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Skills Mean Savings

Shoppers in the East Midlands are missing out on supermarket savings because of poor maths skills

Shoppers struggle to work out basic shopping discounts, according to new stats from the Get On campaign. When asked, nearly nine out of ten adults (87%) in the East Midlands could not do the maths behind typical high street special offers.*

Well over half (58%) could not work out how much a pack of sausages would cost if it had a third off and nearly half (44%) admitted they often won't pick up discounts because they don't understand if it's a good deal or not.

With over a third of adults (41%) saying they would buy more discounts if they were more confident with their maths, Get On, the campaign to encourage adults to improve their basic numeracy and literacy skills, is joining forces with Sainsbury's to help shoppers grab the best bargains on the shelves this Christmas.

Over the next week, Get On teams are heading to the Sainsbury's store in Rockingham Road, Kettering to talk to shoppers about how to improve their skills and enrol on a free Get On course at their local college. The teams will be at the store from 11am-3pm on the 5th, 6th and 7th October.

As Kevin Brennan, Minister for Further Education, Skills, Apprenticeships and Consumer Affairs, says, "This is a great chance for people to think about how improving their skills could help their everyday life – from doing the weekly shop and helping children with their homework, to improving their chances in the workplace. Call free on 0800 66 0800 or go to www.direct.gov.uk/geton to find out more about free maths or literacy courses in your local area."

Justin King, Chief Executive of Sainsbury's, said, "We are delighted to be partnering with the Get On campaign to encourage shoppers to think about their maths skills whilst doing their shopping. As a major retailer we realise how important good numeracy is, not only in the workplace but also at home.

To help our colleagues brush up on their maths skills we launched our Skills for Life programme. With Skills for Life, the learning is tailored to the individual and is all online so colleagues can complete the courses at their own pace. Skills for Life is part of our wide ranging You Can programme which provides over 10,000 colleagues with opportunities to gain skills and nationally recognised qualifications."

Ends

For more information on the Get On campaign please contact the Get On team at Fishburn Hedges - Phillipa Jose, Katie Shaw and Joanna Heath on 020 7839 4321 or email firstname.lastname@fishburn-hedges.co.uk.

Notes to editors:

ICM interviewed a random national sample of 1025 adults aged 18+ by telephone between 11th and 13th September 2009. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults. ICM is a member of the British Polling Council and abides by its rules. Further information at www.icmresearch.co.uk

*respondents were asked, 'a bar of chocolate is priced at £1.99, you can get two for £3.45. How much do you save?'

About Get On

1. The Learning and Skills Council's "Get On" campaign, which was first launched by the then Department for Education and Skills in 2001, is part of the Government's Skills for Life strategy. The campaign encourages the millions of people in England who experience difficulties with literacy and numeracy skills, or would benefit from 'brushing up' on these skills, to enrol on a free course by calling **0800 66 0800**.
2. Help is at hand with free courses which offer an entirely different experience from school days, focus on helping adults improve their skills so they can deal with practical, everyday situations in life and work. As an added incentive the courses can also lead to a nationally recognised qualification.
3. It is estimated that an individual with good literacy and numeracy could earn £50,000 more over a working life than someone with poorer skills. The increased self-confidence and motivation learners gain from completing a course is of huge personal value and helps them start the process of transforming their lives, both at home and at work.