

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact Julie Beeman
Family Resource Management and Entrepreneurship Agent, Wildcat Extension District
juliesmith@ksu.edu (620) 331-2690

Smart Ways to Save Money on Back-to-School Shopping

August is here, and students are preparing to head back to the classroom. Families face the reality that summer is over and the reminder that it's time to shop for school supplies, clothing, and technology. Families can keep from breaking the budget by planning ahead. Here are three simple strategies to help stretch your dollar when school shopping.

1. First, create a plan. Take an inventory of what you already have. Supplies such as pencils, backpacks, calculators, and even notebooks can often be reused. Create a list based on your school's required supply list and stick to it. Shopping with a plan helps reduce impulse purchases and ensures you buy only what you need.
2. Next, compare prices. Many stores offer back-to-school sales. Compare prices online and in local advertisements. Use digital coupons and consider purchasing store-brand items. Many are comparable in quality to name brands and are offered at a lower price. If your state offers a tax-free shopping weekend, plan your shopping trip then to maximize your savings.
3. Finally, buy smart and think long-term. When possible, invest in quality items that will last. Durable backpacks, lunch containers, and water bottles may cost a little more up front, but can save money over time. Consider buying in bulk for frequently used items and splitting larger packages with friends or family members to reduce costs.

Back-to-school shopping can be overwhelming. By planning ahead, shopping wisely, and making thoughtful purchasing decisions, families can reduce expenses while ensuring students have everything they need for a successful school year. For families in financial distress, community groups often help provide school supplies. Check with your school and don't be afraid to ask for help if needed.

For more information, contact Julie Beeman at (620) 784-5337 or by emailing juliesmith@ksu.edu.

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