

FACT SHEET

Current Children First Policies can be viewed at: www.childrenfirstgrants.ca

MISSION To help families afford their choice of school.

Children First: School Choice Trust is Canada's first privately funded program to help families improve their educational choices. Children First offers tuition assistance grants, so that parents who could not otherwise afford it can choose an independent elementary school for their children.

WHO WE ARE Children First is a program of the Fraser Institute, an independent Canadian policy research organization. In the 2008-09 school year, we are serving approximately 1,100 children in Ontario.

Children First has been operating since 2003.

TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANTS Children First grants are worth 50% of tuition, up to an annual maximum of \$4,000.

The grants are available to the students until they complete Grade 8, as long as they remain financially eligible and in good standing with their schools, subject to funding availability.

Grant payments are made in three installments in the school year – October, February and May. The cheques will be paid directly to the school.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA Applicants and grant recipients must:

- Be entering Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8
- Reside in Ontario
- Live in a household with low net assets and an income that does not exceed twice the poverty line as defined by the Basic Needs Index (see chart below)



Income Eligibility for 2009-10	
Household Size	Qualifying Income for 2009-10 (household qualifies if below)
2	\$38,924
3	\$47,308
4	\$54,953
5	\$62,065
6 or higher	\$68,764

Source: Basic Needs Index, updated using Statistics Canada Consumer Price Index

APPLICATION
PROCESS

Applications for the 2009-2010 grants will be available the first week of January 2009, and should be submitted to the Children First office by March 31, 2009. Applications are accepted by mail or online at **www.childrenfirstgrants.ca**.

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of grants available, a lottery will be conducted in April 2009 to select grant winners at random.

Lottery winners will be notified immediately following the draw and given 3 weeks to accept the grant, verify eligibility (i.e., provide proof of income and assets) and enroll students in an independent school.

APPLICATION
DISTRIBUTION

Families can apply using our online application on our web site:
www.childrenfirstgrants.ca

Applications will also be distributed through:
-Independent schools
-Certain libraries, community centres, YMCAs and places of worship.

SIBLING POLICY

If a family is selected in the lottery process, all eligible siblings who were included on the family's application will be awarded grants.

ELIGIBLE
SCHOOLS

Grants may be used at any independent school registered with the province of Ontario, subject to our school participation policy which can be viewed on our website: **www.childrenfirstgrants.ca**.

All grants are given at the absolute discretion of Children First.

AREA SERVED

Ontario

AWARDS

Children First has received international recognition for its innovative work. The program was awarded a Templeton Freedom Award for Social Entrepreneurship, given by The Atlas Economic Research Foundation in 2004. Children First was selected from more than 140 programs from over 50 countries for its creative and groundbreaking work meeting the needs of families through private initiative. It is the only Canadian program ever to have received this award.

CONTACT US

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