

The Bear Essentials Program helps families cover unexpected or extraordinary expenses related to their child's health and special needs, especially families whose needs fall between the cracks of other available programs and/or are of an urgent need. Referrals to the program are accepted from health professionals working with Island Health or one of the Foundation's qualified community partners.

Please attempt to access other applicable resources before requesting funds from the Bear Essentials Program. These resources and applicable links are included below:

Community Specific	
Comox Valley	
YANA—You Are Not Alone	yanacomoxvalley.com
Comox Valley Military Family Resource Centre	familyforce.ca
Campbell River	
Cameryn's Cause for Kids	camerynscause.com
Victoria	
Esquimalt Military Family Resource Centre	esquimaltmfrc.com
CFOX Santas Anonymous Society	cfaxsantas.com
Accommodation Specific	
Jeneece Place—Victoria	jeneeceplace.org
Easter Seal Houses—Vancouver	lionsbc.ca
Ronald McDonald House—Vancouver	rmhc.org
BC Family Residence Program—Vancouver (when treatment location is BC Children's Hospital or Sunnyhill)	bcfamilyresidence.gov.bc.ca
Travel Specific	
Travel Assistance Program	health.gov.bc.ca/tapbc
Wheels for Wellness	wheelsforwellness.com
Shriners Care Cruiser	shriners.bc.ca
Hope Air	hopeair.org
Government Programs & Health Services	
Ministry of Children and Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Funding • At Home Program • Family Support Services 	mcf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs
Ministry of Children and Families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Funding 	eia.gov.bc/publicat/bcea/healthykids.htm

Ministry of Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Services Plan • PharmaCare 	health.gov.bc.ca/msp
Intertribal Health Authority	intertribalhealth.ca
Foundations & Societies	
Vancouver Foundation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving in Action—Family Fund 	givinginaction.ca
Variety the Children’s Charity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Grants • Freedom Grants • Future Grants 	variety.bc.ca
Help Fill a Dream <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Assistance Fund • Quality of Life Initiative 	helpfilladream.com
President’s Choice Children’s Charity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Needs Grant 	presidentschoice.ca
Canadian Forces Personnel Assistance Fund	familynavigator.ca
Canadian Union of Postal Workers	specialneedsproject.ca

Guide to Completing the Application Form

Applicant Eligibility

Eligibility requirements:

- Application is for a child or youth aged 0-19 and his/her family.
- Child/youth is a resident of Vancouver Island or the Gulf Islands (for at least three months).
- Family resources are insufficient to cover the items in this application.
- The maximum funding of \$1,000 per child per lifetime has not been exceeded.

Applicant Eligibility

All applications must include family contact information and signed consent to share this information between the referring professional or agency and Children’s Health Foundation of Vancouver Island. In addition, we encourage families and professionals to share their stories about the Bear Essentials Program to let our donors know the difference they are making in children’s lives.

Explanation of Request

The Bear Essentials Program funds requests in four categories:

1. **Out of town travel** for medical appointments—gas, parking, food, or accommodation
2. **Personal health or support items** such as car seats, eyeglasses, Braille materials, hearing resources or dental care
3. **Therapeutic resources** such as music therapy, art therapy, therapeutic riding, or transportation to therapy sessions
4. **Medical or therapeutic equipment or supplies** to address special needs

The dollar value must be indicated and supported by documentation such as medical or therapy appointment schedule, quotes for equipment, supplies, or personal items.

Please note that Bear Essentials does not cover shelter, rent, hydro, telephone or internet.

Approval Process

Completed applications must be signed by the referring professional. The signature of the authorized Executive Director or Manager indicates support for the application.

- For **Island Health and South Island** applications, please submit to:

Heather Smith
Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health
2400 Arbutus Road
Victoria BC V8N 1P8
Tel: 250-519-6992 | Fax: 250-519-6932
email: heather.d.smith@viha.ca

- For **Central and North Island** applications, please submit to:

Anita Brassard
c/o CV Community Health Centre
961 England Avenue
Courtenay BC V9N 2N7
Tel: 250-702-6131
email: anita.brassard@viha.ca

Receipt and approval of applications will be verified by email. Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island will arrange payment with the referring professional.

Thank you for applying to the Bear Essentials Program. If you have any questions, please call the numbers listed above.