

Monday March 9, 2015.

Dear WTK Key Contacts and School Principals:

This year, the Welcome to Kindergarten program has decided to partner with a non-profit organization, SmartSAVER. This letter outlines the rationale for this partnership and our decision to allow the SmartSAVER information card to be included with our WTK resources for families, this year.

**Who is SmartSAVER?**

SmartSAVER is a program of the Omega Foundation, a Canadian registered charity. SmartSAVER is a creative marketing initiative that helps lower-income parents become successful savers using Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) and the Canada Learning Bond (CLB).

**What is the *Canada Learning Bond*?**

The Canada Learning Bond is a federally-funded education savings grant for children of lower-income families. The Canada Learning Bond offers up to \$2,000 in RESP contributions, with no family contribution required.

**Why does Welcome to Kindergarten partner with SmartSAVER in promoting the *Canada Learning Bond*?**

1. *This program fits with our WTK mandate.* The *Canada Learning Bond* engages young families with modest incomes in providing funds to establish valuable RESPs, at an early age.
2. *The funds are free.* The program offers RESP funds for children whose families qualify for the National Child Benefit Supplement. It does not require any matching funds from families. Families may choose to contribute to their RESP, at any time.
3. *The application process is easy and there are no fees.* The SmartSAVER online application is very simple and straightforward to complete. The online application is followed by a phone call from the chosen financial institution back to the family to complete the application process.

**Who is eligible?**

The child must be born in 2004 or later. The family must have been eligible for the National Child Benefit Supplement as part of the Canada Child Tax benefit. Currently, over 1.4 million children are eligible to receive the Bond. View: [Jesse's Story](#).

**What do families need to begin the process?**

1. Access to a computer and the website: <http://www.StartMyRESP.ca/wtk>
2. SIN numbers for the child and the applicant.

Extensive research confirms the positive impact of early savings on children's educational outcomes from improved high school completion to greater post-secondary success. The WTK program strives to support families with strategies and resources that make early learning and play a priority in the home and support children in a successful transition to school. *The Canada Learning Bond* allows families to view their children's growth and development within the context of a bright future where opportunities for post-secondary training or education are realistic possibilities.

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