



BIC Survey Finds Back-to-School Costs Nearly Double While Parents Spend More than Two Additional Hours On Homework Help Per Day Amid Global Health Crisis

Recognizing increasing demands on educators, BIC celebrates teachers going above and beyond with inaugural BIC Cristal Pen Awards

Shelton Conn., November 19, 2020 – BIC, a world leader in stationery, lighters and shavers, released the results of a recent survey undertaken to better understand the challenges parents are facing during the global health crisis. The survey of more than 500 parents from across the US explores how parents are coping with their new role as teacher, as well as other top concerns from increased costs of school supplies to managing children's screen time.

Key learnings:

- More than three out of four US parents (78%) are spending more than two additional hours a day engaging in educational activities with their children since COVID-19 began, of those, 25% report spending 4 or more hours a day.
- Back-to-school spending increased this year, likely due to the need to buy new technology or more items to have separate in-school and at-home supplies, with many parents continuing to shop in-store.
- Parents found that trying to keep life 'normal' for their kids was the most challenging part of parenting during this time (59%), followed by juggling children's schoolwork, their work and housework (44%) and finding safe ways for kids to socialize with their peers (44%).
- Screen time for kids has also increased: 68% of parents reported that their children are spending more time in front of screens, despite 43% actively trying to limit their time in front of devices.
- Parents were confident in their teaching skills, with 40% giving themselves an A grade, and 35% giving themselves a B.

US parents are struggling to find balance as they take on new roles and spend nearly double on school supplies and technology

Of those parents surveyed, 82% are employed with their children attending school remotely. This has made juggling time and work extremely challenging. The majority of parents (59%) stated that the most difficult part of COVID-19 was trying to keep things normal for their children, finding time to balance career, housework and helping kids with school work (44%) and finding safe ways for their kids to continue to socialize with their friends (44%).

Despite the pandemic, nearly one-third (31%) of back-to-school shopping took place in-store this year versus online only (24%) and 12% reported a combination of online and in-store purchases. Parents reported spending more on back-to-school items this year. Those who spent the most had children between the ages of 4-10 (\$580 more on average), 11-13 (\$469 more on average) and 14-18 (\$478 more on average). This was due to the need to purchase more technology and duplicate items for use at home and at school. In 2019, the National Retail Federation reported that parents with students in grades one through 12 planned to spend an average of \$696.70 on back-to-school supplies, meaning that costs have nearly doubled for some parents.

Parents are investing more time on children's education, but some feel they are struggling to relearn math skills

While some schools have opened fully or partially, parents still feel they need to spend more time helping their children with schoolwork. In fact, 34% stated they were spending two hours more a day, 19% are spending three hours more a day and 25% reported spending four or more hours a day helping their



children with schoolwork than they did before COVID-19. This was true even if the student was back in school full-time.

Overwhelmingly, parents reported that they are struggling with math the most (40%) followed by science (18%) and writing and reading (17%). Dads reported more trouble with science (26%) vs moms (9%), and 53% of moms struggled with math compared to 28% of dads. Despite these challenges, parents were confident in their teaching abilities with 40% grading themselves an A, and 35% saying they probably deserved a B.

Parents are committed to creating normalcy for their kids as well as encouraging them to turn off the devices and spend more time reading and drawing

While parents have reported an increase in screen time (68%), the study showed that children also participate in more creative, offline alternatives. One in three children (46%) are writing by hand more frequently, 52% are coloring or painting more, 53% are drawing more, and 59% are reading more since the global health crisis.

“This study gives us a better understanding of the evolving needs of families, who are an important subset of our consumers. We are delighted to learn that despite increased screen time, children are expressing themselves creatively through offline activities, such as handwriting, coloring and drawing,” said Chester Twigg, BIC Chief Commercial Officer. “At BIC, we are proud to provide families and children with the essential tools they need for learning, working and self-expression, and we hope we can help spark joy and imagination during these difficult times.”

BIC is celebrating teachers around the world for helping students and parents navigate these challenging times with the inaugural BIC Cristal Pen Awards

The past year has been extremely stressful for families, but also for teachers who were tasked with reimagining how they can reach and engage students virtually and continue to support both students and parents. Aligned with BIC’s longstanding commitment to improving lives through education, BIC is awarding 10 teachers around the world with its first-ever BIC Cristal Pen Awards.

“This year has also been difficult for educators who have had to adapt to new ways of teaching, connecting and supporting their students. To celebrate their passion and to thank them for their devotion, this year we decided to introduce the BIC Cristal Pen Awards to celebrate those teachers who have gone above and beyond for their students and communities,” Twigg said.

BIC team members from around the world nominated educators who have continued to give back and raise the bar on education excellence over the past year. Each BIC Cristal Pen Awards winner will receive a custom-designed award and a grant and product donation for their school or organization. To learn more about the 10 winners – from the US, Australia, India, Uganda, Ethiopia, Brazil, Greece and Turkey – and how they are making a difference, visit: <https://www.bicworld.com/en/ten-educators-win-first-bic-cristal-pen-awards>

To learn more about how the US survey results compared to those in other regions around the world, visit: <https://www.bicworld.com/en/bic-surveys-parents-understand-covid-challenges>

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Methodology



The survey was conducted by a leading market research firm between October 8 and 13, 2020, among 500 nationally representative U.S. adult parents ages 18+, using an email invitation and an online survey.

About BIC

BIC is a world leader in stationery, lighters, and shavers. For more than 75 years, the Company has honored the tradition of providing high-quality, affordable products to consumers everywhere. Through this unwavering dedication, BIC has become one of the most recognized brands and is a trademark registered worldwide. Today, BIC products are sold in more than 160 countries around the world and feature iconic brands such as Cello®, Conté®, BIC Flex™, Lucky Stationery, Made For YOU™, Soleil®, Tipp-Ex®, Wite-Out® and more. In 2019, BIC Net Sales were 1,949.4 million euros. The Company is listed on "Euronext Paris," is part of the SBF120 and CAC Mid 60 indexes and is recognized for its commitment to sustainable development and education. It received an A- Leadership score from CDP. For more, visit www.bicworld.com or follow us on [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), or [YouTube](#).

Media Contact

Kate Taylor
kataylor@mww.com
973-590-9481