could build financial skills?

Possible Additional Questions: What Do You Know About Finances?

These additional questions are not to establish a 'grade' but to establish what financial skills to focus on as part of the learning plan for the youth. Questions could be asked as true and false (as below) or as a range (i.e., “on a scale of one to ten, rate how confident you are” in the required financial competencies).

The CAS worker could use these or other questions to check in with the youth’s progress over the course of the program and determine what areas may be in need of attention. These questions below are provided as a guide and can be adapted by the CAS worker according to the unique situation of each youth.

1. A cell phone bill counts as a monthly fixed expense. True or False?

2. Accurate recording of expenses helps people plan for their needs and wants. True or False?

3. Identity theft is rare and you don’t have to worry about it. True or False?

4. A budget should include your personal income and expenses. True or False?

5. A financial plan uses your income, expenses and other financial records to provide a realistic roadmap for achieving your goals. True or False?

6. There are no differences in the services offered by different financial institutions. True or False?

7. Using extra money in a bank savings account to pay off credit card debt is a good idea. True or False?

8. Paying and filing annual income tax is only required for people with very high incomes. True or False?

9. If you save 10% of your income from the time you first start working, you’ll most likely be able to retire with plenty of money. True or False?

10. Paying your credit card bill late can make it more difficult to take out a loan in the future. True or False?
APPENDIX B:  
Guide for Youth: Developing Your Learning Plan

Our Message to Youth
Think of the OCBE Savings Program as an investment in you, in your future, in helping you realize your goals. The Financial Literacy Program, therefore, is a way to help you build your personal 'assets' (financial knowledge, confidence and skills) so you can take charge of this investment and make it work best for you now and in the long run.

Goals of the Financial Literacy Program
The goal of the program is to prepare you for your transition to independence by:

- Building your financial knowledge, confidence and skills to set and achieve goals, make informed choices and respond effectively to your evolving financial circumstances.

Getting Started
We recommend you build a financial skills binder or portfolio to help you keep track of all the things you learn over the course of the program. This is your creation: think about how you want to organize it, decorate it, put it to use. Do you want to use art supplies, pictures, clippings, graphics, etc. to decorate the binder and illustrate your experiences? Customize it so it’s all about you.

Most importantly, though, this portfolio is your working record of all the things you are learning about managing money and building your financial skills.

If you learn something about banking, keep a record of it in your binder. If you go shopping, keep track of what you bought and how much you saved by comparison shopping. If you are tracking your actual expenses, write them down and save a record of it in your portfolio. In creating your financial plan, keep track of all the versions (it may change a thousand times!), and any of your thoughts about what it means to you now and in the future. It is a way to discuss your experiences with your CAS worker and prepare for your post-program interview.

Use the portfolio to keep track of:

- what you have learned about financial skills
- where you accessed information to build skills
- what else you need to know to continue to build these skills
- how you will apply these skills now and in the future

The portfolio is one way for you to be in the driver’s seat of your own learning journey.

Another way is the development of your own learning plan.
Developing Your Learning Plan

Your learning plan may be a useful tool to help you to meet the Savings Program Requirements if it is based on the required Financial Literacy Competencies.

These competencies are:
- Financial responsibility and decision-making
- Money management
- Saving, banking and investing
- Employment and further education
- Credit and debt

A list of these competencies and expected skills is attached.

In developing your learning plan you may want to ask yourself:
- Who in your life can help you learn and apply these skills in your daily life (consider a role for foster parents, teachers, case worker, etc.)?
- What community resources are available to help you learn and apply these skills (bank manager, youth employment centre, etc.)?
- What skills do you think you already have now and how can you build on them? What can you do to document your experiences to demonstrate you have acquired these skills?
- What are your steps to build each of these skills? What’s your timeline?

Think also about the initial discussion you had with your CAS worker about money management. In particular, reflect on the question: When I think about money in my future I feel …

Then ask yourself: What does my future look like? What kind of jobs will I have? How will school help? What are the steps to fulfilling my dreams?

This will help you start to think of a plan for the use of your OCBÉ savings (having a plan for the use of savings is a Savings Program Requirement).

Talk to your CAS worker to find out how you will be assessed on learning financial skills for your post-program interview.

Reflect on the assessment questions, make a check list of the things you need to do and learn, and … guess what? You’ve got a learning plan.

Now, keep updating it every few months: what is new, what is next, am I on track, what else do I need to do? This will help you discuss what additional supports you may need and to guide your discussions with your CAS worker and other adult mentors. To be successful in your post-program assessment, you need to have had opportunities to build new skills. It’s up to you to build new skills and it’s up to the CAS worker to support you to help you make this happen.
APPENDIX C: 
Post-Program Assessment Interview – Possible Questions

The following interview questions could guide the assessment of whether the youth has acquired financial skills and can demonstrate financial competency as per the financial literacy requirement of the Savings Program Requirements.

It is advisable that the actual questions are provided to the youth well in advance of the interview to guide the youth’s learning plan and help the youth prepare for the interview.

These questions should be adapted according to the youth’s learning profile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial skills</th>
<th>Possible assessment questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Find and evaluate information about the cost of living (utilities, rent, phone, internet, incidentals, etc.) | • What do you expect your monthly expenses (fixed and variable) will be upon leaving care? List fixed expenses (such as phone, rent, internet, debt payments, insurance, utilities) and variable expenses (such as clothes, books, groceries, childcare, tuition fees, recreation, transportation, savings, etc.).  
  • What are some unexpected costs you may encounter? |
| Make financial decisions by considering alternatives and consequences            | • Of the list of expenses above, what are ‘needs’ and what are ‘wants’?  
  • Describe a time (refer to a journal entry) when you bought something you wanted but in so doing you couldn’t buy something you needed. What would you do differently if you could do it again? What did you learn that you could apply to financial decisions in the future? |
| Protect himself/herself against fraud and safeguard their money                  | • What can you do to protect your OCBE savings? Bank/debit card? Online bank account? Credit card (if applicable)? Bank statements? Driver’s license? Social Insurance Number? Birth certificate? Your online identity?  
  • How do you know if someone is trying to “rip you off” and what can you do about it? |
| Develop and implement a budget to live independently, based on their expected monthly expenses and income | • Provide a realistic monthly budget based on your expected monthly expenses (use expenses from question above) and your expected monthly net income.  
  • What did you learn from doing a budget? What are some ways you can ‘live within your means’ so you don’t go into debt?  
  • Have you talked with an adult mentor to help you with live within a budget? |
## Apply consumer skills to purchase decisions

- Where are some good places to shop for deals for your monthly expenses (refer to expenses in budget)?
- Describe how you’ve saved money by comparison shopping (show receipts, etc. to illustrate point).
- Describe when you should read the fine print (ads, contracts, online, etc.) to make sure you understand all the details?

## Develop a personal financial plan to achieve goals

*Note: this skill is related to Savings Program Requirement 3*

- Youth should be able to identify their goals – personal, education, and career/job related.
- They should be able to demonstrate they have researched the cost of achieving their goals.
- They should be able to describe how they will pay for these goals (i.e., how the OCBE savings will contribute as well as how else they will pay for these goals).

## Understand basic concepts of saving

- Why save money?
- Explain the meaning of “pay yourself first”? What are some good ways to help you save your money?
- Give an example of how you have set money aside/saved for something you wanted to do or buy. What did you learn about saving that you could apply in the future?

## Understand the different types of bank accounts, services and fees

*Note: this skill is related to Savings Program Requirement 2*

- What type of bank account do you have? What are the monthly service charges? How does your account compare against other types of accounts and at other banks? Why did you choose this particular bank and account?
- What is the difference between cashing a cheque at a bank and at a cheque cashing ‘mart’? Why is it unadvisable to use the cheque cashing mart?

## Understand basic concepts and risks of investing

- Describe a few types of investments. What are some reasons people invest their money? What is risk tolerance?
- What is the connection between saving and investing?

## Understand their responsibilities of annually reporting income (including what expenses can be claimed)

- Explain how and why you need to file an annual income tax return. For instance, when to file, what receipts are required for tax deductions (to reduce amount you need to pay), how to receive a GST refund, and where to submit completed forms.
- What are good sources of information if you need help to file?

## Understand payroll deductions

- Bring in a sample pay stub (actual or fictitious) and identify and explain the deductions from the gross income.

## Identify sources of income to assist their transition to

- What’s your plan to secure income to pay for your monthly expenses? What is the difference in income from social
| independent living | assistance and income from employment?  
|                   | • How could you increase your income?  
|                   | • Identify some key factors that influence wages and salaries?  
|                   | • What are some other benefits that employers may offer?  
|                   | • How may your income change with your different life stages?  

| Demonstrate they have researched different employment and education options | • Complete the following sentence: the career goal(s) for my life is _________. The education I need to meet my career goal is_________. The salary range of jobs related to this career (entry level and over time) is from ________ to __________.  
|                                                                           | • How can you draw on your abilities and accomplishments to help you achieve your career goals? Describe some steps/actions you have taken to find a job related to your career goals.  
|                                                                           | • How will you further your education to achieve your career goal(s)?  
|                                                                           | • What are some skills you need to enter, stay in, and progress in the world of work?  

| Write a résumé and understand how to apply and interview for a job | • Provide a sample résumé you have created to help you apply for a job.  
|                                                                  | • What are some interview ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ to help you apply for a job?  

| Calculate the cost of paying interest on purchases made with a credit card | • Give youth a scenario using a sample credit card statement. For instance: You accumulated $1,000 on your credit card that has an annual interest rate of 18.5%. You only pay the 5% minimum each month ($50). Approximately how long would it take to pay off the debt and how much interest would you have paid at the end?  
|                                                                         | • Debt is expensive so what is a good financial strategy to manage/avoid debt?  

| Describe the risks of credit cards and other high interest loans | • Do you have a credit record and what does it say? (need to have contacted a credit bureau to find this information)  
|                                                                 | • What are your responsibilities when you borrow money? What happens if you default on paying back a loan/credit card debt?  
|                                                                 | • Do you understand why maintaining a good credit record is important (i.e., possible impact of a bad credit record)?  
|                                                                 | • What can you do to avoid dangerous debt?  
|                                                                 | • How do you know if a credit card or other type of loan is a rip off?  

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APPENDIX D: Selected Financial Literacy Resources

Many websites, teaching guides and youth learning aids exist that could be adapted by CASs or community partners to help youth build financial skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Type of Resource</th>
<th>Intended User</th>
<th>Relevant Content Area</th>
<th>Additional Features</th>
<th>For more information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investor Education Fund</td>
<td>Taking Stock in Your Future</td>
<td>Co-curricular resource for intermediate and high school teachers that could be adapted for use by community organizations, includes:</td>
<td>Grade 7/8 (intermediate level) and High school (senior level)</td>
<td>Module 1: Understanding money and money management, Personal finance, Earning money, Debt and credit, Saving and budgeting, Cost of living</td>
<td>All materials are downloadable online at the “Teachers Corner”</td>
<td><a href="http://www.investorED.ca">www.investorED.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funny Money Tool Kit</td>
<td></td>
<td>Activity kit for teachers</td>
<td>High school students</td>
<td>Needs and wants, Cash flow management, Saving, What is credit and credit rating, Investment choices risk and return</td>
<td>All answers included with Activity Kit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Financial Skills: A Teacher's Guide</td>
<td>Supplementary resource to teach skills and behaviours for saving and investing</td>
<td>High school students</td>
<td>Thinking about money, What is your saving style?, Personal finance and wealth, Spending and saving habits, Other forms of money, Investing, Setting goals</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Type of Resource</td>
<td>Intended User</td>
<td>Relevant Content Area</td>
<td>Additional Features</td>
<td>For more information</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Money Belt</td>
<td></td>
<td>Web portal for youth with tips, quizzes and links to other resources</td>
<td>15-29 year olds</td>
<td></td>
<td>Available in French and English</td>
<td><a href="http://www.themoneybelt.ca">www.themoneybelt.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation</td>
<td>Money Smart for Young Adults</td>
<td>CD-Rom curriculum includes: Instructor guide, Participant guide, Computer-based scenarios and exercises for youth</td>
<td>12-20 year olds</td>
<td>Banking, Chequing accounts, Setting financial goals, Saving, Borrowing, Credit cards, Paying for college, Housing</td>
<td>8 customizable instructor-led modules 90-110 minutes each, Easy to use instructor guide, US-based materials could be adapted to the Canadian context</td>
<td><a href="http://www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/money-smart/young.html">www.fdic.gov/consumers/consumer/money-smart/young.html</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative</td>
<td>Building Assets for Your Future</td>
<td>Curriculum includes: Instructor manual, Participant workbook, Train the trainer materials</td>
<td>14-23 year olds who are or were in care</td>
<td>Needs and wants, Goal setting, Financial planning, Saving and investing, Plan for earning, spending and saving, Money and banking</td>
<td>Curriculum for youth leaving care who are participating in the US-based Youth Opportunities Initiative to build individual development accounts, Materials could be adapted to the Canadian context</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jimcaseyyouth.org">www.jimcaseyyouth.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Resource</td>
<td>Type of Resource</td>
<td>Intended User</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canadian Foundation for Economic Education</td>
<td>Money and Youth</td>
<td>Workbook for youth, Teacher's Guide</td>
<td>Goals, values and decision-making, Income and careers, Budgeting and planning, Debt and credit, Investing, Protecting assets</td>
<td>Materials available free of charge (plus cost of shipping, $25 for box of 35 booklets), Available in French and English</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cfee.org">www.cfee.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Bankers Association</td>
<td>YourMoney</td>
<td>Web-based resource for youth, Free seminars delivered by volunteer bankers</td>
<td>Youth in grades 10 to 12</td>
<td>Budgeting, Saving, Using credit wisely, Investing, Borrowing, Keeping money safe</td>
<td>Interactive online tools, including a credit calculator that calculates interest on purchases and years to pay back credit</td>
<td><a href="http://www.yourmoney.cba.ca">www.yourmoney.cba.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ministry of Children and Youth Services  
Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent (OCBE) Savings Program  

Savings Program Requirements Check List

As set out in the Addendum to Policy Directive CW 002:08, eligible youth are required to meet certain requirements of the Savings Program to determine the method of disbursing savings. The check list below will help the children's aid society (CAS) document whether an eligible youth meets the four program requirements.

Name of youth:  
Name of CAS:

---

**Requirement: Financial Skills for Independent Living**

The CAS should have made available to this youth a program to acquire financial skills and demonstrate financial competency relevant for independent living. The youth should be able to demonstrate they acquired the skills below, as outlined in the financial literacy program framework.

In assessing whether the youth is able to demonstrate they acquired financial skills, the CAS should consider changes in the youth’s behaviour and skill level established in the youth’s pre-program assessment, as well as based on the youth’s learning plan, and the ongoing progress meetings over the course of the program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is youth able to:</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Explain how youth was able/unable to demonstrate they acquired this skill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Find and evaluate information about the cost of living (utilities, rent, phone, internet, incidentals, etc.)?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Make financial decisions by considering alternatives and consequences?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect himself/herself against fraud and safeguard their money?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop and implement a budget to live independently, based on their expected monthly expenses and income?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply consumer skills to purchase decisions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand basic concepts of saving (how much to save, different financial products)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand the different types of bank accounts, services and fees (including drawbacks of payday lenders)?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand basic concepts and risks of investing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand their responsibilities of annually reporting income (including what expenses can be claimed)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand payroll deductions?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify sources of income to assist their transition to independent living?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate they have researched different education and career options?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a resume and understand how to apply and interview for a job?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculate the cost of paying interest on purchases made with a credit card?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Understand the consequences of bad credit and being in debt?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the risks of credit cards and other high interest loans?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Requirement: Personal bank account**

To meet the Savings Program requirements, the youth should have established a personal bank account, or an alternative savings mechanism to receive funds where banking is not feasible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has youth:</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Established a personal bank account, or an alternative savings mechanism to receive funds where banking is not feasible?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Requirement: Plan for savings**

To meet the Savings Program requirements, the youth should have developed an appropriate plan for the use of the savings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is youth able to:</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>If no, please explain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify their goals – personal, education, and career/job related?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Demonstrate they have researched the costs of achieving their goals?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Describe how they will pay for these goals (i.e., how the savings will contribute as well as how else they will pay for these goals)?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Requirement: Stable housing**

To meet the Savings Program Requirements, the youth should have secured stable housing for when they leave care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is youth:</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>If no, please explain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In stable housing? If not, is youth able to describe where they are going to secure stable housing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to pay the rent and monthly utility bills?</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to take care of the property and their belongings?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aware of their rights and responsibilities as a tenant and the rights and responsibilities of the landlord?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aware of the terms of the lease?</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aware of how long they plan to stay in the housing and what they would do if they had to find another residence?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Disbursement of Savings

Where a youth has successfully met the Savings Program Requirements, the CAS shall disburse the total savings, including any interest, to the youth directly into his or her bank account (or an alternative mechanism where banking is not feasible).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has youth:</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Successfully met the Savings Program Requirements?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the youth has not successfully met the Savings Program Requirements, the CAS shall meet with the youth to establish a plan for the disbursement of all or part of the savings to third parties on behalf of the youth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If youth has not successfully met Program Requirements, describe plan for disbursement of savings:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This confirms that _______________________ and _____________________ met
Name of youth                                Name of CAS worker

on ___________ to discuss the youth’s completion of the OCBE Savings Program.

Date

The youth _______________ successfully met the Savings Program Requirements.

has/has not

________________________________________    ___________
Signature of authorized CAS representative             Date

________________________________________    ___________
Signature of youth              Date