



# BACK-TO-SCHOOL: 5 WAYS TO LIMIT SPENDING

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GOOD DAY COLUMBUS

## BACK TO SCHOOL SPENDING TIPS

**HOST JACKIE OROZCO:** We want to help you out this morning by saving you some extra bucks.

**HOST MIKE MCCARTHY:** This morning, CEO of Government & Civil Employee Services, is here to join us. This is Clinton Smith and now that I screwed up his title, he's going to help correct your behavior at home on how to save some money and not overspend when it comes to back-to-school. So, step one is what?

**CLINTON SMITH, CEO OF GOVERNMENT & CIVIL EMPLOYEE SERVICES:** Step one is to definitely set a budget. This is the first thing that you're going to teach your kid in the year. It's really the first lesson in going back to school. This first thing is to set a budget and that's really so basic. So, setting the budget is the thing you need to start with.

**HOST OROZCO:** I know because you see all of these shiny new things and you're like, "Oh, I want this and I want that," right? So, that's probably very important.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** What would be the key to setting that budget? I know how much money you want to allocate there, but do you have any suggestions on how families should start with that?

**SMITH:** Just what you can afford. There are a lot of different things that you can do. You can try to find stuff online. A lot of people don't think, maybe you could go to Facebook Marketplace. Try to find stuff there. Maybe if you need a bicycle, you can reach out on Facebook and see if anyone really has a bike that they're trying to get rid of. Some other supplies that you might need, like pencils and paper and stuff like that, you might already have that stuff sitting at home. So, really go around and look around and see what you have at your house is really a big thing to do, too.

**HOST OROZCO:** And shopping could be also overwhelming for some parents, so what's another tip that people can use?

**SMITH:** Now that you're saying shopping, leave your kids at home. Don't take them with you, right? They're going to want everything that's on the shelf. They're going to be putting stuff in the cart and they're your kid and they're going off to school so you're going to feel obligated to give to it to them. So, leave them at home, don't take them with you.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** And I know you mentioned leaving the kid at home. We just showed a picture to folks at home saying shop smart. What do you mean by that?

**SMITH:** So, shop smart would be not just to leave them at

home and set a budget, but you can also recycle stuff that's in your house.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** Sure.

**SMITH:** There's Facebook Marketplace, also.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** Okay.

**SMITH:** So, really there's those three different ways. You can also take advantage of the sales tax holiday that's in Ohio this weekend. It ends tonight at midnight.

**HOST OROZCO:** And so, when you're talking about recycling, are you saying gathering old pencils?

**SMITH:** Yeah, well I mean, I am not saying get your trapper keeper out from the 80s and give it to them, right?

**HOST MCCARTHY:** Oh, come on, mine was pretty rad [laughs].

**SMITH:** I know. You know, I don't even think they know what trapper keepers are. I mentioned that the other day and people look at me like, "What's a trapper keeper?" So, I would say definitely look around your house and find the kinds of things that you could reuse. You don't necessarily have to regift everything from one child to the next, but you probably have hundreds-of-dollars' worth of merchandise sitting at your house that you could reuse this year.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** Okay. So, just to recap really quick, set a budget, shop smart, recycle, leave your kid at home and take advantage of the holiday. What's the number one mistake you see parents make? When it comes to a budget and when it comes to buying back-to-school?

**SMITH:** It's the fun one – leave your kids at home. I think everyone sees the kid and they want to take the kid. Especially if your kids are going off to college. Because you don't think it's just not high school, but there are also tons of money being spent towards college back-to-school.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** Sure.

**SMITH:** And if you're getting rid of your child for the first time and they're going off to college, you're going to be grabbing stuff left and right.

**HOST OROZCO:** And, also, is there anything parents can do? I know a lot of these times these kids come home with a long school list that's like, aren't some of them recommendations? Like, you don't really need this, but it's cool if they have it.

**SMITH:** Well, I would think about what time of year you're going into. You know, the kids aren't going to need shorts or bicycles if we're going into winter. So, really look at the time of year and try to spread your costs out throughout the year. You don't have to go and do all of your back-to-school shopping right now. You could do some now, some a little around Christmas and a little bit more towards the end of the year. So, you don't have to do it all at once.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** And the sales tax holiday, while it can help families, it's not an enormous sum that people save, but I guess every penny kind of counts?

**SMITH:** Yes, I think the cutoffs is that you can buy a clothing item that's less than \$50, school items that are less than \$20 and instructional school items that are \$20 or less also. And those are tax-free up until midnight tonight.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** That's great.

**HOST OROZCO:** And have you had any problems? You have two kids.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** Well, we're in preschool, we don't have that level yet.

**SMITH:** No budget yet.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** But I will tell you what, you go in those stores today and they've got all their school supplies up front. It is not messing around time for these stores. I mean, they're going to be really busy today.

**SMITH:** Yeah. Everyone is talking about back-to-school. This is the time of year. This is it.

**HOST OROZCO:** Yes, that is right and we of course want to see your photos of back-to-school. So, don't forget, you could be celebrating that with us. So, just be posting them on our website. You can send them by downloading our free FOX28 app and chiming in under the explorer tab. Then we could share them on Good Day Columbus.

**HOST MCCARTHY:** You know, they had me send in an old photo and I haven't seen it pop up anywhere yet, on any promotions. I am hoping they just forgot about it.

**HOST OROZCO:** Hopefully so [laughs].

**HOST MCCARTHY:** I am a little anxious of what it's going to look like. Clinton, thank you very much for coming in. We really appreciate it.

**SMITH:** Thank you for having me.

Clinton Smith, CEO of Government & Civil Employee Services, LLC (GCES), is focused on building a team of passionate professionals whose genuine interest is in helping others, while staying current on ever changing laws and procedures determined by the Federal Government. Clinton holds a Pennsylvania Life, Health and Annuity License and is also a registered Public Notary for the state of Pennsylvania.

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