

## Center'd Eases Back-to-School Stress for Parents and Helps Schools Take Advantage of the Internet with New Time-Saving Group Planning Tools

*New Survey Reveals Parents Spend Almost a Quarter of Their Free Time Scheduling and Coordinating Their Children's and Family's Activities*

*Parents Claim They Would Rather Pay Bills or Go to the Dentist than Volunteer to Plan a School Event*

**AUGUST 20, 2008** – MENLO PARK, CA – In recognition of the increasingly hectic schedules parents face, Center'd ([www.centerd.com](http://www.centerd.com)) - the planning site that ties together local search, community and planning tools in one place - today announced that it has launched a new set of innovative group planning features that will help busy parents manage their family and school activities just in time for back-to-school season.

### Time-Crunched Parents and Children

A new study commissioned by Center'd and conducted by Harris Interactive® underscores just how pressed for time parents are, and reveals how many scheduled activities their children participate in today. When asked how the number of extracurricular activities their children participate in compared to the number they did as children, only 13 percent of parents<sup>1</sup> claimed their children had fewer activities, and nearly one out of two (49 percent) respondents stated their children have more or significantly more scheduled activities than they did. In fact, parents<sup>2</sup> spend an average of 23 percent of their free time outside of work scheduling and coordinating their children's and family's schedules.

According to the survey, nearly one third (30%) of children<sup>3</sup> will have more than three scheduled extracurricular activities per week this coming school year. Even young children are starting to get booked up, with nearly 8 of every 10 parents with children under the age of 6<sup>4</sup> (79%) reporting their children will participate in extracurricular activities.

"As a working mother of two school-aged children and a former teacher, I know first-hand how difficult it is to successfully manage peak planning times, especially the back-to-school season," said Jennifer Dulski, co-founder and chief executive officer of Center'd. "Our goal at Center'd is to extend a planning 'lifeline' to parents so that they feel less overwhelmed and more empowered to effectively organize and manage all of their activities, be they family or professional, big or small."

To reduce the stress of back-to-school planning and address the needs of today's time-crunched parents, people can use Center'd to easily organize both family-centric activities (e.g., carpooling, family trips) as well as larger functions that require volunteer coordination, like school events or team practices. In addition to the search, planning and social networking tools already available from Center'd, new features and functionality released today include:

- **Volunteer Sign-Up Lists:** Center'd enables individuals, schools or organizations to easily recruit and manage the people they need to get things done, even for complex recurring tasks. After

---

<sup>1</sup> Parents of children under 18 who will participate in activities outside of school

<sup>2</sup> Parents of children under 18

<sup>3</sup> Parents of children under 18 who attend school

<sup>4</sup> Parents of children under 6 who attend school

setting up a sign-up list and associated tasks, Center'd automatically sends participants email reminders to participants, and relevant alerts to organizers.

- **Shared Calendaring:** This new feature gives people a quick snap-shot of all their events and tasks from friends and organizations in one place. People can choose which calendars they want to view, and share their calendar with important people like family members. The new sign-up list tool integrates the shared calendar feature so people can easily track their tasks.
- **Social Search Enhancements:** Back-to-school is also a time when parents exchange recommendations, from which healthcare professionals they like, to information on after-school activities. Now, in addition to using ratings from across the Web, search results will also be weighted according to the places that people's friends have saved or tagged, providing a more relevant and personalized local search experience.

"Every day I hear from moms confirming that they feel overwhelmed with the amount of activities they have to organize during the school year," said Amy Keroes, co-founder of mommytrackd.com and multi-tasking expert. "Not only do they have to stay on top of their own family's activities, but many of them are also required to volunteer at their school and help plan events for their kids' groups. It's great that companies like Center'd are coming to the rescue and helping busy parents plan and organize complex group events that require a lot of time and volunteer coordination."

### **Attitudes on Planning School Events**

In addition to uncovering information about the time involved planning children's activities, the survey revealed some interesting data regarding parent's attitudes toward volunteering to plan school events:

- Only 11 percent of parents<sup>5</sup> like planning school events and feel they have the perfect system for planning them;
- Over half of parents<sup>5</sup> (57 percent) said they would be willing to plan school activities or events if it wasn't so stressful (21 percent); if it was easier to recruit volunteers to help (19 percent), or if it didn't take so much time (16 percent);
- More than half (53 percent) of parents<sup>6</sup> said they would rather perform some other tedious task instead of planning an event for their children's school, including activities such as paying household bills (30%) or getting their teeth cleaned at the dentist (17%) .

For more information on how to reduce stress and save time, check out the Back to School resource center: <http://www.centerd.com/backtoschool>.

### **About Center'd**

Center'd is a local planning site that ties together local search, planning tools, and trusted community to make planning easier. By marrying these three elements, Center'd gives people a way to seamlessly manage the core elements of planning: finding the right place, agreeing on a time, selecting service providers, sending invites, managing volunteers, hosting and communicating. From basic local activities like figuring out what to do this weekend to more complex plans like organizing a school event that needs volunteers, Center'd provides the tools to get it done. Ultimately, Center'd aims to make local planning so easy that people make even more plans to spend time with the people that matter to them.

---

<sup>5</sup> Parents of children aged 18 who attend school

<sup>5</sup> Parents of children aged 18 who attend school

<sup>7</sup> Parents of children aged 18 who attend school

Center'd is headquartered in Menlo Park, California, and is funded by Norwest Venture Partners, KeyNote Ventures, and private angel investors.

[www.centerd.com](http://www.centerd.com)

### **Methodology**

The survey was conducted online within the United States by Harris Interactive via its QuickQuery<sup>SM</sup> online omnibus service on behalf of Center'd between August 5-7, 2008 among 2,010 U.S. adults ages 18 and older, of whom 576 were parents of children under 18 who live in the household. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated; a full methodology is available on request.

### **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is a global leader in custom market research. With a long and rich history in multimodal research that is powered by our science and technology, we assist clients in achieving business results. Harris Interactive serves clients globally through our North American, European and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms. For more information, please visit [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

Ayanna Anderson or Corie Pierce  
The Sutherland Gold Group for Center'd  
[center'd@sutherlandgold.com](mailto:center'd@sutherlandgold.com)  
(415) 655-4560

###