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Pulse: Trends in Looks, Life and Love

THE BROWN BAG UPGRADE

We've had graphic art messages on T-shirts, bracelets, backpacks and even billboards. Now, whimsical drawings move to the otherwise lowly brown paper lunch bag.

Make way for "LuNcHoLOgy®," which offers bags with educational messages, games, spiritual thoughts and humorous sayings you might have found on a T-shirt.

It's the brainchild of Kristi Thomas, an Akron, Ohio, mom whose grade-school daughter Madison was having separation anxiety.

"I started writing her little notes on her lunch bag so she would call home a little less," Thomas says. "I'd write, 'Have courage,' 'I love you' or 'Thinking about you.'" Then she started adding drawings.

Before long, she says, children were going into trash cans to find her daughter's decorated lunch bags. Teachers were asking her to develop themes connected to Spanish or whatever the class was studying. Coaches were calling.

She and her husband were encouraged. Two years ago they went into their nest egg to build a new home to build a business. They have two national suppliers and packaging sources, Thomas says, including Weaver Industries, which employs people with disabilities.

The art is drawn by the whole family and production takes place in their basement. The bags may be decorated with a foreign language lesson, a trivia game or sayings that adults can relate to such as, "One loyal friend is worth a thousand relatives."

Thomas, who has graduate degrees in art and psychology, has a goal to be in 5,000 stores in about two years. She has a start; she is negotiating with Target.

The retailers are not limited, they're all over the nation and the bags are available online at www.Lunchology.com for \$4.99 a set plus shipping charges. A minimum order of three sets is required.

You can find LuNcHoLOgy® at www.lunchology.com and at their Corporate Offices: 540 South Main Street, Suite 813, Akron, Ohio 44311, 1(888) i-8-Lunch.

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