

THE ONTARIO CHILD BENEFIT AND CHANGES TO SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATES

The 2009 Ontario Budget announced that beginning in July, the [Ontario Child Benefit](#) will increase to a maximum of \$1,100 per child annually.

In support of this increase, social assistance rates will change and the maximum [Transition Child Benefit](#) amount will increase. No family types on social assistance will be worse off as a result of these changes.

Certain child-related supplements that are included in social assistance rates are being partially or fully rolled into the [Ontario Child Benefit](#). These include the age-related supplement for children age 13 to 17 and the sole-support parent supplement.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE RATE CHANGES

Ontario Works

If you have a child under age 18 and are on the Ontario Works program, you may see the following changes in your social assistance payment if you rent or own your home, or live with your parents:

- If you are a single parent with a child under age 18, the amount you receive for your family may be lower.
- If you have a child age 13 to 17, you will no longer receive an age-related amount for that child.

Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)

If you have a child age 13 to 17 and are on the ODSP, the amount you receive for that child will be lower.

These changes mean:

- you will receive less from Ontario Works or the ODSP **but**
- the increase in your monthly [Ontario Child Benefit](#) payment will make up the difference.

Families will continue to receive other help for their children through social assistance (such as shelter allowance and health benefits). You can also claim some or all of your child care costs if you are working.

Families not receiving the [Ontario Child Benefit](#), or receiving less than the maximum amount of the [Ontario Child Benefit](#) may be eligible for a Transition Child Benefit.

THE ONTARIO CHILD BENEFIT

The [Ontario Child Benefit](#) was introduced in 2007 to give low- and moderate-income families the help they need to provide for their children.

The 2009 Ontario Budget announced that the phase-in of the [Ontario Child Benefit](#) will be accelerated by two years, providing up to \$1,100 annually per child starting this July. This represents an 83 per cent increase in the maximum benefit compared to 2008.

Depending on your family income, you may be eligible for the [Ontario Child Benefit](#), if you meet all of the following requirements:

- Children must be registered for the Canada Child Tax Benefit.
- A person must be the primary caregiver for one or more children under age 18.
- A person must be a resident of Ontario.
- The primary caregiver (and spouse, if applicable) must file income tax returns every year.

The amount of [Ontario Child Benefit](#) a family receives will be based on:

- a family's adjusted net income, and
- the number of dependent children under the age of 18.

TRANSITION CHILD BENEFIT

The Transition Child Benefit is a benefit for families on social assistance that are not receiving the Ontario Child Benefit or are receiving less than the maximum amount of the [Ontario Child Benefit](#).

You do not need to apply for the Transition Child Benefit. If you are eligible, your local Ontario Works or ODSP office will add it to your Ontario Works or ODSP payment.

Your eligibility for the Transition Child Benefit is based on the information you give to your local Ontario Works or ODSP office to calculate your Ontario Works or ODSP payment. Also, to receive the Transition Child Benefit you must be trying or have tried to get the [Ontario Child Benefit](#) and the National Child Benefit Supplement.

If you are already receiving the Transition Child Benefit, you may see a higher monthly amount on your Ontario Works or ODSP payment stub as the maximum monthly Transition Child Benefit and the [Ontario Child Benefit](#) will **increase** at the same time.

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY

Announced on December 4, 2008, Ontario's poverty reduction strategy aims to reduce the number of children living in poverty by 25 per cent over five years – lifting 90,000 kids out of poverty – by boosting benefits for low-income families and enhancing publicly-funded education.

The strategy will represent an additional annual investment of over \$1.4 billion at full implementation – including \$300 million in new targeted initiatives:

- \$1.3 billion annually for the Ontario Child Benefit.
- \$70 million annually in a range of new educational and community projects, such as parenting supports for low-income families and outreach programs for vulnerable youth.
- \$54 million in down-payments made in the 2008 Budget for dental care for low-income Ontarians and an expanded student nutrition program. The Budget also included \$100 million in one-time funding to assist with repairs to about 4,000 affordable housing units.

The strategy also includes the implementation of full-day learning for four and five year olds, with part of the initial focus on low-income neighbourhoods.

Read about the Ontario government's plan to [break the cycle](#) of poverty.