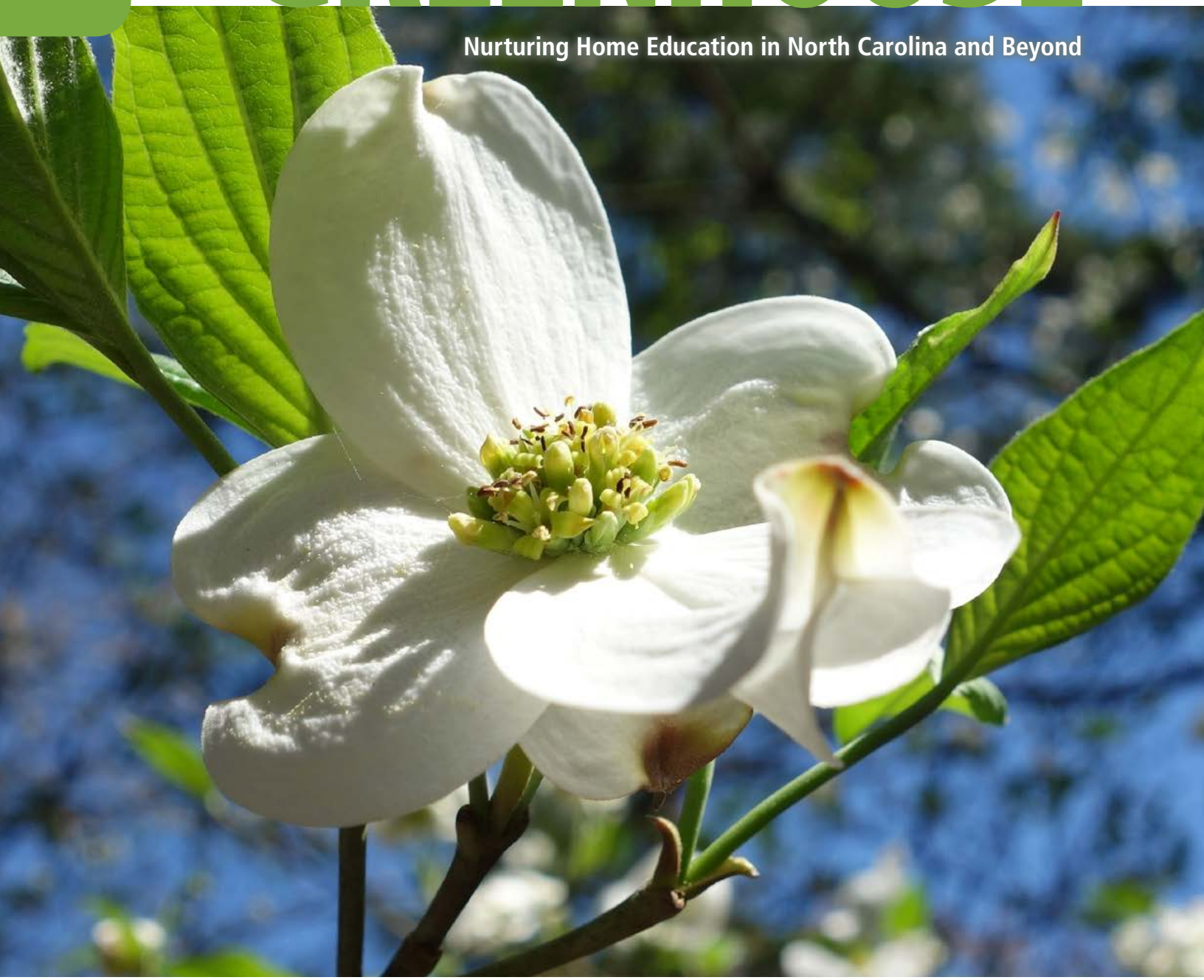
SPRING 2021
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GREENHOUSE

Nurturing Home Education in North Carolina and Beyond



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The Tie That Binds

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Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children, play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.

Fred Rogers

DEADLINES

ISSUE DATE	ARTICLES	ADS
Fall – *September*	July 20	July 30
Spring – *March*	January 20	January 30
Graduate – *May*	March 20	March 30

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McDill boys with their cousin at college

"I Don't Want to Go to College. Wait — Yes, I Do."

by Matthew McDill

I'd like to tell you a story about what happened with one of my high school students that points to several important homeschooling principles:

1. In NC, the parents decide what is required for a student to graduate, not the state or any other organization.
2. If your student is headed to college, you must determine the high school courses and build a transcript that will meet the prospective colleges' requirements.
3. Many colleges (especially community colleges) offer dual enrollment for high school students. Students can take college classes and earn credit for both high school and college.
4. Home education provides fantastic flexibility to meet your students' individual needs and timing.

At the end of my oldest son's sophomore year, we went out for coffee to plan for his junior year. Boy, was he prepared! He presented a very persuasive argument for completing only one more year of high school. He was not interested in going to college, he was older for his grade, and he was eager to work more and learn about business. So, I created an especially difficult "final" year of high school; he completed it diligently, and he graduated.

Can you do that? **Yes, you can. In NC, the parents decide what is required for a student to graduate, not the state or any other organization.** You can require more, or less, than what public schools require. You can choose the same subjects or different subjects from those used in public school.

For the next two years, my son worked very hard, saved up to buy a very nice used car with cash, and then saved another $15,000. He was also exploring vocational options and praying about what God wanted him to do with his life. At some point in the process, he became interested in law enforcement and began doing research. He quickly discovered that almost every officer he talked with recommended a college degree.

As a result, one day my son said, "Well, Dad, I think I'd like to go to college after all." To his utter dismay, I replied, "Unfortunately,

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we only have a three-year high school transcript for you. You'll have to do another year of high school!"

Although parents have the freedom to determine what is required for graduation, preparing your student for college is quite another issue. **If your student is headed for college, you must determine the high school courses and build a transcript that meets the prospective colleges' requirements.**

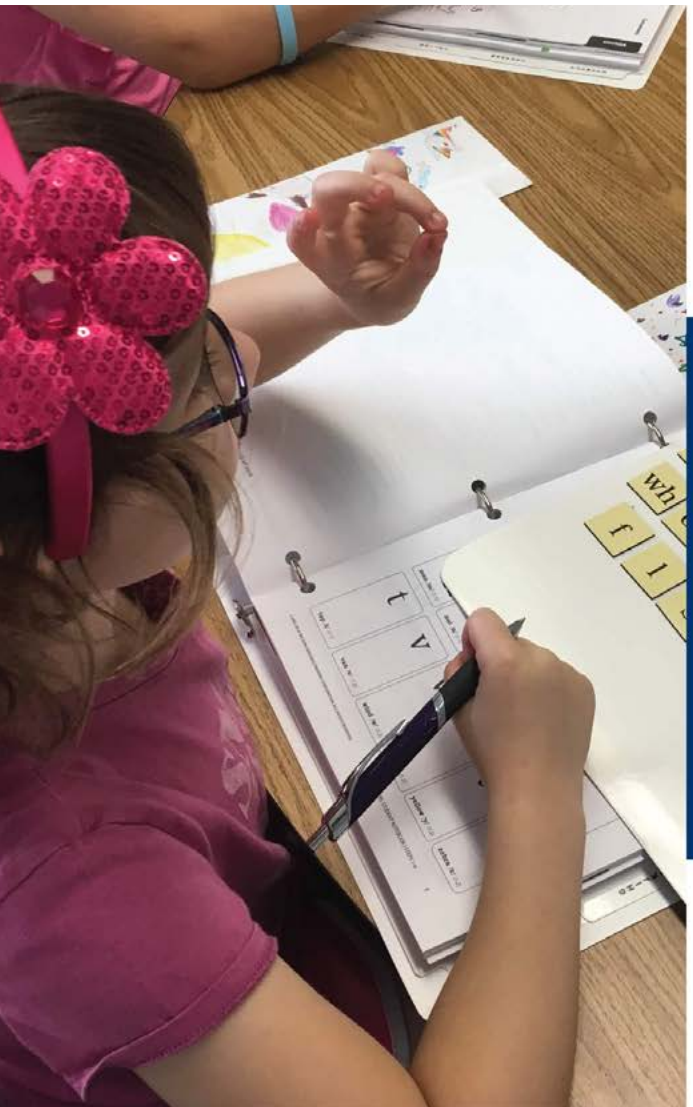
Once my son got over the shock of this news, he agreed to complete another year of high school because he was so committed to pursuing law enforcement. We put together another year of courses that would meet the requirements of the college in which he was interested. One of the things that really made this bearable for him was dual enrollment. **Many colleges (especially community colleges) offer dual enrollment for high school students. Students can take college classes and earn credit for both high school and college.** My son felt that he wasn't just *going back* to high school—he was also moving forward with college.

As I look back at this adventure, I would not do it any differently. My son needed to go to work and do research to discover what direction he was heading in. Once he had a direction, he was able to chart a path. Most important, he had his own personal understanding of and motivation in the process. He wasn't just going to college because that's what most people do. This experience is one of the reasons I love homeschooling so much. **Home education provides fantastic flexibility to meet your students' individual needs and timing.** On the other end of the spectrum, I currently have a daughter who would normally be a junior in high school this year. She is young for her grade, feels behind on her work, and wants to build a good transcript, so she has decided to take an extra year as a sophomore.

I hope this story will inform you about how homeschooling high school works in NC and encourage you to take full advantage of the wonderful flexibility homeschooling provides to meet the unique needs and timing of each of your children.



Matthew McDill and his wife, Dana, homeschool their nine children in Clemmons, NC. Matthew is the executive director for North Carolinians for Home Education and continues to serve as president of the board. Through his ministry, Truth to Freedom (truthtofreedom.org), he teaches and writes about discipleship, marriage, family, parenting, home education, and church. Matthew holds a bachelor's degree in communication along with two master's degrees and a doctorate in biblical studies.



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Keynotes and Workshops



Vendor Hall

Conference Speakers and Workshops

Featured Speakers



Adam Andrews is the director of the Center for Literary Education and a homeschooling father of six. Since 2003 he has traveled throughout the US and Canada presenting an innovative method for teaching the crucial skills of literary analysis. Adam's dynamic presentations enable students to enjoy great literature as never before, while his fresh insights inspire parents with new vision for their task as educators. Adam earned his B.A. from Hillsdale College in southern Michigan and his M.A. from the University of Washington in Seattle, where he is currently a candidate for the Ph.D. He is a Henry Salvatori Fellow of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute and a founding board member of Westover Academy in Colville, Washington. He and his wife, Missy, who holds degrees from Hillsdale College and Harrison Middleton University, taught all of their children at home in Rice, Washington.

- **The 7 Laws of Teaching and Other Myths**
- **Piece of (Thunder) Cake: A Solution to Homeschooling's Crucial Dilemma**
- **Building the Perfect Reading List: How to Find Great Books for Students of All Ages**
- **Designing Your Own Lit Program: A Scope and Sequence Workshop**
- **Living Books: Implementing the Ultimate Box-Set Curriculum**
- **Teaching with Grace: An Unlikely Path to Success in Your Homeschool**
- **Education in an Hour: Teaching Life's Most Crucial Lesson in One Sitting**



Steve Demme is an adopted child of God. He and Sandra have been married since 1979 and have been blessed with four sons, three daughters-in-law and two grandchildren. Their fourth son, John, has Downs Syndrome and lives with them in Lititz, PA. Steve is the creator of Math-U-See and the founder of Building Faith Families.

- **Raising a Special Needs Child and Finding Support for the Journey**
- **Parents Are Uniquely Qualified to Teach and Disciple Their Children**
- **Tips for Being a Faithful Dad and Supportive Husband**
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Andrea Hall, M.Ed., is a certified educator, executive director and mom of 3 with over 17 years of homeschooling experience. As an educator, she designs online courses and teaches through The Study Hall Education Consulting Company, LLC. She was motivated to start the In Real Life Math Community, www.irlmath.org, by her love of math. Her goal is to create in her students a love for mathematics, one equation at a time. She is also the founder and executive director of EPIC Homeschool Network, Inc., a nonprofit homeschool organization that seeks to enrich, enhance and empower home education in the community (www.epichsn.org). When she is not working, she likes to blog at www.nomommyleftbehind.com where she shares her journey as a busy, working, homeschooling mom.

- **Start Strong: How to Start the Homeschool Year Right**
- **How to Create Your Own Homeschool Curriculum**
- **Working Homeschool Moms: How You Can Be a Working Mom Pro**
- **Real World Math for Homeschoolers**
- **10 Principles of True Education**



Brett Kunkle, is the founder and president of MAVEN (www.maventruth.com), a movement to equip the next generation to know truth, pursue goodness and create beauty for the cause of Christ. He has more than 25 years of experience working with youth and parents. In addition, Brett is a Teaching Fellow at the Impact 360 Institute. He was an associate editor for the *Apologetics Study Bible for Students* and co-authored *A Practical Guide to Culture: Helping the Next Generation Navigate Today's World* and *A Student's Guide to Culture*. He received his master's degree in philosophy of religion and ethics from Talbot School of Theology. Brett lives with his wife and five kids in Southern California.

- **Why I Am a Christian: An Introduction to Apologetics**
- **How Your Worldview Matters for Every Single Area of Your Life**
- **A Practical Guide to Culture: Helping the Next Generation Navigate Today's World**
- **True for You but Not for Me?**
- **Like Me, Follow Me: How Social Media Influences Your Heart and Mind**
- **If God Is Good, Why Is There Evil and Suffering?**
- **Truth and Love: What Do I Say to My Gay Friend?**


College Fair



Mentoring



Rebecca Spooner is a second generation homeschool mom of 5, author of *More than Words* Bible curriculum and *Gather 'Round Homeschool*, international speaker and popular blogger at homeschoolon.com. She is married to an RCMP (Canadian police) officer and lives in a frozen tundra (okay, it only snows half the year) in Northern BC, Canada. She is passionate about sharing real life and the message that this homeschooling life is messy and wonderful and challenging and most importantly—possible. Come join her in the midst of her chaos. She doesn't promise to have it all together; she promises to give you hope, laughter and permission to make mistakes and know you are not alone, and this is worth the cost.

- **Teaching the Child You Have, Not the Child You Want**
- **Confessions of an Introverted Homeschool Mom**
- **Confessions of a Recovering Type A Homeschool Mom**
- **How to Homeschool with Confidence**
- **Working and Homeschooling: The True Story**
- **Homeschooling the "Nothing Works" Child**



Todd Wilson is a dad, granddad, writer, conference speaker and former pastor. Todd's humor and down to earth realness have made him a favorite speaker at homeschool conventions, retreats and churches across the country. As founder of Familyman Ministries, his passion and mission are to remind dads and moms of what's most important through a weekly email for dads, seminars and books and products that encourage parents. Todd and his wife, Debbie, homeschool 3 of their 8 children (5 have graduated) in northern Indiana and travel America in the Familyman Mobile. You can read more at www.familymanweb.com.

- **Invasion of the Conviction Snatchers**
- **Lies Homeschoolers Believe**
- **Help! I'm Married to a Homeschooling Mom**
- **Fostering a Hate of Learning**
- **Priority Homeschooling**
- **How to Choose Relationship when There's So Much to Do**
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Missy Andrews



After Apple Picking: Conclusions, Confessions, and Callings

Lit for Littles: Making Reading Magical

The Wardrobe Door: A Way into Worlds

Janice Broyles



Journaling Counts as Writing!

Brent Casteel



Go Team! Instilling Sportsmanship in Young Athletes

Jeremy and Kylie Cochran



Finding Hope after Trauma Finds You

Thriving in the Homeschool Lifestyle

Katie Dugdale



What's in Your Hand? Starting a Micro-business for Teens and Adults

Getting Started with Preschool

Middle Schoolers Are Weird, and I Love Them!

Kristen Eckenwiler



Teaching Reading May *Not* Be as Easy as You Think

What if Your Child Is the Fish that Can't Climb the Tree?

Learning Challenges? Dyslexia? Delays? Uncovering What's Going On

Strategies to Teach Reading to All Learning Styles

Jessica Embry



Gifted Education

Homeschool High School Workshop for Parents and Teens

Dr. Jeff Ertzberger



Using Augmented Reality and Virtual Reality as Teaching Tools

Google Tools for Home Educators and Co-Ops

Mark Fox



Dads Who Lead

Amanda Garner



Through Deep Waters

Myth Busting 101

Tom Gurganus



What Is the Gameschooling Thing Anyway?

Debra Haagen



Using Historical Fiction to Teach History

Homeschooling in the Military

Dara Halydier



Building a Biblical Self-Esteem in Your Child

The Real World: Are They Ready?

God Didn't Make a Mistake

Lindsay Leiviska



Outside-the-Box Teaching

Co-learning for Long Term Academic Success

Ronda Marshall



Secrets of Endurance: Successful Co-ops and Tutorials

Teaching More than One (or Multi-level Teaching)

Debbie Mason



Homeschooling High School

Preparing for College

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Additional Conference Speakers

Dana McDill
Choosing Rest in the Midst of Homeschooling



Matthew McDill
Equip Children for Life with Three Critical Skills

How to Help Your Children Discover God's Plan for Their Lives



Marji McIlvaine
What's in Your Hand? Starting a Micro-business for Teens and Adults



Online Instruction: Explosion in E-Learning in These Covid Times

Staying *Home* to Homeschool—What a Concept! Must We Outsource?

Jerome McQueen
Connecting STEM Concepts to the Real World



Danielle Papageorgiou
Lifeschooling: Homeschooling for the YouEconomy



Marcus Ross
Walking in Athens: A Creationist's Odyssey in Geological Education



Craig Seibert
Christian Citizenship 1: The 4 Structures of a Healthy Society



Christian Citizenship 2: The Keys to Understanding the Declaration and Constitution

Christian Citizenship 3: Engaging the Culture with Salt, Light & Courage

Amanda Wares
Help! I'm New! Now What Do I Do?

The Girlfriend's Guide to Choosing Curriculum



Pat Wesolowski
Help! My Student's Interests Are All Over the Place!

The Struggle Is Real!



Durenda Wilson
Sustainable Homeschooling

Homeschooling Boys: What Do They Really Need?



Creating a Family Schedule

Nurturing Sibling Relationships


Children's Program


Talent Showcase



If You Want Them to Love Learning—then Don't Kill It!

by Todd Wilson

As I write this, the world is trying to figure out how to get back to normal after the COVID-19 pandemic. To tell you the truth, I'm ready for normal—at the same time knowing that once we get back to normal, I'll be wishing we were back in the not-normal days of staying home, not running from place to place, and enjoying undiluted family time. But I know that many homeschooling moms struggle through these wonderful times because they feel the guilt of shirking school responsibilities. I read their posts and hear their hearts. They press on at times when they should rest because they fear—*everything*.

They're afraid their kids will get behind, afraid that they'll forget what they learned, afraid that they won't ever get into college, land successful careers, or lead productive lives. These fears drive them to push, cram, and stuff as much school into their children's lives and heads as humanly possible. They're susceptible to every "expert" and philosophy that shows up in homeschool conventions and social media posts.

The homeschool movement coined and promoted the idea of fostering a love of learning, and yet, many homeschooling moms have fostered a hate of learning. Instead of inspiring their children to love exploration, discovery, and learning, all of which homeschool *should* foster, moms find their children fighting them tooth and nail against "doing school."

Let me just say from the start that I *believe* homeschooling should foster the love of learning in our children. Its very design enables learning to be experienced in a way *no* public or private school can provide. So why do most homeschools not foster this love?

I think the answer is simple: we've believed and adopted some ideas that are not true and that kill inspiration and the love of learning.

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These ideas are:

- Longer is better.
- More is better.
- Earlier is better.
- Harder is better.
- Classics are better.
- Busy is better.
- Textbooks are better.
- Standard courses are better.
- A's are better.

Now, I'm not going to give away the whole farm (you'll need to come to the conference this year to hear the full-blown thoughts on this topic) but let's just look at a couple of those *wrong ideas*.

Longer is better. We've been taught that if our kids spend more time doing something they'll learn more. That's just not true. And even if they do learn more, they often end up hating the very thing they spent so much time doing. I'd even go as far as to say *shorter* is better.

Think about all the articles, posts, and YouTube videos out there. They're short, brief, and cut away all the fat. That's because more learning takes place in smaller chunks. Your mind (and the minds of your children) starts to cloud over after a while, and learning stops along with the enjoyment.

So practically that means spending a shorter day of homeschooling is better than spending a longer day. Yes, you can be done with the book learning by noon even in higher grades. It also means individual subjects and lessons are shorter. An hour of math, science, or anything else is too long. Don't tell me that I'm wrong and that your kids have to spend more time to get it. That is an excuse and kills learning.

More is better. I'll just say right off. More is *worse-er* and less is better, especially at the beginning. I'd rather my children know that dolphins can jump high, swim fast, and do a lot of other cool things than be able to tell me what kingdom, class, phylum, or whatever they're in. That stuff is boring and will be used only if your child becomes a biologist or textbook writer.

Keep the subjects shallow at first so they can get a taste of what they might like to learn more about later. Don't sweat the technical stuff—expose them to the engaging parts. I often wonder how many kids who liked plants got turned off on plants because all the textbooks talk about is the pistils and stamens, forgetting the cool plants that eat insects, close up at human touch, or live to be 5,000 years old.

Earlier is better. What is it with homeschoolers and trying to get a jump on the rest of the world in learning? I can't tell you how many parents come up and say, "I'm burnt out on homeschooling, and my child is four." Then, I learn they're doing five hours of school each day and they're reading chapter books.

Yes, I know some kids get it early, but maybe even then, *early* isn't better. Maybe it's better to have young children who play instead of doing school, middle schoolers who still work on multiplication instead of algebra, and kids who graduate at eighteen instead of fifteen.

There is nothing noble about beating everyone to the end of the race. In fact, I believe starting too early and pushing too hard kills the love of learning. Just relax, and let your kids move at their own pace. If you have a child who you think is a school whiz, you might even apply the brakes slightly so they can enjoy being a child just a little bit longer because some of those kids who can handle the upper courses can't handle the emotional pressure that comes with them.

Are you starting to get the idea? To inspire your children, keep school short, make the topics broad, give them lots of time to explore and discover—and keep video games to a bare minimum. (You decide what's too much. I think an hour a day is too much. I suggest maybe a couple of times a week or on the weekends, but don't fall into the trap that free time equals video time. Video games kill exploration and learning.)

If you aren't smiling and your kids aren't smiling, there is no love of learning taking place.

We'll talk more about this topic later!



Todd Wilson is a dad, granddad, writer, conference speaker and former pastor. He will be a speaker at the 2021 Thrive! Conference. As the founder of Familyman Ministries, his passion and mission are to remind dads and moms of what's most important through a weekly email for dads, seminars and books and products that encourage parents. Todd and his wife, Debbie, homeschool three of their eight children (five have graduated) in northern Indiana and travel America in the Familyman Mobile. You can read more at www.familymanweb.com.



Putting on the Yellow Margarine Container

by Steve Demme

When I travel, I prefer to fly on Southwest Airlines. One of the reasons is that the crew has a sense of humor. On one flight, the person giving the instructions about how to buckle, where to locate the exit rows, that there should be no smoking in the bathrooms, etc., was explaining what to do when there was a loss of cabin pressure and the oxygen masks fall from the overhead compartment. He said, "When the yellow margarine containers fall from the overhead compartment, first place the mask on yourself and then help your children."

His description caught my attention, and I have thought about the serious message conveyed by that picture many times. Our first reaction as a parent would be to make sure our children had access to the flow of oxygen. It is counterintuitive to put on our own mask first. But there is wisdom in what they tell us. For if the parents are not able to breathe, they will not be able to help their children.

The best thing I can do as a husband and father is invest time each morning putting the *yellow margarine container* over my face. This may include reading a few chapters of the Bible or being still, waiting on God, or praying for my family. As I breathe the divine air from above, I am properly equipped to help my family.

As I seek God and am refreshed, refilled, and refueled in His presence, I am divinely enabled to be a source of life and comfort to those who are nearest and dearest to me. My first responsibility as a follower of Jesus is to love God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. My primary calling as a parent is to love my wife and sons as God has loved me. Both of these commands are spiritual in nature and flow from my relationship with God.

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For decades, I have made a habit of reading Scripture daily, including reading through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation each year. I find my heart is softened as I am exposed to the inspired passages. The words of life found in the Word are true heart food. I have also seen my faith be increased since "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17).

There are many other reasons for reading the Word daily. After decades of loving the truth, I believe that God has been calling me to not only invest in reading and studying eternal truth but to give equal time to developing my relationship with Him, the living God. "The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (John 4:23-34)

These words "spirit and truth" have been resonating in my heart for weeks now. Each day, my new habit begins with time in the Word as I have been doing for years. I am now following this quiet time by a walk. I find when I am sitting in my comfy chair early in the morning, I am prone to drowsiness and distraction. When I walk (also a good source of exercise) I am able to focus my attention on communicating with God in my spirit and through His Spirit, for the *Spirit* is as essential as the *truth*.

Believing that God is delighted when I draw near to Him makes it easier for me to approach Him. I used to have a serious problem *waiting on God* because I had not comprehended His grace or how much He truly cared for me. Now I am more convinced than ever that He not only loves me but genuinely likes me. He is my Dad. He knows me intimately and yet still affectionately desires my presence. I know this from the source of truth, the Holy Scripture, that says "God is for me." (Psalm 56:9)

My heart and spirit are encouraged while daily communing with the living God for "the Spirit gives life." (2 Corinthians 3:6). Sometimes I talk; other times I listen. This past week as I prayed, I focused on the admonition found several times in Revelation, "He that hath an ear, let him hear. . . ." (Revelation 2:11) God faithfully meets me as I seek Him. I am deepening my relationship with God and growing in *spirit* and *truth*.

I still smile when I fly and am told to use the yellow margarine container on myself first. As I have applied this principle, I find myself in a better state of being with God and my wife. Since every good and perfect gift comes from above, I am discovering new life, new hope, and fresh grace each day, to love God and my family.

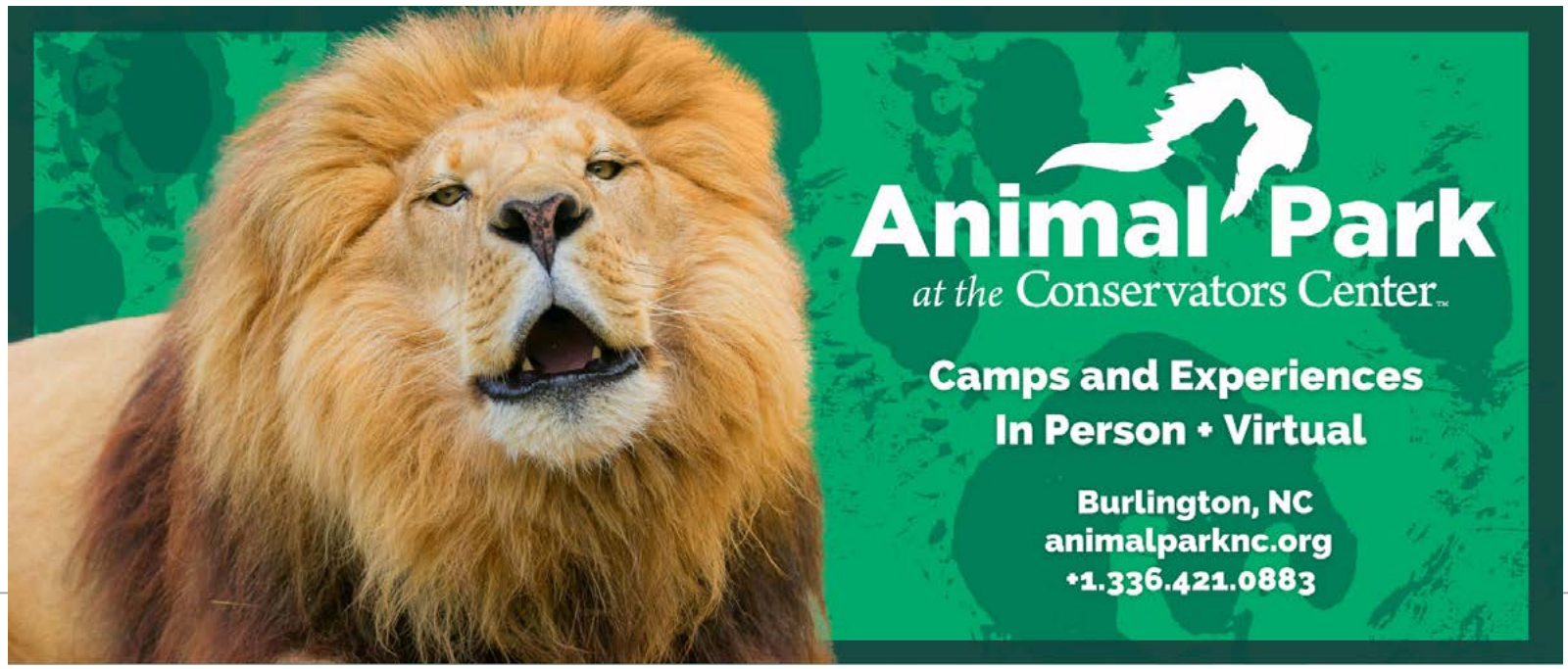
May God bless us each as we breathe in new life from God "drawing water from the wells of salvation." (Isaiah 12:3)



Steve and Sandra Demme have been married since 1979. They have been blessed with four sons, three lovely daughters-in-law, and two special grandchildren. Their fourth son has Down syndrome and lives with them in Lititz, PA. Steve has served in full or part-time pastoral ministry for many years after graduating from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He is the creator of Math-U-See and the founder of Building Faith Families, www.buildingfaithfamilies.org.

Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.

Proverbs 19:20





Music for Your School

by Evelyn Bickley

Rock-a-bye, baby, in the tree top…
Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream…
Jingle bells, jingle bells…
Away in a manger, no crib for a bed…

The songs that you learned as a child and that may have immediately come back to you just now were the beginning of your musical education. Even if you don't consider yourself musical because you long ago quit playing your trumpet, or you sing only in the shower, the basics of music—melody, harmony, and rhythm—have stayed with you.

Many homeschool teachers and parents will feel strained even thinking about adding music education to the already lengthy list that includes just getting the *three Rs* accomplished! It is also not in everyone's budget or timeline to add a couple of years with a music teacher for their children to learn to read music and play an instrument. So what are some ways to incorporate music into your family and school life? And just why is music important, anyway?

Let's start with the second question first: why include music? According to an article entitled "The Benefits of Studying Music" from Florida National University, music can relieve stress and improve brain function, focus, and even physical performance. The article cites a study that showed that listening to music can lower blood pressure and heart rate as

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well as other signs of anxiety—great especially for those with test or performance anxiety. Basketball players who listened to upbeat music prior to games were significantly more likely to perform well especially in high-pressure situations like free throws.

Dr. Anita Collins, an internationally known researcher in the field of brain development and music, has worked with neuroscientists around the world. She reports that the scientists studied brains by way of MRI and PET scans while having people perform tasks such as reading or doing math problems. The researchers watched which parts of the brain lit up with each activity. When subjects listened to music, nearly every part of the brain lit up simultaneously! It was also found that music strengthens the communication pathways between the two halves of the brain and allows for far greater problem-solving ability, thinking, and higher memory pathways. They found that music and language processing—including reading—are closely connected in the brain. Overall, involvement with music generally raises cognitive capacities.

Dr. Collins urges musical exposure and instruction before the age of seven for maximum benefit. Incorporating music into daily life with young children can be as simple as singing songs throughout the day and having a music-rich auditory environment by playing music. I especially did this while in the car with my children, even tapping out the beat of the songs on their car seats to help them know about rhythm. Let the little ones dance to fun music, which also has the benefit of working out some of the wiggles! At first, it may just look like jumping around, but you can gently lead them into more organized or even interpretive movement in response to the feeling of the music.

What do you do, though, if your children are not under seven, or if you aren't musical yourself? What are easy ways to add music without adding another whole curriculum to teach?

One of my favorite teaching methods is to combine subjects into minor unit studies. For example, if we are studying the Civil War, we might do a little history textbook reading, but we mostly read biographies or other pieces of historical literature, visit a battlefield or re-enactment, and make some food typical of what a soldier might have had. Adding music here is a natural: listening to "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," or "Dixie," or even "Eating Goober Peas" is a simple way to enrich the history study.

Music is mathematical. The meter signature tells how many beats per measure and how many beats each note gets. Studying written music helps with counting, addition, and even fractions. Learning to identify patterns in music can also help students learn to identify patterns in math.

Music is scientific. Ever heard of sound waves? *How Music Works* from Lightnote (https://www.lightnote.co/) starts with the basic physics of sound.

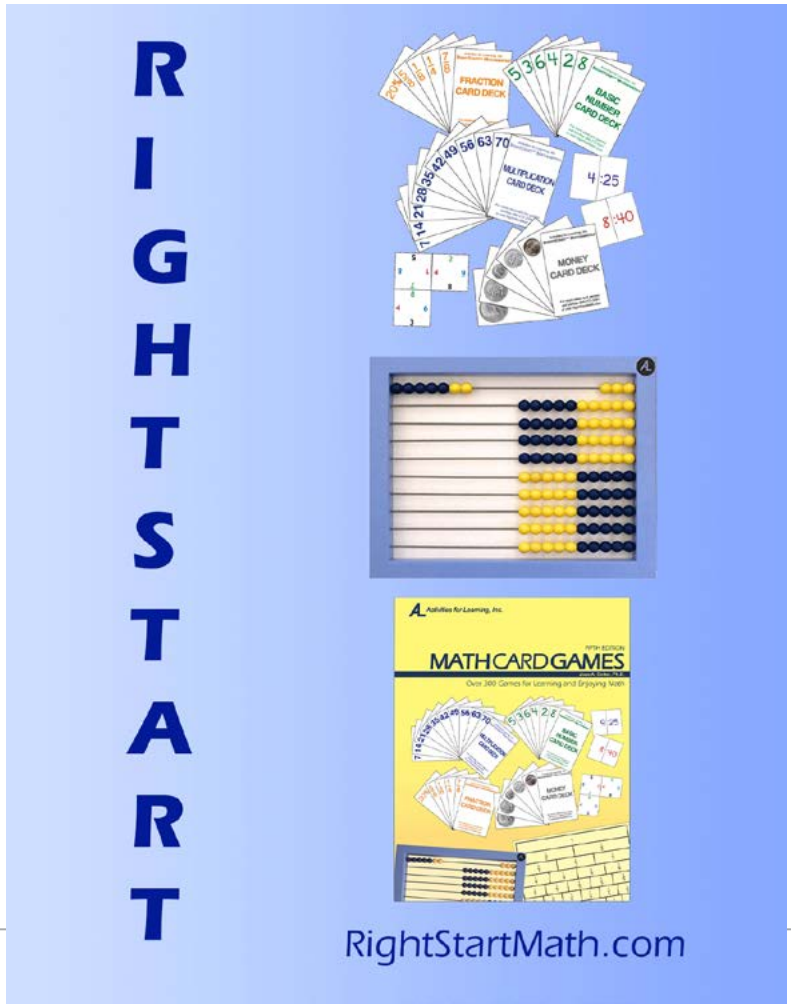
Is a holiday coming up? Incorporate songs of the season while learning about and observing the reason for the day. Sharing a sing-along with your kids can create great family memories.

Musicinourhomeschool.com is a webpage run by a homeschooling mom of eight who is also a music teacher with twenty-five years of experience. She offers more than forty free *Fifteen Minute Music Lessons*, many tied to holidays, specific composers, or themes. Lessons are pretty complete with links to performances, ideas to discuss, copy work, and even related books to read!

Melody, harmony, and rhythm: add some music to your family's life and reap a multitude of benefits.



Evelyn Bickley is a homeschooling veteran of more than twenty-two years. She has served on the boards of several different support groups and as an adviser to the Zeta Epsilon chapter of the National Homeschool Honor Society. Wife to Barry and mom to three homeschooled graduates and a high school junior, Evelyn enjoys traveling, leading a Gavel Club for teens and advising other homeschool families on their journeys through high school. She serves on the NCHE board as activities director.





The Ever-Present Opposition to Home Education

by Spencer Mason

Is there an imminent threat to parents' rights to homeschool their children in North Carolina? The short answer is no. In the US, homeschool laws are determined by the state, not the federal government. Therefore, the primary place where homeschool law is created or regulated is in the state legislatures. (Occasionally, state agencies impose regulations and courts make rulings that affect homeschooling.) Since the NC homeschool law is primarily controlled by the NC General Assembly, when the NC GA is not in session, there is no imminent danger. Also, the majority of legislators in the NC General Assembly favor parental choice in education and tend to be homeschool friendly. However, even friends can unintentionally restrict homeschooling.

Even when there is no immediate danger, it behooves homeschool families to be aware of the sources of opposition to homeschooling, to understand the arguments being made against home education and to develop a rebuttal to those arguments. Often arguments against homeschooling turn into legislation against homeschooling.

Typical Sources of Opposition to Homeschooling

Professional educators and those in academia have a history of opposing homeschooling. Following are examples of attacks on homeschooling in past years.

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The NEA

In 1986 the National Education Association (NEA) published a position paper on home education. In it, they proposed that school districts should control who can homeschool based on review meetings each semester. Homeschools would have to meet state curriculum standards, homeschool students who didn't maintain adequate test scores would have to enroll in public schools, and homeschool teachers should have a minimum of a bachelor's degree. The paper also promoted the idea that home education would harm public education and society as a whole. This position paper was widely disseminated by the union and mainstream media. The position of the NEA has had a wide-ranging effect on state legislatures, including in NC.

The NC DPI and NC General Assembly

In April 1987, the NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) proposed legislation entitled *An Act to Permit Home Instruction under Certain Conditions, as a Means of Complying with Compulsory School Attendance Requirements*. Under this proposed legislation, homeschools would be under the authority of DPI and local boards of education. Homeschool teachers would be required to have a college education and to teach a state-approved curriculum. This proposal also required a six-hour school day and gave the local school authorities ability to deny permission for a family to homeschool based on a twice-a-year subjective review of their homeschool. Most of this proposal was copied directly from the NEA position paper.

Following this proposal, companion bills with the same provisions were filed in the NC House and the NC Senate. NCHE began lobbying against both bills. It was said that the legislature had never received so many calls, visits, and letters over any other piece of legislation. Through phone chains and letters, NCHE was able to inform and mobilize NC homeschoolers in a time before email was widely used and the number of homeschools was small. Homeschoolers attended committee meetings and took very close notice of every suggested change to the proposed legislation. Through NCHE's efforts, the senate bill died in committee, but the house bill passed and crossed over to the senate when the 1987 session ended. An NC Senate passage of this bill in the 1988 short session would have been disastrous for homeschooling in NC. Fortunately, NCHE was able to convince the NC Senate to pass an NCHE authored substitute bill that included only two modifications—the requirement that the teacher has a high school diploma and that homeschools were required to administer nationally standardized tests annually. The NC House approved the bill as received from the NC Senate, and the resulting law is essentially the law we enjoy today.

NCNEA, the Opportunity Scholarships and the Courts

The North Carolina NEA continues to oppose parental education choice. In 2020, they filed a lawsuit to end Opportunity Scholarships. This is a state program that allows low-income families to withdraw their children from underperforming public schools and enroll them in private schools (which includes homeschools). Two reasons they give for the lawsuit are, "The NEA opposes tax credits, vouchers, grants, and other funding assistance because such programs and policies undermine public education by diverting vital funds from public schools" and "These programs are not accountable for upholding students' human and civil rights; providing services, resources, and therapies for students with disabilities; or reporting student proficiency and progress to state education agencies." Because the NCNEA cannot get the NC General Assembly to do their will they are going to the courts.

Harvard Magazine

The May-June, 2020, issue of *Harvard Magazine*, featured a widely publicized article titled "The Risks of Homeschooling" that reported on a paper by Harvard professor Elizabeth Bartholet that recommends that homeschooling should be banned. The rationale is that "homeschooling is

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generally unregulated in the US, violates children's right to a 'meaningful education' which is 'a threat to US democracy', may expose children to teachers 'who don't read or write themselves' or who are 'extreme religious ideologues' and make children more vulnerable to child abuse.

Social Service and Medical Professionals

Other sources of opposition are social service professionals and medical professionals who work with neglected and abused children. In 2010, the North Carolina Pediatric Society Committee on Child Abuse and Neglect was formed to develop recommendations for protecting "Invisible Children" from neglect and abuse. Fortunately, one of the pediatricians was a homeschool mother, and I was asked to participate in their quarterly meetings. I was able to help the members of the committee to understand that studies show that homeschool students are more likely to be visible in community activities than are public school students. The "Invisible Children" paper that they published in 2012 targeted children who were not receiving an education of any kind. However, the paper also proposed more homeschool regulations that wouldn't have helped those "Invisible Children."

Disgruntled Homeschool Alumni

Another source of opposition to homeschooling as-is in North Carolina are disgruntled adults who were homeschooled. They were possibly deprived, neglected, or abused. Studies show that this is a very small group of people, but they are very vocal in the call for more state control of homeschools.

Typical Arguments for More Regulation or Banning Homeschooling

- State governments have the responsibility and the right to educate children. Students in schools that are not controlled by the professionals in the public education system will be short-changed.
- Parents are not qualified to teach their children.
- Homeschooled children are more likely to be abused or neglected because teachers cannot observe and report such mistreatment.
- Public education is harmed when students are enrolled in schools that are not controlled by the state public education system.

How NCHE Responds

NCHE affirms that it is the responsibility and the right of parents to direct the education of their children and that a tutorial style of education offered by a parent is far more effective than classroom instruction.

When merited, NCHE responds to public attacks on home education. Here is a link to our response to the proposal to ban homeschooling by Harvard professor Elizabeth Bartholet, https://www.nche.com/blog-the-war-on-home-education/.

NCHE has pointed to a plethora of studies showing that homeschool students are academically equal to, or superior to, their classroom educated peers. Studies show no difference in homeschool student achievement based on the level of parental education, family income, skin color, or the length of time the student was homeschooled. Studies also show negligible differences in homeschool academic achievement between states that highly regulate homeschools and states that have little regulation.

In recent years, there have been a few studies showing that homeschool students are no more likely to be abused or neglected than the general student population, https://www.nheri.org/?s=abuse. Also, a study mandated by the United States Congress in 2004 reported a tragically high frequency of child abuse, finding that one in ten children suffered some form of sexual abuse from an employee of his or her school. A more recent study reports that more than 2,500 teachers in the United States had their license denied, suspended, or revoked because of sexual misconduct.

Along with other state organizations, NCHE will be contributing to fund a methodologically sound study on whether homeschool students experience more, the same, or less abuse than do public-school and private-school students. NCHE will publicize the results of this study when it becomes available.

NCHE has joined with other parental rights organizations by joining the Coalition for Education Opportunity. By being a part of this coalition, NCHE has access to information and resources that make us a more effective advocate for education choice and home education.

As we have from the beginning, NCHE will be vigilant in protecting our rights to educate our children at home. During the NC General Assembly's long session which runs from February through around July in odd-numbered years and the short session which runs approximately May and June in the even-numbered years, NCHE is paying special attention to bills that are filed. While real threats to homeschooling freedom are rare from other sources, we work to keep abreast of any opposition to homeschooling.



Spencer Mason and his wife, Debbie, homeschooled their four children from birth through high school, starting in 1981. Now their five grandchildren are being homeschooled. Spencer has served on the NCHE board for thirty-two years—serving in several different positions, including twice as president. He now serves as law and policy director. Under his leadership, NCHE maintains a respected voice on both sides of the aisle in the legislature. In addition to his board position, he is now serving as the NCHE executive office manager.

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NC Veterans on YouTube

Interviews by John Speights on YouTube of six North Carolina veterans, with duplicates having Subtitles. 12 videos in all. They describe their War experiences, from Spanish-American war era in early 1900s to Vietnam!

List of those interviewed:

Raymond M Berkeley - 100-year-old vet of Spanish-American War era. As lay minister, he brought people to Jesus.

Harvey Maness - World War One - See written info under his interview picture.

Dallas S Burroughs, Jr - World War Two Prisoner of War

Gilbert Lopez - Raleigh National Cemetery

Colonel James Hiteshew - Vietnam War Prisoner of War
Courtesy NC State Archives

Charles A Lloyd - World War Two
Courtesy NC State Archives

Extra benefits if you watch from home:

★ **Free Parking**

★ **And you don't have to get permission from Government to go to the bathroom!**



Ethan, age thirteen, and Havilah, age eight, nail a roof joist for their family's new shed.

The Tie That Binds

by Jessica Frierson

Have you ever gone through an experience where you look back and wonder, "How on earth did I just make it through that?" If so, then you know just where our family is right now. In the past few months, I have been interviewed by our local newspaper, an out-of-town paper, and NPR radio. Each reporter asked me that question: "How did you make it through that? What kept you going?"

As schools closed this past spring, toilet paper disappeared from supermarket shelves, milk began to be rationed, and the entire world joined together for the first global fashion trend—face masks—our family decided to purchase a new home. Although we had been considering it for some time, circumstances thrust us into this decision at this very strange moment in history.

The next few months were spent house hunting by doing drive-by viewings, signing papers electronically, helping an older child make his first move out on his own, and downsizing to a house half as big as our former one. It was one of the biggest transitions our family has undergone, and it was done during a pandemic.

My first priority at our new house was setting up our school room so that our children could pick up their studies while their father and I worked on getting settled in. Once that was finished, we began constructing a storage shed in the backyard. All of the children pitched in on what was sure to be a memorable learning experience. On day seven of the supposed two-day project, two of my daughters said their throats hurt. I had received air quality warnings on my phone earlier that day due to the Sahara dust storms coming through so I sent everyone else inside and continued working. The following day, I had two strange near-fainting episodes that I wrote off to exhaustion and decided to take a couple of days off to rest. Long story shorter: that was over six months ago, and we still haven't completed the shed or finished unpacking.

As it turned out, the sore throats were not from a dust storm that drifted over from Africa but from COVID-19 arriving in our household. Its impact on our family will never be forgotten. As one child after another fell ill and then recovered from the initial symptoms, they were about to face a test beyond anything I would have ever planned for them. Both my husband and I ended up being hospitalized with life-threatening complications. Our three teenagers, barely well themselves, were

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left to care for themselves and their younger siblings. Due to quarantine, they could not go to stay with anyone and no one could come to stay with them. Our homeschool co-op started leaving meals at the door for them, and when I was able to, I placed pick-up orders from Walmart for family members to drop off. Never have I been so thankful for having taught the children how to do laundry, cook, and do household chores!

After being discharged from the hospital, I faced a long recovery. The blood clots in my lungs caused long-lasting lung damage that left me unable to do more than the lightest activity. Talking left me short of breath, tremors made it difficult to hold a book or write, and extreme fatigue drained me after any effort. My children needed reassurance that their mama was going to be okay, but this mama wasn't so sure of that herself.

After one frightening night of seizures, heart palpitations, and difficulty breathing, I had a good wrestle with the Lord. I pleaded with Him for healing, poured out my gratitude to Him for sparing my and my husband's lives, and sought His help on how to handle this new world we lived in, both literally and figuratively. As Psalm 121 says, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth." The next day, I woke with the determination to live each day and love those around me to the fullest that I could.

Since I could not speak more than a few sentences, reading history and science lessons was out, and YouTube videos were in. We majored in art, learning how to do watercolor painting together. We minored in whatever wasn't working out to do at the time. The children took turns planning meals that they could prepare. They spent hours playing games on my bed while I rested. We watched more TV in five months than in the past ten years combined. Oh well, they survived!

That was the most important thing we learned this past year: sometimes all you can do is survive. You put one foot in front of the other. You keep moving forward and don't give up; you keep trusting and believing that God has this whole mess under control, even when you don't see His hand or feel His presence. When you are too sick to even walk across the room one day, you get up the next and try again. And somewhere along the path of surviving, you realize you have begun thriving.

A new year has arrived, and COVID was supposed to long be in the rearview mirror. Instead, two of our children are still battling its effects. Our high school-aged son struggles to recall what he just read, writes words backward, and loses his train of thought mid-sentence due to neurological damage from the coronavirus. But he and his fifteen-year-old sister held this family together for months, not knowing if their parents would live or not. Our ten-year-old was at Brenner's Children's Hospital twice for post-COVID inflammatory syndrome and is still recovering from those effects. She has hardly left my side, always bringing me an encouraging note or a picture she has painted. Homeschool not only equipped my children to handle this ordeal, but it has provided the freedom we have needed to work our way through it. We can take what each day brings and with the Lord's help, make the most of it.

So when asked, "How did you make it through all that?" my answer is that you don't even know how while you are doing it. You just keep on going, hoping, praying, believing. Then you look back and see that somehow you got through it. If you have built your house upon the Rock then when your world gets shaken, after the dust settles you will look around to see that although there may be fallout all around you, you are still standing. Coronavirus may have damaged our lungs, brains, and hearts, but it drew our family together in a way I could never have imagined. Our determination to prevail became the tie that binds us. We will never be the same, and as bad as the doctors see that outcome, we know that it is a wonderful thing. Battle wounds are the badge of courage proudly worn by victors. The lesson plans I had for this year have been traded in for life lessons that will never be forgotten.

Some days, all I can do is snuggle with my little ones and listen to the interminable retelling of a Dude Perfect video for which thirteen-year-old boys have a penchant. In the background of my mind is an ever-present prayer of gratitude that I have been given this moment to hear my son share his amazement at the video he watched or to feel a tiny hand patting my back. Through the haze of doctor appointments mixed with checking math lessons, trying to remember what bills were paid and where we might have stuck the box with our checkbook (COVID brain fog is a monster I have yet to successfully slay), and figuring out what we can put together for dinner, comes a newfound clarity to appreciate the priceless joy of simply being present. I have learned that you can't place a value on the wonder of being here—alive—together. It is inevitable that we focus so much on the aspects of life—even important ones such as education, healthy food, and studying God's word—that we fail to grasp what a precious gift life itself is. And the harmony of a family pulling together to take care of each other is the perfect way to wrap that gift. For all that COVID-19 stole from us, our Heavenly Father has returned back to us a hundredfold. Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, the God of our Salvation! (Psalm 68:19)



Jessica Frierson is a second generation homeschooler now teaching her own ten children. She and her husband, Ernie, knew from the time their first child was born twenty-six years ago that home education would be their only choice. They moved back home to North Carolina in 2000 to take advantage of the less restrictive homeschool laws here. Jessica is NCHE's secretary.

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John and Natalie Vecchione enjoy spending time outdoors with their son, Nick, and daughter, Gianna.

Treasure Finders—

Homeschool Parents of Children with Special Needs

by Natalie Vecchione

"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well." Psalm 139:14

My name is Natalie Vecchione, and I am blessed to be a *treasure finder*. Our family has been living in North Carolina for over four years. Three years ago, we moved into our *funky farmhouse* on a little under four acres in Johnston County. We are converting one of our detached workshops into a tiny house for our son so he can have interdependence. We have been blessed that the Lord built our family through adoption. We've been a homeschool family for seven years. Last fall, we began homeschooling our daughter, five-and-a-half years old, who has childhood absence epilepsy. Our eighteen-year-old son has a fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD)/bipolar disorder and other diagnoses. In May 2020, he finished his homeschool journey. He is working part-time as a carpentry apprentice and also studying computer coding online, part-time. Although our son had many comorbid diagnoses, he did not receive his *official* diagnosis of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) until he was almost fifteen years old. We began homeschooling seven years ago, before his diagnosis, while we were living in NY as an *accommodation* for our son's multiple physical, developmental, and learning needs. We were weary and tired of hearing everything that our son couldn't do, and we wanted to start focusing on what he *could* do. Our homeschooling adventure has been a challenging but exciting one, and both of our children (who are thirteen years apart in age—God's orchestration!) have homeschooling paths that are unique and strength-based.

Often times, the world focuses on our children's deficits and compares their development to their peers. Homeschooling allows us to work with their needs while giving us the opportunity to *focus on their strengths*. This is one of the many grace-based (and brain-based) foundations of parenting a child with a brain-based disability: to focus on the child's strengths and to meet them where they are in order to accommodate their needs. I especially believe that as parents of children with brain-based diagnoses, we need to recognize that what we previously thought were *bad behaviors* are actually *symptoms* of the brain struggling to be accommodated. Furthermore, we are our children's best *advocates* because we know our children best! We know that the world may see their needs and struggles, but we see their potential and talents. Our Heavenly Father has blessed us with the responsibility to find the treasures (or gifts) inside our children. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10

We always knew that our son loved to work with his hands and that he was very creative. When he was younger, he enjoyed hands-on science experiments, art projects, and building things. He also enjoyed outdoor activities, exploring nature, and physical activities like skateboarding, scootering, and lifting weights. We quickly embraced that our son was a kinesthetic learner. Throughout his homeschool journey, I learned how to accommodate in ways that would help strengthen his ability to learn and retain information. For example, we practiced and recited spelling words while he was riding his scooter, or we worked on math facts while he was bouncing on the trampoline. When he was sixteen, our son participated in a two-week carpentry camp (for teens with special needs) where he learned that he had a gift of carpentry and woodworking. After many phone calls and emails, I was blessed to find two amazing carpenters who saw the blessings that our son had to offer and took our son on as their apprentice. His last two years of homeschool were the best! In addition to completing his required subjects, he spent many hours in the woodshop (and in the field) learning his trade in the best way possible—hands-on. Our family also enjoyed the fruits of our son's labor—cutting boards, bowls, custom-designed woodwork, keepsake boxes, and even a custom-made desk for our home office! Most importantly, we were blessed to be able to help our son grow in the gifts with which the Lord has blessed him!

Now, we have started our daughter's homeschool, which will be unique and just as adventure-filled! *We are blessed*.

Before I share the final lessons that I've learned from our family's homeschool journey (and my love for homeschooling children with unique needs), I'd like to share some facts and reasons why I became a parent advocate in the FASD community:

• Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) is a lifelong disability that affects the brain and body of those individuals who were prenatally exposed to alcohol.

• FASD is the leading cause of developmental disabilities in the western world. Those who have FASD have a lower developmental age versus their chronological age.

• Primary characteristics of FASD include: poor working memory, executive functioning deficits, dysmaturity, impulsivity, distractibility, slower processing, inconsistent memory, difficulty with cause and effect, inability to make associations or think abstractly.

• A recent 2018 study, published in JAMA, by Phillip May, Ph.D. of UNC-Chapel Hill found that one in twenty first graders have FASD.

• No amount of alcohol is safe during pregnancy. Out of all of the drugs/substances to which an unborn child can be exposed, alcohol causes the most damage.

• Approximately 70% of children and teens in the US foster care system are impacted by FASD.

• FASD is a spectrum disorder. No two people with FASD have exactly the same set of symptoms. There are five diagnoses that fall under the FASD spectrum umbrella: fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), partial fetal alcohol syndrome (PFAS), alcohol-related birth defect (ARBD), neurobehavioral disorder associated with prenatal alcohol exposure (ND-PAE), and alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND). FASD results in cognitive, behavioral, health, adaptive functioning, and learning challenges. There are over 400 comorbid medical and mental health diagnoses that can accompany having FASD.

• FASD is a brain-based disability with lifelong symptoms. It cannot be cured. A child or teen with FASD is not "misbehaving" or "being disobedient." His or her brain cannot process what is being asked of him/her. It's not that they won't do something, they can't.

• FASD is not limited to one population or demographic. It can happen to any unborn child exposed to any amount of alcohol.

• FASD is the most misdiagnosed, undiagnosed, and underdiagnosed of all developmental disabilities.

What have I learned as a *Treasure Finder Homeschool Mom*?

• We must meet our children where they are so that they can explore the gifts in them. We should learn their interests, support their interests, and nurture their growth.

• We shouldn't focus on what our child *can't* do, but rather, rejoice in what they *can* do!

• We should see our child the same way the Lord sees our child—as a gift, a blessing, and *your* teacher! I can honestly say that our son's homeschool journey, especially the past few years, taught *me* numerous

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life lessons and strengthened my faith in so many ways!

• We should support our child—learn how we can accommodate and support his or her needs!

• We should recognize that every child, no matter the diagnosis or level of functioning, has treasures inside that we have the honor and blessing to discover. Once we discover our children's gifts, we can nurture and support them so they can grow and thrive.

• We should recognize our role in our child's life. On the days that we think we can't do this (and I've had *many* of those!), let's remember that the Lord has trusted *us* to be a *Treasure Finder* for our child. One of the many blessings of this unique journey is that we celebrate victories and milestones that are taken for granted by the rest of the world. We glorify Him when we discover the God-given potential inside our children.

• *We are not alone on this challenging but blessed journey.*

We realized that the Lord placed our family on this very unique journey to help others in the FASD community. Last fall, my husband and I were led by the Holy Spirit to start FASD Hope, a podcast/resource website to carry out our mission/ministry of increasing awareness of (FASD). We pray that we can be a resource to families and those in the FASD community.



Natalie Vecchione has volunteered as a board member and social media coordinator for several NC non-profits. In April 2020, Natalie began her new adventure in the world of podcasting through producing and hosting podcasts about FASD, as she became a mom on a mission with a microphone. In October 2020, Natalie and her husband, John, co-founded their own podcast and website, FASD Hope, whose mission is to provide awareness, information, and inspiration to people whose lives have been touched by FASD. Natalie is thrilled to begin this new adventure of serving the Lord through this ministry. You can learn more on the FASD Hope podcast series or on http://www.fasdhope.com/.

Remember that your children are not your own but are lent to you by the Creator.

Mohawk proverb

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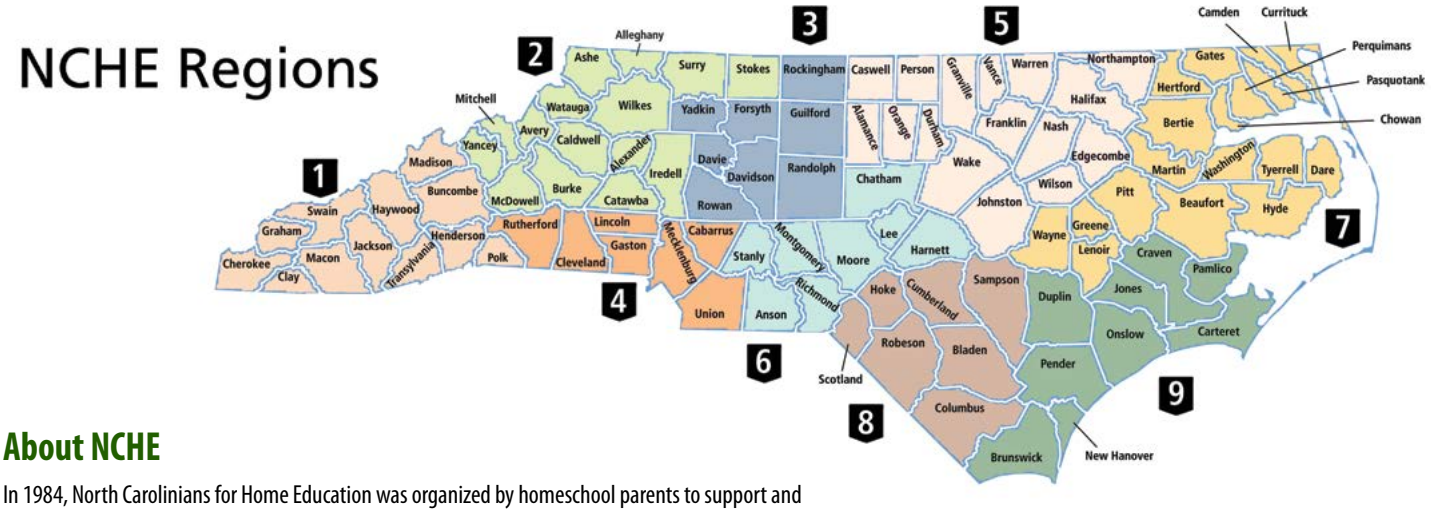
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About NCHE

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.

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BULLETIN BOARD

Thrive! The nche Homeschool Conference

Thrive! The NCHE Homeschool Conference will be May 27-29, 2021 at the Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem, NC. We are hopeful that we will be able to have an in person conference this year, but we will have to wait and see what the COVID-19 mandates are at the time. See pages 4-11 for more information.

The NCHE Talent Showcase will be held Friday, May 28, 2021, at 7:45 pm at the NCHE Thrive! Homeschool Conference. If you know a talented homeschooled student, encourage them to audition to be a part of this very entertaining show. The deadline to submit an audition is March 31, 2021. See more details on the NCHE website.

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

Upcoming "Required Annual Homeschool Testing" Webinar. Join us for this webinar on March 16 at 3:00 p.m. After a super informative presentation, we will take your questions! Go to nche.com/testingwebinar to register for free.

Capital Fest 2021. Due to current NC COVID-19 orders and directives, we are not able to reserve any meeting space for Capital Fest at this time. The current directives are effective through March 31. We are still hopeful that we can schedule an event this year, and we are looking at a date of April 20 or later. However, we won't know when or if we can have Capital Fest this year until the current COVID-19 orders and directives are ended.

Save the Date! The NCHE Mom's Retreat is November 5-6, 2021, at Caraway Conference Center in Asheboro, NC. More information will be available this summer on our website at nche.com/momsretreat. We had to cancel the fall 2020 retreat due to COVID-19.

Support NCHE when you shop! Visit smile.amazon.com and select North Carolinians for Home Education. If you shop at Harris Teeter, link or relink your VIC card to their Together in Education program. The NCHE code is 2534.

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