



# Bo-Tree

WISDOM • PEOPLE • COMMUNITY • REFLECTIONS

## Home School Connect

Education is a partnership and our children benefit from an alliance between the school and home. As parents are the key provider of the child's education, the home becomes the primary environment in which the child's personality and potential take shape. It holds true that the skills and the concepts that the child learns at school are influenced by what the parents do at home. When parents and teachers work hand in hand everyone and more so the child benefits. Parents and teachers can provide each other with unique insights about the child, culminating in a more comprehensive understanding of the child, her abilities and challenges. A strong home school connection will set the stage for the child to grow up with a love for learning.



### Breaking down the barriers

When our children are little, we're very conscious of our job as "first teachers." Yet once they enter school, we tend to abdicate this role. But the fact is, home life encourages school success. What time your child goes to bed, whether she eats a good breakfast and how well she gets along with her siblings affect every aspect of her well-being, including academic performance.

One thing's for certain: kids don't do well with chaos. They also don't do well with a structure so rigid that there is no room for their own quirks.

A specific routine that works for one family doesn't always work for another. And what helps one child might be counterproductive for another. Most parents do find, however, that a predictable daily framework benefits all the kids in their family. They usually work better when they feel organized and on top of things instead of confused. An added benefit is that settled rules and routines eliminate the on-the-spot decisions and arguments that wear parents — and kids — down. When they whine, "Can't I stay up a little later?" it's easier to respond, "The rule is eight o'clock bedtime on school nights," than to argue.



### A few practices for a better home school connect:

**Get Set the Night Before:** Being prepared for the next day before going to bed gives parents and children alike a settled feeling. For one thing, it's more relaxing for kids to go to sleep knowing that they've taken care of business. And it makes mornings more pleasant. Here's the routine that works for us.

**What we do at bedtime:** Everything goes more smoothly when we keep to a regular bedtime routine on school nights. The time and routine will depend on children's ages. Regularity is the important thing. When children are little, the routine might include reading a story, hearing a special lullaby and turning on a night light. Older kids might choose to read in bed on their own for half an hour.

**Allot enough time:** Cramming down a piece of toast on the way out the door to the bus is not a great way to start the day. Not all kids like a big breakfast, but they're likely to eat more if they have little more time. Many busy parents also try to have enough time in the morning to do a pleasurable activity with their children: reading a book, starting a puzzle, even just chatting over a bowl of cereal. This is especially helpful to younger kids who are feeling reluctant about leaving and are sleepy.

**Keep a Family Calendar:** All parents know how hard it is to manage schedules for more than one person. Many families post a month-by-month calendar in the kitchen or family room along with school and family commitment to help them keep track of all up. One family I know with three children uses a different color marker for each family member. Music lessons, cricket coaching, a project model on housing due in three weeks: all should go on the calendar, and everyone should check it regularly. Review the week ahead on Sunday evenings to avoid last minute panic.

When children are young, home and school are the two most important parts of their lives. What happens at one usually affects the other. On the home-to-school route, our children carry both family problems that worry them and family values about learning. Kids are barometers of their environment, and when things are good, it's easier for them to do better in school.

Sutapa Mishra  
The Principal,  
Redbricks Primary School

### References:

- [http://www.parenthood.com/article-topics/protect\\_your\\_childs\\_selfesteem.html/page/2](http://www.parenthood.com/article-topics/protect_your_childs_selfesteem.html/page/2)