



Transition Age Youth Resource: Accessing CalKIDS College Savings

CalKIDS is a California program that funds up to \$1,500 for eligible newborns and public school students to save for college, trade school or career programs. If you were in foster care and enrolled in a California public school, you may have money waiting for you in a CalKIDS account. The money can be used for college, community college, trade school, or vocational programs.

You do not need to apply to get CalKIDS funds. If you are eligible, the State of California has already opened a CalKIDS account in your name. You just need to claim it online at CalKIDS.org.

Who is Eligible for CalKIDS?

All children born in California on or after July 1, 2022 have a CalKIDS Scholarship waiting for them.

- \$500 automatic deposit in a CalKIDS account; and
- \$500 additional deposit in a CalKIDS account for eligible students identified as a foster youth; and
- \$500 additional deposit in a CalKIDS account for eligible students identified as homeless, plus:
 - \$25 for children born between July 2022 and June 2023
 - \$100 for children born on or after July 1, 2023
 - \$25 bonus when you claim your CalKIDS Scholarship Account
 - \$50 bonus when you link your CalKIDS account with a ScholarShare 529 account

You must be over the age of 17 and under the age of 26 to access CalKIDS funds.

How to Claim Your CalKIDS Account

To claim your CalKIDS account, visit CalKIDS.org and enter the following:

- County where you attended school (based on academic year chart – see CalKIDS website),
- Your birthdate, and
- Your 10-digit Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) OR the unique registration code on the letter you may have received.

A Statewide Student Identifier (SSID) is a unique, confidential 10-digit identification number assigned to every public K-12 student in California to track their educational data and ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements. To find your SSID, contact your current or last school district of enrollment.

You do not need a Social Security Number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number to claim your CalKIDS account.

How You Can Use CalKIDS Funds

CalKIDS funds can only be used for qualified education expenses, including:

- Tuition and enrollment fees;
- Books and required school supplies, such as textbooks, lab supplies, and basic items like pens and paper;
- Computer equipment, such as computers, printers, and other necessary equipment for your education, and
- Room and board (if enrolled at least half-time) and the room and board are paid directly to the college or university.

Using CalKIDS Funds

To request a CalKIDS distribution, you must:

- Be at least 17 years of age
- Be enrolled in an Eligible Institution
- Request the distribution on the online portal and provide*:
 - Name and address of education institution
 - Self-certification that you are enrolled in an Eligible Institution
 - Self-certification that you were a resident of California for the 12 months preceding the request
 - Student's ID number issued by the Eligible Institution you are attending, and
 - Dollar amount of the distribution

A CalKIDS award is treated as a scholarship and does not need to be paid back. You must be enrolled in an eligible school that accepts federal financial aid. A taxpayer ID is NOT required to request a distribution. Contact your school's financial aid office to determine if CalKIDS funding will impact your ability to receive financial aid.

What is an Eligible Institution?

Eligible Institutions generally include postsecondary schools that are eligible to participate in federal financial aid programs. This includes thousands of colleges, universities, and technical/vocational schools across the nation and even some abroad. Your school's financial aid office or admissions office can confirm if they are an eligible school. If you cannot confirm whether your institution is qualified and you believe it may be qualified, please send an email to support@calkids.org with proof of enrollment and information of the school's status indicating it is eligible to participate in federal financial aid programs.

Establishing a Personal College Savings Account

If you or someone else wants to save more money for your education, you can open a [ScholarShare 529 account](#) and link it to your CalKIDS account using the online portal at CalkIDS.org. This is optional and is not required to access CalKIDS funds.

How to Ask for Help Determining Your Eligibility and Accessing Your CalKIDS Account

- Ask your social worker, probation officer or other supportive adults (members of your CFT, your attorney, mentors, CASA, teachers, coaches, school counselors, etc.) what they can do assist you in determining your eligibility and accessing your CalKIDS account.
- Contact your current or last school district of enrollment to find your SSID.
- Ask your school's financial aid office or admissions office to confirm if they are an eligible school.
- Ask your school's financial aid office to determine if CalKIDS funding will impact your ability to receive financial aid.

Where to Get More Information and Help

If you need help accessing your account or have questions:

- Visit CalkIDS.org.
- Call the CalKIDS Help Line: 1-888-445-2377.