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what's the point?

The NICHE Board believes that even more important than quality academics is eternal salvation from the penalty and power of sin. While we come from different church backgrounds, we, with all true Christians, agree on the fundamentals of salvation:

- 1. All people are in rebellion against the God who created them and deserve eternal punishment for that rebellion (sin).
- 2. God, in love, sent His sinless Son, Jesus Christ, who died on the cross as payment for the sins of sinful humanity, rising again from the dead.
- 3. Jesus' death and resurrection provide forgiveness of all sin and reconciliation with God to any who repent and believe in Him.
- 4. Salvation cannot be earned by any act on our part; it must be received as a free gift by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

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magazine

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our mission

To provide Christ-centered events, communication, and resources to better equip, inform, and encourage lowa home educators to the glory of God!

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Think I Can

BY JENN WARREN

can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phillipians 4:13 (KJV)

hrough the lens of social media I have seen many "first day of school" pictures, beautiful and organized homeschool rooms, and simple set-ups with happy kids and workbooks at the kitchen table. I have also seen second or third day (or week) of school cries for help and encouragement from discouraged parents walking the path of homeschooling, but feeling like they are failing their kids.

Over and over again I've tried to reach out and encourage those who are feeling discouraged by the day to day struggles of teaching kids who would rather play than do lessons. Or those parents frustrated by family members or friends who are not supportive of their desire to homeschool their children. Or those families who are simply dealing with difficult life circumstances while also homeschooling their children. Throughout all of these conversations, I keep saying again and again "you CAN do this!"

Several years ago my husband preached a message based on the story of The Little Engine that Could. This story has been edited, tweaked, modernized, printed in many forms, turned into a movie, and in 2007 was named one of the "Teachers' Top 100 Books for Children" by the National Education Association. But, through all of the changes, the message of perseverance shared in this story has not changed since it was first published in 1906 in the New York Tribune. Today I want to encourage you with some of the simple life lessons my husband shared in his message.

First - the engine knew its job and knew where it was going.

Homeschooling parent - you know your job, you know what you want to accomplish, you know where to find help. Most importantly - remember that God knew when he placed your children in your care that you would be enough for them. You are gualified to raise your children. You are qualified to educate your children and to get help with that process if you need to. You CAN do this.

Second - the engine believed it could do the job.

The engine started by saying "I think I can." The engine didn't start by saying "maybe I can." It said, "I think I can." Not I think that big engine over there can, not I think that shiny engine in the yard can, but "I think I can."

Winston Churchill once said, "Attitude is a little thing that can make a big difference." Believing that you CAN is the first step towards success in any undertaking. The way you homeschool may be different than the way your neighbor, best friend, or even parents homeschool - and that is ok. The one thing you have in common with every other homeschooling parent you meet is the belief that you CAN homeschool your own children. Don't let the discouragement of the moment rob you of your confidence.

Third - the engine had the courage necessary to try to do something new. The engine had spent its life in the train yard doing its job. When this new challenge came along the engine was willing to take it on. By being willing, the engine was able to leave the small world of the train yard, climb a beautiful mountain and coast into a peaceful valley.

The rewards of homeschooling are sometimes hard to quantify but always worth the effort. I have been blessed over and over again by experiences we would never have had if we had not decided to homeschool our children. I was there when they learned to read. I've discovered new authors as my kids reach out for more literature. We've stopped in little museums that turned out to be full of fascinating history - because it supported something we were learning in school. Take courage - and stay strong in your decision to homeschool. And, if something you are doing is not working, have the courage to change it.

If you are having a rough time with homeschooling right now, reach out for help. Struggle does not equal failure. At Homeschool Iowa, we have Regional Reps across the state who are ready to come alongside you and be a mentor or help you find a mentor. Also, our Homeschool Iowa Discussion Group on Facebook can put you in touch with hundreds of other homeschooling families across the state. Don't isolate yourself, reach out and find a community to be a part of. Sometimes we all need someone to remind us that we can.



Jenn Warren is a homeschooling, work-at-home freelance graphic designer, and mom of two who loves fonts, graphic elements, and white space almost as much as she loves her husband. Jenn serves as the editor for Homeschool lowa magazine and as NICHE marketing director.

Finding Your NICHE Regional Focus: Northwest Iowa



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www.onawachamber.com

Perform the contacted our Region 1, 4, 5, and 6 Representatives, asked a few Facebook friends, and did a little Google searching to compile this list of things to do, see, and know about Northwest lowa!

Region 1: Denise Huskamp, our Region 1 Rep says that the Clay County Fair in Spencer, held every September, is the largest county fair! (And what kid doesn't love a good county fair?) Another interesting place to visit is the Kaleidoscope Factory in Pocahontas, which is open for tours by appointment. Your tour guide, Leonard, has interesting stories to tell as he talks about kaleidoscopes and shows how they are put together. The Planetarium in Cherokee offers programs regularly, and the Lost Island Nature Center by Ruthven has viewing binoculars that allow you to watch activity on the lake. Another fun family day out is Arnold's Park Amusement Park right on Lake Okoboji. The Blue Bunny Ice Cream Parlor in Lemars offers great choices in ice cream. Denise's favorite event in the area is the Albert City Threshermen and Collector's Show. If you attend that event you will likely see Denise participating!

Region 4: Laura, Cvrk, with Region 4 focused on all the things there are to do in the Sioux City area. The Siouxland area is a wealth of locations to visit to become more acquainted with Lewis and Clark. In Onawa, there is a replica keelboat that you can board and even at times take a ride on. Sioux City has the Sergeant Floyd Monument, the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, and the Iowa Welcome Center that also has lots of Lewis and Clark information and area history. There are many reenactments in the area over



www.kaleidoscopefactory.com

the summertime that you can visit and learn from. Some of the reenactments will even allow people to spend the night with them and participate as a reenactor. The reenactments include time period cooking, portable blacksmithing, and trading for goods, plus lots of historical time period information.

Sioux City has an interesting local history museum that is kid friendly. If you have young children another brand new very popular destination is the Launchpad, a children's hands-on science center that can keep the young ones investigating, exploring and learning for hours. Sioux City also has an art museum which includes a hands-on, exploration room there for children with a Lego wall and arch, cartooning wheel, and many other areas that are free to hang out in.

If you would rather spend some time in the outdoors there are two wonderful Nature areas and Stone State Park that have lots of wildlife and some hands-on exhibits can be found at both the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center and Adams Homestead. Both of the Nature Areas also have many classes for kids and adults that can be utilized by signing up ahead of time. Some of the classes take places in various areas throughout Siouxland, not all of them are at the Nature Centers themselves.

Region 5: Is home to a 14 story bell tower in Jefferson. You can go up to the observation deck 120 feet up where you can view the countryside, including four rooftop art displays. In the summer pianists give live 15-minute concerts every Saturday. You can also enjoy canoe trips on the Raccoon River. There are options to take 5 hour long trips or short 90-minute trips. In Ida County, you can visit the Moorehead House Museum which was constructed in 1883 by the sons of one of the first settlers here. It was turned over to the Ida County Historical Society in 1982 with the stipulation that it would be restored in the form of a museum. It was restored to take visitors on a real-life tour of the late 19th Century in pioneer America. Sac City, Iowa holds the record for having the Worlds Largest Popcorn Ball which weighs in at over 9000 lbs! In Odebolt, you can visit the Iowa Rural Schools Museum which honors the 12,632 schools that helped shape lowa's rural history.

Region 6: Clarion is home to the Heartland Museum complex,

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a regional historical museum dedicated to life in the heartland of America. Agriculture was, and is, the largest business in lowa. From the family farms of the early years to the expansive farms today, the museum strives to preserve and celebrate our local history. In Fort Dodge, you can visit the Fort Museum and Frontier Village and schedule a learning tour to get a look into the history of Fort Dodge as well as life in a pioneer town. The tours are based on the State Board of Education's social studies standards. Hardin County and Eldora are home to the Civil Conservation Corps/Prisoner of War Recreation Hall and Museum where both the Civil Conservation Corps and Prisoners of War stayed. There is also a Railroad Museum, Farm Museum, and the Pine Lake State Park.

In Conclusion: This feature has simply been a quick overview of what is available in these regions, but for a more comprehensive list check out the Travel Iowa website at www.traveliowa.com.

We will focus on Southwest lowa in our next issue, and I would love to have your input! Email me at editor@homeschooliowa.org with your tips on places to visit, pictures of activities, and attractions in the Southwest area of the state.



www.idagroveia.com



www.heartlandmuseum.org



5 Lessons for Raising Financially Savvy Kids

BY PAMELA YELLEN

e all want our children to be good stewards of the bounty God has given and to grow into responsible adults when it comes to money. Yet most of us had little or no formal financial training ourselves. I'm frequently approached by parents who ask, "How do I even begin teaching my child about money?"

Over the years, I've gathered practical money lessons and fun training activities parents can use. Keep in mind that, like any learning, their lessons must be age-appropriate. And of course, kids learn best by participation and example, not by being lectured!

Here are five lessons to help your kids learn great money habits — and have fun doing it:

1. Money is Exchanged for Things (ages 4-8)

Kids don't necessarily make the connection between money and the groceries, clothes and toys that show up in your home — especially if they only see you take that plastic card out of your wallet at the store! Use the following activities to reinforce that connection.

Sort coins and bills together. Depending on their age and math skills, you can have your children stack ten pennies to equal a dime or even have them make change.

Make shopping lists together. Let your child help make the grocery list. Show them how you decide what you'll need at the store. Explain why you don't include other items on your list.

Pay cash at the store. Paying cash has two benefits. First, it will help your child grasp the connection between money and buying things. Second, studies show that you'll actually spend about 20% less—without feeling deprived!

Let your child choose and buy a small item with coins. Let him or her count out the coins for the right amount to the cashier.

The extra time this takes will be well worth the confidence your child gains!

2. Creating Spending Plans (ages 4-12)

Even young children can begin to decide how they will spend their money. Older children can set longer term goals and manage larger amounts.

Create "Spend, Share and Save" images. Discuss what each category

means. "Spend" is for things they will buy that week (or, for older kids, within that month). "Save" is the money put away for a larger purchase or goal. "Share" is the money they will give to a worthy cause of their choice or tithe to your church. Have them cut out or draw images that represent these concepts for them.

Set simple goals for each category. Young children's goals must be very simple and not very far out into the future! But even a four year old can set a goal to "save \$1.50 for the poor children." Write these simple goals on a sheet of paper.

Make "Spend, Save and Share" envelopes. Have your child make colorful envelopes for the three basic parts of their spending plan. Every time they receive money, have them immediately divide it into these envelopes.

"The greatest gifts you can give your children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence." ~Denis Waitley Create Spending Plans. Children who are a bit older and who have some math skills can graduate from envelopes to create simple spending plans for themselves. Start with weekly spending plans; then help them with monthly plans once they get the hang of it.

3. Money is Earned (ages 4-12)

No, money does not grow on trees! But kids don't necessarily grasp that what you or your spouse do all day while you're away from home (or from home) is what allows you to put food on the table and toys in the toy box. Help them understand how your family earns money and let them earn some of their own.

Take your child to work. Some employers encourage this; some do not. If you can't bring your child to the workplace, take excursions to explain what you do. Show them the house Mommy designed or the law books Dad studies to help his clients.

Create a list of kid-friendly chores. Together, decide on small chores they can do to earn extra money. Set a "wage" for each one. Older children can even invoice you at the end of the week. (Make sure you set a limits on what they can earn based on what you can afford so your budding entrepreneur doesn't break the bank!)

4. Wants Versus Needs (ages 8-12)

Kids much younger than eight will have trouble grasping this lesson — as do many adults I know! But it's important to help your kids understand the distinction. A need is more connected to survival. A want is a desire that we can certainly survive without.

Distinguish common purchases. Make a list of items that you commonly purchase, everything from bread to new shoes. Have your child rank each on a scale of 1 (just nice to have) to 10 (need to have.) Discuss the rankings without making them wrong.

Play "What's the Worst that Could Happen?" Using that same list or other items you and your child might want to purchase, ask "What's the worst that could happen if we don't get this?"

Share your own Delayed Gratification list: Make a list of all of your personal "wants" that you are delaying for other priorities. Share the list with your children, and explain your reasoning. Encourage them to make their own list.

5. Understand Impulse Buying (ages 8-12)

Again, younger children may not be able to grasp this lesson. But it's critical for older kids to be aware of how Madison Avenue is trying to manipulate them!

Critique commercials. While watching TV with your kids, ask them what advertisers are trying to get them to do. What is the

underlying message? What are they saying will happen if you buy or don't buy that product? How does the product look in real life (i.e. that Big Mac) compared to the advertisement?

Offer "now versus later" deals. For example, offer your children \$5.00 today or \$15.00 in two weeks. Which do they want? Talk them through the decision. And if they decide on the \$5.00 today, check back with them in two weeks and ask how they feel about that decision.

Create a Spending Pleasure Meter. Have your child create a visual that represents how much pleasure they feel about various purchases. It can look like that old carnival game with the bell on top or like a speedometer that shows 0 to 100. (See the Spending Pleasure Meter for an example.) Whatever they come up with, ask them to rate potential purchases on this meter before they head to the store. Ask them to re-rate that purchase a few days later.

Gauge Your Satisfaction *Before* You Buy, Using the Spending Pleasure Meter



I hope you find these lessons and exercises useful. One last note: One of the most important things in teaching your children about money is to allow them to make mistakes, and let them experience the consequences of those mistakes! You'll find that there is no need to scold or lecture them. If Jimmy blows his allowance on candy so he can't go to the movies with friends, great! It's a lesson that will definitely stick. Better to have your children get these tough lessons while they're still under your care.

Pamela Yellen is a financial security expert and author of two New York Times best-selling books, including her latest, The Bank On Yourself Revolution. Readers can boost their financial literacy and discover their Financial IQ by taking Pamela's eye-opening Financial IQ Quiz here: www.BankOnYourself.com/old-schoolhouse-quiz.

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Libraries in Higher Education

BY MANDY GRIMM, COLUMBUS JUNCTION LIBRARIAN

eading to college? Joining the workforce? Trying to decide what the next step is in your journey? The library can help! While you may feel that your time in libraries is over now that you've graduated from High School, there are so many resources available in libraries that can help with all your postsecondary needs or interests!

Learning Express Library is a fantastic place to start. Learning Express is available through any library in the State of lowa; check your local library's website for a link and sign-up instructions. Once signed in, start at the career preparation tab if you're looking at occupations that require a credentialing or testing process. Multiple jobs are available to research prior to starting a program to complete, such as caseworkers, culinary arts, law enforcement, legal careers, nursing, and teaching. Several occupations require entrance exams, such as nursing school entrance exams. Learning Express has multiple practice tests and suggestions for additional resources to check out if you're interested in those fields. There are also practice exams for credentialing, such as becoming an air traffic controller, postal worker, or licensed real estate agent. The military also has testing requirements, and these practice exams are included here as well!

For those who are interested in a four-year school program, Learning Express has a "college students" tab. This includes reviews for math, reading, grammar/writing, science, and preparation for graduate school exams. If there is an area of particular need prior to entering college, or if you find a need during the middle of the semester, this is a great way to brush up on skills. Likewise, under the computer skills center, there are tutorials on basic computer programs, such as the Microsoft Office products, graphics & illustration tools, and other computer/technology related tasks. This can be very helpful when using programs that perhaps you haven't used in a while, such as formulas and other tasks in Excel or putting finishing touches on a Powerpoint Presentation. These tutorials aren't limited to those attending a four-year school either; many employers/occupations have an expectation for knowledge about these programs. Any interested in knowing more should definitely access them!

Many libraries have these same practice exams or tutorials in other formats, such as ebooks or traditional print materials. If your library doesn't have a particular item, never be afraid to ask; many libraries are able to borrow items from other libraries for patron use. Likewise, if your professor is asking for you to read a particular book, check in with the library before purchasing it! Academic libraries at the school you attend may also have additional copies or resources for students, so make sure to access both your public and academic library for the best of all worlds. lowa Workforce Development also partners with many lowa libraries to provide supports in job seeking, resume writing, cover letter writing, and other employment related topics. Often, these groups take place at your local library as well; check with the library staff to see if you library does have a partnership or if they could provide you with more information.

If you haven't yet graduated but are starting to think ahead to post-secondary options, Learning Express has multiple college admissions test preparation options, including for the ACT and SAT. There are tutorials and multiple practice exams at your fingertips. There's also a tab for suggestions and information about writing college admissions essays. Likewise, checking into certain careers is an option on Learning Express as well. The choices are vast in terms of future careers, and you've got a bright path ahead of you!





Do you have a piece of our puzzle?

Homeschool lowa needs resources to accomplish our mission of continuing to equip, encourage and protect homeschooling families as well as to see the growth our organization needs. To find those resources we are launching the Friends of Homeschool lowa program. We want to build a network of "Friends" that spans the state - including businesses, churches, community organizations, and others who can step in to help both financially and with the gift of their talents and service.

Our core team of volunteers has been able to accomplish much over the past 26 years, but the workload is getting bigger and we need more individuals and families to come alongside and work with us ~ filling in the gaps in our puzzle. Are you interested in joining our team of volunteers? Simply email niche@homeschooliowa.org and tell us how you would like to be involved with our mission, we can then put you in touch with the leader of that team.

If you would love to be a part of our mission, but don't have extra time right now there are two ways that everyone across the state can help. The first is by providing financial support through your tax-deductible donations. The second is the most important piece of the puzzle - that is your prayers. Please keep Homeschool lowa in your prayers as we work to serve homeschooling families across our state.





How to Strengthen the Homeschooling Community: Look to our past, focus on the present, and plan for the future

BY TRACY KLICKA

I grew up wearing mood rings and bell bottoms, playing with Shrinky Dinks and an Easy Bake Oven, and listening to songs like "Summer Breeze" and "American Pie." Yes, I was a child of the late'60s/early'70s. Back then, I hadn't even heard of homeschooling. Yet, while many of us were still kids, the modern homeschooling movement in America was born.

While it's true that as far back as Colonial America, many families, some well-known like the families of George Washington, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Jefferson, taught their children at home, it wasn't until the 1960s and 1970s that the homeschooling population had grown enough to even be noticed. These parents were the pioneers of a new movement to strengthen the family and better educate their children. Home educators during these years would have been noticed more so if the vast majority of them hadn't been homeschooling underground due to an unsupportive legal climate for home education in most of the US.

The 1980s marked a significant shift, however, thanks in part to several individuals who laid the groundwork, educational reformers like John Holt, Raymond Moore, and Gregg Harris, as well as the monumental legal efforts of the Home School Legal Defense Association. Because of their hard work and the hard work of many others, the message of educational freedom and parental rights spread, along with legal changes which codified those freedoms in many states.

In 1990, the first year I started homeschooling our oldest child, Bethany, the homeschooling landscape in America looked far different than it does today. Families who answered God's call to teach their children at home were still considered pioneers, trailblazers who faced a lack of curriculum choices and uncertain freedom, even though it was now legal to homeschool in all but a handful of states. With a strong sense of conviction and armed with a hopeful resolve, these pioneers forged the trail that eventually became a highway for families wanting to give their children an excellent, moral education.

Why is looking to the past important for homeschooling families today?

The sacrifices and efforts made by those pioneers, educational thinkers, HSLDA, and

individual families, were costly ones. They made possible the climate of freedom, acceptance, and accessibility we all enjoy. The work of my late husband, Christopher Klicka, Senior Counsel at HSLDA and a much-loved speaker at homeschool conventions, gave me an insider's view of the movement as a whole. As a homeschooling mother of seven children, the youngest now 16, I personally watched the movement grow from toddlerhood to adulthood.

We have benefitted greatly from the work of our homeschooling forefathers, and looking through the scrapbook of our past helps us to remember the price that was paid in the early years of the homeschooling movement so that we might enjoy great freedom today. If you haven't read about the beginnings and development of homeschooling in America, I encourage you to read Home Schooling, the Right Choice, and Home School Heroes, the Struggle and Triumph of Home Schooling in America, both written by my late husband, Chris. His books have documented well the vast amounts of our nation's homeschooling history.

The wisdom of focusing on the present

While home education is definitely mainstream, the landscape is rapidly changing in America. Burgeoning governmental regulations and an increased intolerance of Judeo-Christian religious expression make the sacrifices of our nation's homeschooling pioneers even more valuable. This growing threat of pervasive government control could spell trouble for the future of our homeschooling freedoms.

Because more regulation is always possible, as home educators we would be wise to do everything we can to maintain our current educational freedoms. How do we do this? By teaching our children well, being committed to our children's academic success, complying with state homeschooling regulations, joining with HSLDA to advance and protect educational freedoms, and setting an example in our own homes of faithfulness, diligence, and love.

God is with us to help in all of these areas. Yet, as freedom can never be guaranteed, our efforts today are just as important as were those of America's homeschooling pioneers. Giving great attention to what we are doing now as homeschoolers builds the life and integrity of home education in the US.

Planning for the future – an opportunity too good to pass up

Part of what has made the home education movement strong, as mentioned earlier, are the efforts of homeschooling pioneers who worked hard to lay a solid foundation and ensure freedom for every family who wanted to teach their children at home. Another reason we are strong, however, lies in our awareness that we are a community, knit together by a desire to give our children our very best. Although each of our homeschools may look quite different from each other (the liberty to creatively provide for our children's education is one of the best advantages of homeschooling) our commitment to helping each other succeed is quite possibly as strong as our desire to school well ourselves.

Promoting the success of the homeschooling movement is planning for its future. How do we do this? As parents, it starts with looking at our own homeschools, assessing areas where we can do better tomorrow than we did today. Another equally important way to encourage the success of homeschooling is to partner with organizations that assist families that are homeschooling through hard times, like the Home School Foundation, the charitable arm of HSLDA. When we reach out to homeschooling families facing difficult challenges, we are investing in the strength of the movement as a whole.

We have been given a great treasure, our homeschooling past, from which we now enjoy the fruit of parental and educational

"We have been given a great treasure... but like anything worth possessing, it must be rightly stewarded to ensure its future value."

liberty. But like anything worth possessing, it must be rightly stewarded to ensure its future value. We do this not only for our own good, but for the good of our community and, ultimately, for God's glory.

Tracy Klicka (MacKillop) is the widow of former HSLDA attorney Christopher Klicka and homeschooling mom of seven (mostly graduated and married) children. As a seasoned homeschooler and gifted writer and speaker for over 17 years, Tracy has addressed thousands of parents at homeschooling conventions and women's events has written dozens of articles and has contributed to her late husband's books on homeschooling. Tracy loves serving and encouraging homeschooling families. She and her husband Peter live in Northern Virginia. She can be reached at tracy@homeschoolingfoundation.org

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Prayer Warriors for Our Children

"...we must be as diligent to pray for

our compliant children as we are

for our more stubborn children."

BY KIM STILWELL

There is no one who is more invested in a child's life than their mother. No one, aside from God, loves them more. No other human on the planet has their best interest at heart. (This is true of dads as well, but the nurturing role of a mother is unique.) Yet, sometimes we moms become so busy with the everyday, practical aspects of mothering that we neglect the most important thing we can do for our children which is to pray for them.

As a mom, I know my children better than anyone. I know their weaknesses and their strengths. But, as much as I love my children, I do not know everything about their hearts and minds. It is good to ask our children directly how we can pray for them.

I have learned so much about my children, both their joys and sorrows, by asking specific questions over the years.

When you ask these questions, be prepared for answers that may surprise you. Be prepared to feel hurt from time to time. But, most of all, listen and show no shock or judgement. Show only

love and concern. It is a gift if your child chooses to open up to you. They do not have to do so. When they respond to your lovingly expressed questions, it is not the time for correction or instruction. Please don't misunderstand me. There is definitely a time for correction and instruction. But it is not at this time. As they share their hearts with you, your only response should be to listen, love, encourage, and assure them of your prayers. Many times, especially as our children get older, they know the Biblical response to their struggles. They just need to talk it through with someone who is there to listen and encourage. I think it goes without saying that, with the exception of our husbands, we should keep what they share with us in confidence. (I do have a couple of dear friends who love my children and know how to keep things private, and a couple of my children have given me their permission and blessing to share most of their struggles with these friends. In fact, it encourages them to know my friends are praying for them. But I would not share without their permission.) Here are some questions that I will periodically ask my children.

- 1) How can I specifically pray for you?
- 2) What is the nicest thing about your life right now?

3) What is the hardest thing about your life right now (perhaps something out of their control)?

4) What is your biggest personal struggle right now (perhaps an attitude and/or sin struggle)?

5) How is your relationship with God right now?

6) What is your biggest relationship problem right now?

7) If you could change one thing about me, what would it be? (This doesn't necessarily mean we should change it, but it gives us an opportunity to either explain why we have chosen to do that particular thing, or if the child is correct, to work on correcting our own character flaws. This is by far the most humbling question to ask! I will be honest and say that I do not ask this question very often!)

I have compiled a list of 31 ways to pray for my children. Some of the things on the list are original with me; some I copied from others. Each day I pray for all my children concerning the one that coincides with that day of the month. Here is my list.

1) That they will accept Christ as their Savior.

2) For their future spouse or for contentment in being single, whichever the Lord has for them.

3) That their identity would be in Christ.

4) That they will not have a fear of man but will desire only to please God.

5) That they will be like Daniel and Esther, having the courage to stay strong and stand against the culture when the culture does not honor or please God.

6) That they will have self-control and self-discipline.

7) That they will be humble.

8) That they will be kind and

compassionate. 9) That they will have a grateful and content spirit.

10) That they will have godly friends who point them to Christ.

11) That they will have godly adults in their lives who point them to Christ.

12) That they will be caught when guilty.

13) That their minds will be pure.

14) That they will understand that people will disappoint them, but that they should love them anyway. That they will realize that only God will never let us down.

15) That their eyes will be protected from seeing evil.

16) That they will not have idols, even idols that can appear to be good.

17) That they will be in God's Word daily.

18) That they will be obedient to authority.

19) That they will have wisdom and discernment.

20) That trials will draw them closer to the Lord and not make them bitter.

21) That they will be wisely generous with their time, talents, money and material possessions.

22) That they will be a godly example to others.

23) That they will desire only what truly matters.

24) That God will keep them safe.

25) That they will use their tongue for kindness and not harm.

26) That they will be others-oriented.

27) For their future.

- 28) For a sense of purpose
- 29) For their relationships

30) For purity

31) For their health

On a practical level, if you are struggling with the details of

how to pray for your children, there have been various ways that I have prayed for my children over the years. While I pray for my children often throughout the day, I find that it is good to have a system or else my children, who aren't having an obvious struggle in their life at the moment, tend to get neglected in my prayer life. What I have done the past few years is to "assign" a day of the week to each child. I happen to have five children and there are five work days of the week, so I pray for a specific child on a specific day. (I pray for my husband on Saturdays and myself on Sundays.) I have a married son so I pray for him and his wife and baby (who will be born by the time this article goes to print) on the same day. (We are more than a little excited about meeting this precious little miracle baby in person!) This system does not mean that I don't pray for my other children or my husband on a day is not "assigned" to them, but I especially focus my prayer time for each family member on their specific day.

Another way we can pray for our children is to pray Scripture. For example, if I read Philippians 4:8 in my Bible reading time, I can stop and pray, "Dear Heavenly Father, Please help (insert child's name) to think on whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely and whatever is commendable." What a blessing that we can use the words of our Lord and Savior to pray for our children. (I do the same for my husband and others.) One caution, though. Sometimes when we pray Scripture for our children, it is easy to fall into a rote method of "vain repetition." When we pray Scripture for our children, we need to mean it sincerely from the heart. We need to focus on the words, just as we do with the prayers we pray in our own words.

As alluded to a couple of paragraphs ago, we must be as diligent to pray for our compliant children as we are for our more stubborn children. Most of us with several children have one or two who are compliant, desire to please Mom and Dad, and who have a heart to serve. We also have one or two children who seem to fight us on nearly everything, doubt our motives, and are just downright stubborn. And then there are the children who are somewhere in between. It is easy to focus our prayers on the children who cause us to struggle most in our parenting. However, our compliant children need our prayers just as much as our stubborn ones. Perhaps more so, because the sins of our stubborn children are very obvious. The sins of our compliant children are more hidden. Just as we want our stubborn children to become Christ-like, we want our compliant children to stay Christ-like. We also want God to work on their hearts and help them overcome any hidden sins that we do not know about.

Colossians 4:2 tells us, "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving." That is how we should pray for our children, both watchfully and with thanksgiving. It is amazing to me that God has given us the privilege to come to Him in prayer. I am in awe that the Creator of the universe cares about me enough to listen to my prayers. How terrible it would be to waste this great honor and to not pray for our children. May God bless each of you as you bring your children before Him in prayer!



Kim Stilwell moved to lowa when she married her high school sweetheart and best friend in 1987. Jeff and Kim have five children and a daughter-in-love. The days were indeed long, yet the years far too short, and their children are now all older teens and young adults.



Figure 1 by the renewing of your mind



















SAVE THE DATE:

HI Conference 2019 is coming to Valley Church in West Des Moines on June 6-8, 2019!

2018 CONFERENCE Highlights

Thank You

to the many volunteers, attendees, exhibitors & speakers who made our 2018 Conference amazing! As we look over the comments in our afterconference surveys we are able to see repeatedly that God uses the Homeschool Iowa annual Conference to encourage, challenge, and inspire homeschooling families across our state. It was a blessing to see so many families attending the conference together.

If you missed conference and wish to purchase recordings of the workshops you can do that on the Conference page of our website, homeschooliowa.org. "Thank you. Please keep doing what you're doing. The hard work is paying off in dividends. God is using this work, your efforts. I'm so grateful for this conference."

"The Keynote's from Heidi St. John were right on the money. The conference was a great experience & I am walking away feeling encouraged, equipped, and excited. Refreshed indeed. Transformed."

"My daughter really enjoyed the children's program, our 2 hour drive home went fast as she recounted the entire drama!"

> "I loved the Thursday Mini Conference. Next year I will attend the whole conference."

"Thank you for the encouragement to put my faith in Christ to let him lead me through our homeschooling journey - because it's Him who engineers the learning opportunities."

"Thank you! What a great first conference experience we had. It was like drinking water from a fire hose. We are so thankful for all of the wisdom and encouragement we received at the Homeschool Iowa Conference. It was really professional and well put together."

Rooted in Christ

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. ~I Corinthians 3:19

Socialization and the Homeschooled Autistic Child

BY TERRI BROGAN



s the mother of a child diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), I have always known that I would homeschool my son. Within three months of his birth, my husband and I firmly made the decision to homeschool, after much prayer, thought, and consideration. Our decision did not change three years later when he received a diagnosis of autism. We knew that it would be more challenging, but we also knew that we were not willing to relinquish our God-given right and responsibility to homeschool our child because of his diagnosis.

However, the decision to homeschool is typically not as straightforward for some parents of children with autism. Instead, homeschooling a child on the autism spectrum is often a hasty decision that is made after disparaging trials experienced in the public school system. As a result, these parents may become quickly frustrated and often doubt whether they made the right decision to homeschool.

Typically, the reservations about this educational option are focused on the age-old concern of "socialization." If this is the case, their doubts and fears are even more pronounced because they are now charged with the task of finding appropriate ways to socialize a child with a social disorder. While their anxiety is well-founded, their energy is often misspent on rummaging through the wrong resources trying to find the right answers.

Instead, the practical solution is to prayerfully consider the best methods for socializing a child on the spectrum. In doing so, a few factors should be examined. First, it is important to evaluate the purpose of socialization. Second, it is vital to consider the role that the child's overall health will play in his or her ability to properly socialize with others. Third, it is crucial to set measureable and attainable goals for finding the right kind of amenable social environments for the child.

The Purpose of Socialization

When looking for a means to socialize any child, we must first understand the purpose and goal of socialization. The purpose of socialization is to modify an individual's behavior so that it complies with social norms. The primary goals of socialization are for an individual to be able to properly function and to become a productive member in society.

In order to accomplish these goals with an autistic child, it is necessary to expose the child to a variety of social settings, particularly ones that are suitable for helping the child acquire the requisite skills to adequately interact with other individuals. In which case, appropriate settings for autistic children are often significantly different than settings that are appropriate for neuro-typical children. This is due to the unique social and health challenges that a child with ASD faces.

Health and Socialization

Once parents or caretakers understand the purpose of socialization, they should investigate the impact that the child's health will have on his ability to understand and reciprocate social cues. It is important for caretakers to understand these dynamics before placing ASD children in social environments. This is because children on the spectrum often have sensory integration issues, developmental and cognitive delays, and self-stimulatory behaviors that can seriously impede their ability to communicate with others.

Therefore, it may be necessary for caretakers to consider treatments that focus on recovering the child's physiological, psychological and emotional health before visiting the issue of socialization. In doing so, caretakers will be able to provide the child with the proper foundation for processing and engaging with social stimuli, thus, improving social transitions and interactions for the child.

This is something that we experienced with our son. When he was initially diagnosed, the early intervention specialists from our state's program for developmental delays were primarily focused on his socialization. They were adamant about him needing to

be around age-appropriate peers so that he could learn social skills. Thus, they repeatedly implored us to send him to a schoolbased early intervention program so that he could be socialized with other pre-school aged children.

Fortunately, we maintained our stance and kept him at home. However, instead of focusing on socialization during the initial phases of his treatment, God revealed to us that we needed to attend to his health concerns first. Therefore, we started using biomedical treatments that helped restore his physiological, psychological and emotional well-being.

In particular, we concentrated on alleviating his allergies, eczema, and self-stimulatory behaviors. Thankfully, within about six months he made significant gains in his speech, language and social development as well. It was at this point that he was better equipped to handle sensory stimuli and social cues, which resulted in him being able to more adequately communicate with others.

Thus, parents should consider the role that health plays in their child's social development. Enrolling the child in school won't fix these issues, especially if the child's social challenges are rooted in underlying health conditions such as allergies or yeast infections. Instead, doing so may actually exacerbate these social challenges by increasing sensory integration problems and selfstimulatory behaviors.

Setting Socialization Goals

The final step that parents or caretakers should consider is to set socialization goals for their child. This step helps to ensure that the child is being placed in amicable social settings that will foster positive social development. Thus, one of the primary goals of socializing an autistic individual should be to find suitable environments in which the child can properly grow and develop his social skills.

As mentioned earlier, children with ASD typically have diverse health concerns, which can interfere with their sensory processing abilities. As such, these individuals will generally not thrive in loud or noisy settings, or with large numbers of people. Therefore, special care and attention must be paid in selecting more hospitable environments in which to engage children on the spectrum.

Such settings will be comprised of individuals who can teach and model appropriate social interaction in a loving and patient atmosphere. Typically, this will not be in classrooms filled with large numbers of students. In fact, schools can often be counterproductive for autistic children because they can overwhelm the child, resulting in behavioral problems.

Conversely, children on the spectrum tend to thrive in settings where mature and responsive caretakers are present. In this way the child can be monitored and assisted when making social exchanges. This component will vary based on the child's age and level of development.

Obviously, older and/or higher functioning kids will typically require less guidance than younger and/or lower functioning children. Either way, these environments will provide the child with a buffer against social settings that are replete with overwhelming and confusing social stimuli.

Parents will also need to seek out places where their child can interact with others in smaller groups and in quieter settings until the child can adequately process sensory feedback. This is why the homeschool environment is generally more suitable for managing the social needs of autistic children. In essence, home education allows caretakers to gently introduce the ASD child to social settings in a way that is conducive to the child's individual strengths and unique challenges.

Teri Brogan is a blessed wife and homeschooling mother of two children. Her 10-year-old son was diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder at the age of three, which makes her family's homeschooling journey especially interesting. She also teaches college-level health science students and in her spare time maintains her blog Natural Homeschooling, where she shares helpful ideas about autism homeschooling and many other diverse topics. She is also the author of the book "Recovering from Autism: Our Family's Journey of Hope and Healing" in which she details her son's recovery from autism. Copyright 2018, The Old Schoolhouse[®]. Used with permission. All rights reserved by Author.

Small Business Directory:



On Teaching History

arry S. Truman once said, "There is nothing new in the world, except the History you do not know." That sentiment echoes the words of King Solomon in Ecclesiastes 1:9 and 10, "...and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us."

There is so much history to study, how do you know where to start? What to focus on? What to study? Fortunately, there are several good resources to start with.

Where to start: There are two primary methods of teaching history, the first is to study history chronologically - beginning by studying prehistoric civilizations and moving forward into modern times building your knowledge of history by starting from the beginning and working your way forward. The second is to start with local history and work your way out - usually elementary students who learn history this way are introduced to Christopher Columbus and the Pilgrims first, then continue on to learn more about the colonization of the United States, the War for Independence, the Civil War and then move on to study world history. These students will usually bounce back and forth between United States history and World history, each year learning more and going more in-depth in their studies.

A third method of teaching history starts with learning family history and expanding from there. This method has children learn about their grandparents and their lives, then their greatgrandparents, and on out, building on their own family's heritage and studying world events as they affected your family.

Keep history interesting: If you focus on stories, experiences and interesting bits of trivia your students will be more interested in learning that if you focus on simply memorizing dates, names, and places. Understanding why the year 1792 is important and how it fits into the whole story of history makes it much more

likely that your children will retain the date as well as the story of Christopher Columbus crossing the ocean and what happened with the expedition once he got to the Americas.



Lunch hour at a country school in Grundy Center, Iowa, Oct. 1939

Another tip is to use historical fiction in your studies. Well written novels can help your children understand the culture of the period of time you are studying. An example that has been in the news this year are the *Little House on the Prairie* books. Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote about life as it was when she grew up. Her stories have transported generations of children back to a time when the United States was still growing and expanding. When evening entertainment was singing around the fireplace while Pa played his fiddle. When some new mittens, or a cloth doll, or a tin cup, penny, and a peppermint stick was an exciting gift at Christmas.

Make history hands-on: To keep the study of history interesting, relevant and engaging; make learning history hands-on. Study maps and navigational charts. Seek out primary sources of important historical documents and view them online or in person when you can. Build models of pyramids, airplanes, skyscrapers and Indian villages. Visit museums. Recreate a meal that was served on the Titanic. Go to a living history site. Visit a re-enactment store and try on period clothing. Don't just read about history - but make it personal and relevant to you and your children.

Resources:

Iowa State History:

Looking for a great way to teach lowa history? A treasure trove of primary sources from the State Historical Society of lowa and Library of Congress is available online. There are now 40 Primary Source Sets of photos, videos, maps and documents ranging from the lowa Territory to the Civil War to 20th century achievements in women's suffrage and civil rights. Teaching toolkits and discussion questions accompany all of the K-12 resources, which are searchable by subject, time period, and lowa Core social studies standards. Visit the website here: www.iowaculture.gov/history.

TeachingHistory.org:

Teachinghistory.org is a website full of free teaching resources for K-12 teachers This secular website was originally funded by a 2007 U.S. Department of Education contract. While the majority of users are K-12 teachers, the site is also used by librarians, social studies methods instructors, homeschoolers, and public historians. Visit the website here: www. teachinghistory.org.

Where to browse a variety of "ready to use" curriculum choices:

Rainbow Resource Center offers curriculum from several different publishers and is a regular participant in the Exhibit Hall at our annual conference. Visit the website here: rainbowresource.com **Christian Book Distributors** has a wide selection of homeschool materials for all subjects from a variety of publishers, including history. Visit the website here: christianbook.com/homeschool

Homeschool Curriculum Reviews:

Bloggers are constantly reviewing homeschool curriculum. It can be helpful to read through the perspective of multiple people when determining what curriculum resources will work for your family. A simple Google search will bring up several of these options for you. We recommend also visiting the website of Cathy Duffy, a long-standing and reputable curriculum reviewer. has been reviewing curriculum since 1984. Visit her website here: cathyduffyreviews.com

hi

HOMESCHOOL OPTIONS IN IOWA A QUICK-LOOK OVERVIEW CHART

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REQUIREMENTS:

>> No initial reporting required If public school written request is received, use NICHE Independent Private Instruction Response Form ACCESS AVAILABILITY: >> No access to Dual Enrollment for public school services, activities, or Senior Year Plus options (other than concurrent enrollment) >> No access defined in Iowa Code for Parent-Taught Driver Education

REQUIREMENTS:

>> <u>No</u> initial reporting required ACCESS AVAILABILITY:

COMPETENT

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION (CPI)

Option 2 w/ Opt-Out Reporting

>> No access to Dual Enrollment for public school services, activities, or Senior Year Plus options

>> Access available for

Parent-Taught Driver Education Use NICHE Optional Report Form for CPI Option 2 with Opt-Out when applying for status as a teaching parent for PTDE.

OPTIONS WITH REPORTING AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC SCHOOL SERVICES

COMPETENT PRIVATE INSTRUCTION (CPI) Option 2 w/ Opt-In Reporting

REQUIREMENTS:

>> CPI Form A <u>must</u> be filed by Sept 1 or within 2 weeks after removing child from school >> Annual assessment results report must be filed by June 30 ACCESS AVAILABILITY:

>> Access available for Dual Enrollment

for public school services, activities, and Senior Year Plus options >> Access available for Parent-Taught Driver Education

COMPETENT PRIVATE INSTRUCTION (CPI) Option 1 w/ Your Chosen Teacher

REQUIREMENTS:

>> CPI Form A <u>must</u> be filed by Sept 1 or within 2 weeks after removing child from school >> Meet with your chosen teacher 8 times (2 per quarter) ACCESS AVAILABILITY: >> Access available for Dual Enrollment for public school services, activities, and Senior Year Plus options >> Access available for Parent-Taught Driver Education COMPETENT PRIVATE INSTRUCTION (CPI) Option 1 w/ HSAP^{*} Teacher

REQUIREMENTS:

>> CPI Form A <u>must</u> be filed by Sept 1 or within 2 weeks after removing child from school >> Meet with HSAP* teacher 16 times (4 per quarter) ACCESS AVAILABILITY: >> Access available for Dual Enrollment

for public school services, activities, and Senior Year Plus options >> Access available for Parent-Taught Driver Education

*Public School Homeschool Assistance Program

IAM

I was regretting the past And fearing the future... Suddenly my Lord was speaking: "MY NAME IS I AM." He paused.

I waited. He continued, "When you live in the past, with its mistakes and regrets, it is hard. I am not there.

My name is not I was. "When you live in the future, with its problems and fears, it is hard. I am not there.

My name is not I will be. "When you live in this moment, it is not hard. I am here.

My name is I AM."

Helen Mallicoat (1913-2004)



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