

Extension Tip of the Week

The start of a school year is a lot like turning the calendar in January to a new year. Many families think about a new school year and make some mental new school year resolutions like we make New Year's resolutions. Families may say to themselves, "We need to get to bed earlier, home work needs to be done and turned in on time, we need to make sure everyone eats breakfast, etc. etc." If you have children heading off to school and starting a new school year in the next weeks, now is a good time to think about how your family can prepare for another successful school year. Here are some ideas to consider:

- ✓ Practice going to bed at a reasonable time. You can do it gradually by going to bed 15 minutes earlier each night until you get to the expected bed time.
- ✓ Practice getting up earlier in the mornings too in the same manner! Depending on your child's age, you can help them set an alarm to help them practice getting up on their own.
- ✓ Encourage your children to pick out their clothing for the first couple of days of school – lay them out so everyone knows what they are wearing.
- ✓ Discuss as a family what everyone wants to eat for breakfast and stock the cupboards accordingly. Avoid sugary pastries and breakfast foods. Research shows that students who eat breakfast perform better at school.
- ✓ Make it a practice to look at book bags each night. If you do it about the same time each day it will help you and your child develop it in to a good habit. If something needs to be signed by a parent, take the time to look at it and sign it, putting it back in the bag rather than think you will get to it later.
- ✓ Establish a time to do homework by letting your child help determine when they will set aside time to get it done. As a parent, support their agreed upon home work schedule and praise them for their follow through in getting that part of their job done!
- ✓ Figure out how your child is going to get to and from school each day. Make sure your child knows what the plan is. If your child is young and they will walk to school, practice with them now.
- ✓ If your child is going to get home before a parent arrives home, make sure they know what is expected and even review some 'what if' scenarios with your child so that they feel comfortable.