



# COMMON CENTS

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# Summer



## Debt Problem Growing Out Of Control?

Are you “stressed out” or in financial trouble? Is your debt growing out of control? Review the danger signs below:

Warning signs of over spending and too much debt:

- Charging items you would normally buy if you were paying cash. (i.e. groceries)
- You dip into your savings account for items and never replenish the supply.
- You have no saving account.
- You're still paying for Christmas when Christmas arrives.
- Discussions of monthly bills become arguments.
- You have no budget.
- You're purchasing expensive brand names to “keep up” with others your age or in your income bracket.
- You've applied for more credit cards in an attempt to pay off other credit card balances.



If you or someone you know is experiencing financial crisis please contact our office (705) 254-1424 where a professional counsellor will work with you in a relaxed and fully confidential manner. Or visit our website at [www.creditcounsellingssm.ca](http://www.creditcounsellingssm.ca)

## STUDENTS SHOULD CONSIDER A BUDGET BEFORE HEADING OFF TO POST SECONDARY

Many students have already experienced running low on cash at one time or another. This can be due to many different factors, and certainly a student budget requires flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. However, in order to make your student finances as effective as possible, please consider setting a spending plan.

Before attending school, costs should be identified. Statistics Canada said that in order to attend a University in Ontario in 2006, the average cost was \$16,200. This was broken down as follows:

PROVINCE	TUITION (1-5)	COMPULSORY FEES	RESIDENCE & MEALS	TEXTBOOKS & SUPPLIES	PERSONAL EXPENSES	ESTIMATED COST
ONTARIO	\$4,900	\$700	\$7,100	\$1,000	\$2,500	\$16,200

In order to properly establish a spending plan, one needs to determine all available income. This would include money from student loans, money earned over the summer or already saved for school, money that parents may provide, allowances, gifts, etc. Once you know what these numbers are, you can begin a spending plan.

We realize that this can be difficult as student loans are paid in two lump sums, but that makes the spending plan all the more important and effective. What you should consider is adding up all the income that you expect to have available, then subtract the large fixed costs. Using the above example, we will assume that you will have \$16,200 available. Your fixed costs are the tuition, compulsory fees, residence & meal plan and books (\$4900 + \$700 + \$7100 + \$1000) In other words, \$16,200 minus \$13,700 leaves you with \$2500 for personal expenses.

This may seem like a lot in the beginning, but we need to take into account that we need that money to last approximately 9 months (September to May). This means you should only withdraw \$280 per month (\$2500 personal expenses divided by 9 months away). That \$280 per month needs to provide you with any necessities that will be incurred, such as transportation, recreation, toiletries, cosmetics, etc.

If \$280 will not be enough for your spending plans, then you either need to change your plans or consider part-time employment to increase your available income. Most importantly, you would like to have a comfortable schooling experience, and by allowing your money to stretch over the school year, you will be ensuring you do not run out. Let's face it, school life can be stressful enough, you don't want to encounter it knowing that you spent your money in the first few weeks, and have no money for the remainder of the school year.

## Attention Employers!

Want your staff to get the most out of their paycheques? Want to ensure that your staff has less stress and is able to perform their duties as effectively as possible?

We can help! Our preventative education program provides a very informative group presentation to employees. We talk about budgeting, money management systems, wise credit management techniques, and debt relief options. If you would like to provide your employees with this valuable information, we would be more than happy to tailor a session to meet your needs. Events that we have participated in are: lunch and learn sessions and workday presentations.

This is a free service and includes resource materials for your employees to take home. For more information call Credit Counselling Service at **254-1424** today!

## DID YOU KNOW?

You don't have to be drowning in debt to use our services. Learn how to make better use of your money and achieve your future goals! We offer free confidential money management sessions. It's never too late to learn how to handle your resources better!

Call us today...  
**(705) 254-1424**

## A SUMMER OF SAVINGS

Summer's here! As we shake off the confines of winter—staying indoors, wearing heavy clothing, looking pasty—we long to get outside to plant our gardens and barbecue our brats (sausages, not children).

It's no myth that you can live more cheaply in the summer. The most obvious is heating costs, but there are many more opportunities to cut costs and even sock away some extra money. Take a tip from the squirrels: saving for next winter is a good habit to adopt!

Besides turning off your furnace, here are some tips on saving more money on your energy bills:

- 1) make sure your heating & cooling systems are operating at peak efficiency.
- 2) close blinds, drapes & shades during the hottest part of the day to keep sunlight from heating your home.
- 3) install a ceiling fan to create a cool breeze and keep the air in the home circulating.
- 4) turn your water heater down to 120 degrees.
- 5) use your barbeque for cooking instead of your oven.
- 6) change all of your lights in high use areas to fluorescent light bulbs.

For those of you who have a little plot of dirt at your disposal, planting just a few easily maintained vegetables can save money on groceries, and nothing tastes better than home grown! Another good way to save on groceries is to visit the farmer's market. The taste of fresh fruit is what makes summer meals special. Summer activities can also be a source of savings. Find free and low cost activities right in your own hometown, like free concerts, summer festivals that the entire family can enjoy. Have a wonderful summer enjoying the outdoors, and saving money!

## Credit Counselling Service of Sault Ste Marie & District

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## Depth on Debt

"The only man who sticks closer to you in adversity than a friend is a creditor." Author Unknown

**Why Don't You Use Your Common Cents?  
To advertise in our next issue...  
call 254-1424 today!**

**FYI:** Regardless of the type of credit you may use, it is always very important to keep in mind that a creditor's role is to simply sell you money at a higher price.