

Journey to Better Financial Health



National Credit Education Month: Lessons to Teach Your Kids

As March National Credit Education Month nears; this presents an excellent opportunity not only to further your own awareness about credit—but to spread some of this valuable knowledge onto your own children and other youth in your life.

Teaching your kids about credit early will help them build a foundation for responsible budgeting and spending, and help them learn about the financial burdens that can come with misusing credit. Read on to discover simple tips for teaching kids about credit.

Lesson 1: Credit Basics

Without a solid understanding of how financial decisions can affect credit, it's very easy to make mistakes that can ultimately tarnish your credit and have a long-lasting impact on your life. You

may already know this all-too-well, so by spreading awareness of credit education, you may be able to protect a child or another loved one from falling into a similar situation.

Unfortunately, according to the **U.S. News & World Report**, only 19 states across the country currently require students to take financial education classes. When teaching your kids about

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SPOTLIGHT ON SUCCESS!

Welcome to our 'Spotlight on Success' column. Each month we celebrate a client's success by sharing their experience while on the Century program.

ALLISON

Allison was already struggling to make ends meet and make the payments on her high-interest rate credit card debt when 'life' really knocked her down.
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[Click to read her Story](#)



National Credit Education Month: Lessons to Teach Your Kids

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credit, it's best to start with **the basics**. Get the conversation started by explaining how credit cards are borrowed money you can use to make purchases. Credit cards are often used to make large purchases and build overall creditworthiness.

There are also several terms that are associated with credit cards that you should teach your kids. Be sure to go over the following terms to ensure they understand the basics of credit, loans and debt:

- **Credit limit**
- **Credit card balance**
- **Interest**
- **Credit card payments**
- **Credit report**
- **Credit score**

Lesson 2: Credit Cards are Not Free Money

Help your kids understand that when a money lender (bank) gives you a credit card, they tell you how much you're allowed to borrow, which is called a credit limit. The more responsible you are with your credit card, the more they will lend you. If you do not pay back the borrowed money on time, you may have to pay a late fee on top of paying back what you've borrowed.

These late fees are called interest and will increase until you completely pay back the borrowed money.

Lesson 3: Wants vs Needs

Help kids understand that credit cards are not free money and should only be used for needs or emergencies, instead of for things they want, so they can better maintain their financial health and creditworthiness in the long term.

When teaching your children about credit limits, simply explain that there is a certain amount that the bank or lender is willing to let a user borrow. The more responsible a customer is with their credit card and payments,

the more credit the lender will be willing to offer in the future.

Make sure your child understands that even if you have a lot of credit to spend, racking up big balances is risky because you may run out of credit and not have any more to spend before you pay all of your borrowed money back.

Lesson 4: Form Good Habits Early

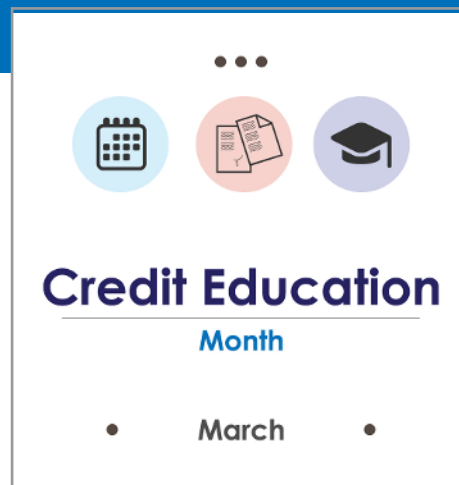
Make sure you emphasize the importance of credit scores with your children and help them picture what types of hardships come with bad credit. It's also a good time to check and review your own credit report while encouraging others in your life to do the same. Remember that you are entitled to one free copy of your credit report from each of the major reporting bureaus (Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion) each year.

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Teaching your children early on to be careful with their money, save for things they want and pay back loans or debts right away will help them establish good financial habits for the future.

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When your teen has a job or is otherwise ready to have their own spending power, consider starting them off with their own credit card account or a joint account where they are an authorized user. This way you can monitor their activity and make sure repayments are made every month, until they're ready for full financial independence and responsibility. It's a good idea to check in with them or check their credit scores every now and then to make



sure they're on track for good creditworthiness.

Observe National Credit Education Month this March, make an effort to speak with your children or other youth about the importance of credit literacy. Sharing your own experience and struggles can be helpful here (if that's something you're comfortable with) and may serve as a cautionary tale of sorts.

Many young people are falling into the same cycle of debt that previous generations have. They're carrying high credit card debt balances, struggling to afford their monthly expenses, and suffering from low credit scores. Even those who have managed to remain reasonably responsible with their finances may not understand how to check their credit reports or dispute errors/mistakes on their reports.



Things to Remember When Filing Income Tax Returns in 2022

While you're working diligently on your debt-relief program, don't forget about tax relief. The joke that the IRS is actually the "Eternal Revenue Service" isn't too far off the mark, and you'll not want to complicate your financial life further by getting out of step with the world's most powerful and relentless collection agency—the IRS.

As we get older, it seems that time passes more quickly with each passing year. So, now between January 1 and the April 15 (April 18 for 2022) deadline for filing your income tax return, those 105 days can fly by quickly. If you've done nothing much to get your return prepared, you could be facing monetary penalties for late or inaccurate filing.

Or, worse, you could be missing out on tax breaks, legal deductions, and new 2021 tax credits.

By way of a general planning roadmap, and while there is still time, there are things to remember when filing your income tax return in 2022:

Collect and organize your 2021 tax documents.

Your W2s, 1099s, and other interest and earnings statements should begin arriving in the mail or online after the new year. Gather those documents in a file folder and keep a checklist of



everything you'll need to begin preparing your return.

Decide how you are going to file

Your choices range from hiring a tax accountant to preparing your own return. Tax preparers earn their keep by doing all your paperwork and finding all your legal tax deductions. Remember, however, that they have a busy season, so your best bet is to make an appointment early in the year.

Do your own taxes and save money

If, however, you are among the middle-income earners and not interested in paying a CPA **around \$500** to prepare your federal and income taxes, you can do your own taxes using tax software or **online e-file services**.

The tie-breaker is whether or not you should itemize your deductions. If you can come up with deductions above the standard \$12,950 for single filers--\$25,900 if you're filing jointly--then you're getting into the realm of complicated forms and IRS audit triggers. If not, your filing task is simpler, and you should go the do-it-yourself route.

Look at income tax preparation software

Even if your return is one or two steps beyond simple, tax preparation software—costing about one-tenth the

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DID YOU KNOW?

Our **Facebook page** focuses on tips and articles to help you enjoy your life while saving a few dollars!

Click on the Like & Share button and LIKE us today.

HAVE A QUESTION?



Chat* with a representative directly from our website or client portal!

**Available during regular business hours only*



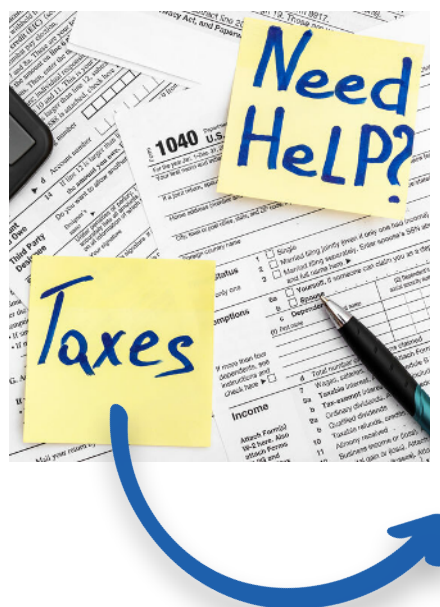
Subscribe to Our YouTube Channel

Things to Remember When Filing Income Tax Returns in 2022

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price of a CPA—can get you over the hump. There are some free versions, but pay the freight for the full-featured products and you'll get some fringe benefits of built-in auditing and accuracy checks, online advice from experts, and, in the case of H&R Block's product, an assurance that you won't get dinged by an IRS audit.

Also, you might be able to log into a free income tax filing session with your home state. Although not listed in this [IRS newsroom piece](#), Colorado is one state that has a user-friendly income tax filing site. You'll need to file your federal return first and know your adjusted gross income, among other things.



Educate yourself about tax changes this tax year

The COVID-19 pandemic saw significant tax changes in the areas of child credit and tax relief bonuses in 2021. You need to get familiar with those and other tax changes. See this [C/NET online piece](#) on 10 tax changes that could impact the size of your tax return. Or you can go straight to the source and review this [IRS news item](#) highlighting 2021 tax changes.

Plan on an extension if you need it

You can receive an [automatic filing extension](#) to mid-October (or longer if you reside outside the U.S.). The catch is that you must estimate your tax liability and pay it up front. So, the IRS will wait for the paperwork, but not for a payment you owe.

Century Value-Added Service:



**Tax Preparation,
Tax Resolution,
and Tax
Monitoring
Services**

Community Tax has extensive experience assisting taxpayers with significant IRS tax burdens. Their dedicated team is ready to provide you with a free consultation to help determine the best plan of action for your specific situation.

[Learn More](#)



**CFT
Mobile**

The mobile app, in conjunction with your Crossroads Financial Technologies account and CFTPay is available for you to [download here](#).



Want Some Extra CASH?

Refer a friend to Century
for help and make some
cash today!

[Learn More](#)

PROGRAM TIPS

Do you have additional unsecured credit card or loan accounts that are not enrolled in your debt settlement program?

For more information about adding an account or to get an account added to your Century program, please contact a Certified Debt Specialist via phone at 855-417-6643 or email at Add@centuryss.com.

Century Value-Added Service:



Do you have a cell phone? Internet? What about cable or satellite TV? Just like most of us, you're probably paying an arm and a leg for those services. Billcutterz saves you money by negotiating lower rates with your current providers.

[Learn More](#)

Need a refresher of how your Century Debt Settlement program works?

Review our new on-boarding video that reviews all aspects of your program, includes great tips for success and information about new features.

[Watch the Video](#)

4 WAYS TO APPROVE YOUR SETTLEMENT

CHOOSE THE MOST CONVENIENT METHOD FOR YOU!



1

Inbound Automated Settlement Approval

- Call us at **888-913-8784**
- Select Option 3, then Option 1
- Verify your **Century ID**
- Review the Settlement Details and Approve

2

Text Message

- You will receive a text message from '47234'
- Respond with '**Approve**' to accept your settlement offer



3

Online via MyCentury Portal or Live Chat

- Go to www.centuryss.com and choose '**Client Login**'
 - Click the red '**SETTLEMENT PENDING**' button to view all your pending settlements
 - Click on next to the Creditors name and review the settlement details
 - Scroll to the bottom and click on the '**Approve**' button
- Go to the main Century website or your MyCentury portal and start a **New Chat**.
 - Our representatives will review any pending settlements with you
 - Send your approval in the chat



4

Email

- When you have a pending settlement, **Century will send you an email** that explains the terms of your settlement.
- Follow the instructions in the email to submit your settlement approval.





Spotlight on Success — Allison

... First, it was her beloved cat, Pepper. He had been there for her through good and bad times and when Pepper required vet care, it was no surprise that Allison would do whatever was necessary to help him. The vet bills began to roll in.

Then Allison's Dad fell ill in the hospital and she was forced to help him with his bills at home. Like most people, Allison never expected these events to happen. However, now she found herself living what felt like a nightmare. Barely able to keep up with her minimum payments before her Dad fell ill, now trying to keep two households afloat was adding an enormous amount of stress to her daily life.

"I was paying my minimum payments but there were so many that it was never even making a dent in my debt," explained Allison. She decided it was time to seek help. Hoping to prevent her situation from getting any worse, she reached out to Century. One of our Certified Debt Specialists talked with her about her needs and provided her with what options would be best for her. After



reviewing her options, Allison enrolled in our debt settlement program.

She knew it would not happen overnight and trusted the process that would eventually lead her toward better financial health. **"I spoke with Jennifer and she was great. She explained the process to me and answered all of my questions. I was in so much credit card debt that this program could not have come any sooner,"** explained Allison.

Allison is working closely with our customer experience team, taking advantage of several of our convenient communication methods. **"When they have a settlement ready, they let me know and I can approve it or not. If I want to approve the settlement, Century has a really easy process to go through online or through my phone,"** Allison stated.

"I'm making progress and most of my debts are already negotiated. I'm very close to being done. I will actually have my debt completely cleared up way sooner than if I hadn't gone through Century." Allison stated.

Congratulations!

We thank you for trusting us to be part of your journey toward better financial health and celebrate your progress with the Century program!



We are always looking for better ways to service our clients. Knowing what lifestage you are currently in, helps us customize our messaging and future value added offers we can bring to you.

[Take the Survey](#)

MyCentury Portal



Review your on-boarding features, approve settlements, and information about new features.

MyCentury LOGIN

What is CAS?



Our Century Alert System (CAS), communicates the most important program notifications to you via texts, automated phone calls and emails.

[Click Here](#)

Click the button above to learn more about the features of CAS and the benefits to your program.

Avoid Finding Yourself in Credit Card Debt Again

Credit cards are a financial tool. If used wisely, they help manage finances, build credit profiles, and meet financial goals. If misused, they have the potential to create an overwhelmingly stressful financial life.

No matter how you may feel, credit cards are a necessary part of one's life in the 21st century. It is unrealistic (and arguably unwise) to think one can avoid using credit in a credit-based economy. Therefore, it is essential to know how to use credit prudently.

Stay Mindful Of The Fact That Temptations Are Everywhere.

Marketing is designed to entice consumers to open their wallets, even for things they cannot afford and purchases they do not need.

You Are Not Alone.

According to a recently released Harris Poll, nearly 50% of those polled carry credit card debt. About 40% carry debt from month to month. Approximately 25% of the respondents who carried debt had more than \$100,000 in debt.



Debt also tends to amplify inflation's impact. Other relevant stats from Harris Poll's 2021 **Financial Literacy and Preparedness Survey** include the following–

- 26% of the responding general population is more worried this year about meeting basic expenses related to the household than 12 months ago.
- 24% of the responding general population is more worried about making timely debt payments this year.

Spend Within Your Means.

With temptation everywhere, this may be easier said than done – but not impossible! It can be tempting (and convenient) to use a credit card to meet this cash flow issue when facing a monthly shortfall. Focus on spending less than your income, so it is more unlikely there will be a shortfall to manage.



Century has partnered with Century Legal Group to support the effort to settle enrolled accounts with certain creditors.

Your Benefits with Century Legal Group

✓
No Additional Fees

✓
Simpler Negotiations

✓
2 Experienced Teams

[learn more](#)

Speeding Up Your Century Program

The funds you deposit into your debt settlement program every month are the fuel that powers your program to success.

If your financial situation changes and you have the ability to increase your deposits (either one time or an increase to your scheduled deposit amount), these funds may reduce the length of your program and may even mean you are able to take advantage of a better settlement... quicker.

[Click here](#) for more information on how you can contribute additional funds. Investing in your future and the relief of settling your debt early, is worth every extra penny you can contribute.



Scan the QR code

with your smartphone to ensure our important contact numbers below are set up as a contact in your phone.

■ **724-861-3401**

■ **Our text number - 47234**



Your Century Program

'Who's Who' Contact Sheet

On your journey to financial freedom, you are receiving communication from several different support organizations. To keep the roles and contacts clear, here is a snapshot for your reference:

PROGRAM PARTNER



Century Contact Information:

customer care@centuryss.com | 888.913.8784 | centuryss.com

Century Support Services is your debt settlement services company. Our goal is to resolve your unsecured debt in the shortest amount of time possible by executing on a plan that fits your budget and negotiating with your creditors to get the best settlements for you.

CONSUMER ADVOCATE



UCAN Contact Information:

877.462.8226 | ucan.net

UCAN (United Consumer Advocacy Network) specializes in consumer advocacy issues. As a Century client, your membership to UCAN is included with your account. In order to use your UCAN services, you simply need to contact them. They can start assisting you immediately with any collector harassment you may be experiencing.

3rd Party Bank Affiliates (Payment Processors)

Third party affiliate banks work with Century debt settlement clients to help administer payments (deposits) in and disbursements out of your Dedicated Accounts. Neither of these payment processors has any legal affiliation with Century. The third party affiliate banks enable you to accumulate and control your own funds within your Dedicated Accounts. These funds are then used to pay your creditors once settlements are authorized. You will work with one of the processors below.



CFTC Contact Information:

888.348.4543 | cftpay.com



Global Contact Information:

800.398.7191 | ghllc.com/login



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