

Learning after High School

Information for Alberta parents with children in Grades 6 to 9

Easy-to-read information

Alberta

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Dictionary

- **elementary school:**
Kindergarten to Grade 6
- **secondary school:**
Grades 7 to 12
 - **junior high school:**
Grades 7, 8 and 9
 - **middle school:**
Grades 6 to 8, or 6 to 9
 - **high school:**
Grades 10, 11 and 12
- **marks:**
Students get marks on tests and on homework. Final marks in courses are often a percentage. For example: A student needs 50% to pass a course. 100% is excellent.
- **post-secondary education:**
education after high school
- **post-secondary school:**
a college, university, technical institute, vocational school

Note: In this issue, we use the word **parents**. We mean mothers, fathers, foster parents and other people who are raising children. For example: grandparents, aunts and uncles.

Make plans together

These 4 students are thinking about their futures. They are making plans. Their parents are helping them.



Natasha

Natasha: I want to be a famous photographer. I like to take photos that tell a story.

I plan to live with my grandmother in the city when I go to college or university.



Natasha's mom and great aunt: We talk about Natasha's dreams. We are helping her choose courses for high school. We are finding out about programs at post-secondary schools.

Raven

Raven: It would be fun to build houses when I grow up. Maybe I will be a carpenter.



Raven's parents: Raven is in Grade 7. She is taking a course in building construction.

She is learning about hand tools. She might start an apprenticeship program in high school.



Etienne

Etienne: I like to help people. I might like to work with children and youth one day.



Etienne's mom: My son's teacher is helping him choose optional courses for Grade 9. I am helping my son explore jobs.

Mitchell

Mitchell: I like working with animals on our farm. I belong to a 4-H club. I am raising a calf for my 4-H project.

In school, I like science and math.



Mitchell's parents: Our son wants to go to college one day. So we are saving money now.

He is saving money too. When he sells his calf, he will put the money into his RESP. (More about RESPs on page 6)

Photo: Brittany Burton

When children do well in Grades 6 to 9, they have more choices later on. You can help your children do well.

1 Talk about school

✓ Here are some questions to ask:

- What is your favourite subject? Why do you like it?
- What is your hardest subject? Why is it hard?
- When do you choose your classes for next year?

What are you learning about in social studies?



2 Be positive

✓ Praise your child often. Give small rewards when your child works hard.

You worked hard on your project! Let's have pizza for supper.



3 Help your child find a quiet place to study

Time to turn off the TV. Your brother is studying.



4 Encourage good study habits

✓ Here are some good study habits:

- Prepare for classes.
- Listen carefully in class.
- Take notes in class.
- Do homework neatly.
- Keep binders neat.

Do you need dividers for your binder?



5 Help your teen make time for homework

✓ In junior high, students have about one to 2 hours of homework at night. Students should hand in homework on time.

I hope I get a good mark.



Your paper is on time. Great!



✓ Does your teen have a job? Make sure your teen has time to study and to do homework.

6 Help your child find a computer to use



✓ Help your teen find a computer for school work. For example:

- a computer at a library
- a friend's computer

7 Encourage your child to eat well and exercise

✓ Healthy food and exercise are important. They help students think and remember things.



8 Encourage reading

✓ Teachers expect students to read every night.

Mom, did you know that Wabamun means mirror in Cree?



9 Encourage extra activities at school



✓ Your child can join sports teams or clubs at school. For example: a soccer team, a language club, band.



10 Talk to your child's teachers

✓ You can talk to teachers anytime. Phone for an appointment or send a note.

✓ Schools have **parent-teacher-student conferences** once or twice a year. It is important for parents to go.

You might talk about report cards, homework and your child's future.

¿Como va Raven en Inglés?

He asked, "How is Raven doing in English?"



Note: An adult can interpret for you if you don't speak English well.

Make a plan for each school year

Grade 6

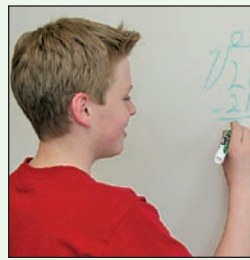
Students study 8 subjects in Grade 6. For example: math, social studies, science, art, music.

Some schools have other subjects. For example: drama, languages.



Talk to your child

- ✓ What does your child like to do?
- ✓ Does your child have favourite subjects?



Plan ahead

- ✓ What junior high will your child go to? Does it have special programs?
- ✓ Visit the school together.

Junior high school (middle school)

Students must take **core (required)** subjects in Grades 7, 8 and 9. For example: social studies, English language arts, health and life skills, math.



Practice

Expand.

1. $5(x+1)$
2. $3(x-2)$

Students can take **optional** subjects too. For example: foods, mechanics, languages, fashion studies.

Many students also do extra activities at school.



I am taking Cree as an option in Grade 9.

Talk to your teen

- ✓ Encourage your teen to work hard. Grade 9 marks are important! High marks mean more choices in high school.

Plan ahead

- ✓ What high school will your teen go to?
- ✓ Teachers and counsellors can help your teen choose subjects for high school.

High school



Courses

Students can choose from many courses in Grades 10, 11 and 12. Courses have a name and number. The number is very important!

Example:

In Grade 10, students can take English 10-1, English 10-2 or English 10-4.

Etienne wants to go to college or university. So he should take English 10-1.



Credits

Students get credits if they pass a course. For example, English 10-1 is worth 5 credits.

A student must get 50% or higher to pass a course.

Choose courses carefully

Teens should choose courses carefully in high school. Different programs at post-secondary schools require different high school courses. Help your teen plan ahead!

Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)

Some teens take RAP (say: rap). It is an apprenticeship program for high school students.



- ✓ RAP students take high school courses and earn credits.
- ✓ They also start to learn a trade. They become apprentices. They work part time. They learn skills on the job. They earn wages too.
- ✓ After high school, they continue as an apprentice.

Other activities

Students can join clubs. There are often activities after school and at lunchtime.



Talk to your teen and plan ahead

- ✓ What jobs is your teen interested in? What education will your teen need for these jobs?

How was Career Day at school?

Good. I talked to a web designer and a lawyer.



- ✓ Does your teen want to go to post-secondary school? What programs is your teen interested in?
- ✓ Where can your teen take these programs? What high school courses will your teen need to enter these programs? What marks will your teen need?
- ✓ How will you and your teen pay for tuition, books and other costs after high school?

Find out about post-secondary schools

Alberta has many post-secondary schools. Students take courses there. They can study full time or part time.

1 Universities

Some students go to a public university. For example:

- University of Alberta
- University of Calgary
- University of Lethbridge
- Athabasca University
(At this school, you learn mostly at home and on the Internet.)



University of Alberta campus in Edmonton



lecture hall



Photo: Uwe Weitz



Many students go to university for 4 years to get a degree. For example: a degree in education (B.Ed.).

Programs have different entrance requirements (marks, courses, credits). Some programs require very high marks.

Some programs accept a small number of students. So it is hard to get into these programs. For example: pharmacy.

2 Colleges

Some students go to a public college. For example:

- Medicine Hat College
- Northern Lakes College
- Red Deer College

Classes are often smaller at colleges. Colleges have many different programs.



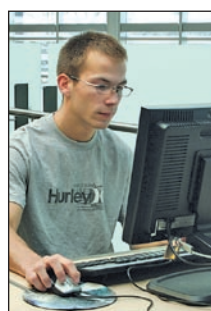
Students can get diplomas and certificates. At some colleges, students can get degrees.

In some programs, students can transfer to a university after one or 2 years.

3 Technical institutes

Some students go to a technical institute. For example:

- NAIT (Edmonton)
- SAIT (Calgary)



Classes are often small at a technical institute. Students can learn on-the-job skills.

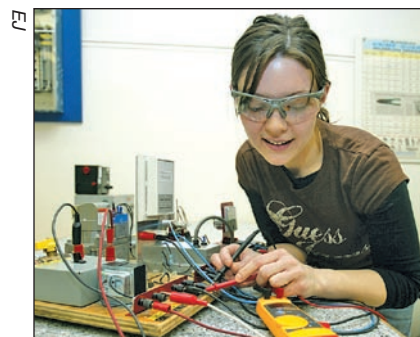
Many students get a diploma or a certificate.

4 Apprenticeship program

Alberta has an apprenticeship program. Students can become an apprentice and learn a trade. For example: ironworker, millwright.

Apprentices learn on the job. They also take technical training.

Technical training is often 4 to 6 weeks per year. It is usually at a post-secondary school.



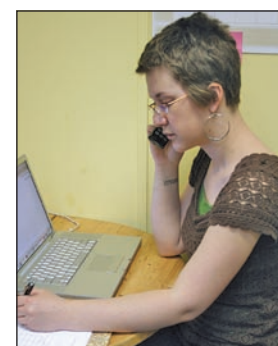
Apprenticeship programs are from 1 to 4 years long. Apprentices get a journey person certificate when they are done.

5 Learning at home

At some schools, students learn at home.

Students get course packages. They talk to teachers by phone. They use the Internet to learn. For example:

- athabascau.ca
- eCampusAlberta.ca



6 Private institutions

Alberta also has private post-secondary schools. For example:

- private university colleges
- private vocational training schools

Classes are often small at these schools. Different schools have different programs.

Some schools look like business offices. Some look like college campuses.

You can print an easy-to-read list of post-secondary schools. Go to: aet.alberta.ca/englishexpress/specialissues/lahs.asp

Visit a campus

What is a campus?

Post-secondary schools have one or more campuses. A campus often has:



- buildings with classrooms, labs and lecture halls



- a library



- a cafeteria



- areas for sports



- outdoor areas



- residences

Some students live in a residence. Students can rent rooms there during school.

Ask about prices.

Visiting a campus

✓ Do you have friends or family at a post-secondary school? Ask them to take you and your teen on a tour.



✓ Many campuses have **open houses** and **info sessions**. Parents and teens can go to the campus and ask questions.

Explore programs and jobs

- ✓ Talk to your child about skills and interests.
- ✓ What jobs might your child do well?
- ✓ What jobs might your child enjoy?
- ✓ What education will your child need for these jobs?

Etienne

Interests (Things I like to do)

- I like to help people.
- I like to read.
- I like to learn new things.

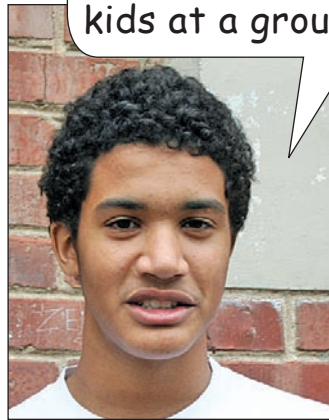
Skills (Things I am good at)

- I have a good memory.
- I am good in social studies.
- I follow directions well.

Favourite school subjects

- social studies and science

My mom and I talked to our neighbour about her job. She works with kids at a group home.



Job and programs to explore

- child and youth care worker



I want to go to college or university. I want to take a 2-year program or a 4-year program. For example:

☞ I can get a Child and Youth Care degree. It takes 4 years.

or

☞ I can get a Child and Youth Care diploma. It takes 2 years.

After my program, I can work at schools, group homes, youth shelters and other places.

Raven

Interests (Things I like to do)

- I like to draw.
- I like to build things.
- I like to be outdoors.

Skills (Things I am good at)

- I know how to fix my bike.
- I am organized.
- I can plan and finish a project.

Favourite school subjects

- building construction and math

My teacher told me I can start an apprenticeship program in high school.



Jobs and programs to explore



- carpenter or cabinetmaker

☞ I can take an apprenticeship program. It takes 4 years.

or

☞ I can get a carpentry diploma at a college or technical school. It takes 2 years.

Figure out costs

How much does post-secondary school cost?

✓ One year of post-secondary school is often 8 months long. Many students take classes from September to April.

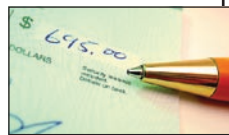
✓ Students need money for:

- tuition and fees
- books and supplies



✓ Students also need money for living expenses. For example:

- a place to live
- food
- a bus pass
- fun things to do



Here is an example of costs for one year

Costs	Living at home with parents	Living away from home
Tuition and fees	\$5,428	\$5,428
Books and supplies	\$1,400	\$1,400
Basic living expenses	\$3,456	\$8,528
Total	\$10,284	\$15,356

Source: Alberta Students Finance

Get information

Each post-secondary school has different costs. And each program has different costs.

- ✓ Find out costs from post-secondary schools.
- ✓ Get information at your child's school.
- ✓ Talk to other parents, friends and neighbours about costs.

More choices

It costs money to go to a post-secondary school. But after students finish, they usually get good jobs. They earn good wages. They often have more choices.

How can families help pay for costs?

1 Save money

✓ Try to save \$10 a week. In 7 years, you can save more than \$3,500! Your child can earn and save money too.



Raven earns money by babysitting.

2 Open an RESP

(say: R-E-S-P)

✓ An RESP* is for your child. It is like a savings account. The money grows tax free. Your child can use the money for post-secondary school.

- You can open an RESP at banks, credit unions and other places. These places are called providers. They may charge a fee. For example: \$25.
- You and your child need a social insurance number (SIN).

*Registered Education Savings Plan

Q: I have a low income. How can I set up an RESP for my son?

A: You can start an RESP with money from the government. Your RESP provider will help you apply for the money.

For example:

- You can get \$500 for a child born in 2005 or later. The money is from the Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan. The money goes into your child's RESP.
- Your child may also get \$100 at ages 8, 11 and 14.

Q: We add money to our child's RESP every year. Can we get the Canada Education Savings Grant?

A: Yes. The federal government will give you a grant (money). It goes into your child's RESP.

For example:

- If you put \$500 into your child's RESP this year, the grant may be up to \$200.



Ask your provider about the **Canada Learning Bond** too. Your son can get this money if you get the National Child Benefit Supplement. The money goes into your son's RESP.

- You get \$500 for each child born after 2003.
- You may also get \$100 a year for your child—up to age 15 (up to \$2,000 per child).

More information

✓ Find out more about RESPs, the Canada Learning Bond, and the Canada Education Savings Grant.

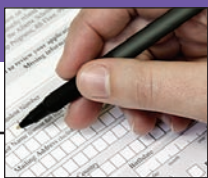
Phone: 1-800-622-6232 (free)

✓ Find out more about the Alberta Centennial Education Savings Plan.

Phone: 1-866-515-2237 (free)

Website: aces.alberta.ca

Figure out costs



How can students help pay for post-secondary school?

1 Scholarships

Encourage your teen to apply for many scholarships.

✓ Scholarships come from many places.

✓ Scholarships can be small or big. For example: \$100 or \$10,000. This free money can help pay for post-secondary costs.

✓ A scholarship might go to:

- a student with high marks
- a student who helps others
- a student who is a very good athlete

85%



Alexander Rutherford Scholarship

✓ This money is for good marks in Grades 10, 11 and 12. Students can get the scholarship for 1, 2 or all of those grades.

■ The student's grade average must be 75% or higher.

■ Students get the money when they enrol in a post-secondary program (full time).

■ This scholarship is for students who finished high school on or after September 30, 1980.

2 Grants and bursaries

Your teen can apply for grants and bursaries. They are usually for students from families with low incomes. The money is free.

I got a bursary for students from northern Alberta. It is for \$1,000.



Get information

You can get more information about scholarships, grants and bursaries at:

alis.gov.ab.ca/scholarships

3 Part-time jobs and summer jobs

Your teen can save money from part-time jobs and summer jobs.

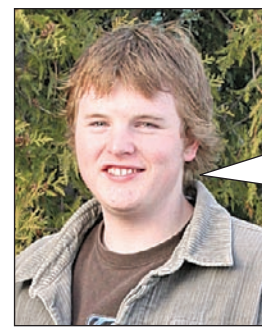


4 Go to post-secondary school part time

In some programs, your teen can go to school part time. Costs will be lower each year. But it will take longer to finish school.

5 Student loans from the government

Your teen can apply for a student loan from the government. The money can help pay for post-secondary school.



I got a student loan for \$5,800 this year. I need the money to help pay for tuition, rent, food and gas.

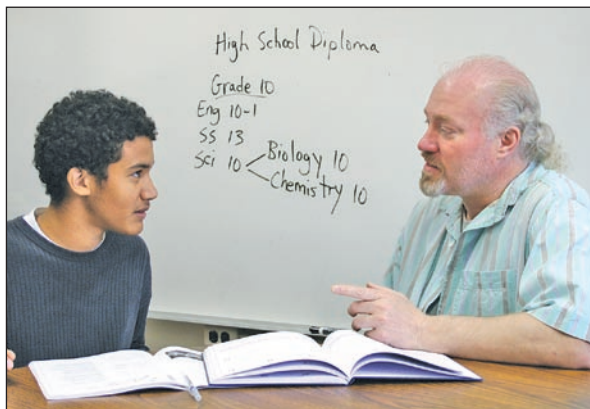
✓ Students must pay back loans.

✓ There is no interest on the money while students are in a full-time program. The interest starts when the students finish school.

✓ Usually, students must start to repay the loan 6 months after they leave their full-time program.

Etienne gets help from the assistant principal

Etienne: I want to go to college or university. I can live at home. How much will my first year cost?



Mr. Rooney: Tuition, books and supplies cost about \$7,000 today.

Costs will be higher in 4 years. Let's plan for \$8,000 for school and \$4,000 for living costs.

There are many ways to pay for college. First, work hard in school now. High marks will help when you apply for scholarships.

Mr. Rooney: Many students work during college too.

You can work full time in the summer. You can work part time while you take your classes.



Can your mom help pay for college?

Etienne: Yes, she started an RESP for me. There is \$1,500 in it.

I saved \$600 from my summer jobs and birthday gifts. I'll add it to my RESP.



Mr. Rooney: That's great! You can also get a student loan. You apply for it in Grade 12.

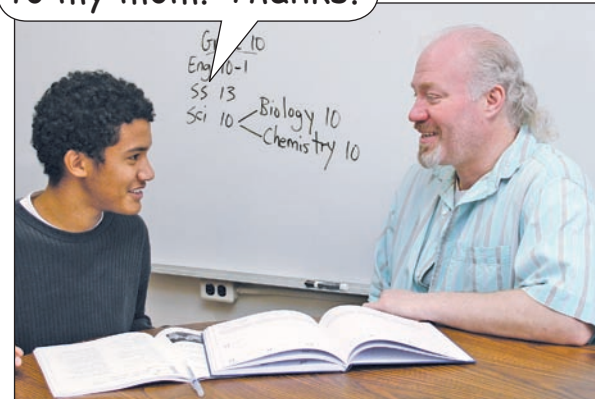
Now let's make a budget for your first year of college.



My budget for 1 year

from scholarships, grants, bursaries	\$ 2,000
from my savings and RESP (in 4 years)	\$ 4,800
from a student loan	\$ 5,200
Total	\$ 12,000

I'll show the budget to my mom. Thanks.



Get help and information

Talk to someone at your child's school

Do you have questions about your child's education? Talk to someone at your child's school. For example:

- your child's teacher
- the guidance counsellor
- the assistant principal
- the ESL teacher

Talk to them at parent-teacher-student conferences. Or call the school to make an appointment. Or send a note.



What to talk about

The school can help you and your child do many things. For example:

- explore your child's skills and interests
- help your child choose courses for junior and senior high school
- apply for scholarships
- find out about student loans
- find out about post-secondary programs and costs

Homework clubs

Some schools and immigrant-serving agencies have homework clubs. They are often for students learning English as a second language (ESL).

Students get extra help from a teacher or volunteers. The club may meet at a school or library.



Mentors

Some schools have a mentor program. Adults volunteer to be mentors. The school matches a mentor with a student.

The mentor and student do many things together. They often meet once a week.

ALIS website



ALIS (sounds like Alice) is a website.

✓ It has information about many things. For example:

- kinds of jobs
- schools and programs
- student loans
- scholarships
- apprenticeship programs

✓ You can order many resources too.

Go to: alis.alberta.ca

Where to get this guide

✓ Schools, libraries and agencies in Alberta can order free copies of **Learning after High School** from the ALIS website.

✓ You can also read a tabloid-sized version of **Learning after High School**.

✓ You can download and print Teaching Notes too. These notes have learning activities.

Go to:

alis.alberta.ca/publications



In the search box, type:

Learning after High School

Tips for parents

Marilyn: teacher



“Make sure your child shows you notes from school. Please sign and return forms right away.”

Brian: guidance counsellor

“Some kids don't know what they want to do. That's okay. But plan ahead. Your child might go to post-secondary school one day.”



Bruce: assistant principal



“All kids are different. Try not to compare your teen to other students. Teens have lots of ups and downs!”

Harnaik: ESL teacher



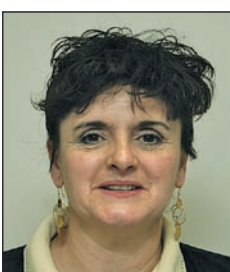
“Some teens come to Canada from other countries. It can take them 5 years or more to know English well. Be patient.”

Charlotte: Aboriginal school counsellor

“Try to be positive about school. Encourage your children to finish high school and to study after high school too.”



Wendy: phys-ed teacher



“It is important for kids to be active. Exercise helps them feel good. It helps them handle stress.”

Special thanks to the people who helped with this guide.

The stories in this guide are fictional. The people in the photos are volunteers. They portray fictional characters.

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