



# Financial Planning Is Good for Everyone

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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About four years ago, my oldest grandson got a part-time job in a grocery store. He graduated from high school last year and even though he was eligible for scholarships, decided that he would continue working so moved into a full-time position in the produce department. He likes the job but is kind of an oxymoron. He doesn't have a driver's license, credit rating or independent living yet, at the same time, he has a great deal of responsibility in his job and a fairly large bank account.

It's kind of like having one foot on the pier and one in the canoe!

Alexander wants to live the life of an adult because he is facing his nineteenth birthday, but, at the same time, there are a few things that are standing in his way. For example, it is not easy to build a good credit rating when you have never needed credit.

During my last visit to Okotoks, we talked about how to build a good financial future and I suggested that we visit the Credit Union where he has been depositing his pay cheques in order to learn about his options for investing and building credit.

The experience we had was wonderful! First of all, we booked an appointment with a specialist named Barbara and, while we were waiting for the appropriate time to arrive, went to see Alexander's employer to ask about pension and other benefits that he might be eligible to receive. When we returned to the Credit Union Barbara was not only friendly but also wise. She asked an investment specialist named John to join us and, for the next hour all four of us shared ideas about money.

John said two things that I thought were particularly brilliant. First of all, he asked Alexander "What are your goals?" He immediately got my grandson thinking about future possibilities and how important it is to set and know exactly where you are headed in the future. Then John said, "The very best investment you can ever make is to get an education".

Now, John could have taken Alexander's money and moved it into something where he would have earned a commission for himself. He could have set up a locked in account or focused the conversation on interest rates. Instead, he gave good solid advice that I know will help my grandson make good choices in the future.

Then Barbara, in her kind and thoughtful way, helped Alexander to apply for his first credit card. That opened up the opportunity to talk about financial responsibility, how FICO scores are calculated and the dangers of having too much credit. She gathered together a handful of booklets on budgeting, saving and borrowing for him to take home. It didn't surprise me that when we were leaving, she encouraged Alexander to stop in and visit with her again.

As a psychologist with four degrees who believes in goal setting you can very well believe that I was beaming as much as Alexander when we headed to the car.

I am so grateful that we had the opportunity to meet with two knowledgeable and caring people who made their biggest investment of that day in my grandson.

Do you or someone who you love to need a little education and wise advice when it comes to finances? Perhaps recommending a trip to a bank for a conversation about money would

also help reap dividends in the form of knowledge. You never know, it might result in a more promising future.