

## Over Half of Canadian Parents Admit That Adult Peer Pressure Influences Back-to-School Spending

*RetailMeNot.ca consumer survey reveals Canadians are keeping up with the Joneses but facing wallet woes*

TORONTO, Aug. 12, 2014 /PRNewswire/ -- Seventy-eight per cent of Canadians believe back-to-school has become increasingly expensive and staying on budget (69 per cent) is on their minds, according to the latest consumer trends survey from digital offers website [RetailMeNot.ca](http://RetailMeNot.ca). But they aren't just spending to appease the little ones. Fifty-eight per cent of Canadians surveyed admit that other parents influence what they buy for back-to-school shopping.



To help parents – and kids – get more of what they want this year and get the most out of their back-to-school budgets, RetailMeNot.ca has teamed up with [Smart Cookies](#), the daily guide to living a sweet life debt-free.

"Back-to-school shopping is getting more expensive as kids – and parents – want the latest and greatest. Along with pressure from other parents, 82 per cent of Canadians surveyed believe a child's peers influence their purchasing decisions," says Angela Self, co-founder of Smart Cookies. "Yet Canadian and American parents polled show equal devotion to shopping mostly or completely in a physical store this season [61 and 60 per cent, respectively], and they may be missing out on major online savings."

Despite budget woes, the majority of Canadians polled will spend over \$200 on their sons and daughters (54 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively), but 12 percent will actually fork over more than \$400.

Other survey findings include:

- **Fashion still comes first:** Over half of Canadian parents (53 per cent) will spend the most on clothes when preparing their child for back-to-school, down from 60 per cent in 2013;
- **Pinching pennies on tech:** Tablets and tech toys may not be eating into those lunch-box budgets, with just 6 per cent of Canadian parents planning to spend the majority of their back-to-school dollars on tech this year;
- **Whatever happened to an Etch a Sketch?** Seventy-four per cent of Canadians believe parents are buying tech items like tablets for their children at too early of an age;
- **Shy Canucks:** Socializing with other parents is something 14 per cent of American parents are most looking forward to, while only 5 per cent of Canadian parents are;
- **Moms save:** Moms are savvy shoppers. Sixty-eight per cent of Canadian moms said it is important to consider if they can get an item on sale or for a discount, and 25 per cent look for coupons;
- **Dads cave:** Better bring dad along – especially if a laptop is on the wish list! Twenty-three per cent of Canadian fathers will buy their 12- to 14-year-old a laptop, while 36 per cent of moms will hold out until their child is at least 15.

Angela Self and Katie Dunsworth from Smart Cookies share a few insider tips to kick-start back-to-school savings:

- **Email the teacher first:** If your child's school doesn't provide a shopping list, ask the teacher what supplies are needed. Knowing what you need will help determine how much you have to budget for all the items on your child's wish list;
- **Know when to shop:** Shop as early as possible to avoid the risk of stores running out of your preferred items. This will also give you time to hunt for the best deal;
- **Know where to shop:** Office supply stores often have the best deals on folders and notebooks. Before checking out in store, be sure to do a quick 30-second search on your smartphone for a promo code at [RetailMeNot.ca](http://RetailMeNot.ca);
- **Shop online in advance:** Take the stress out of back-to-school by shopping online in advance. Make sure to check [RetailMeNot.ca](http://RetailMeNot.ca) for coupon codes on free shipping or discounts on items ordered;
- **Take advantage of student discounts:** Many retailers offer student-only pricing on laptops and often attach a free gift card to the purchase for printers, e-books or apps.

RetailMeNot.ca regularly conducts consumer behaviour surveys to examine the buying habits of Canadians.

**About the Canadian surveys:**

From July 28 to July 31, 2014, and July 29 to July 31, 2013, two online surveys were conducted among 2,514 and 500, respectively, using randomly selected Canadian adults and Canadian parents of 5- to 18-year-old children and who are Angus Reid Forum panelists. The margin of error—which measures sampling variability—is +/- 1.95% and +/- 4.5%, 19 times out of 20. The 2014 results have been statistically weighted according to education, age, gender and region (and in Quebec language) census data to ensure a sample representative of the entire adult population of Canada. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.

**About the U.S. surveys:**

The surveys were conducted between July 1 and July 8, 2014, and May 22 and May 28, 2013, among 1,008 parents and 1,123 U.S. residents ages 18 and over, respectively, using an email invitation and an online survey. Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In these particular studies, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 3.1 and 2.9 percentage points, respectively, from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample. The margin of error for any subgroups will be slightly higher.

**About RetailMeNot, Inc.**

RetailMeNot, Inc. ([www.retailmenot.com/corp/](http://www.retailmenot.com/corp/)) operates the world's largest marketplace for digital offers. The company enables consumers across the globe to find hundreds of thousands of digital offers from their favorite retailers and brands. During the 12 months ended June 30, 2014, RetailMeNot, Inc. experienced more than 625 million visits to its websites. In 2013, RetailMeNot estimates \$3.5 billion in its paid retailer sales were attributable to consumer traffic from digital offers in its marketplace. Its mobile apps have been downloaded over 18.5 million times. The RetailMeNot, Inc. portfolio includes [www.RetailMeNot.com](http://www.RetailMeNot.com), the largest digital offer marketplace in the United States; [www.RetailMeNot.ca](http://www.RetailMeNot.ca) in Canada; [www.VoucherCodes.co.uk](http://www.VoucherCodes.co.uk), the largest digital offer marketplace in the United Kingdom; [www.Deals.com](http://www.Deals.com) in Germany; [www.Actiepagina.nl](http://www.Actiepagina.nl), a leading digital offer site in the Netherlands; [Bons-de-Reduction.com](http://Bons-de-Reduction.com) and [www.Ma-Reduc.com](http://www.Ma-Reduc.com), leading digital offer sites in France; [www.Poulpeo.com](http://www.Poulpeo.com), a leading digital offer site with cash back in France; and [www.Deals2Buy.com](http://www.Deals2Buy.com), a leading digital offer site in North America. RetailMeNot, Inc. is listed on the NASDAQ stock exchange under the ticker symbol "SALE." Investors interested in learning more about the company can visit: <http://investor.retailmenot.com/>.

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