

BACK TO SCHOOL

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The Independent & Free Press special pullout section

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Buying clothes is a big part of back to school shopping. The Georgetown Market Place has numerous shops to offer great bargains and fashions for kids of all ages.

Survey says: Shoppers to spend average \$319 on back to school buys

While economic concerns persist, Canadian retailers should expect to see a boost from back to school shoppers during the second busiest shopping season of the year. A new study from BMO Bank of Montreal released today shows that two thirds of Canadians plan to spend more or the same on back to school shopping compared to last year and nearly two in five (36 per cent) plan to do their shopping at local retailers.

"For many retail businesses, the back to school shopping season is the second most important sales period in the year," said Cathy Pin, Vice-President, BMO Commercial Banking. "It is

also a great opportunity for shoppers to support their local businesses when buying the necessities to get the school year off on the right track."

According to the survey, conducted by Leger Marketing, one third of Canadians plan to spend more than \$200 on back to school purchases this year, and on average, they plan to spend \$319.

"Retail sales in Canada, excluding autos and gasoline, over the August and September period are expected to continue growing at a moderate rate of 2 per cent, similar to the pace this time last year," said Sal Guatieri, Senior Economist, BMO Capital Markets. "Continued low interest rates will pro-

vide support, though concerns about the global economy will also weigh on the back to school shopping season."

The survey also found only five per cent plan to do their back to school shopping online

BMO gives a breakdown of how much Canadians should expect to pay for some back to school items:

School Supplies— Pens, pencils, lined paper, erasers, sticky notes, highlighters, notebooks, organizer and binders— \$25 to \$40

Clothing— Pair of jeans, two shirts, a sweater, pair of running shoes and three pairs of socks and undergarments— \$210 to \$260

Accessories— Backpack, pencil case and lunch bag— \$35 to \$50

Miscellaneous— Magnets, lock, gym uniform and head phones— \$25 to \$40

Total back to school budget: \$295 to \$390

Additional Items— Calculator, laptop, printer and USB key (8GB)— \$80 to \$1200

The Leger Marketing survey was completed online from August 2-4, with a sample of 1501 Canadians, 18 years of age or older. A probability sample of the same size would yield a margin of error of ± 2.5 per cent, 19 times out of 20.

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