



# 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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### **Back to School getting your Child off to a great Start**

Summer is winding down; it's time to think about school again. As you pick out new clothes and backpacks, here are four back-to-school preparations that can make a real difference in your child's health and academic success this school year.

1. **Get your child on a good sleep schedule with good sleep habits.** During the summer, we often let our children stay up late. To avoid a grumpy child when school starts, begin the school sleep schedule a week before school begins. Children need 8-10 hours of sleep every night, so count back from when they need to wake up to find the right bedtime. Switching to a school routine may not be easy but healthy sleep habits will help them in the classroom this school year.
2. **Plan healthy lunches and snacks.** Use the end of summer to talk with your child about healthy food they can bring to school. If they get to pick their healthy foods, they are more likely to eat it.
3. **Make an appealing homework place, and decide on a routine.** They should have a quiet, well-lit, pleasant place to do their homework. For younger children, it should be where you can easily supervise, but not necessarily in the middle of family chaos. Decide together when your child will do homework. You can always change it up later if it doesn't work out, but have a plan.
4. **Plan activities and downtime.** It's important that your child be active, so signing up for a team sport or other physical activity can be a good idea. Be sure that there is enough time for homework and sleep. This is crucial for your child's mental health. Your child needs time to relax and play no matter what their age.

These may seem basic and simple but can get lost in the shuffle. These simple tasks can be very effective when families do them. So give them a try. You'll be glad you did.

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