**Storwell Provides a $2,000 Annual Bursary for Former Foster Children and Youth in Care Seeking Post-Secondary Education**

Foster children and youth in care are some of the most underrepresented groups when it comes to financial support for post-secondary education. According to the Children’s Aid Foundation of Canada, right now there are approximately 63,000 Canadian children living in permanent care with foster families, extended family, or in group homes. More so, a 2012 study in the medical journal, *The Lancet* observed that Manitoba’s rate of children in care is among the highest in the world. Despite these startling numbers, there are very few bursaries and scholarships targeted towards this demographic, which receive relatively little support once they exit the foster care system.

When a young person “ages out” of foster care they lose access to many of the supports available through the child welfare system. While that age varies between provinces and territories, aging out usually occurs between the ages of 18-21. Once a young person reaches that age, they are expected to live as independent adults, with only limited supports available to them. Many young people leaving foster care do not have the same educational and employment opportunities as their contemporaries, leading to an employment rate 20% less than their peers. For every 1,000 youths in Canadian foster care, only eight go on to graduate with a post-secondary education.

The vast majority of former foster youth have a desire to attend university or pursue other post-secondary education, yet fewer qualified former foster youth pursue post-secondary education compared to their peers. When university or post-secondary education is pursued, significantly fewer former foster youth finish their studies compared to same age peers. This lack of advanced education can have a substantial impact on a former foster youth’s employment opportunities moving forward. The difference in earnings over a lifetime is over a million dollars between a university graduate and someone who did not complete high school.

To help combat the overwhelming lack of support that foster children and youth in care receive when it comes to financial aid, Storwell Self Storage decided to create an initiative that can help these children after they have aged out of care and as they pursue post-secondary education. Along with providing secure and affordable self-[storage units in Toronto](https://www.storwell.com/), Storwell is also devoted to helping out the community through various charitable causes and social initiatives. The aim of the Storwell Foster Children Bursary Program is to provide foster children and youth in care with resources and opportunities that might be otherwise unavailable to them. This is an annual award of $2,000, eligibility requirements and access to the application form can be found at: <https://www.storwell.com/bursary-application>