

## RESEARCH REVEALS THE COST OF BACK TO SCHOOL SHOPPING GOES BEYOND THE CHECK OUT

*New data from Officeworks highlights the time and money Aussie parents spend on the annual shop, and why convenience and quality are top priorities*

**[Embargo]:** Australian parents expect to **spend almost \$1,200** (\$1,182) and **more than two hours getting each child back to school-ready** this year, according to **new research by Officeworks. More than half (51%) of parents surveyed say they're concerned about the cost** of this year's back to school shop, highlighting the time and cost pressures families are facing.

Officeworks is helping parents navigate these challenges with everyday low prices and a range of convenient, time- and cost-saving tools and services. Designed to give parents the confidence they're getting the right products at the best price, Officeworks' School List Service, Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) purchasing assistance, Price Beat Guarantee and commitment to value help take the guesswork and stress out of back to school.

The research released today reveals that it's not just the financial cost that proves stressful for back to school shoppers; time is also a pressure point for already-busy families. The overall back to school **shopping experience takes parents more than two hours (133 minutes) to complete per child**. According to the research, it's the purchasing process itself that takes the most time, with **the average parent spending over an hour (61 minutes) at the shops**.

Officeworks' School List Service helps households save time and money when shopping for their back to school essentials. It takes **less than three minutes** to upload a school list to the online tool, with **parents saving 20% on average** on their school list when using the service. Officeworks finds the best-priced matches for items on school list and collates the order, ready for parents to collect in store or get delivered to their door.

With technology now a classroom essential, the research also revealed that tech is a back to school concern for many parents. The findings show that **parents expect to spend close to \$500 (\$484) on school tech** with **almost one third (29%) expect to spend up to \$1000** or more, making it the biggest back to school expense category. Not surprisingly, **80 per cent are concerned about the cost of school tech**. Another **two thirds (66 per cent) worry about making decisions** on the best tech for their child and **one fifth (19%)** said they plan to **spend more time researching this year** to make sure they get the right device.

Officeworks' **Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)** purchasing assistant takes the guesswork out of selecting school tech, making it easier and more convenient than ever to find the right device at the right price. The online tool gives parents straightforward recommendations on the best tech to suit their child's year level or school's BYOD specifications. As well as saving research time, Officeworks won't be beaten on price with their Price Beat Guarantee\*, meaning parents can be confident they're getting the best price on BYOD tech, and their Tech Trade In offer lets families

exchange eligible, unused tech devices in for Officeworks gift cards that can be put towards the back to school shop.

And it seems one back to school shop doesn't suffice for the entire year. Parents on average need to replace school supplies two to three times a year, with one in five (20 per cent) restocking once a term. Unsurprisingly, over 40% of parents said they want to buy quality products that will last the whole school year.

**Officeworks Managing Director, Sarah Hunter** said that Officeworks strives to help families tap into the excitement of the season and start the 2024 school year with confidence.

"At Officeworks, we take the guesswork out of back to school shopping and support parents with the entire process, with our extensive range, commitment to everyday low prices and quality, and time, stress- and money-saving tools like our School List Service and BYOD purchasing assistant."

"It's clear from our research that cost and time are key concerns for parents at this time of year. We want to give families the confidence that they're getting the right products at the right price and set kids across Australia up to make bigger things happen in the school year ahead," says Hunter.

You can explore Officeworks' range of Back to School products and services [online](#) or by heading into one of its 169 stores across the country.

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**About Officeworks**

Established in 1994 in Richmond, Victoria, Officeworks is committed to making bigger things happen for its customers, team, the community and stakeholders. It operates 169 stores across Australia, a website that is home to more than 40,000 products, a national call centre, and a business team that helps micro, small and medium-sized businesses start, run and grow and Australians to work, learn, create and connect.

Officeworks offers customers a wide range of office supplies, technology, furniture, art supplies, education resources and helpful services like print & copy and on-site and remote tech support through Geeks2U – delivering an experience that is easy and engaging, no matter how customers choose to shop.

Officeworks is focused on the safety, wellbeing and career progression of the more than 9,000 team members it employs. It's also dedicated to operating in a sustainable manner, including building and maintaining meaningful connections with the communities in which it operates, fundraising for its national partners and local community groups, continuing to reduce its impact on the environment and source responsibly.

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Research summary**

#### **What parents place as top importance when shopping for BTS supplies:**

- Cost is the most important thing to Australian parents as just over four out of five (81%) ranked it in their top 3 important elements when shopping for school supplies and almost half (47%) ranked it first).
- Three quarters (76%) of parents ranked quality in their top 3 important elements when shopping for school supplies.
- Interestingly, their child's preference ranks as the third most important element for parents, with just over half (52%) ranking it in their top 3.

#### **The time parents spend across the BTS shopping experience:**

- The average Australian parent spends over two hours (133 minutes) on the complete back to school shopping experience per child.
- The purchasing process itself takes the most time as the average parent spends just over an hour (61 minutes) on BTS shopping.

#### **BTS Spending:**

- The total amount the average parent expects to spend on BTS supplies is close to \$1,200 (\$1,182).
- Unsurprisingly, electronics are the most expensive type of school supplies this year as the average parent expects to spend close to \$500 dollars (\$484).

#### **Replacing BTS supplies:**

- Parents on average need to replace school supplies 2 to 3 (2.5) times during the school year.
- A third (32%) of parents need to replace school supplies once every 6 months, and just over a quarter need to replace them once a year (28%).
- One in five (20%) parents need to replace school supplies once a term, while just under 10% (8%) need to replace their school supplies more than once a term.

#### **Technology:**

- Four out of five (81%) parents worry about their child looking after their devices at school, given the higher price point.
- 80% of parents are concerned about the cost of tech/devices, particularly this year, while two thirds (66%) find making decisions on the best tech/devices for their child's school needs tricky at times.

#### **Parents feelings towards BTS:**

- When thinking about the back-to-school shop, over half of parents like trying to find bargains (54%) or are concerned about the cost of this year's shop (51%).
- Over 40% of parents feel like they want to buy quality products that will last the whole school year.
- Happily, a quarter (25%) of parents enjoy doing the shop with their kids.
- A fifth of parents say they are going to start back to school shopping earlier this year (20%) or they are going to spend more time researching this year to make sure they get the right tech items (19%).

#### **What would make BTS shopping easier?**

- Half (49%) of parents believe having a one-stop-shop where they could get all back-to-school supplies would make the experience easier for them.

- Close to half (46%) of parents believe a price match/beat guarantee would make back-to-school shopping easier for them.
- 2 in 5 (39%) parents believe back-to-school shopping would be easier if they could upload/leave a list of the school supplies with the store and have everything sourced and packed for them, while around three in ten think free delivery in January (33%) and buying in the big sales (29%) would make things easier for them.

### **Officeworks Back to School services**

- **School List Service (SLS):** an efficient [online tool](#) saving parents time and money by matching products on official school lists with the best prices available. Parents can simply search for their child's school list or upload their own, with orders ready to collect at the nearest store or delivered directly.
- **Bring Your Own Device (BYOD):** A good first port of call for buying high school BYOD is Officeworks' [BYOD Tool](#). In just a few simple steps, parents can find devices suitable for their child. All they need to do is enter the name of their child's high school and the grade they're commencing to be given three options that meet the school's specific requirements: best allrounder, best value, best performance. The purchase can be made online or by heading in store with a list of options to discuss further with a team member.
- **Click and Collect or home delivery:** Customers shopping the website, including the School List Service, can buy online and collect their orders from the nearest Officeworks store from over 169 store locations nationwide or have their back to school shop delivered.
- **Price Beat Guarantee:** Officeworks' Price Beat Guarantee means that if you find a lower priced identical stocked item that's in stock with a competitor (even if it's on sale), Officeworks will not only match it, they'll beat it by 5%. [Exclusions apply](#).
- **Tech Trade In:** Officeworks is helping families shop even smarter this back to school season and put old tech to good use (and out of landfill) with its [Tech Trade In](#) program. Shoppers can get an instant Officeworks gift card when they trade in eligible unused tech devices that they can put towards their back to school shopping at Officeworks.

### **Research methodology:**

- A 10-question online study was conducted amongst members of a permission-based panel. After interviewing, data was weighted to the latest population estimates sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- The study was conducted among 1,003 Australians Parents with children aged 5-17 in school. Surveys were distributed throughout Australia including both capital city and non-capital city areas.
- Fieldwork commenced on Tuesday the 17th of October 2023 and was completed on Tuesday the 23rd of October 2023.