

Independent Living

Supporting Independent Youth

Peel Children's Aid Independence Program provides intensive one-to-one service and support for Crown Wards, aged 16 to 18, and former Crown Wards, 18 and 21, who are trying to gain the necessary life skills that will allow them to achieve complete independence in the community.

Peel Children's Aid also provides ongoing support and financial assistance to all eligible former Crown Wards.

Peel Children's Aid encourages youth to pursue educational goals, providing annual scholarships and bursaries for appropriate applicants.

Some of the annual bursaries provided through the generosity of our supporters are:

The Jim Ho Bursary—started in 2000 by a former Peel Children's Aid worker.

The Peel Senior Police Officers' Association Bursary—first presented in 1990.

The Knights of Columbus Heart Lake Council 9108 Bursary established in 1995.

The Carl Ingebertson Bursary—created in 1992 by The Mutual Group in recognition of Carl Ingebertson's service to the Region.

The Program

Since 1985, Peel Children's Aid has been committed to providing an intensive and specialized program for some of our Wards who are living independently in the community. This program is focused on youths sixteen years of age and over and is designed to help them optimize their life skills, achieve their education and career goals and pave the way to adult self-sufficiency.

The Independence Program staff specialize in youth-related issues and actively share their knowledge and perspective with other Peel Children's Aid workers and community support organizations.

Program Eligibility

The following are eligible for participation in the Peel Children's Aid Independence Program.

Wards of Peel Children's Aid between the ages of 16 and 18 who are struggling with independence-related issues such as housing, or budgeting.

Former Crown Wards between the ages of 18 and 21 who are seeking assistance with specific independence goals such as education, self-esteem or peer relationships.

Youths who require intensive worker involvement to successfully acquire and manage tasks associated with day-to-day living.

Youth who may be motivated to start an independent life, but who lack the necessary direction and experience to do so.

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Independence Services

The Independence Program is staffed by Child and Youth Workers who are highly experienced in working with adolescents and young adults. They work intensively with the young people in the Program, providing a range of critical services and supports. They are on hand to lend an ear, offer a helping hand and help find a path to achieving future goals.

Independence services include:

- Individual counselling
- Life Skills counselling & group work
- Budget counselling
- Financial support
- Independence Support Group
- Youth Criminal Justice system advocacy
- Educational and housing advocacy
- Job search and training programs
- Liaison with community services
- Vocational assessment facilitation
- Information sharing and referral
- Crisis intervention
- Health-related counselling
- Treatment and residential services advocacy

Independence skill training for agency personnel and other resource workers is also provided through the Independence Program.

Achieving Independence

Peel Children's Aid Independence Program provides intensive one-to-one support for eligible youth between the ages of 16 and 21. These individuals will acquire important life skills to help them achieve independence and self-sufficiency.

Peel Children's Aid also provides on-going individual and financial support to eligible former Crown Wards.