

Back To School Shopping Can Be Done On A Budget

(KAIR)--It's something that most children don't want to think about, but the start of a new school year is right around the corner.

While students may dread a return to the classroom, parents have to deal with the cost associated with their children going back to school after the summer break.

According to the National Retail Federation, the average back to school spending for families with children in Kindergarten through twelfth grade is about \$650. In total, families spend about \$26.7 billion for K-12 children. While these costs can hit all at once, K-State Research and Extension Specialist Elizabeth Kiss says that back to school shopping does not have to wait until right before school starts. She suggests spreading it out as long as you can. Figure out the most important things to buy first and get those before anything else. School supplies should be first, but things such as winter clothes can wait until later in the year.

Because children can grow so fast, parents are encouraged to plan for clothes purchases, but wait until later to actually buy them. Kiss says that most retailers can assist with this by offering sales throughout the year.

If the end of the summer is sneaking up on you, and you haven't even started to plan for back to school purchases, Kiss says now is the time to take a closer look at your financial situation. She suggests looking at what your financial situation will be for the next couple of months, and what you realistically have to spend.

Kiss says you should also consider any extra-curricular activities your child may be participating in when you plan your back to school budget.

More information on back to school shopping or family financial management is available at county and district extension offices. Or, by going to ksre.ksu.edu.

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