Making School Days Easier And Less Expensive

(NAPSA)—Many families may be surprised at how much they spend on school supplies: According to a recent article in the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton Magazine, for the average person with children in grades K through 12, it comes to nearly $700 a year. To help you get the most for your money, consider these eight ideas:

1. **Try to get a list** from your child's teacher ahead of time. The teacher may require specific brands, sizes or quantities.

2. **Subscribe to a newspaper.** It encourages reading and can give kids extra knowledge and incentive in history, civics, English and science classes.

3. **Depending on the child's grade,** you'll probably need glue, scissors, ballpoint pens, No. 2 pencils, colored pencils, a pencil sharpener, a large pink eraser, water-based markers, spiral-bound or composition notebooks, and a three-ring binder with loose-leaf notebook paper.

4. **Get pocket folders with two pockets.** Label one "keep at home" and the other "bring to school" to help your child organize his papers.

5. **Get a calendar** for scheduling assignments, sports practice and so on.

6. **A pack of index cards** for making flash cards can also come in handy.

When shopping for school supplies, try to get tools that help kids get and stay organized, such as a good day pack.

7. **Lots of books** of all kinds.

8. **A way to carry it all.** It's a fact: Kids are tough on stuff. But today, kids are carrying many more delicate things like electronics, phones and sunglasses. The days of the simple backpack are over. Today, kids need places to put laptops, tablets, cables and cords along with schoolbooks and papers. The Thule EnRoute series is a great option for all these needs. The packs come in four colors and four sizes, and feature a large main compartment with a padded sleeve for a laptop and a separate pocket for a tablet. There is even a heat-molded compartment, called a SafeZone, to protect those smaller, fragile items.

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