

January 2015

Technology reliance leading to major handwriting decline and financial strain on families

Australian school children's increasing reliance on technology has led to an alarming number of students struggling to put pen to paper, with almost two thirds claiming it would be challenging to hand write assignments, according to Officeworks research.

A national survey of 1000 school aged children revealed students' dependence on technology is also adding financial strain on parents who anticipate spending an extra \$620 per child for digital requirements.

Officeworks spokesperson, finance writer and mother Justine Davies said the research results highlighted the importance of combining digital and traditional learning tools to help young minds grow.

"Cursive writing is an essential tool for cognitive development as it involves using both sides of the brain and helps children generate more ideas.

"Digital learning is here to stay but it's vital parents encourage their children to practice the art of handwriting to help prevent deterioration of the mind. This can occur when people rely on technology to make decisions for them," she said.

Ms Davies said the financial pressure felt by parents trying to meet their children's increasing digital requirements meant back to school budgeting was more crucial than ever.

"Back to school budgeting will be essential, particularly for families with multiple school aged children. Officeworks is helping reduce parents' back to school stress by offering the lowest prices on the widest range of back to school supplies, as well as a Parent's Price Promise."

Officeworks' Parent's Price Promise guarantees that if parents find an identical stocked item on a quoted school list at a lower price, the retailer will beat it by 20 per cent.

According to the Officeworks' research, one quarter of secondary students use social media or text while listening to their teacher and more than 60 per cent of students are multi-tasking by searching the internet when their teacher is talking.

Almost 60 per cent of students said laptops and personal computers were more essential for learning than libraries, while close to half (48%), considered computers more important in the classroom than textbooks.

When asked about their parents' schooling, 81% of students were unsure how their mums and dads completed homework without the internet. In fact, 88% of students admitted they would find it difficult to research an assignment without going online.

Increased use of technology in the classroom and the rise in digital text books, is causing concern for parents with nine in 10 worried that young people are now reading fewer books.

Despite these concerns, 93% of parents still believe the education system needs to reflect the realities of the digital world to properly prepare children for success later in life.

<more>

To browse Officeworks' widest range of back to school products at the lowest prices, or to complete your child's school list, head to [officeworks.com.au](https://www.officeworks.com.au).

For more information about Officeworks' back to school campaign, visit www.officeworks.com.au/campaigns/back-to-school

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For further information, imagery or interview opportunities, please contact Haystac:
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About Officeworks:

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