



Families can expect to spend up to 25 percent more this year to fill their children's school backpacks and pay for extracurricular activities, according to the 2011 Huntington Backpack Index. Specifically, Huntington's annual survey of the cost of items on school supply lists found that between summer 2010 and summer 2011, elementary school costs shot up from \$474 to \$530 or 12 percent; middle school costs ballooned from \$545 to \$681 or 25 percent; and high school costs increased from \$1,000 to \$1,091 or 9 percent.

Here are some money-saving tips for this year's back-to-school shopping:

- Get your school supply list early – check now if you don't already have it.
- Give "homework" to your children to collect sales promotions and circle the items they'll need.
- Sit down with your family and find the best prices among sale items.
- Compare in-store sales with online promotions.
- Start and maintain a checklist of all items and the expected costs. Get your kids to practice their math by adding up the totals.
- Do your children want a specific brand name? Ask them to use their allowances to make up the difference and then let them save up if they still insist. Remind them of the clothes or gadgets that money could buy instead.
- Play the waiting game. If your kids only need a few items at the very start of school, just buy those items and then wait for clearance sales. This works for clothes, too.
- Shop with cash in the amount you agreed to spend and have your kids deduct from their amount every time they place an item in the cart. If it's not on the list, it still comes out of the budgeted amount.
- Visit used bookstores, online auction and classifieds sites, and online college retailers to find savings on college prep books for older children. And instead of renting instruments or athletic equipment, check with friends and family to see what you might borrow for free.
- Set a budget and stick to it. Not only will your bank account benefit now, but you'll also learn valuable family lessons to establish wise saving and spending habits for the future

- *Huntington Bank, July 22, 2011*

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Contact your nearest Approved Cash finance center to find out how
a payday cash advance or title loan can help you get the
cash you need NOW, when you need it!**