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PRESS RELEASE

Canadian kids are absorbing their parents' financial stress, new Vanguard Canada study finds

TORONTO (September 1, 2026) — Life in Canada has rarely felt more expensive and according to a new Vanguard Canada survey of Canadian parents, that financial pressure isn't just affecting adults.

Parents are working hard to shield their children from money stress. Among financially stressed parents, 68% say they feel pressure to hide their financial worries from their kids and 36% avoid talking about money at home altogether.

But the survey shows those efforts aren't enough. Seventy per cent of financially stressed parents say their children are overhearing money conversations at home anyway and those kids are nearly five times more likely to feel anxious about money than their peers.

"Children are remarkably perceptive. Parents may choose not to talk about money, but children are still listening, watching, and forming their relationship with finances based on what they see and hear at home," said Sal D'Angelo, Head of Vanguard Investments Canada Inc. "Financial well-being starts with education and by teaching students good habits at an early age, we can equip the next generation of Canadians to make well-informed decisions."

Financial literacy starts early with children and often at home

Children in households where money is discussed regularly show nearly three times the financial comprehension across core concepts like banking, debit and credit. But 88% of parents say those meaningful conversations don't happen until their child is 15 to 18 which is well after financial attitudes have taken shape.

Nearly half of Canadian parents (49%) say teachers should play a role in their child's financial education. Policymakers agree as Ontario recently mandated high school students to pass a financial literacy test in order to graduate.

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Vanguard's MyClassroom Economy was built to start financial conversations earlier. The free, digital K-12 program provides a classroom management resource for teachers where students earn salaries, pay rent on their desks and make spending decisions. It gives kids hands-on experience with money concepts during their most formative years and helps teachers integrate these lessons into their existing curriculum.

"MyClassroom Economy reaches children during the years when curiosity is highest and the potential to shape lifelong financial habits is greatest," D'Angelo added. "It gives teachers a ready-made way to bring money concepts to life in the classroom, no matter what kind of conversations are happening at home."

MyClassroom Economy is a comprehensive program for grades K through 12, that is designed to overlay – not interrupt – a classroom curriculum with ready-to-use classroom tools and a digital classroom teachers can customize and launch in just 30 minutes. The complete program is available to Canadian educators at vanguard.ca/en/my-classroom-economy.

About Vanguard

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About the Vanguard-Angus Reid Survey

These are the findings of a study/survey conducted by Angus Reid Group for Vanguard from March 13th to March 17th, 2026, among a representative sample of 1,014 Canadian parents of children under the age of 18 who are members of the Angus Reid Forum. The survey was conducted in English and French. For comparison purposes only, a probability sample of this size would carry a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20.

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