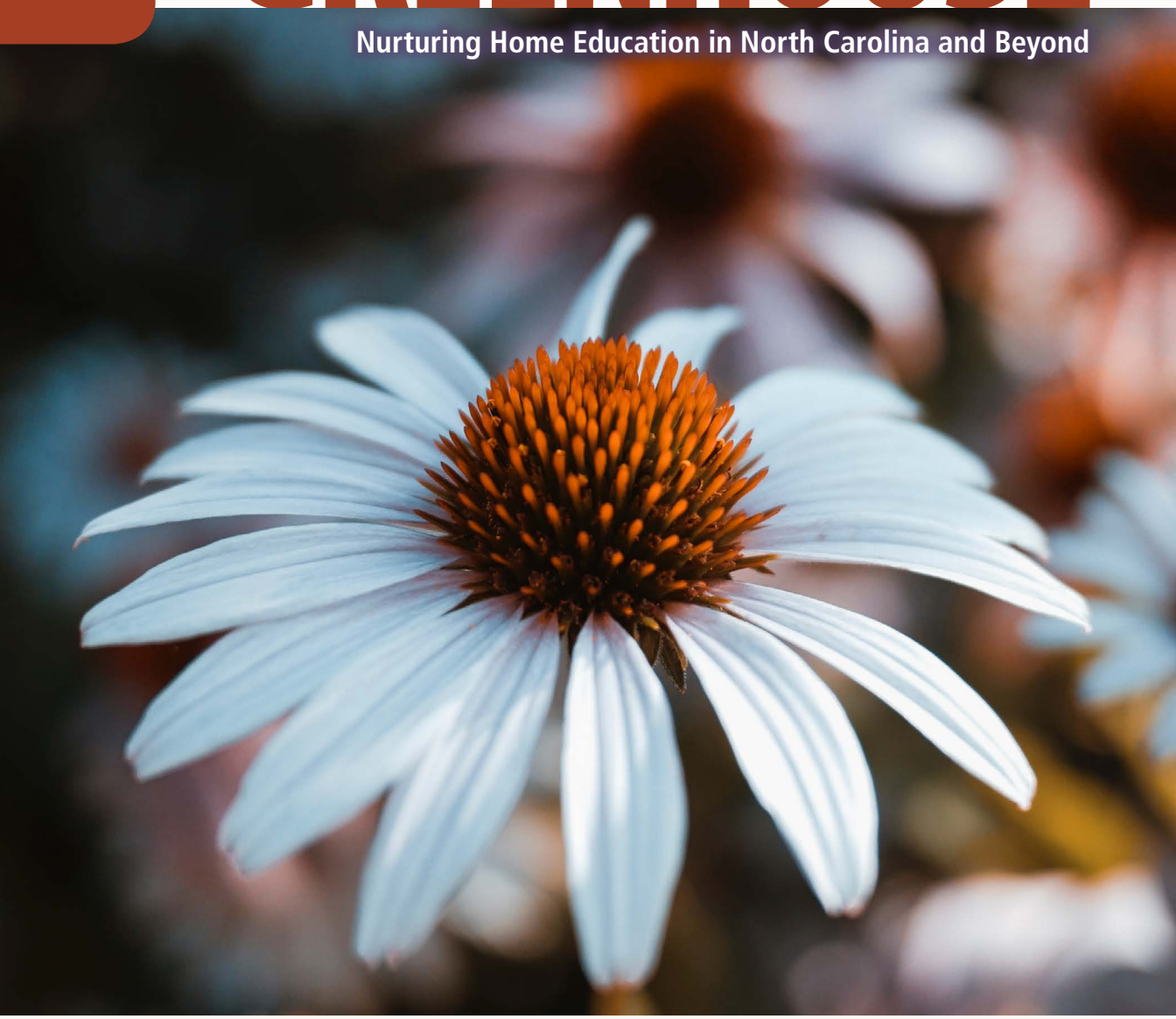
FALL 2018
Volume 37 | No. 1

GREENHOUSE

Nurturing Home Education in North Carolina and Beyond



In This Issue

What Is Happening In Your Daughter's Life?
Five NCHE Scholarships Awarded
Dear Younger Me
Homeschooling In the Midst of Suffering
The Sunny Mrs. Dorsey
He Said, She Said
Homeschool Lesson Planning
What to Teach When

nche
NORTH CAROLINIANS FOR HOME EDUCATION





Thrive!

The nche Homeschool Conference

EQUIPPING, ENCOURAGING and CONNECTING

2019 Thirty-Fifth NCHE Annual Conference

BENTON CONVENTION CENTER • WINSTON-SALEM, NC





May 30 - June 1, 2019

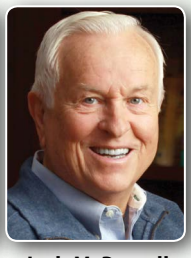
Featured Speakers



Belinda Bullard



Kirk Martin



Josh McDowell



Andrew Pudewa



Sonya Shafer

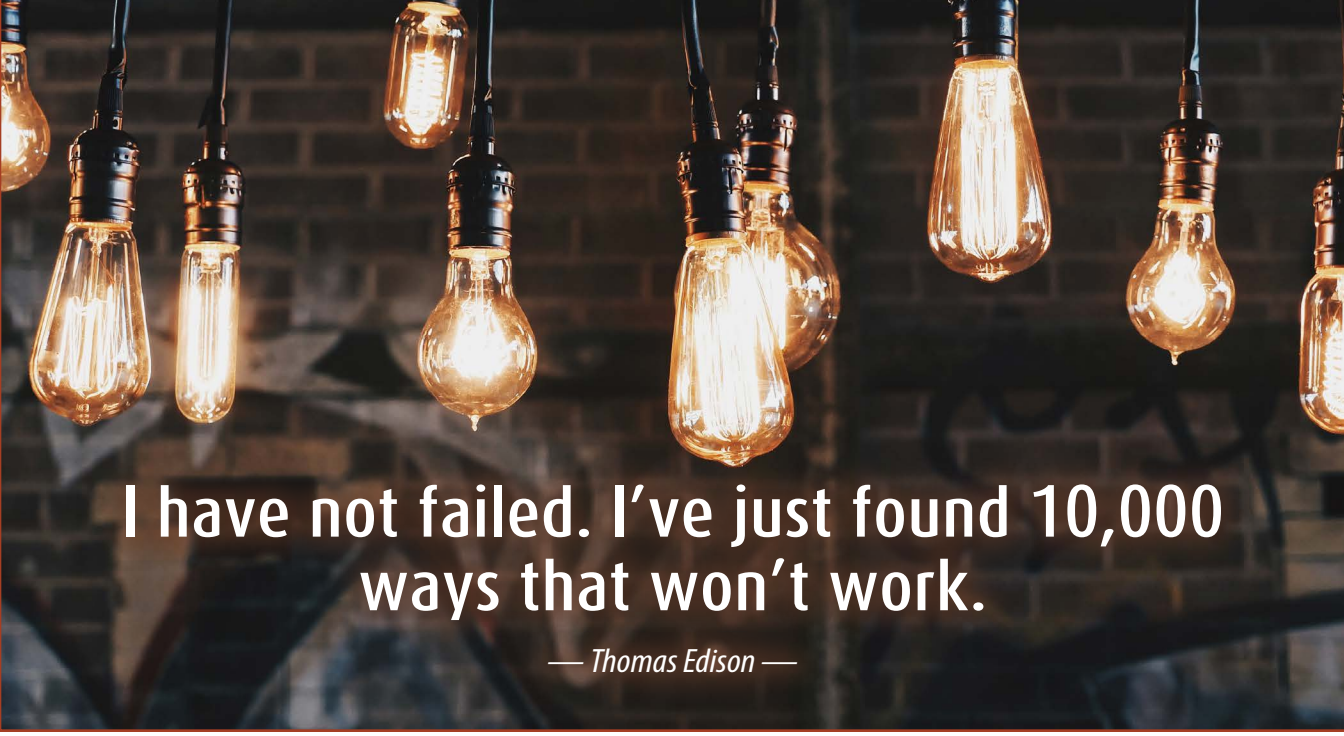


Sam Sorbo

Knowledgeable and Inspiring Speakers • Huge Vendor Hall
Fun Teen Activities • Engaging Children's Program

"I love the conference! It refocuses, motivates, encourages and inspires me every year!" — Christy

nche.com/thrive



About GREENHOUSE

The GREENHOUSE is the periodical of North Carolinians for Home Education. It is published twice a year, spring and fall. There is also a special graduate publication in May. It is mailed to all members and posted online. The name GREENHOUSE was chosen to represent the type of care homeschooling parents are able to give to their children. Children are lovingly "tended" in a protected and nurturing environment until they are sufficiently mature to go out and take a place of service in the world. Letters and articles addressed to the GREENHOUSE become property of NCHE with full right to publication without further permission required. Ideas and opinions expressed in articles do not necessarily represent those of NCHE.

ADVERTISING: The publication of advertising in the GREENHOUSE in no way expresses or implies endorsement by NCHE of products or services.

DEADLINES (Received By)

Issue Date	Articles	Ads
Fall – September	July 20	July 31
Spring – March	January 20	January 31
Graduate – May	March 20	March 31

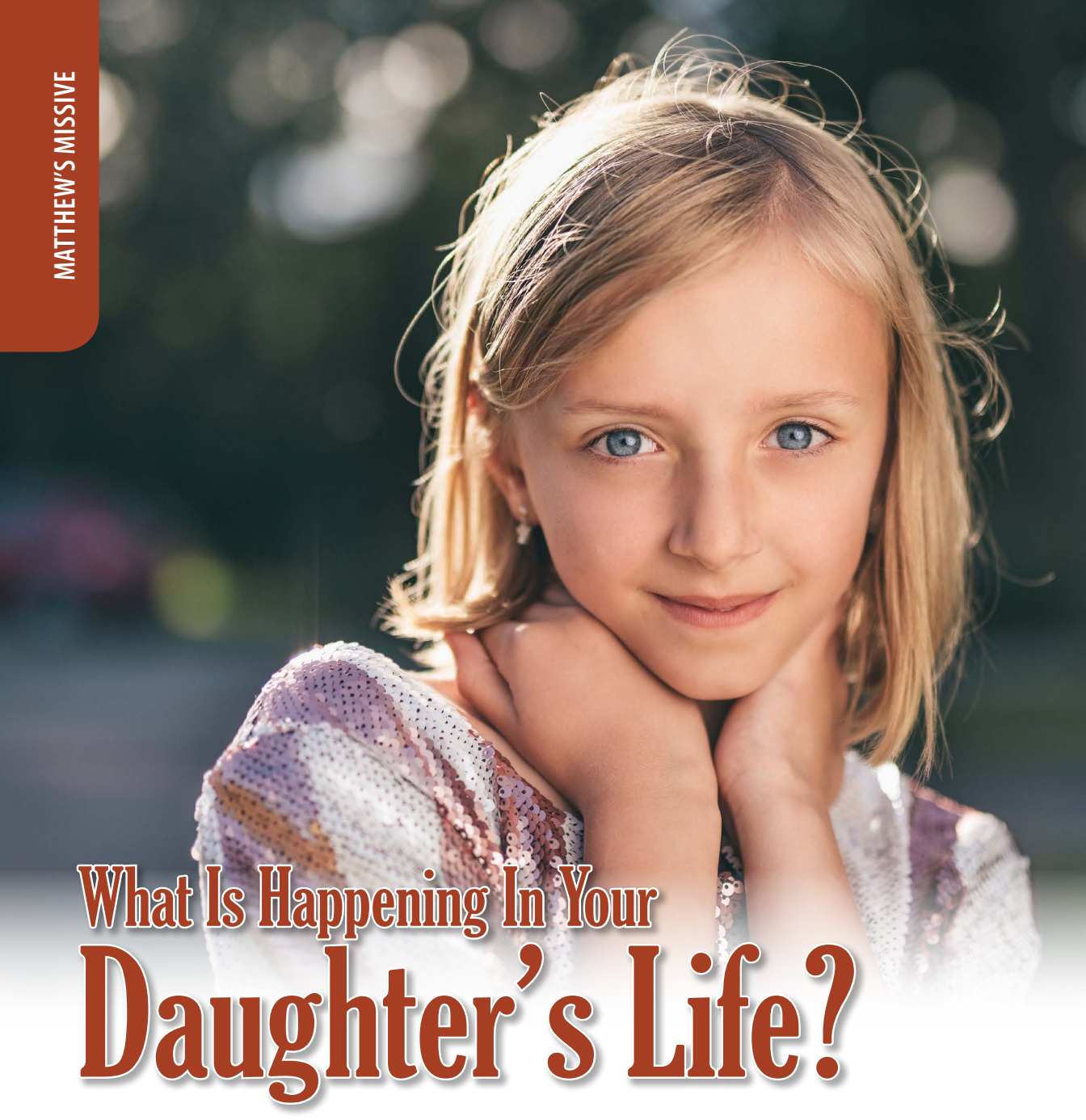
GREENHOUSE Editor
Ivey Deitz
email greditor@nche.com

Published by:
North Carolinians for Home Education
4441 Six Forks Rd., Suite 106, Box 144
Raleigh, NC 27609

(844) 624-3388 • *email* nche@nche.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2 What Is Happening In Your Daughter's Life?
4 Five NCHE Scholarships Awarded
6 Dear Younger Me
8 Homeschooling In the Midst of Suffering
10 Six Things I Wish I'd Known When I Started Homeschooling
14 The Sunny Mrs. Dorsey
16 He Said, She Said
18 Homeschool Lesson Planning
20 What to Teach When
22 I See You, Little Homeschooling Momma!
24 How to Create a World of Fun
27 Five As for the Novice Homeschooler
30 Add Some Pizzazz to Your First Day of School!
32 Be Watchful, Dads
34 Sports News
35 Bulletin Board



What Is Happening In Your Daughter's Life?

by Matthew McDill

What is happening in your daughter's life? I think this is a particularly good question for fathers. Stop and think about that question for a moment. How would you answer? Do you feel like you know? Now, think of all the texts, video chats, social media, and hours spent with friends. Are you sure you know? This is a good question for both fathers and mothers for both sons and daughters. But I'd like to focus on fathers and daughters. The father-daughter relationship is the context of a great Bible story that provides a wonderful lesson for dads.

In the book of Esther, we learn that as a child Esther lost both her mother and father. Mordecai (who was her cousin) adopted her as his own daughter and raised her. The nature of this father-daughter relationship manifests itself as Esther becomes a young adult and is taken by the king to be considered as a wife.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

And every day
Mordecai walked in front of the court of the harem
to learn how Esther was
and what was happening to her.
Esther 2:11

I doubt Mordecai's interest and involvement in Esther's life was a new development. This was his fatherly way. Every day. What a wonderful example for us as dads. Express daily interest and involvement in your daughter's life. Find out what she is thinking and feeling. Ask about what she loves and about her conversations. Inquire about her relationship with God.

I am not sharing this lesson with you because I have done such a great job with my own family. In fact, I can see ways that I have failed to be interested and involved in my daughters' lives.

Another aspect of the relationship between Mordecai and Esther is her obedience to him.

Esther obeyed Mordecai
just as when she was brought up by him.
Esther 2:20

Again, Mordecai's influence in Esther's life, and her response to him, was not a new development. The nature of their relationship had developed over time. The story does not make a direct connection between the ongoing influential role of a father in a daughter's life and his ongoing interest and involvement in her life. But it sure does make sense.

It is certainly possible for a daughter in faith to follow the leadership of her father, no matter what her relationship to him is. But it is a natural outflow of the relational investment that has been made when the father has chosen to be interested and involved in her life. He has her heart. He has earned her trust.

I plan to follow the example of Mordecai's fatherly ways. I want to connect daily with my daughters, discovering how they are and what is happening in their lives. And I pray that they will receive godly, fatherly guidance as they grow into young ladies.



Matthew McDill and his wife, Dana, homeschool their nine children in Creston, NC. Matthew has been on the NCHE board for several years and currently serves as president. He is a pastor of Highland Christian Fellowship in Boone, NC. Through his ministry, Truth to Freedom (truthoffreedom.org), he loves to teach and write about discipleship, marriage, family, parenting, home education, and church. Matthew holds a B.S. in communication and two master's degrees and a Ph.D. in biblical studies.

The Best Tests Since 1990!
Easy ordering, reliable scoring, low prices
NC DNPE approved do-it-yourself testing
CAT/6 Complete Battery *or* Survey
$40 Grades 4-12, **$45** Grades K-3
USPS Priority Mail postage for any size order **$10**
Other approved tests available, priced from **$25**

Bayside School Services
PO Box 250 • Kill Devil Hills NC 27948

Order securely from our website baysideschoolservices.com
If you have questions just email and we'll get you answers right away.
No web access? Call and we'll mail you our brochure and order form.
voice messaging 800-723-3057 • orders@baysideschoolservices.com



FIVE NCHE SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

by Evelyn Bickley

This year NCHE was able to award five scholarships! The scholarship categories were academic, arts, scholar-athlete, HINTS Community Service, and Apologia Missions and Ministry.

The NCHE scholarship program was instituted in 1998 to encourage and reward excellence in homeschooling in North Carolina. Since it began, the program has awarded over $150,000. Winners have chosen to study at institutions such as UNC Chapel Hill, NC State, Duke, the US Air Force Academy, Moody Bible Institute, Patrick Henry College, as well as non-degree programs in aviation and missions.

All applicants must be full-time homeschooled high school seniors whose families are members of NCHE and in compliance with NC laws governing homeschools. The scholarship application process opens in December. Students must complete an application, gather standardized test scores, collect letters of recommendation, and write essays explaining their experiences and vision for the future. NCHE awards scholarships that are generously funded by Apologia Publishing and the HINTS homeschool support group in south Charlotte. In addition, individual members and supporters of NCHE donate to provide other scholarships awarded by NCHE. We are excited to announce the 2018 winners.



Anthony Chaffey, winner of the *Academic Scholarship* and son of Dan and Vivian Chaffey of Charlotte, plans to attend Cedarville University in Ohio to study computer engineering. From a young age, Anthony loved problem solving. An eighth-grade engineering class confirmed that's where he belonged! He hopes one day to use his skills to design and build things that will impact the world for the better.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018



Bethany Brinson, winner of the *Arts Scholarship* and daughter of Cliff and Christi Brinson of Holly Springs, will study piano performance at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University. The winner of numerous music awards, Bethany is also interested in composing and scoring.



Natalia Padua, winner of the *Scholar-Athlete Scholarship* and daughter of Tony and Aleksandra Padua of Cary, plans to study fashion design at either Liberty or Appalachian State. Natalia was on the NCHEAC women's volleyball team, the Durham Flight, for years including being captain in 2017 when the team won the state championship. She has traveled extensively in Europe and will be spending part of the next year at the Discipleship Training School of Youth with a Mission (YWAM) in London.



Mark Rowan, winner of the *HINTS Community Service Scholarship* and son of Jeff and Beth Rowan of Winston-Salem, will be attending Cedarville University's pre-med program in the fall. Some of Mark's extracurricular activities include ten years of piano and years on several soccer teams, including the NCHEAC Forsyth Home Educators. He used those skills in community service through volunteer coaching of the Under-Six league of the Northern Triad Soccer Club and playing piano at a local nursing home and at Wake Forest Baptist Hospital.



Kierstyn Kiser, winner of the *Apologia Missions and Ministry Scholarship* and daughter of Shannon and John Kiser of Charlotte, plans to pursue studies to become a nurse. Sparked by several life experiences with critically ill family members and her studies in Apologia's biology and human anatomy courses, this choice has been confirmed by God as vocation she can use to serve Him regardless of the locale.

To help NCHE continue to offer scholarships to deserving homeschool seniors such as these, go to www.nche.com and click on *membership/contribute* in the blue ribbon at the top of the page. You may also mail a check, marked for the scholarship program, to NCHE, 4441 Six Forks Road, Suite 106, Box 144, Raleigh, NC 27609.



Evelyn Bickley is a homeschooling veteran of more than twenty-five years. She has served on the boards of several support groups and as an adviser to the Zeta Epsilon chapter of the National Homeschool Honor Society. Wife to Barry and mom to four homeschooled graduates, Evelyn enjoys traveling, leading Gavel Clubs for teens, and advising other homeschool families as they journey through high school. She currently serves as the NCHE activities director, responsible for field trips, scholarships, and athletics.

Achievement, Cognitive, Career, & Practice Tests
www.TriangleEd.com

National standardized achievement tests

Specializing in

The Iowa Tests®
The Iowa Assessments™ (paper and online)
Stanford 10 (paper and online)
TerraNova2™ - California Achievement Test
Brigance®
Woodcock-Johnson®
BASI™ - (Apex, NC testing office only)
CogAT®
OLSAT®
Career Tests
Achievement & Cognitive Practice Tests

Group discounts available • Some restrictions apply

Your Child is Uniquely & Wonderfully Made

Triangle Education Assessments, LLC
5512 Merion Station Dr
Apex, NC 27539 • Ph. 919.387.7004
orders@triangleed.com
Toll free or fax order: 1.877.843.8837



Dear Younger Me

by Amanda Garner

As I stand on the verge of another school year, I can't help but reflect on the incredible journey I've taken down this path called homeschooling. After a decade and a half, I'm amazed at how far I've come and how much I've grown. It hasn't been easy, but the things that truly matter seldom are. If I could reach back in time and send a letter to my younger self, the one standing uncertain, peering down this unknown path called homeschooling, this is what I would say:

Dear Younger Me,

Hey, you! You, standing there with your brood of young children, straining to see down this unknown path, debating whether or not you want to take this route. I know it's a scary decision; you wonder if it's the right choice, if you can make the journey, if you can handle what's coming around the twists and turns. I know, because I've been where you are, choosing the road less traveled, doubting myself and my abilities, entertaining all the what-if scenarios. So, you'll just have to trust me on this. Take the first step. Step out in faith and confidence in your decision. If others try to stop you, ignore them and walk on. Don't try to explain it or defend it; just go!

The journey will be challenging, of course, but you already know that. What you don't know is that the difficulties will come from heart issues, not necessarily head issues. Right

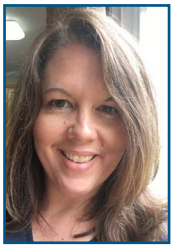
© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

now, you're probably worried about the academics, the curriculum, and the testing. But I'll let you in on a little secret: that's the easy part. It doesn't matter which method you use or philosophy you embrace. Anything you use diligently will work. Your biggest obstacle will be bad attitudes—theirs and yours! So when those heart issues pop up, be ready to do battle. Right now, you think you're simply choosing to home educate your children, but what you're doing is entering the battlefield for their hearts and minds. In the process, your weakness and sinfulness will be exposed. When those days come (you know, the ones where everything goes wrong) forget what's written in the lesson planner. Abandon the academics and deal with the heart. It doesn't matter if your son can read three grade levels ahead, if your daughter is advanced in math, if he or she whines and complains, is disobedient, or has a rebellious spirit. The most important lessons won't come from a book. Rather, they are life lessons learned as you walk along the way.

I also encourage you to enjoy the scenery along the way. Savor the days when they are young and nurture the natural curiosity that brings excitement when the whole world is brand new! Join in the joy of discovery in digging up worms, planting a seed, watching birds, and building forts. Bask in the glory of lightning bugs, stargazing, and summer storms. Education is so much more than paper, pencil, and books. As your children grow, you'll be tempted to join in the rush of activities, sports, clubs, and co-ops. Choose wisely and continue to stay plugged into your child's life and heart. As the teen years roll around, they may not need you to make them a sandwich, but they do need you to stay engaged and interested in who they are. Let them ask tough questions and don't be afraid to let them see your own fears and struggles. Win their hearts in the small things when they are young, so they will trust you with the big things when as they grow older.

Last of all, determine right now to stay the course. Don't let the inevitable doubts and fears cause you to turn around and look back, wondering if you're too far down the path to turn around and go back. If you don't hear anything else I have to say, hear this: it's worth it! Don't give up. The days are long, but the years are short. Suddenly you'll turn around, and in place of a dirt-smudged cheek or a toothless grin, there will stand before you a young adult looking back at you. In an instant, the years will seem to melt away. The tears will be forgotten, the hard days a distant memory. You'll look on him or her with wonder and awe at the amazing work the Lord has done in that child's life and how He used your humble obedience in shaping their hearts and minds.

Until then,
Your Future You



Seasoned homeschool mom, author, and regular NHCE conference speaker, Amanda Garner and her family live, love, and learn together in Oxford, NC. Married for twenty-four years, she and her husband, Wes, have one homeschool graduate and three more to go! In addition to voracious reading, freelance writing, and teaching, Amanda also enjoys encouraging other homeschool moms via her blog: www.dropsofdelight.weebly.com.

The Homeschool Gathering Place

We provide new and consigned curricula, a wide array of other homeschool and family resource material, and guidance in making the best selections for your needs.

Tues-Sat 10am-5:30pm
*Tues & Thurs evenings 6-8:30pm for adults & nursing babies only, please.
Closed Sunday & Monday.

919.571.8106
www.homeschoolgatheringplace.com

Near 440 & 540 Beltlines in Oak Park Shopping Center:
5204 Hollyridge Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27612

Copyright © 2009 The Homeschool Gathering Place



Homeschooling In the Midst of Suffering

by Eric Pope

As parents, we often want to shield our children from the painful conditions of our world. We regard ourselves as their guardians, their protectors. But unfortunately, there are times when our children inevitably witness sufferings that we have no control over—trauma, disease, terminal illness, death—things that unavoidably bring heartache and grief to our doorstep. As a homeschooling family, how do you survive?

Last summer we lost one of our children—the youngest of three children—our beautiful eight-month-old baby girl, Everly Rose. She was perfectly healthy in the womb, but a rare pregnancy complication resulted in a traumatic delivery that left her clinging to life in the hours and days after her birth. The trauma that occurred resulted in severe brain damage and internal injuries that would eventually leave us with the hardest decision we have ever had to make. We could continue with interventions and advanced hospital care with little to no improvement to be expected, or we could bring her home with us to live as long and peacefully as God would allow. We consulted extensively with her medical team. We prayed for guidance and wisdom. We sought counsel from Scripture and from our pastor. But ultimately, the decision would be ours to make. And our decision was to come home.

We were provided with support from a hospice provider for children and given all of the medical resources necessary for treating a terminally ill infant. She was expected to be with us for only a matter of weeks, but through God's grace, we were able to spend many beautiful months with her. Just before her ninth month with us, her body finally yielded to its injuries. The entire experience was the most difficult test of faith and endurance that we have ever experienced as a family.

How did we keep up our schooling through all of this? Well, when she was born our school routine had understandably ground to a halt. We were spending most of our time at the hospital,

 © North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

and each day was an exhaustive struggle. Our family was temporarily housed across the street, and the Christmas holiday was steadily approaching. Once the new year came, and we finally came home, we still needed several more weeks of adjustment as we dealt with the physical stress of caring for Everly around the clock, as well as the mental and emotional fatigue that comes with grief and stress. I can tell you with no regret—we didn't jump right back into schooling. How do you find the time, patience, and mental stamina needed to homeschool two other children when you are barely surviving?

Somehow, we found our bearings and eventually picked up where we had left off. It almost felt like starting a new school year. But we made it through it, and in the weeks and months to follow, we learned the value of flexibility and adaptability. We found that quality schoolwork and education does not always have to be confined to rigid schedules, established routines, or strict timeframes. We even learned ways to incorporate Everly into our school day. Her presence in the classroom with her older siblings gave us memories we will cherish for a lifetime. We eventually found a new school routine. And before long, even though we were well into the summer, we successfully finished up the year with a grateful heart and a continued trust for the Lord's provision in the difficulties we knew were still yet to come.

Whether your family is dealing with a recent loss, a devastating illness, chronic disease or sickness, or even a serious burden, I want to encourage you to keep pressing forward—one day at a time. You are not alone! The seeds you are planting will one day bear good fruit.

As summer began to wind down, following a few weeks of rest and what could undoubtedly be called our shortest summer break ever, we truly began a new school year, not knowing that the following week would be Everly's last with us. Our homeschool routine, yet again, ground to a halt. In fact, everything ground to a halt. We clung to God and one another as we laid Everly to rest. And as we began picking up the pieces and trying to adjust to life without her, God gave us the strength to somehow move forward. Not the strength to move on, but to move forward.

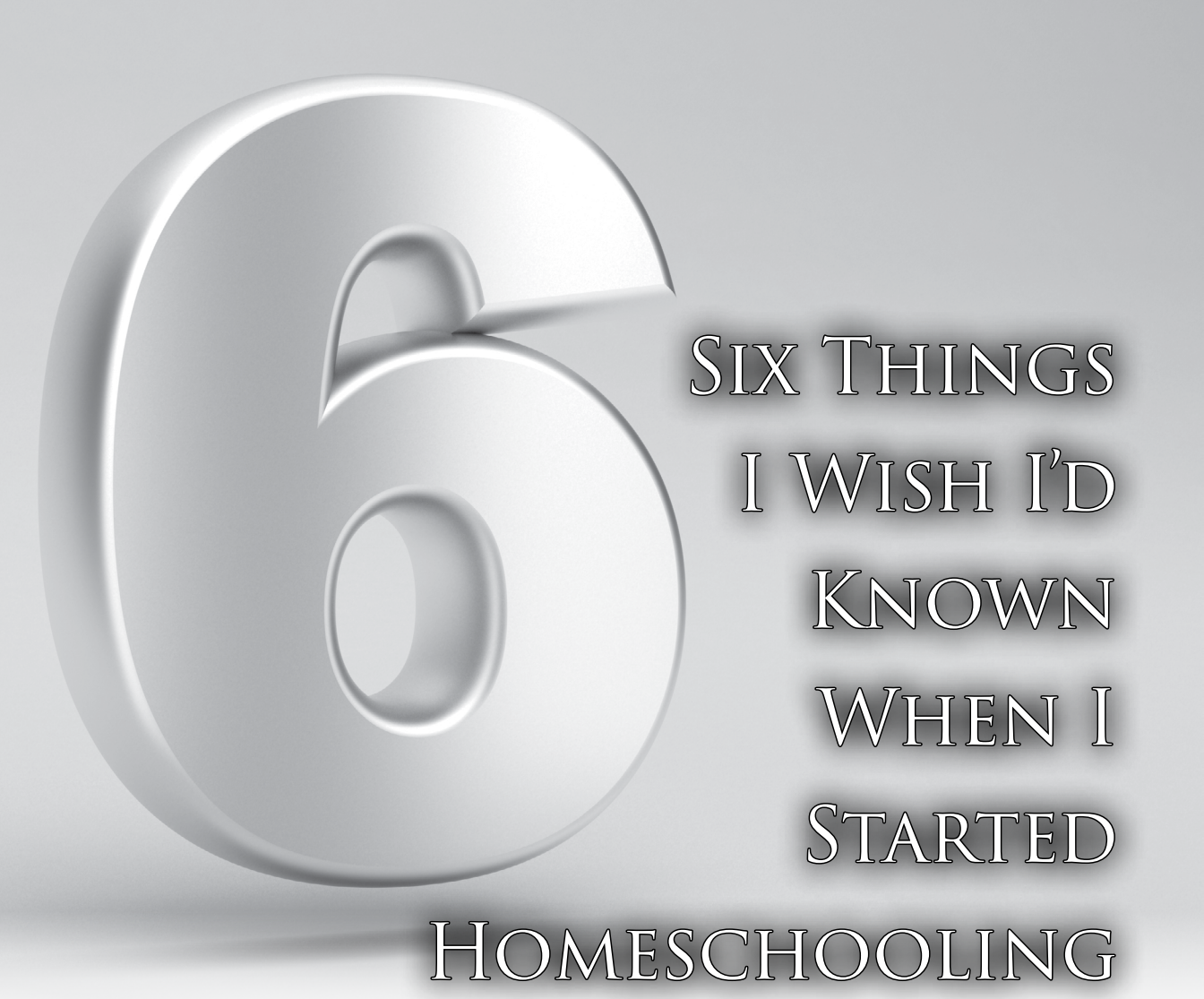
How do you homeschool through seasons of suffering? You do it by pressing in—one day at a time, by walking one step at a time in the truth that God's mercies are new every morning, that His faithfulness is great, and that He is the author of each new day. Homeschooling doesn't always have to be pretty and buttoned up. When life happens, you adjust. You adapt. You thank God for another special day with your children and for the privilege of being able to educate them at home.

As for us, we are so thankful that God placed in our hearts the desire to homeschool our children, long before they were even school-aged. Homeschooling allowed us to spend some very precious time together as a family during those eight precious months that Everly was with us. It allowed us to learn and grow and love in ways that we would never have been able to do had our children been attached to the school system. In fact, a few weeks after Everly died, a grief counselor from our hospice agency underscored that fact when she came to our home to evaluate our other two children to see how they were coping with everything. Ella was seven at the time, and Caleb was five. After spending some time with them, she was encouraged to see that they were doing quite well considering what they had recently experienced. And she attributed their emotional stability partially to the fact they were homeschooled. She mentioned that most children who lose a sibling or a close family member usually only get a few days before having to go back to school again and unfortunately, essentially get thrown back into the daily grind. She said these children often get overlooked and can have a harder time coping with everything and finding long-term healing. Hearing this from her made us even more grateful for choosing years ago to homeschool.

Whether your family is dealing with a recent loss, a devastating illness, chronic disease or sickness, or even a serious burden, I want to encourage you to keep pressing forward—one day at a time. You are not alone! The seeds you are planting will one day bear good fruit. It will be hard. Perhaps, the hardest thing you've ever had to endure. Just keep pressing forward one day at a time, and you will slowly begin to see what God has in store for you. Have the courage to allow others that you love and trust help you bear your burdens. Allow God to comfort you as you continue to find healing and restoration.



Eric Pope is a career firefighter and proud homeschooling dad. He and his wife, Caroline, are native North Carolinians and have been married for twelve years. They enjoy the privilege of serving in their church and volunteering with several local civic and faith-based organizations over the years. They are entering their fourth year of homeschooling and are connected with a local classical community. Connect with Eric by email at carolinafireman@gmail.com.



Six Things I Wish I'd Known When I Started Homeschooling

by T.K. Chapman

Looking back twelve years to the beginning of our homeschooling journey, I remember well the questions swirling around in my mind. *How will we do this? What's the best way to teach this? Am I doing this right? Did I make a mistake in this or that?* Truthfully, we all begin homeschooling with some preconceived ideas about how education is supposed to happen, usually gleaned from our own school experiences. As with many other areas of life, homeschooling's best practices are often learned on-the-job through trial and error. Having said that, I feel that there is still great benefit in learning from the successes and mishaps of others. If we could sit down and chat, these are the six things I would tell you—the things I wish someone had told me when I started homeschooling.

1. Remember that you are teaching a child, not a curriculum.

In other words, the goal is not to get through the book, but to get what's in the book through to the child. It's easy to get caught up in checking boxes. I'll be the first to admit I love the sight of a completed, boxes totally ticked, to-do list. Completing material shouldn't come at the expense of our real goal for our children though, which is mastering the material. Rushing through lessons doesn't serve our purpose very well. One of the great benefits of homeschooling is being able to slow down or speed up to meet the needs of the child.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

Another pitfall in this area that seems to be common among those of us educated in the American public-school system is the insistence on using a textbook/workbook approach. The subtle error in thinking goes something like this: if the lesson doesn't come from a textbook, it doesn't count. This idea is simply not true. Let's say your objective is for a child to learn the multiplication facts. There's a myriad of ways to accomplish this goal, such as worksheets, flashcards, audio CDs, and hands-on math manipulatives. What's most helpful will be determined by your child's learning style.

Ultimately, the goal is helping your unique child obtain the skills and information that comprise a good education. Homeschooling frees you to do that with methods and at a pace that works best for you and each child in your family.

2. Cut the comparisons.

Nothing will take the wind out of your homeschooling sails quite like comparison. Comparing your curriculum, schedule, methods, or worst of all your family to another is the quickest way to destroy your contentment and motivation. I'm not talking about the kind of comparison that simply seeks to learn what someone else has found to be effective. That can be helpful. What's not helpful is the kind of comparison that holds one thing up to another to determine which is *best*. It leads to thoughts like, "If only I had those books," "I wish my children would do that," and "If I had just used the Charlotte Mason method during the early years my kids would be perfectly behaved geniuses, too."

There is no one-size-fits-all best-method-ever in homeschooling. Trying to force your family into another family's schedule or method often leads to misery. One of the advantages of homeschooling is being able to tailor an education to your child's learning style. Comparing your homeschool to another to see if you measure up will never be productive. Find what works for your family and forge ahead confidently.

3. Recognize that there is no such thing as a perfect curriculum.

If there is a holy grail of homeschooling, this is probably it. The quest for the perfect curriculum has lured many of us down rabbit hole after rabbit hole, but I'll tell you a secret: it doesn't exist. What does exist is a number of great products that will be a good fit for your family.

Looking back, I see how my question shifted from "Where will I find material to teach ____?" to "How will I choose among all these awesome products?" It's easy to become overwhelmed by the volume of curriculum products available to homeschoolers today. And it's easy to second-guess your choices when you read the rave reviews of another book or listen to the success story of another family. There's nothing wrong with changing curriculums if something isn't working for your family but be wary of switching out a good product that works for something you hope may be *perfect*.

4. Don't neglect discipleship for your children.

It's easy to assume that once we've purchased Bible-based materials, the discipleship will take care of itself—this is not the case. Children thrive with the kind of life-on-life discipling the homeschooling lifestyle allows, but it doesn't happen without effort.

Making time for Bible study, prayer, and the processing of what is being learned is vital to the development of a Christian worldview. Never assume your children are thinking biblically about a topic. Ask questions. Find out where they are in their understanding. We often avoid doing this because we're afraid we won't know how to answer the questions, but it's okay not to have all the answers. Not knowing gives you an opportunity to model the learning and growing process as you search out answers together. Each homeschooling family establishes its day-to-day rhythm of learning and living. Be intentional in including opportunities for spiritual growth.

5. Use structure to save your sanity.

Right now, all the type A readers are nodding, while all the type B folks are shaking their heads in disgust. Hang in there, type B-s! Structure doesn't mean soul-crushing, second-by-second regulation. The structure I have in mind is simply a schedule/system/plan that works for you and yours.

The purpose of structure and organization is to enable learning. Too much or too little can get in the way of the goal. Too much structure can result in a disproportionate amount of time spent maintaining it, while too little leads to lost time searching for needed materials and figuring out what should be done next. Even unschoolers need to be able to find materials and have a big-picture plan. Some curriculums come with built-in scheduling you can take advantage of, but many people tweak such plans until they find what works for them.

I made schedules, tweaked, adjusted, and remade plans so many times I lost count. It always seemed our system was a

work in progress, but we did always have an overall plan that helped keep us on track. Find a structure that works for your family and don't be afraid to adjust it as needed.

6. Don't be afraid to plod rather than sprint.

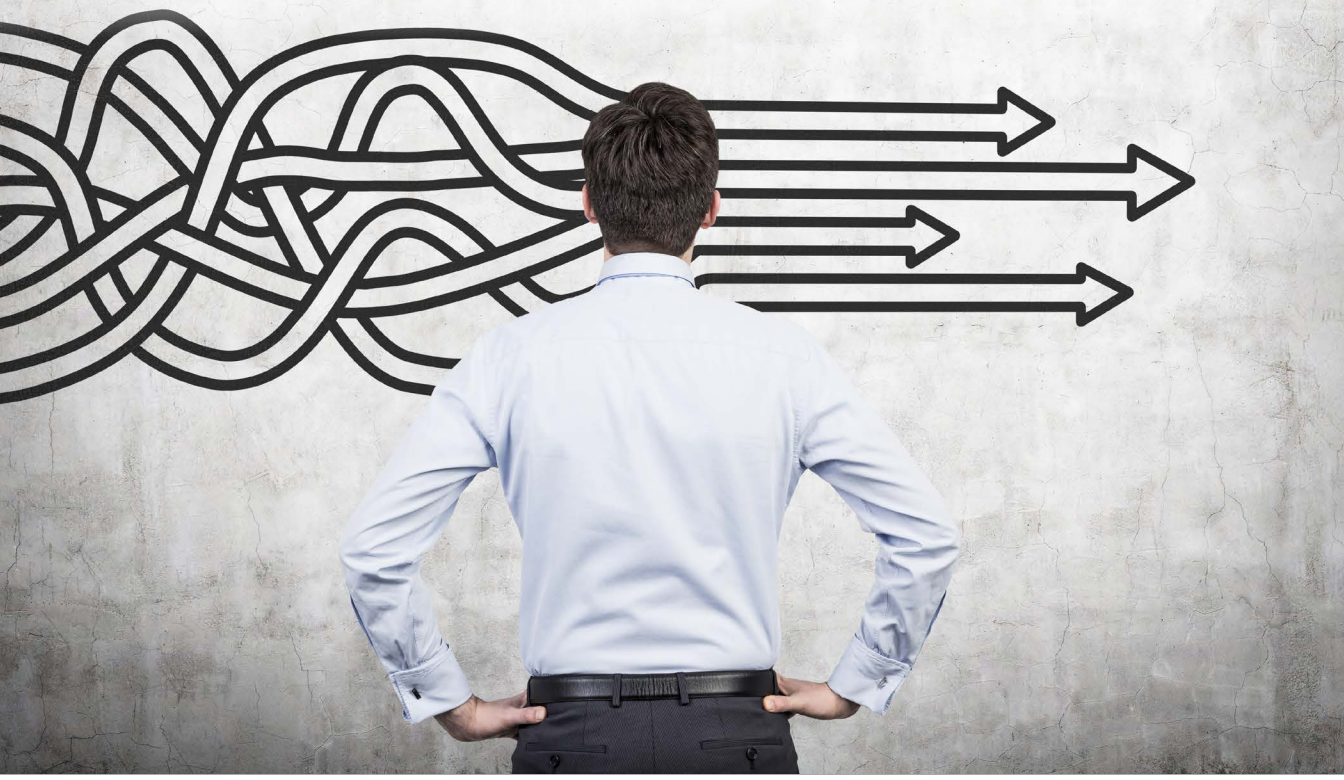
Remember the adage: life is a marathon, not a sprint. The same can be said of homeschooling. Accomplishing a little every day adds up to a lot of learning over the course of a homeschooler's journey.

Cramming too much into your homeschool day or year can result in frustration and tears for both student and teacher. Oh, we have the best of intentions when we buy all those beautiful extras and pencil them in for each week, but as reality sets in, we may realize the eight-year-old is not going to be able to complete the art appreciation, music appreciation, Spanish, and poet of the month curriculums by the end of the year. You don't have to throw all the extras out the window, though. Pace yourself. Do what you and your children can reasonably do. It's okay to stretch a curriculum over multiple years or to pick and choose the parts you want to use. Take your time and enjoy learning with your children. Remember: the tortoise wins.

I wish I could say my family excelled in each of these areas from the beginning, but that would be far from the truth. We had our share of unsuccessful practices that were eventually scrapped and replaced. As our venture came to a close this spring, we were able to say with Solomon, "The end of a thing is better than it's beginning." (Ecclesiastes 7:8) The beginning of the homeschooling journey can be fraught with uncertainty. Our vision of what we want to accomplish may still be unclear, or we may know exactly what our end goal is, but little about the day-to-day practices that will take us there. While homeschooling may always be a learn-as-you-go process, one of the best ways to learn is by taking to heart the lessons others have gleaned through the years.



T.K. Chapman does her living and writing by the grace of God alone, for the glory of God alone in western North Carolina. She has spent the past twelve years homeschooling her exceptional younger brother. She enjoys reading, writing, and spending time with her family.



© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

University *of* MOUNT OLIVE

A SMALL CAMPUS WITH BIG OPPORTUNITIES IS WAITING FOR YOU!



"Our journey at the University of Mount Olive has been one full of learning and adventure. Having an advisor who is familiar with homeschooling has made our transition from studying at home to a college campus a smooth and positive experience."

— Hannah and Micah Lee

634 Henderson Street • Mount Olive, NC 28365 • 800-653-0854 • www.umo.edu

The Sunny Mrs. Dorsey



by Sarah Hicks

When I was in sixth-grade, my science teacher was Mrs. Dorsey. She had blonde hair that looked like cotton candy and a slightly mischievous glint in her eye. Mrs. Dorsey stood on her desk and sang memorization songs about mitosis while pointing to her bare feet and repeating "my-toes-sis." In addition to school work from our textbooks, each week we were required to turn in two current event articles from newspapers or magazines along with a few sentences about our reactions to the events. They were never graded with numbers or letters. Instead, she hand-wrote encouraging words about how we might take action and change the world. We did reports about very important people: our classmates. We also had a mailbox in her classroom for sending other students personal notes of encouragement—anonymous or signed—as long as they were positive. She called them "sun-shines."

I don't remember my seventh-grade science teacher's name, but I do remember she wore Fila sneakers and quit mid-year.

When we went back to school for eighth-grade, we got the greatest surprise: Mrs. Dorsey had moved up to teach eighth-grade. We had her for a second year, and what a year it was! Over the next 180 days, we built a nature trail and outdoor classroom space that the entire school could use. Every day we went outside and worked. We were trusted to use actual farm implements, and we cleared the trees, brush, and briars ourselves. We made little stools from the tree trunks and a podium for a teacher. We hauled off trash. We identified plants, flowers, and trees—then found them in the taxonomy books and labeled them for the younger students.

I don't know about you, but at the beginning of every school year I feel like Mrs. Dorsey. Our books smell new. The words from last year's conference are still resounding in my ears, and I am ready to inspire! But around the end of February, I turn into *Mrs. Fila Sneakers*, and I want to quit.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

Here are four lessons I have learned to help keep a *Mrs. Dorsey* mindset all year:

1. **Write yourself a sun-shine.** Write yourself a note today! Tell yourself how excited you are for this school year. Ask your spouse and children to write *sun-shines* and keep them somewhere you'll remember. Include a few *sun-shines* from God, too, like Psalm 37:23-24 or Psalm 90:12. Re-read them when you are feeling uninspired.
2. **Go outside.** Blaze a trail! There's something about the unplugged, unfiltered beauty of nature that refreshes us down deep in our soul. Sit still. Observe creatures in their surroundings and habits. Watch a sunrise, or search for nocturnal critters. Praise God for the wonder of creation that declares His glory.
3. **Color outside the lines.** Step away from the lesson plan! I repeat: close the pinning app! Ask your kids what *they* want to do for school today and do it. Watch them make a costume, write a song, build a model, bake a treat, or dramatically re-enact something you're studying.
4. **Serve others.** Take fresh flowers to a shut-in, and then sit to listen to her tell you about history. Plant a garden you can study, and then share its fruits with your neighbors. Mrs. Dorsey knew, as you and I do, that one day children will leave our classrooms. Perhaps, watching her students grow, not only in knowledge but also in virtue and purpose, was what made Mrs. Dorsey such a memorable and optimistic teacher.

And whatever you do in word or deed,
do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through Him!
Colossians 3:17



Sarah Hicks is the media manager for NCHE. She and her husband, Peter John, educate their four children at home. She does not have cotton candy hair but has been known to have a slightly mischievous glint in her eye.

JOIN US AT OUR COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSES! NOV. 15 AND FEB. 14 | 9-11 AM



At Noble Academy, students with learning differences are no longer different. We provide a school with small class sizes and our curriculum is traditional, though infused with techniques and methodology proven to be successful with our students.

As the ONLY Wilson® Accredited Partner learning differences school in the state, we are committed to both the remediation of areas of weakness and the celebration of areas of strength.

Join us at our Community Open Houses on November 15th and/or February 14th, 9-11 a.m., to learn more. RSVP at nobleknights.org.

NOBLE ACADEMY
EXPLORE • UNDERSTAND • ACHIEVE
EST. 1987

3310 Horse Pen Creek Rd | Greensboro, NC
336.282.7044 | nobleknights.org



He Said, She Said

by John and Amy Sloan

What would happen if you asked a dad and a mom the same series of questions about their homeschooling? Would their perspectives be similar or different? My husband and I decided to take on this challenge!

When did you first want to homeschool your children?

John: Since I was homeschooled, I considered homeschooling from the time I began thinking about becoming a parent. In my mind, it had the inside track over other educational alternatives.

Amy: I was homeschooled, and it was a great experience. I was taught to be filled with wonder, to delight in learning, and to take the time to pursue deep and rigorous studies. This experience was a heritage of truth and riches that I was excited to pass on to my future children. It was something John and I discussed even before we were married.

What were your reasons for wanting to homeschool?

John: Every person has a world view, and every educator communicates to students from a particular world view. Homeschooling provides the opportunity to pass down what I believe directly to my children. Jesus Christ is King over this world, and homeschooling gives parents the opportunity to teach their children how everything in this world derives its meaning and purpose from Him. The financial cost of a Christian private school was definitely prohibitive for our family, so this made homeschooling preferable over private schools.

Amy: So many reasons! My faith is certainly the foundation of our educational decisions, but I am also excited by the academic and educational freedom available to us as homeschoolers. Rather than teaching to a test, we can pursue true depth of knowledge, beauty, and culture. We can study at our own pace. We aren't limited to textbooks and worksheets; we can relish all the beautiful words and big ideas of living books. We aren't limited to a modern or cultural-centric view; we can seek to understand the ideas of those in the past and from different philosophical or cultural perspectives through reading their own words. Being able to pursue a relaxed Christian classical education, with a good bit of zany adventure thrown in, continues to delight me! As a mom of five from age three to thirteen, I am also insanely grateful that all of my children can have the time, shared experiences, and unique family culture that will, Lord willing, enable them to have treasured, deep, and lasting relationships with one another into adulthood.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

How do you think homeschooling affects your day to day life?

John: The most important thing I do with our family every day is that we read the Bible together. I want nothing more than for my children to know God and to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. I believe that for us to have a knowledge and understanding of this world, we must first know God Himself through Jesus Christ. This knowledge transforms how we live our lives every day, how we interact with one another, and how we pursue knowledge, wisdom, and truth. Outside of our family devotional time, my wife does most of the heavy lifting directly educating our children. But I take time to read books with our children, coach youth sports, and grade math homework. Often, I fall short in all of these pursuits, but this gives us the opportunity to look for mercy and grace in Christ Jesus.

Amy: From our morning time routine to evening family devotions, homeschooling life can easily consume every facet of my life. It has become important for me to regularly step away (either literally or figuratively) and enjoy my own creative and intellectual pursuits. Homeschooling will end one day. My relationships with my husband, my God, my church—and my personhood—will be there when the kids have left!

What have been some of the biggest challenges you have faced as part of our homeschooling journey?

John: Three large challenges come to mind. One is working to pursue my own career goals without having my career consume me and still making time to enjoy our family. The second challenge is fostering genuine love for one another among my children as they pursue their education. The third would be helping my wife maintain realistic goals and stay encouraged and hopeful, as she works in the trenches day to day educating our children.

Amy: It is a challenge not to allow idolatry to take over my heart: my children's accomplishments, their obedience (or lack thereof), my desire for measurable success, self-pity, trying to take over for the Holy Spirit, etc. Also, facing the reality that I cannot be excellent at homeschooling, housekeeping, exercise—and all the other things—at the same time.

What have been some of your favorite parts of our homeschooling journey?

John: It's hard to say! It has been a blessing to see my children grow in their love for God's Word and their love for each other. Youth sports have always been lots of fun for me, and we have enjoyed field trips together—one to Valley Forge especially comes to mind as being special.

Amy: Field trips. Reading aloud. Poetry and Shakespeare memory. Seeing my kids make connections and grow in individuality and wisdom. Getting to connect everything we do and learn to the character of God that we might grow in humility and doxology.

What piece of advice would you give to a new homeschool mom?

John: Pray! Remember that God loves your children more than you do, and He is the One who is raising them up through your service.

Amy: Always choose relationship over getting things done. Find a way to incorporate things that are true, good, and beautiful into your daily routine. (A morning time routine has worked well in our family to accomplish this goal.)

What piece of advice would you give to a new homeschool dad?

John: Your most important role is to teach your children how to read and understand the Bible. No matter how busy your life and work may get, set time aside every day to read the Bible to your family. Teach them about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Amy: Pray with and for your wife. Be patient when she freaks out. The gifts of time alone, chocolate, a thank you, and a loving hug are always appropriated!

If you could go back to your younger self and say one thing before we started homeschooling, what would you say?

John: I would tell myself to rely more humbly on the Holy Spirit and the grace of God rather than on my abilities and strength. The irony is that this was learned through the years of studying God's Word while undergoing the crucible of family life, church life, and career pursuits.

Amy: Repent of your pride and your self-sufficiency. Look to Jesus. Be patient with your children. Their emotional and social maturity is going to develop asynchronously with their academic gifts, and you can so easily wound their heart and damage your relationship. This is going to be a lot harder than you realize, and a lot more wonderful than you imagine. High-five; by God's grace, you've got this.



Amy Sloan and her husband, John, are second-generation homeschoolers by grace alone to five children ages three to thirteen. They adventure in Holly Springs, NC. This article was originally published on her blog at www.humilityanddoxology.wordpress.com.



Homeschool Lesson Planning

by Tami Fox

As the summer days start growing shorter, we start looking at the calendar and thinking about lesson plans for the new school year. Lesson planning seems like a daunting task for many of you. You may not know where to start. You might be nervous about figuring out *how* to fit everything in. You might have multiple children and are trying to figure out the how of lesson planning and scheduling. After homeschooling for the past eighteen years, I have learned a lot about lesson planning. The first rule of thumb is to keep it simple. When you make up elaborate lesson plans, you start to feel overwhelmed.

First, sit down with the curriculum you have chosen for the year and review how it is set up. Some books are set up with daily lessons. Some are set up with modules. Some have chapters. You need to have a good idea of the *lay of the land* for the books you will be using.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

Next, determine how many pages or chapters need to be covered each week. Divide the total number of pages or chapters by the number of weeks in your school year. For 180 educational days, you are looking at thirty-six weeks of school. For example, the science or history book you picked has 400 pages. Your child needs to read approximately eleven pages per week. You need to factor in time for testing, as well, if you administer tests for these subjects. Your student needs to read approximately two-and-one-half pages per day. If you wanted to allow for a test day, increase the pages read per day. If you have a math book with 130 lessons, you also want to look at the testing plan for the book and add those days into your schedule. Your child will likely do four lessons per week plus a testing day.

After you divide the books up in this manner, you have an idea of how to start your lesson planning. You will also want to look at your calendar and review other commitments. Do you have a weekly co-op or supplemental classes? You may need to increase the amount of reading or lessons your child does on the other four days of the week to accommodate these educational events.

If you are lesson planning for multiple children, use a format that allows you to see an overview of your children's lessons. Look for subjects that you can combine teaching time with two or more children that will help you with lesson planning time and teaching time. History and science lend themselves to multi-level teaching for children below high school level.

You do not have to plan out your entire year at once. I recommend that you do lesson planning once a week. Normally, that works well to finish by the end of the week. You can review the work completed and plan the next week's lessons. When you plan too far ahead, it makes it difficult to catch things up when sickness comes along. When you are planning your start and end dates for your school year, allow for things such as illness. You will want some flexibility with your schedule for holidays, as well.

You have the freedom to choose the days you homeschool according to North Carolina statutes. You have the freedom to choose your curriculum. Don't stress yourself out with elaborate lesson plans.



Tami Fox owns Blessed Beyond Measure Publishing. She has written two books to encourage ladies in their journeys as Christian homeschool moms. She wrote Giving Your Children Wings Without Losing Yours *to help you teach your children life skills through cleaning and home maintenance. She wrote* Finding Joy in Brokenness: Mosaics of the Heart *as a devotional to encourage you to look for blessings in the hard times and in the good times. She also has a homeschool planner for 2018-19 to help you with organizing your lesson plans for one student, up to four students. You can learn more at TamiFox.net.*



What to Teach When



by Ivey Deitz

How does a homeschool parent know what to teach and when to teach it? What do children need to learn to prepare them for their future? What resources are available to make sure your homeschool is on track as your children progress through middle and high school?

A parent can feel clueless as their children advance in their school years. They may worry about whether they should cover a certain topic to prepare the child for what lies ahead. For example, should your homeschool do only the basics: reading, writing, and arithmetic? Is learning cursive important? How much should be done each year with history or science? What do I do about foreign languages? Feeling comfortable with children in the younger years is more common, but time can seem to fly by, and high school, and eventually college and careers, are right around the corner. Do you stick with what you what you have been doing, then figure out down the road that there is an entire subject that you should have been learning all along?

Questions about scope and sequence were recently asked on one of the Facebook homeschool groups I follow. I chimed in, along with a few other veteran homeschool moms from the Hickory area. The responses below were compiled, in no particular order, from the site and show the advice of different individuals.

- Base your high school classes on the North Carolina graduation requirements. Do not be too strict but use the requirements as a guide. For example, one of the four needed English classes could be focused on an interest of your child—such as sports, space, and science fiction. Not all literature has to be classical. In math, if the child is planning to go to a four-year university, you may want to teach the higher levels. But if a child is planning to go to a community college or directly into the workforce, subjects like consumer math, business math, or stewardship might fit. You can have a basic list of what you need to accomplish each year of school but be flexible with each child and base their education on who they are and their plans for the future. You have to be a student of your child to help them look at the second part—whom they hope to become. Watch them, pay attention to what they like, even if you think it is not something they can use later in life, like still building with Legos in high school. Maybe that says the child will be an engineer! Follow their cues and tailor their classes to their interests to help get them to get where they need to be. And relax. You will not make a mistake, really!

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

- Adjustments can be made down the road. Your students are not stuck in one place, to one plan, and their lives are not ruined if you do not give them a certain class in high school or have them take a certain college-bound test. They can do it later *if* they need it—*when* they need it. If they want something, they will do it when *they* want it. Sometimes, we have to back off and let them take the long road.
- When you have a middle schooler, prayerfully assess his strengths and weaknesses, compare them to the North Carolina graduation requirements, talk with him directly, and come up with a plan. There are strength-finder type tests available to use if you need assistance.
- There will always be gaps—and hindsight is 20/20! Teach your children how to learn— teach them character/morals/faith and equip them with the vision of the future that *they* own. The results will be amazing.
- Putting together curriculum from several different sources and changing curriculum yearly can be difficult. Follow through with one company. You can start out by teaching your children yourself, but if you hit a wall in a subject, then you can move to the company's online curriculum and become an assistant to your child's learning. This move will keep you on track for all K-12 and avoid some gaps. This strategy works well with one student. If you are teaching multiple children, you can use this method to teach more independent learning, helping more with the younger children, and leaving the heavy lifting for the older, and keep to the same boxed sets. A benefit of using this method is to have the curriculum purchased for the first, and not having to get anything more for the younger children except some workbooks.
- Trying to stick with one curriculum may be difficult, since each child may learn very differently. Some homeschoolers may not have issues with putting curricula together and finding what works best for their family. To do this, use a list of suggested classes from books discussing what to learn when, or the North Carolina graduation requirements. Look for a scope and sequence list online to follow.
- Get a catalog that sells homeschool curriculum—one that is listed by grade levels. Follow that as you are putting together classes for the coming year. Easy!
- Check out NCHE's curriculum page at https://www.nche.com/helps/curriculum/ and use it as a guide.
- Read articles on homeschool scope and sequences, then make a skeleton framework based on them. Pull ideas together from various sources. Yes, there will be gaps, but there are gaps in everyone's education, even public and private schoolers.
- Look at packaged grade-level curriculum sets for inspiration. You do not have to use them exclusively but take the aspects you like and create a plan.
- Keep the basics in mind: reading, writing (including grammar/spelling) and arithmetic, plus history and science. It helps to stick with the same curriculum for certain subjects, like math, or ones that you do not feel confident teaching. You may not want to do a boxed set for every subject but having the continuity with some subjects helps to avoid gaps. You can make adjustments over the years to any curriculum to make it fit your child and their strengths/weaknesses, so do not throw the baby out with the bathwater when you hit a wall with what you are using. As for other subjects, pick what works for you as a teacher, as well as what your child needs. There are no mistakes. You will not mess up your child, because who else loves them more than you and are working to see the best for them?
- A foreign language may not be necessary if your students are not attending a four-year university. If they are, you may want to do a couple of years in high school. However, if that is not your child's bent, put it off and they can usually take what they have not had in their first year at the university. If they do have a knack for languages, start early. With other subjects, like history, start at the beginning and work through to current events. In some cases, this can take all twelve years of school, and topics can still be missed. There is too much that has gone on in the world to think you will ever cover it all in the few short years we have as homeschool parents. Keep to the basics.

To sum things up, every homeschool family is different. Each child will get a different education, even within the same family. There will always be gaps. Take a general list of subjects for each year; you can find a list in a lot of places. Then, pick the curriculum/teaching style that is best for you and your children and go for it. You will *not* make a mistake! You will *not* ruin your children or their future!



Ivey Deitz, wife of thirty-one years to husband, Doug, is retired after being a homeschool mama for fourteen years to two godly young men, Jesse and Matthew. She is the current GREENHOUSE editor. Ivey helped start the NCHE conference mentor program, organized local homeschool conferences, sat on the board of several local support groups, as well as being an NCHE regional director, and continues to assist homeschoolers in her local area.



I See You, Little Homeschooling Momma!

by Becky Seamon

Are you tired of dry shampoo and yesterday's leggings, praying that you understand today's math problem, holding on to the wiggly soul while searching for something presentable to feed the starving, and having lessons half completed while the sun's setting outside the window? I know about stacked books piled on the sticky kitchen table while young sons sneak off for a moment to play as you tend to the baby's cries. I understand impromptu lessons, because you are just too tired. I relate to patience running thin and threats of public school. I know. I see when you hide behind the window curtain as an unexpected guest rings your doorbell. I know you wonder how to get it all done as you fall mindlessly into bed craving sleep—only to have to do it again tomorrow. I see you, sweet mom. I know the groans, even tears when life is hard—and homeschooling is hard.

From one homeschool momma to another, may I whisper something softly in your ear? Homeschooling is hard and draining, but *you've got this, sweet momma*. In fact, you are perfectly golden as *you*, not your best homeschooling friend, not your mom, not your neighbor, just you and Jesus.

There is no need to play the defeating comparison game. If your homeschool neighbor has her gifted child in Latin, Junior Olympic ice skating, gourmet cooking, and calculus, but you can

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

barely keep a clean kitchen, this does not make you a bad homeschooling mom—this makes you a homeschooling mom with dishes that need washing.

When your homeschool neighbor always has organic meals, but the pizza delivery guy knows you by name, you are still a good homeschool momma. That is her, and you are you. Your kids need you. Be you.

Hear my encouragement for today and tomorrow and the next day: become comfortable in your skin as a homeschool momma, for it truly fits you. Stop pretending to be like *her* or pretending that you have it all together, because, honestly, none of us does.

I know, because sometimes I slip into the trap. I feel my house needs to look a certain way before guests can come over and that my children need to read by age four. At these times, I remind myself to choose to rest in who I am. I choose to stop comparing myself to my homeschool friends and pretending to be more than I am. When we stop pretending true acceptance can be found.

I agree with Brene Brown who said, "Those who have a strong sense of love and belonging have the courage to be imperfect." Honestly, ladies, we are not perfect, and that is *perfectly beautiful*. This imperfection shows us our need of the Savior. He is perfect. He is powerful. He is perfecting us to be more like Him. Soak in the quote from Hal Elrod, "Give up being perfect for being authentic." Yes, my friend, that is enough.

Motherhood is difficult. Homeschooling is hard, but I see you down the road when two decades have passed. Your children have now turned into grown adults who bend to give a kiss as you still search the cabinets to feed the starving. I see your grown children promising, "I do" and having beautiful babies of their own. I see your grown children living with conviction and being all they can be. I see you, being you, with a strong sense of love and the courage to be the imperfect you, leaning on Jesus, which is perfectly beautiful. From one momma to another, you are beautiful perfectly, beautiful in your God-given skin.

I praise you
because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.
Psalm 139:14 (NIV)



Becky Seamon, wife of thirty-one years to Terry, is the proud momma of four beautiful children. She and Terry homeschooled for twenty-five years. Becky's passion includes encouraging young mommas in their faith and family relationships through blogging and speaking engagements. She also serves as director of women's ministry at her local church.





How to Create a World of Fun

(*For You* and Your Children)

by Dava Banner

Whether you are a stay-at-home mom or a homeschooler, you will want various activities with friends to enrich your life. Sometimes, you immediately see where you can plug in, and sometimes, you have to dig a little.

If you are the one who can make a plan and seek others to join you, you will all be blessed. What a ministry you will have to families! It's such a blessing if your children's activities have a *mom benefit*, and moms don't feel like just a chauffeur. Moms want time with other moms to make friends, share ideas and information, recipes and encouragement. You can be friends with whole families. The age and sex of your children don't have to match exactly. Activities don't have to break your budget. It is possible to enjoy time with your children without financial pressure. You can plan activities that are weekly or monthly; you might want to include some of each! Be creative! You can make great memories for yourself and others!

Here are some ideas for you if you want to take the initiative to get people together:

- **Storytime at the library.** Some libraries will let you bring cupcakes once a month to celebrate birthdays. Library outings are a great time to invite folks to go to the park afterward to extend playtime.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

- **Exercise classes.** These can be at the YMCA or gym. You may also find swim lessons for preschoolers and homeschoolers.
- **4-H.** Here you will find groups for all interests and ages. If they don't have what you want, offer to teach!
- **Church friend's playgroup.** You can meet at homes, churches or parks.
- **MOPS meetings.** MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) usually provides childcare for preschoolers while the moms enjoy meeting together. MOPS is a faith-based organization.
- B**owling alley.** It might have a homeschool day, or you can set up a group day. (My sons started bowling with help at age two.)
- **Skating rink.** It might have a homeschool day or set up a group day. (My sons could skate with help at age two and alone at age three.)
- **Picnic at the park.**
- **Kid movies.**
- **Free ice cream day.**
- **Chick-fil-A play area.**
- **Paint pottery.**
- **Nursing home visits.**
- **Crafts with grandparents.**
- **Science center.** Nature museum. Zoo. Most of these offer a free day, which is a good time to plan a trip.
- **Art classes.** Kindermusik classes. Karate. Gymnastics. Many have day classes, so your evenings are still free for family time.



Dava Banner has been married thirty-six years and has three fine sons. She has been a happy homeschooler for sixteen years and counting. She and her family live on a small farm in Crouse, NC.



THANK YOU
FOR VOTING US #1
OVER 10 YEARS IN A ROW









Receive 7 FREE

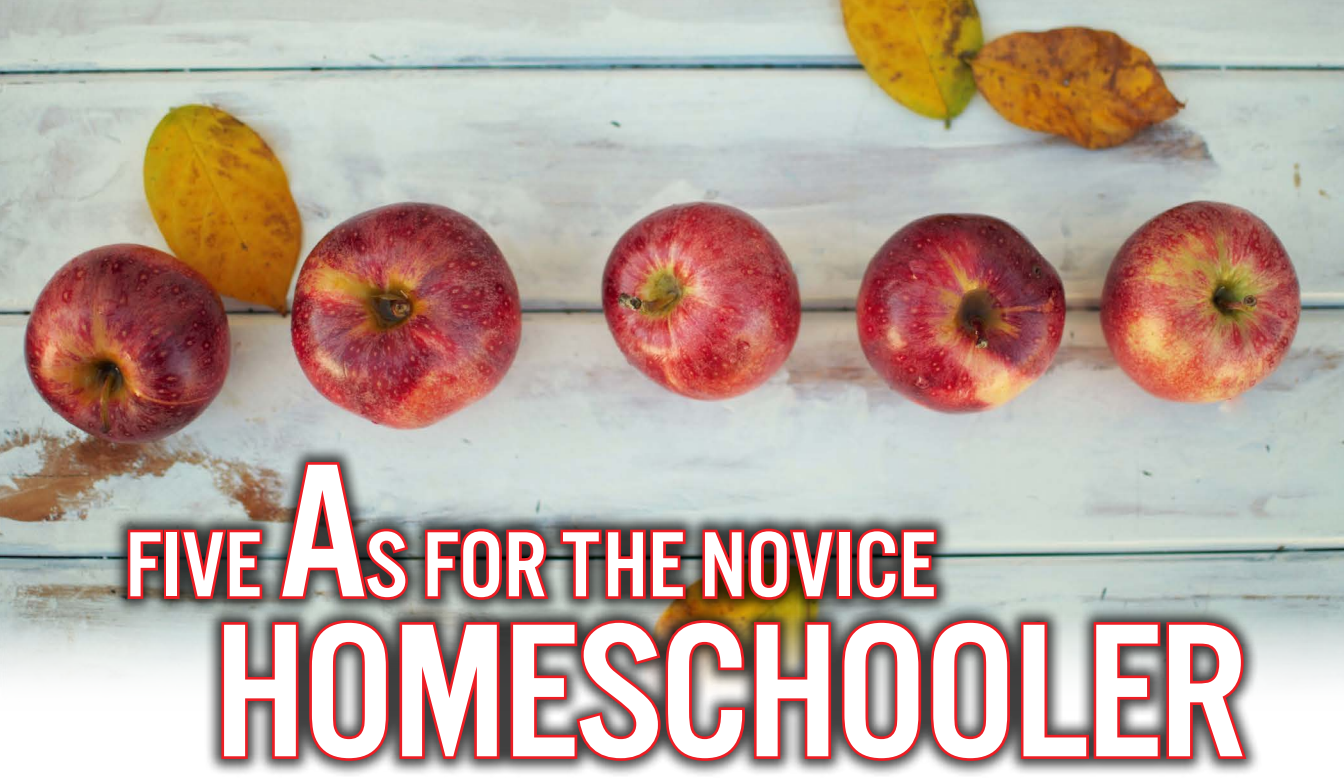
science lessons from Apologia's Young Explorers Series

Scan this code or visit

www.homeschool-101.com/homeschool-science.

apologia

apologia.com • 888.524.4724



FIVE As FOR THE NOVICE HOMESCHOOLER

by Christina Parker Brown

In our homeschool, we have discovered what I call "secrets" that have served us well over the past eighteen years. They have been discovered as we unwrapped homeschooling year after year. I want to share them with you as you start out, because I wish I had known about them much earlier.

As you start out, think about taking these *action* steps.

Adopt

- *Adopt a flexible mindset.* Sometimes, character qualities will be more important than lesson plans. Be prepared to put down math and deal with these issues as they arise, or they will *continue to rear their ugly heads*.
- *Adopt patience for people who don't get it.* For some reason, everyone thinks homeschool moms have lots of free time. Be patient but firm about school hours and activities. Real patience, however, is God-breathed. When people do admire your patience to homeschool, be sure to *point up*.
- *Adopt the understanding that no curriculum is perfect.* Some books may remain on your shelf, never opened. Others will provoke tears. Remember, curriculum choice should take into consideration the way your children learn and the way you teach. Finding the best fit will take some trial and error. No guilt allowed!
- *Adopt a place to do school.* It is nice to be able to leave school wherever you stop instead of having to clean up everything to make dinner. We did school on the kitchen table for years, but later, really enjoyed being able to leave it in a separate room and close the door. If you do not have the space for that, a comfy chair or couch for reading is a minimum. Our most precious memories are made snuggling and learning on our couch.
- *Adopt community.* Find women with children on a similar journey (with similar beliefs and educational goals). We need each other.



Avoid

- *Avoid comparing.* Most homeschool children are academically average. Within the homeschool community, there is the assumption that homeschool children should be above average and high achieving academically. This assumption can put you under a lot of pressure. If your kids are geniuses, that is great! But if they are not, that's okay, too. My children learned to read in spite of me, and even though I think they are amazing, they are average academically.
- *Avoid losing hope.* Don't give up. There will be hard days, but there will be equally rewarding ones too.

Admit

- *Admit your faults, sins, and weaknesses to your children.* Do this as they show themselves in real time (use discernment, of course). Ask for God's forgiveness on the spot. Little eyes are watching.
- *Admit when you are wrong.* Apologize. Let them see you on your knees. Pray together.

Accept

- *Accept a messy house and imperfect days.* I relate most to women whose homes are imperfect, messy, and in states of transition and growth. Want to make a friend feel at home? Let them see your messes. Your children will remember that project on the table more than they will a clean house. Trust me on this. Being allowed to create messes will enlarge your and your child's creativity.
- *Accept the fact that homeschool will not look like school at home.* It isn't supposed to, and you will be glad it doesn't.
- *Accept help and ask for it, too.* Are there family and friends who can help? Do you have a mom who can sew or an uncle who is a photographer? Incorporate these things into your child's education.
- *Ask for and accept God's strength in our weakness.* Pray for wisdom!

Appreciate

- *Appreciate this opportunity.* You have been entrusted to raise disciples at home, intentionally. God loves you so much that He entrusted you with His beautiful children.
- *Appreciate the one who provides so that you can stay at home.* Thank God for them.
- *Appreciate the extraordinary in the ordinary:* Pjs till noon, backwards day (eat dessert first), educational movies, doing school outside, eating under the table pretending to be princes and princesses, nature walks—you get the idea.
- *Appreciate that this rewarding homeschooling journey will change you,* stretch you, shape you, grow you, and better you. Seriously.



Christina Parker Brown is a momma of three, homeschooling since 2000, and the author of AKAHomeschoolMom.com and Alphabet Smash. *Her work has been featured in* Proverbs 31 *magazine,* The Old Schoolhouse *magazine,* Home Educator Family Times, GREENHOUSE, *and others. Christina's passion is to encourage others to connect faith, family, and fun intentionally. She is a hopeless logophile and always brakes for yard sales. Her writing is inspired by her faith in Jesus Christ, adventures in NC with her adventure group, and her twenty-four-year marriage to her best friend, Richard.*

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018


You don't need a degree in education to be a great homeschool teacher.
JUST PRESS PLAY
Abeka Academy video homeschool features video lessons led by experienced master teachers. Which makes it possible for every parent to give their child a college-preparatory education at home.
Learn more at **abeka.com/NCHEaba**
abeka Academy



Add Some *Pizzazz* to Your First Day of School!

by Mari Fitz-Wynn

Each year many homeschooling parents across North Carolina spend a good deal of time thinking about how to make the first day of school exciting and fun, hoping to produce an "I can't wait" reaction from their children. Other homeschool parents are anxious and, with no real plan in place, dread the first day of school. Which one are you?

Before deciding to homeschool and bring our children home, I noticed how students walked into the classroom on their first day. The teachers and administrators made a big to-do for the occasion. The celebrations seemed to have some measure of success and popularity. When I became a home educator, I decided that I wanted that wow factor on our first day. I remember thinking, "Why not give it a shot and make our first day of school a standout day for everyone?" It took several years for us to find our groove as a homeschool family.

Those first years, something was still not quite right. I was working with the wrong equation. I was directing and planning our first day of school activities as a solo act, rather than listening to and considering suggestions from my children. Once I learned the importance of their input, the low expectations were suddenly pumped up from *ho-hum* to *can't wait*! I believe we succeeded in achieving at least *that* when the kids begin asking in July what we were going to do on the first day of school in September!

That's the *can't wait* factor!

Here are a few ideas taken from my book, *Take Heart: 26 Steps to a Healthy Home School:*

- Have a picnic with old-fashioned field day games.

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018



- Take a field trip that will be a fun kick-off to your first unit or major area of study for the year. If this is the year your students will study geology, take a field trip to pan for gold or to a rock quarry.
- Stay up late one last weekend and have a two-day movie marathon.
- Blow up pictures from the previous year of your students holding trophies or ribbons or some other prize they received.
- Create a "Welcome Back to School" banner using the same idea of decorating it with their school photos and fond memories or celebrated accomplishments from the previous year.
- Show your school colors. The first two or three days of school we wore our school colors as a way to connect and bond as a family. This just one great way to achieve that goal.

Here are a few descriptions my kids wrote down about the first day of school over the course of our homeschool years: interesting, weird, long, fun, exciting, more first days, please, hectic!

What adjectives will you and your students use to describe the first day of school? I want to encourage you to celebrate the start of a brand-new school year. Forget about the difficult end you may have had last year and *create* momentum for starting school. *Create* memories and *create* a tradition by planning a special first day of school.



Mari Fitz-Wynn is a veteran home educator. She is president of Heart for Home School Ministries, Inc., a 501c (3) organization that provides encouragement, support, and classes for both civilian homeschool families and military homeschool families as a Military One Source provider. Follow Mari on her blog heartforhomeschoolministries.wordpress.com or visit her website heartforhomeschool.org.



by J. Mark Fox

I remember when I was seventeen, driving my father's Oldsmobile in Charlotte. I had gone with two high school friends to check out the university. I remember it like it was yesterday, driving down Independence Boulevard, feeling like I might as well be in New York City because I had never driven in traffic like that before. It was rush hour. I was nervous driving with two friends and not respecting the seriousness of the moment when it happened. I turned left at a stoplight, right into oncoming traffic. A city of Charlotte truck hit us broadside and smashed up the Olds, but I am thankful we were not hurt. That wasn't the worst of it. I ran over to the trucker to see if he was okay, and the man waved it off. He said, "Yeah, I'm fine," got out of his truck, assessed the damage to the front end, and got back in. I went back to my car and waited for the police to arrive. As soon as the policeman arrived, the truck driver got out of his car and was limping like he had a compound fracture in his right femur. I told the officer that the man had gotten out of his truck two minutes earlier and walked, not limped around it, but the officer told me not to worry about it. So, I didn't. That wasn't the worst of it. I had to call my father and tell him that I had a mental lapse just for a second while driving and wrecked his car. That wasn't the worst of it. Six weeks later there was a knock at the door, and my father was served with a lawsuit because of the wreck. I thought I was going to pass out. Again, the whole thing happened because I had taken my eye off of my responsibilities, just for a second.

I remember when our fourth child was born in January of 1991. We were excited to welcome this little guy into the family, and I stayed in the hospital with him and his mom for a few hours. And then, I left them to teach a class. You see, I had just gotten a part-time job at a local college a few months before to supplement my income at the small church I pastored. I couldn't imagine not showing up for a class. When

© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

Be Watchful, Dads

I got there and told my students the good news about our brand-new baby, just three hours old, they looked at me with shock. One of them even said, "Professor, what are you doing here?" I found out later that my wife was asking the same thing to herself and that I had hurt her feelings with my selfish choice. It got worse, as I became consumed with my two jobs to the point that I took my eyes off the most important job I had as a father and husband. Cindy was homeschooling two children at the time while taking care of a two-year-old and a baby. She had reached her physical and mental limit, and I was checked out.

I can't tell you how many times in thirty-six years of marriage I have found my wife crying because I have taken my eye off of my responsibilities, and she has ended up having to carry something or take care of something that I was supposed to do. They say that a woman notices when there is a leak in the roof, but the man doesn't notice until the roof caves in. That can apply to actual leaks, or it can apply to problems with the finances, child discipline issues, homeschooling, problems with the marriage, and problems with the spiritual environment in the home. That's why Paul wrote this: "Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong."

Be watchful. Watchful is not a passive word that would describe something like watching television. If that is all that God requires of men, then the country is ablaze with His glory. Men everywhere are watching, but not in a biblical sense. In fact, watching television is probably the exact opposite of what this word means. The word is a command to wake up, to refrain from sleep, to engage in what is going on around you. You cannot be on autopilot in your spiritual life and be fulfilling this requirement of the Lord.

Be watchful, dads. Stand firm in a growing faith in God. Don't take the eyes off your responsibilities to your wife and children. Not even for a second.



Mark and Cindy Fox homeschooled seven children all the way to the end, by God's grace. Mark pastors at Antioch Community Church in Elon, teaches at Elon University, and he and Cindy enjoy spending time with five (soon to be seven) grandchildren. You can subscribe to Mark's blog at jmarkfox.com.

2018-2019 NCHE Athletic Tournaments

Go to NCHEAC.com to find a team near you or contact NCHEAC staff for information on how to get involved.

CROSS COUNTRY
October 12, 2018
Hagan Stone State Park
Pleasant Garden, NC

BOYS SOCCER
October 19-20, 2018
Smith Soccer Complex
Greensboro, NC

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL
October 19-20, 2018
Greensboro Sportsplex
Greensboro, NC

PRE-SEASON BASKETBALL
November 2-3, 2018
Greensboro Sportsplex
Greensboro, NC

SWIMMING STATE MEET
February 2019
TBD

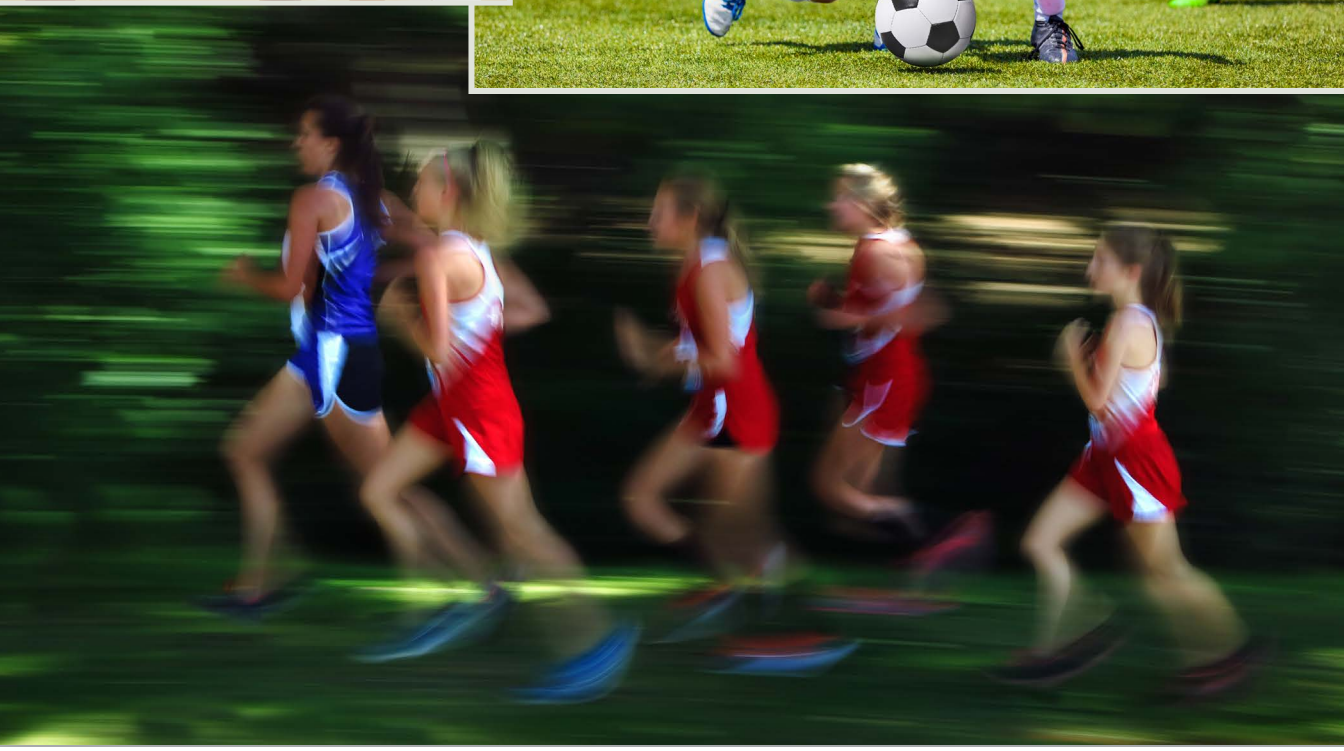
BASKETBALL REGIONALS, SEMI-FINALS, AND CHAMPIONSHIP
February 2019
TBD

BASEBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIP
April 2019
TBD

GIRLS SOCCER STATE TOURNAMENT
May 2019
TBD







© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

BULLETIN BOARD



Thrive! The NCHE Homeschool Conference will be May 30-June 1, 2019 at the M.C. Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem, NC. Rooms at the Embassy Suites and Marriott will be open for reservations at 9:00 a.m. on October 1. More conference information will be available on the NCHE website this fall.

Governor's Page Week is open to a limited number of high school students ages sixteen through eighteen. Students will participate for four days, helping with administrative tasks in the Governor's office, meeting elected officials, and touring government buildings in Raleigh. For more information on the program see www.governor.nc.gov/governors-page-program or contact NCHE activities director, Evelyn Bickley, at evelyn.bickley@nche.com. To register, contact program coordinator, Tyler Robins,at govpage@nc.gov.

NCHE Graduate Offerings. NCHE offers several different opportunities for graduating seniors of NCHE members: The NCHE graduation ceremony, the GREENHOUSE graduate issue, and a scholarship program. More information about these will be available on the NCHE website this fall at www.nche.com/graduate/central/.

Field Trips and Family Outings. NCHE works with museums and event venues across the state to create special activities and discounted admissions for North Carolina homeschoolers. Coming events include Old Salem Candle Tea, Charlotte Hornets, USS North Carolina, Capital Fest, and Family Camping. Join us and connect with other homeschooling families this year by visiting www.nche.com/activities/field-trips/ to learn more!

Harris Teeter's "Together in Education." The new "Together in Education" school year is starting. Through this program, Harris Teeter will donate money to NCHE every time you buy certain products. To support NCHE through this program, simply go to Harris Teeter customer service desk and give them our code, 2534. Your VIC card will be linked for the entire 2018-2019 school year. Don't forget to link or relink your card now, so it will be working for NCHE the whole school year!

NCHE Board Openings. NCHE is governed by a board of directors. This board is composed of volunteers who fill one of the twelve positions. The commitment year is from conference to conference. For this year, we have some vacancies that need to be filled. These openings are: Treasurer and Development Director. If you are interested in serving the homeschoolers of NC in one of these roles, contact Kathy Iandoli at kathy.iandoli@nche.com to learn more.

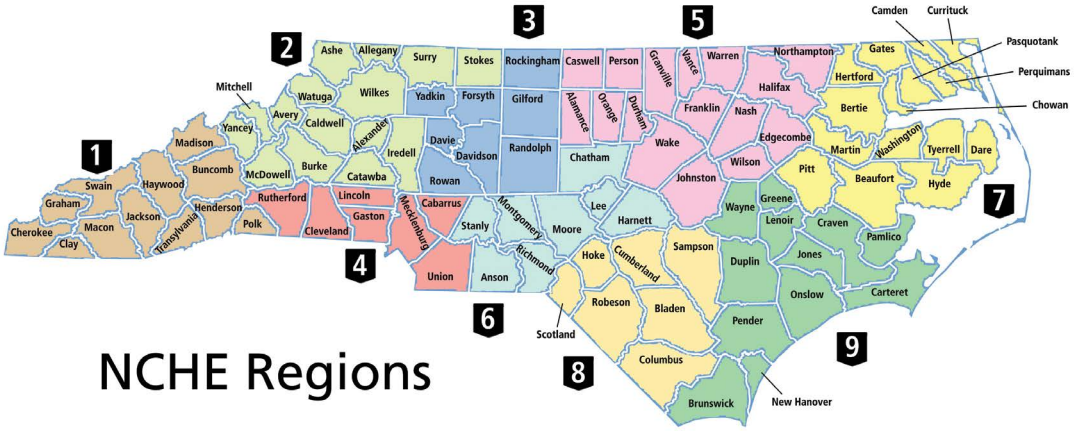
GREENHOUSE is mailed to all members. There are three issues a year: Fall, Spring, and Graduate.

NCHE.COM | 844.624.3338

NCHE Board of Directors (Statewide Officers and Regional Liaisons)

Matthew McDill, President ..... president@nche.com
Vacant, Development Director .....
Sarah Hicks, Media Manager ..... sarah.hicks@nche.com
Vacant, IT Director .....
Briggs Greenwood, Marketing Director ..... marketing@nche.com
Debbie Mason, Events Director ..... events@nche.com
Evelyn Bickley Activities Director ..... activities@nche.com
Kathy Iandoli, Community Relations Director ..... community@nche.com
Amanda Wares, Homeschool Helps Director ..... helps@nche.com
Spencer Mason, Law and Policy Director ..... law-policy@nche.com
Vacant, Treasurer .....
Diane Helfrich, Secretary ..... secretary@nche.com

Ronda Marshall, Advisor ..... ronda.marshall@nche.com
Kevin McClain, Advisor ..... kevin.mclain@nche.com
1. Jerri Neal ..... region1@nche.com
2. Jessica Frierson ..... region2@nche.com
3. Brea McClain ..... region3@nche.com
4. Christina Brown ..... region4@nche.com
5. Vicky Gurganus ..... region5@nche.com
6. Jonathan Shockey ..... region6@nche.com
7. April Briley ..... region7@nche.com
8. Diane Helfrich ..... region8@nche.com
9. Kathy Iandoli ..... region9@nche.com
NCHE Office - Raleigh ..... (844) 624-3388 • nche@nche.com



NCHE Regions

About NCHE

In 1984, North Carolinians for Home Education was organized by homeschool parents to support and encourage home educators and to achieve the right to freely home educate in North Carolina. Since that time, NCHE has endeavored to serve the homeschoolers in NC. NCHE continues to work to promote the excellence of home education, provide support for those who choose to do so and protect the right to homeschool. Our name was selected so as to include all who are for home education, not just those who are currently homeschooling. NCHE is governed by a working board of directors who volunteer their time and efforts to serve homeschoolers. A non-profit organization, NCHE operates on the basis of biblical principles and welcomes members of all races and religions.

GREENHOUSE Information

The GREENHOUSE is the periodical of North Carolinians for Home Education. It is published twice a year, spring and fall. There is also a special graduate publication in May. It is mailed to all members and posted online. The name GREENHOUSE was chosen to represent the type of care homeschooling parents are able to give to their children. Children are lovingly "tended" in a protected and nurturing environment until they are sufficiently mature to go out and take a place of service in the world. Letters and articles addressed to the GREENHOUSE become property of NCHE with full right to publication without further permission required. Ideas and opinions expressed in articles do not necessarily represent those of NCHE.

Advertising: The publication of advertising in the GREENHOUSE in no way expresses or implies endorsement by NCHE of products or services.

NCHE Membership

Membership in NCHE is available to anyone who supports home education. NC residents who are homeschooling must be in compliance with the NC homeschool law. Membership is obtained by donating any amount to NCHE (suggested donation is $35). The service of NCHE is made possible by the generous and consistent contributions of its members and supporters.

ADVERTISERS

Abeka Academy 29
AOP/Horizons ..... IBC
Apologia 26
Bayside School Services 3
Homeschool Gathering Place 7
Noble Academy 15
Triangle Education Assessments, LLC 5
Thrive! Conference ..... IFC
University of Mount Olive 13

Visit Us Online at nche.com

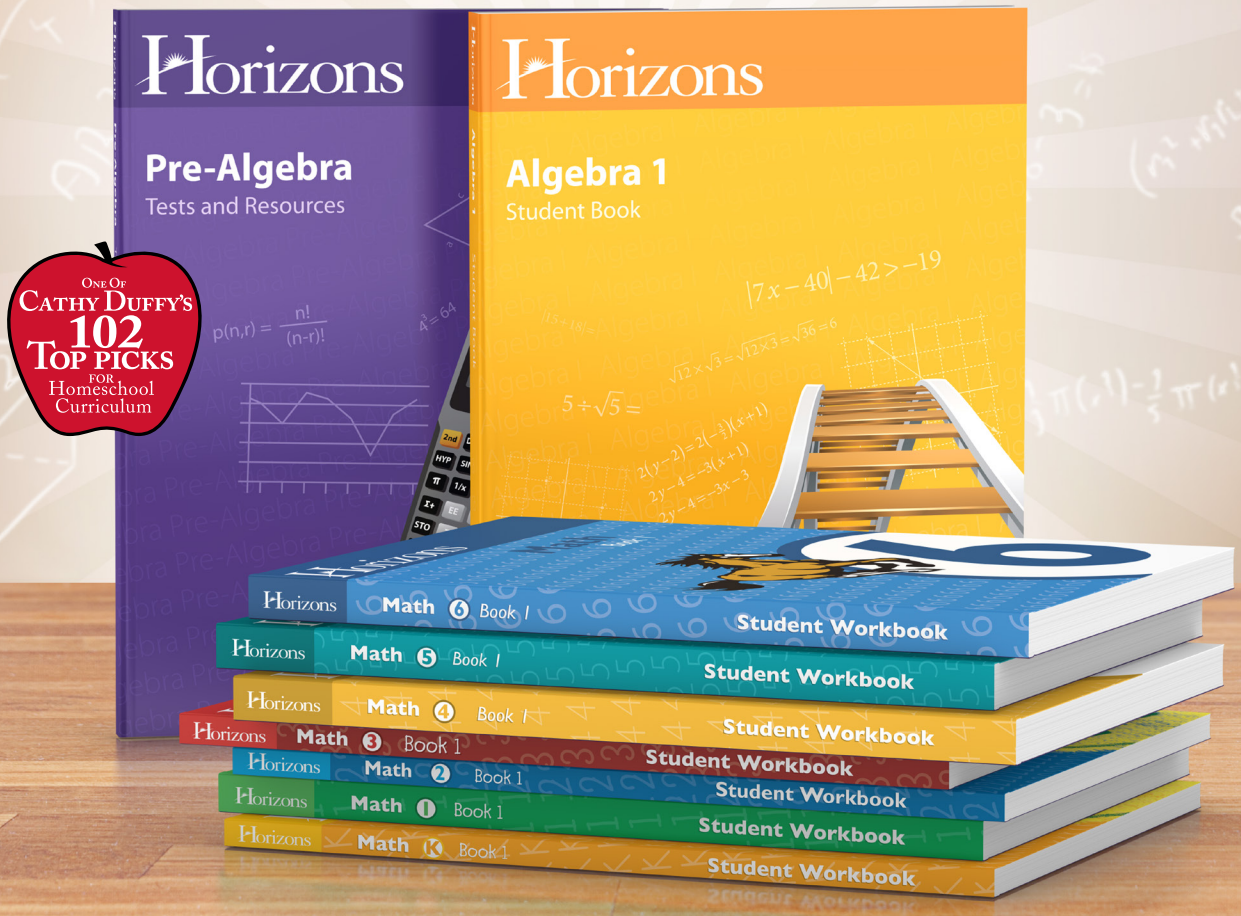
© North Carolinians for Home Education 2018

Horizons

Award-Winning Math Courses Each Under $100

When it comes to math, award-winning Horizons stands out above the rest. Rated as "one of the best math programs" by well-known speaker, author, and curriculum specialist Cathy Duffy, Horizons Math was selected to be included in her *Top 102 Picks for Homeschooling Curriculum*. Hands-on activities and engaging lessons are easy to teach and fun to learn, making Horizons Math a favorite of both students and parents.

From kindergarten to Algebra I, get any Horizons math course for under $100 today at aop.com/nche.



AOP

aop.com

North Carolinians for Home Education
4441 Six Forks Rd., Suite 106, Box 144
Raleigh, NC 27609

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT #222
Greenville, SC

