

Before you open an RESP

Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs) are savings plans to help save for post-secondary education.

Know who is involved in an RESP

Subscriber

- Opens the RESP and puts money to the plan
- Is the decision maker of the account and owns and controls the money in the plan
- Does not have to be related to the child

Primary Caregiver (PCG)

- Person primarily responsible for the care and upbringing of a child, for example the parent or legal guardian
- Person eligible to receive the Canada child benefit (CCB) payment for the child

Beneficiary

- Receives the money for use towards post-secondary education, for example the child of the subscriber

Promoter

- Company that offers RESPs, for example a bank
- Manages the RESP account as well as helps the subscriber request for government grants

Learn about the types of RESPs

There are three types of RESPs: individual plans, family plans, and group plans. An individual RESP is suitable if you are saving for a beneficiary over the age of 21 or if you are not related to the child that you are saving for. A family RESP is ideal if you are saving for two or more children. Group plans require you to contribute fixed amounts on a set schedule. They have stricter rules, higher fees, and penalties if you miss a payment.

Learn more about each type in **The difference between individual, family and group RESPs.**

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1. Individual plans

Suitable if you are saving for a beneficiary over the age of 21 or if you are not related to the child that you are saving for.

2. Family plans

Ideal if you are saving for two or more children.

3. Group plans

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Find an RESP promoter

You can open an RESP at two types of promoters:

1. Financial institutions

Banks, credit unions, mutual fund companies, investment firms and trust companies

2. Scholarship plan dealers

Companies that specialize in group RESPs

You can find a [list of RESP promoters](#) in the Employment and Social Development Canada website. Make sure the promoter you choose offers the government grants that you are looking for.

Ask questions and shop around

Depending on the RESP plan and promoter you choose, there will be different rules and restrictions. Shop around to find the type of plan and the promoter that best meets your needs.

Some things to consider while comparing RESP plans and promoters:

- Number of beneficiaries
- Age of beneficiaries
- Investment options
- Risk and return of investments
- Fees, costs, and penalties
- Ability to withdraw funds
- Cancelling the plan

Read the fine print

Be sure to read all of the information the promoter provides to you about how the plan works, rules, fees, and penalties before you sign any contracts.