

Michaels Helps Kids and Parents Get Ready for Back-to-School

Personalized school supply projects mix fun and developmental benefits

IRVING, Texas, Aug. 4 /PRNewswire/ -- Most kids feel some anxiety as summer winds down and a new school year approaches, but child development experts say personalized back-to-school projects can provide a fun way to ease the transition from summer to fall routines, refine classroom skills and get them off to a good start.

Michaels, North America's largest arts and crafts specialty retailer, has dozens of back-to-school project ideas for personalizing notebooks, lunch boxes, backpacks, lockers and more through The Knack, Michaels' resource for moms and teachers that helps enrich kids' lives through creativity. Project ideas are available online at www.michaels.com/theknack. Michaels will also host a free back-to-school event at all U.S. and Canada stores on Saturday, August 15 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. where kids can personalize pencil boxes.

"For kids who feel anxious about going to school, having a personalized school-related item in their classroom can serve as a comforting reminder of home," said Lena Zettler, Director of Psychology and Behavioral Health for Cook Children's Medical Center in Fort Worth. "The skills used doing crafts are important, whether a child is entering kindergarten or is approaching the teen years."

Ms. Zettler says developmental benefits of creative projects are different for each age group.

- Ages 5 - 6: Crafts help this group fine tune pre-academic skills w cutting, assembling, painting and gluing.
- Ages 7 - 8: At this age, kids begin developing self-control and ca and plan before they engage. Socially, they are all about forming bonds with their friends, and a shared craft can help them show th connectedness.
- Ages 9 - 12: Projects that require small details help older kids i fine motor dexterity. Their attention spans have increased and sequencing is important. Independently following instructions to c a craft that turns out as planned is a great reinforcement.

"The Knack provides developmentally appropriate, fun projects that will help kids of various ages prepare for the new school year and beyond," said John Rowe, Michaels vice president of marketing. "Michaels is a year round destination for teachers, parents and students for everything from classroom decor and school project supplies to school spirit items and party decorations."

About Michaels

Michaels Stores, Inc. is North America's largest specialty retailer of arts, crafts, framing, floral, wall decor, and seasonal merchandise for the hobbyist and do-it-yourself home decorator. The company currently owns and operates over 1000 Michaels stores in 49 states and Canada and over 150 Aaron Brothers stores. For more information visit www.michaels.com

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