

THE HOME AND SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

One President's Story



"Clearly, the job of Home & School President is widespread, especially when you include the day-to-day responsibilities of one's own family life. Sometimes all the tasks put together seem quite abundant. Even so, I am quite sure that the impact of this type of activity on the lives of my children will last forever. I hope that my involvement in this benevolent capacity can motivate them to donate their time for worthy causes in their adult lives. More than anything, my goal is for them to remember how involved I was in their school life."

Arzine Abbas-Brochu is the Past President of the Home & School Association at Dunrae Gardens Elementary School. She has 4 children aged 9, 7, 5, 3. When her first-born started Kindergarten in September 2001, she began volunteering in the school library.

"In my opinion, the library is a great place for parents to begin volunteering. Parents get a sense of the school environment, get to spend time with their child's class by reading stories and helping them to find and take out books. From there, parents can decide for themselves, which part of the school they can best contribute to and then jump right in!"

At Year Two, she was elected to the school's Governing Board for a two-year term and served as the Parent Participation Organization Representative and Vice-Chair. She also helped lobby for Dunrae Gardens School's needs by meeting with School Board Commissioners and the Provincial MNAs of the area.

While still a member of the Governing Board, Arzine continued to volunteer for various committees: book fair, library, teacher appreciation week, etc. In 2004, feeling that she had a strong enough grasp of different aspects of school life, she ran for and was elected President of the Dunrae Gardens Home & School Association. All of Arzine's contributions to her children's school were done on a voluntary basis. Her reward was in knowing that she had helped in enhancing the elementary school education of the kids at Dunrae Gardens School.

Arzine feels that the successful Home & School President must:

- 💡 Define the Association's objectives & tasks, keeping in mind the *net value* of doing them (i.e. *what is the return for the work that needs to be done?*).
- 💡 Create an environment that encourages more parent involvement.
- 💡 Delegate tasks to committee heads, other Home & School members, and other parents.
- 💡 Help to maintain a pleasant atmosphere so that even the most tedious of tasks can become a social situation.
- 💡 Be organized.

