



Extension Connection

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The mission of K-State Research and Extension Family and Consumer Sciences is to link education with life experiences to help people improve their lives, their families and their communities. Family and Consumer Sciences professionals support essential life skills including Community Development, Healthy Lifestyle Choices, Leadership & Volunteer Development, Relationship Development and Resource Management.

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Tips for Parents, Balancing School and Family

Fielding remarks such as "What do you mean, Jack's not joining the team?" shouldn't prompt a guilt trip. School and community activities are bountiful but reclaiming family time can strengthen the family. Choices are key in an endless list of activities. Overcommitted will have the family suffering from the stress. The following tips can help a family reclaim family time and a balance between school, family, work and community:

- Declare one night a week family night. Make it a pizza, movie or game night, or a time to cook together, do a project, go for a walk or ride bikes.
- Encourage children to bring their friends home, stay for supper or join a family activity.
- Share family responsibilities. Get the children involved in sorting laundry, setting the table, cooking, cleaning or yard work to free up time for the family. Accept that a child might not complete the task as you would. Remember that learning to work as a team and accept responsibility is a valuable lesson in life and likely to be more important than a perfect fold on towels or T-shirts.
- Consider a child's age and interests, rather than your own, before choosing an activity.
- If considering an after-school or extracurricular activity, consider the time commitment for the child and others in the family.
- Consider the total cost of an activity. Is it possible to rent a band instrument? Buy used, rather than new? What do basketball shoes cost? How much will it cost to travel to and from practices or home and away games?

- Post a family calendar in a place where entries can be made easily and schedules checked regularly.
- Think of downtime as time to recharge your batteries.

All families have ups and downs but establishing priorities can reduce stress and create a balance between family life, school and community activities.

Source: <http://bit.ly/2zLwpoN>

For additional information, contact the Wildcat Extension District, Crawford County, 620-724-8233, Wilson County, 620-378-2167, Labette County, 620-784-5337, Montgomery County, 620-331-2690, Pittsburg Office, Expanded Food and Nutrition Education (EFNEP), 620-232-1930.

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