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THURSDAY, February 16 2023



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Front Cover: Photograph from the Palmer Family

**Top of Page:** 2022 Father Son Retreat Photography by Ted Jones



ou've heard the saying, "If you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there." Having clearly defined goals is an important part of achieving a productive and successful school year. Maybe you are a "Type A" planner who is thinking "Well, I've got this covered, so let's skip to the next article!" Or maybe you're a "free flow-er" and your stress level began to rise the minute you read the word "goals." Before you stop reading, please hear me out!

I grew up living in the country with three brothers and a sister. We were a pretty rambunctious and adventurous bunch. My mom grew up in an even more rambunctious family of ten kids. As a result, she had an unusually high risk tolerance, which is probably one reason why I had such a fun childhood! After all, it's hard to have fun as a boy without risk. And it is also hard to have fun as a boy without shooting, throwing, or launching things — which we did quite a bit of.

But, we did occasionally cross the line. One incident stands out in my memory. We had a couple bows and some practice arrows that made up part of our arsenal. One day, my older brother, Tim, dared me to try to shoot him with an arrow ... in the head! I was probably around 10 years old, and 10-year-old boys don't put a ton of thought into things. I was no exception. I don't think there was any malicious intent. It just sounded like a fun challenge. Sort of like a William Tell moment ... without the apple. Tim is 4 years older than me and I was no Robin Hood. So he was just planning to duck and let the arrow sail over his head harmlessly.

Well, that's not what went down. I launched the arrow and by some bizarre chance, I nailed him right in the forehead. Thankfully, the arrow bounced off him without causing serious injury. But I was pretty sure I was going to be in BIG trouble. I can still remember exactly where in the house my mom was when I went to tell her what I had just done!

This incident taught me one really important life lesson: "Be careful what you aim for ... because you might just hit it!" Because having the WRONG goal ... and hitting it ... can be much more dangerous than having no goal at all!

#### So what are your goals for this school year?

What are you aiming for? What is your highest priority? Whether you are a "planner" or a "free flow-er," we all have some image in our mind of what success should look like.

I'd like to encourage you to consider the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 6:33 (ESV), "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

The words of Jesus have a way of cutting through the noise and distractions. They remind us of what really matters. They bring the target into focus.

Jesus reminds us that a God-ward focus simplifies life. Homeschooling can feel complicated. Teaching all of those kids ... all of those different grades and subjects ... and it's all on YOU! Is homeschooling stressing you out? That may be because you have the wrong goals. Jesus is not a hard master, and His primary desire for you and your family is that you would simply seek Him. Remember that His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30). If it doesn't feel that way, maybe you are carrying something you aren't supposed to be carrying. As homeschool parents, it is so easy to rush around like Martha, meeting all of the needs, doing all of the things that "good homeschoolers" do, trying to prove to ourselves and to the world what a success we are. There is so much to do! But to the anxious and troubled Marthas of our culture, Jesus says, "But ONE thing is necessary" (Luke 10:42 ESV).

Jesus also reminds us that He won't put up with rivals. He says that we are to "seek FIRST the King-

WRONG GOAL
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WHAT ARE YOU
WIMING FOR THIS
YEAR?

dom of God and His righteousness." He doesn't want to be added as the cherry on top of the milkshake of education. He wants to be the milkshake. Warning: it is possible to incorporate the best, biblical-worldview curriculum into your homeschool and still have a heart that is oriented toward the affirmation and values of men. If we are double-minded in our

focus, our homeschooling will be unstable (James 1:8). Jesus Christ must be the first and primary focus.

Finally, Jesus wants us to rest in the fact that your Father knows what you and your children need (Matthew 6:32) and promises to make sure that you get it, "ALL these things WILL BE added to you." This means that you can take a deep breath. This whole homeschooling thing really is NOT all on you. It's on your Father.

Jesus calls us to faith, to step out of the boat, to believe that He will actually pull through for those who seek FIRST the Kingdom and righteousness of God. Do you trust Him?



Steve Craig is CHEC's Executive Director. He and his wife Tara are second generation homeschoolers and have a passion to inspire others toward biblical discipleship in the home. Steve and Tara live in

Franktown with their seven children: Carson, Christiana, Angelina, Jewel, Ariel, Michelle, and Jackson. He can be reached at Steve@CHEC.org.



### • CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOUR HOMESCHOOL JOURNEY BEGAN?

 Homeschooling was definitely not on our radar at first. With four children just three-and-a-half years apart, it seemed like too monumental of a task. We had even moved to be in a better government school district. One day at church as we were talking with friends, someone we had not met before joined the conversation. She was a mom of six and was homeschooling. I couldn't believe how she homeschooled with so many children, because it just seemed impossible to me. Through the course of the conversation she was very encouraging and challenged me to give it a try for the upcoming year. She reasoned that since my oldest was only in pre-K, I could give it a shot. If it didn't work out, then we had not lost anything and could still put him in school the next year for

Kindergarten. I decided to give it a go, and we have been homeschooling ever since.

### • HOW HAS HOME EDUCATION BLESSED YOUR FAMILY THROUGH THE YEARS?

My husband and I have always known the importance of a good education. As we continued in homeschooling over time, it became evident that homeschooling was the best way to accomplish that goal. We learned that home education provided the opportunity to tailor each child's education to their individual learning styles and interests.

Another blessing has been the friendships we've made along the way. The homeschool community is a very supportive community, and it is such a treasure to have other families that support you through prayer and encouragement. We also have enjoyed many family traveling experiences as part of our children's education.

The biggest blessing has definitely been the freedom to teach our children from a biblical perspective. It has been so enlightening for the whole family to look at each subject through the lens of a Christian worldview. The added benefit is that

we have grown in Christ as a family unit, making not only our individual faith stronger but the family stronger as well.

### • HOW DID YOU COME TO BE INVOLVED WITH THE COLORADO YOUTH PIPE BAND?

• We came upon the CYPB when we attended a "Bagpipes and Brass" concert at a local church. The kids were enamored with the pipe band. They loved the sound of the pipes and the drums as they marched in. As the concert continued, one of the pipers made a plug for the Colorado Youth Pipe Band. Being that our family was the only with children seated in a sea of of people well advanced in years, it was obvious who he was talking to!

After the concert, our children went up to the musicians in the pipe band and peppered them with questions. It turned out that one of the drummers was an instructor for the CYPB, and she encouraged us to get online to check it out.

Back home, I told the kids I would look into it. I did, thinking that I would just rule it out as an activity, as I was sure it would be out of our price range, since it was such a specialized type of learning. As I

# FORWARD

Palmer Family

emailed back and forth with the band representative, it became very clear that it was affordable and that there were many opportunities to be explored in the band. The band gives instruction in piping, three different types of drums, and Scottish Highland dancing as well. There was definitely something for everyone and all in the same place at the same time!

We joined the CYPB in the fall of 2018. My two sons chose to learn the pipes, my oldest daughter learned the snare drum, while my youngest chose to learn the tenor drum. Both my girls also chose to learn Scottish Highland dancing.

### • HOW HAVE YOUR STU-DENTS FLOURISHED WITH THIS UNIQUE EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITY?

• The band provides lots of opportunity for growth and character development. Bagpipes are a tricky instrument to learn and there needs to be an attitude of stick-to-it-ness and a discipline to practice. My boys have learned that hard work and persistence pays off in the long run, which is a great life lesson. The band also provides opportunities to grow in teamwork. The band competes as a whole, so a child must learn how to work for the betterment of the band as a team.

Aside from competitions as an entire band, there are opportunities for each individual to compete in his or her respective skill, be it piping, drumming, or dancing. We have seen how this teaches our children to learn from constructive criticism, to be gracious losers, and to be humble winners. These are fantastic life skills that they are each learning now and will take into their respective adulthoods.

We also have grown together as a family. As the band performs in some interesting places, it has opened up great conversation starters that aid us in shepherding our children as they grow into teens and into adulthood. This has provided us all with both exciting opportunities and closeness in our relationships.

HOW BEING PART OF
A BAND TEACHES OUR
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• HOW IS GOD USING YOUR FAMILY'S PARTICIPATION IN THE COLORADO YOUTH PIPE BAND FOR HIS GLORY?

• As the kids become more adept at their ability on their instruments, they have had a passion to share this with others. We have been very fortunate that our neighbors aren't put out by our children's loud instrument playing! As a matter of fact, we have one neighbor who absolutely loves it. She has been undergoing some health issues, so our children go over to her house to play for her. She has told us on numerous occasions how this has helped to cheer her up and made her health struggles more bearable.

Aside from our neighbors, there are many opportunities for service that others in the band have taken advantage of as well. Whether it be playing for funerals, services that honor our veterans, or just for someone who connects with our family on an app such as Next Door asking if we will come by and play to cheer someone up, it's a wonderful way to bring joy to others.

Our homeschooling journey has brought the educational success we were seeking and also great joy as we have had opportunities to bless others along the way.

DarLin Palmer has been married to her husband, John, for 17 years. They have 4 children, Aiden (14), Zivah (13), Uri (12) and Zoey (10). They live in Littleton and have been homeschooling for 10 years. You can contact DarLin at EDarlin@hotmail. com. More information about the Colorado Youth Pipe Band is on their website, CYPB.net.



Do you ever wonder if homeschool graduates are successful in life as adults? Our Gen 2 column seeks to encourage you that the answer is, "Yes!" We hope you'll enjoy reading this story of one homeschool graduate's journey.

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14, ESV).

### sn't that what **Christian home** education is all about bringing our children to Jesus, everyday?

We teach them about Christ's lordship, grace, and tender mercies. We live together in the joys and trials of life. Prayer. Scripture. Praise. Repentance. Forgiveness. Grace. The dayto-day. Giggles. Messes. Tears. Triumphs. We bring our children to Christ through it all, for He alone can cause them to walk in His ways. We do not and cannot do this alone but must walk hand-in-hand with Jesus along this amazing journey of home education.

Josh and I (Amy) were both raised in Christian homes and homeschooled. Our parents brought us to Jesus through prayer, Scripture, and living out the Gospel of Christ. By God's amazing grace, He saved us both! Now we

are a couple of ordinary homeschool grads, whom God brought together in His perfect timing, trying to raise our boys by the daily grace of God. Every day looks a little different. Sometimes it is peaceful, other times it is hectic. But we are striving for kindness, forgiveness, and Christlikeness. Many days we humble ourselves before our children to ask forgiveness for not acting in a godly way. These are times when the Gospel is on display, when the kids see even Mom and Dad need Jesus. That we all fall short and need a Savior. That Jesus' blood covers our sins. Christian home education is about living the Gospel, on front and center stage!

Josh grew up in Hawaii and often did school after surfing the sunrise at Waipio Valley. He graduated college in two years by taking online classes, and now owns a successful financial advisor practice after years of grit and sweat. Josh enjoys all things outdoors including snowboarding and golf. He moved to Colorado ten years ago after meeting Amy at the CHEC Father and Son Retreat; he was attending, she was serving.

I grew up in Colorado and participated in many activities including 4-H and worship dance. After high school, I didn't follow the "norm" but stayed home to learn homemaking skills from my mom while I

volunteered for CHEC for several years. I am currently living my dream of being a stay-at-home wife and mom. I also enjoy tending my garden and reading.

Everyone's story is unique. We all have different gifts and challenges from God. We must not lose heart in the day-to-day. We must not forget that we are not alone in the journey. Christ walks beside us, with His Spirit is in us, helping and guiding us. So, when you are overwhelmed or discouraged, remember that your job as a parent is not to be perfect but to bring your children to Jesus and to walk together with Him, as you raise the next generation of disciples.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." (Philippians 4:13, NKJV)



Joshua and Amy (Einarsen) Cox live in the Denver area raising their three imaginative, history-loving boys to be warriors for Christ. Josh is a financial advisor with Everest Wealth Advisors. Amy is a

homemaker. They love exploring the outdoors, playing volleyball, and using their home to practice hospitality. Readers can contact either Joshua or Amy at JGCoxFamily@gmail.com.

### WE LIVE IN A CULTURE THAT BECKONS US TOWARDS DEATH

### DID YOU KNOW?

There are NO abortion restrictions in Colorado. In fact, Colorado is now known as the Abortion Vacation Destination. Unabated child-killing, even until the moment of full-term birth is "legal" and flourishing in unrestricted Colorado as abortion-minded mothers flood into our state. We have a message for them and for our neighbors, two blocks from Planned Parenthood:



Are you ready to stand up for the defenseless? Help us to raise up billboards with NEW messages of HOPE and HELP at key entry points near our borders.

Defend the poor and fatherless: Do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Deliver the poor and needy: Free them from the hand of the wicked.

Psalm 82:3.4



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HELP US RAISE UP A MESSAGE THAT LEADS TO LIFE



y body is in Colorado, but my heart is in Ecuador ... and Russia and Ukraine and Poland and Mexico. As I write this, my hubby is in Ecuador teaching the Shuar people how to construct a church building which termites can not destroy.

A Russian pastor friend, whose heart is broken by the war his president has launched, continues to faithfully shepherd his flock through increasing hardships and persecution.

An American musician friend escaped from Ukraine and has hopes that he and his Ukrainian wife will be allowed into the United States.

Missionary friends in Poland are watching the church in action. They report that there are no big refugee camps as there are in some countries with large displaced-person populations. Instead, the Poles are inviting Ukrainians right into their homes.

And, closer to home, a brand-new church building was opened just last Sunday in a poor part of Mexico under the leadership of a long-time homeschooling missionary family. It is exciting to see what the Lord is doing around the world.

I was not raised in a mission-minded church. I had no idea how to teach my children to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19a ESV). Perhaps you, too, are wondering how to help each of your children to develop their God-given life message and to learn how He wants him or her to share these messages with the world. Here are some ways that have worked for many families.

#### Spark your children's interest in missions by reading missionary biographies aloud together.

Read monthly newsletters from the missionaries you support. Invite missionaries on furlough to your home. Assemble a family prayer notebook featuring different people groups to pray for each day: immediate family, our country, church/homeschool friends, missionaries, and extended family. Study a foreign language together; they'll learn faster at a young age than when they're older. Host a minimissions conference with your homeschool group; each family could teach about one country, people group, or type of ministry.

### Plan for financial donations, beyond your regular tithe, to individual missionaries and reputable Christian organizations.

(Membership in the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability is a good indicator that a ministry uses funds wisely.) Participate in Operation Christmas Child; see SamaritansPurse.org for details. One child I know planted tomatoes and sold them to raise money to send to missions. Some families support MedSend.org, a unique ministry that repays student loans so that young doctors and nurses can go straight to the mission field while they are young and healthy. Purchase gifts or provide camp opportunities for prisoners' children through Angel Tree at PrisonFellowship.org.

### Think about ways your family might serve, beginning with those around you.

Make meals for new moms. Sing at senior centers. Perhaps your church offers short-term trips. Our sons were forever changed by serving in Mexico as the team reflected on how happy the orphans were even though they "had nothing."

Remember, as you serve internationally, be careful not to take away income from locals who could do the work you and your team are planning to do. Use your skills in design, technology, or medical areas to support the work of resident missionaries. For example, my husband helps to keep a small hydroelectric plant in the jungle operating so the locals and missionaries can continue to use computers for Bible translation.

### Consider long-term service.

4

Perhaps the Lord is calling you or one of your children to long-term missionary service, either domestically or internationally. There are unlimited opportunities for service beyond what we usually think of as missionary work (evangelism, Bible translation, medical care, etc.). It is said that it takes fifteen people to keep one missionary on the field; among these may be office staff, accountants, clerks, engineers, technicians, medical staff, marketing specialists, security, warehouse management, aviation maintenance through MAF.org , logistical planning, and countless others. Whatever your passion, there will be a place for you.

One couple, both musicians, started an orchestra and choir in Ukraine shortly after the breakup of the Soviet Union. As

they explained the meaning of the words to the great sacred oratorios such as Handel's Messiah to these musicians who had been trained in atheism, many came to Christ (more details shared at MusicMissionKiev.org). Another unique ministry trains indigenous Christfollowers to reach their own people by offering practical assistance in dental, mechanical, farming, and medical service. This allows locals to not be dependent on outsiders for spreading the Gospel. As they pull teeth, they share God's love, speaking in the language of their own people (read more about this at ITECusa.org)

### Prepare your heart for the possibility that your child will be called to missionary service, including overseas.

Our son who, along with his young family, served in Peru as a doctor, told us how grateful he was that we supported his calling. He shared that many of the other young missionaries' parents, while having raised them to support missions, drew the line when it meant that they wouldn't get to see their grandchildren very often or if their adult child was going to a dangerous location. It is hypocritical to "support" missions then to say, "but not my child." Ask God to help you fully release each of your children to His service, wherever that may be.

### Pray, which is the most important thing you can do for active missionaries and to grow mission-minded children.

Missions is our life-long calling as Christians, as we obey Jesus' command to "Go into all the world." Soon you, too, will find your heart is in many places besides your own body.



©2022 by Marcia Washburn who homeschooled five sons for nineteen years, continues to serve in missions at home and abroad. Two highlights for her were presenting homeschool

seminars in the Ecuadorian jungle and in St. Petersburg, Russia. See MarciaWashburn.com for her resources on home education, parenting, music education, and caregiving.



### Recommended Reading

Raising Kids with a Heart for Mission, by Daniel Akin (10 Publishing, 2020)

Window on the World: An Operation World Prayer Resource, by Molly Wall (Intervarsity Press, 2018)

Taking the World for Jesus: The Remarkable Story of the Greatest Commission, by Kevin Swanson (Generations, 2017): history of missions, beginning with the Early Church, Full-color illustrations.

God's Smuggler, by Brother Andrew

The Hiding Place (and others), by Corrie Ten Boom

# FATHERS

BY DR. DANNY HUERTA

father's gifts **,** of quality time, life-giving words, and positive actions have a long-lasting impact on his children. John 7:38 says, "Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

Have you ever wondered, "Do fathers matter? What differences do I make in my home as a dad?" Let's begin with the simple answer — the importance of a father is tremendous and you can bring life into your home! You make countless differences in your home and family. However, how much impact you decide to make as a dad is entirely up to you!

When was the last time you genuinely or playfully smiled at your children? Genuine smiles can bring life to moments and to people.

When was the last time you gave your kids affirmation, gentle correction, and reassurance? These are also life-giving actions you can bring to your family.

If you have not recently done these, do them now and see what happens. What did you notice? Did your child light up or smile back? Did your child respond and shift behaviors?

> I vividly remember one day when my seven-year-old son and I were driving in the car together. He told me he no longer wanted to become like Michael Jordan — instead, my son said he wanted to become like me!

What an honor and a helpful reminder that he is watching and learning from me along the way. I get to point my son to Jesus and to show that in my weakness, I am strengthened through my personal and ongoing relationship with Christ.

As a father, how I live my life has a long-lasting impact on my children's lives. A father has a significant influence within a family's interactions and experiences. Consider Deuteronomy 6 and Deuteronomy 11. They both show the potential life-giving momentum from a parent who is focused on Christ and subsequently leading their children through the everyday challenges and adventures.

If you love sports, science, stories, music, or martial arts, you know about the word momentum. The universe, countries, culture, communities, families, and people are all influenced by momentum.

As a dad, you bring essential momentum to your home. You bring a specific type of feel, action, and movement to your home in all areas of life. The importance of a father can be seen physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and relationally in a family.

In more than two decades of providing counseling to families, I have had a close view into how a father's actions impact their children's lives. Although the life-giving power from a dad to his family is incredible and rarely discussed, God intentionally designed a father's impact. Here are a few ways that God designed dads to have a unique influence on their families:

- A father's strength can be powerful and can provide a sense of safety.
- A dad's words can be fueling and inspirational and can provide a sense of confidence.
- Hugs from a dad can be deeply comforting and can provide a sense of connectedness.
- A dad's smiles can instill joy and confidence and can provide a feeling of peace.
- Time with a dad can be fun and productive and can provide a sense of worth.
- A dad's physicality can be challenging and can provide a sense of strength.
- A dad's guidance can be life-changing and foundational and can provide a sense of direc-

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tion. Proverbs 15:31 says, *The ear that listens* to life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.

- A father's correction can be life-saving and life-giving and can provide a sense of security.
- Adventures with a dad can be exciting and memorable and can provide a sense of courage.

The key word in the previous list is "can." A dad can bring many amazing things to his family, especially

when he is in close relationship with Christ. However, it initially requires realizing that you are essential personnel in your home as a dad and you have a unique invitation to be influential and transformed through the incredible role of "dad."

You bring essential teaching, guidance, motivation, correction, love, and feedback. You can give these anywhere and with no limit in creative day-to-day ways. Your impact is foundational, long-lasting, and can be life-giving to your family. Remember that time flies by and that you get to unwrap each day God has given you with your family. Seize the day!

[Excerpted and updated with permission from an article first published at FocusOnTheFamily.com. © 2021 by Focus on the Family. All rights reserved.]



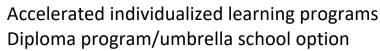
Dr. Danny Huerta, PSYD, MSW, LCSW, LSSW, is Vice President of Parenting and Youth for Focus on the Family, overseeing the ministry's initiatives that equip

moms and dads with biblical principles and counsel for raising resilient children rooted in a thriving faith. He is a psychologist, a licensed clinical social worker, and the author of 7 Traits of Effective Parenting.

### **Teri Spray**

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### bsolutely worth it!" "Definitely attend!" "Amazing!"

These are just a few comments from some of the dads who attended the 2022 Father Son Retreat at Sky Ranch Horn Creek, Westcliffe, Colorado in September. This event is a 4-day, 3-night experience like no other! Men travel from all over the country to spend quality time with their sons and grandsons while connecting with other like-minded men.

If you have not attended before, imagine driving into the beautiful Sangre de Cristo mountain range of Colorado (Spanish for "Blood of Christ"), then being greeted by the Father Son Retreat staff informing you that all the adventure recreation is open and available to you and your son. You drop your bags off at your cabin, head directly to the zipline, then over to the recreation center where you have the choice of bowling, rock climbing, basketball, or racquetball. Next, you grab a quick treat at the snack bar before enjoying an amazing dinner.

After dinner and a time of fellowship with other fathers and sons, you head to the Arena for the evening program, which includes a time of music and a challenging teaching from a guest



speaker. Immediately after the program, the schedule is open to take time to debrief and talk about the message with your son or join in the programmed activities, such as s'mores, big-ball volleyball, or dodge ball! Then you're off to more fellowship and games before heading to bed.

Breakfast is at 8am, but many attend the optional 7am morning devotions to start the day in fellowship and God's Word. After breakfast, everyone heads to the Arena for a fun and engaging time with Mike Snavely, exploring the world of spiders and ancient civilizations. The afternoons are full of recreation like archery, indoor rock climbing, zipline, alpine swing, waterslides, hatchet throwing, .22 shooting, water polo, and so much more!



A special tradition at the Colorado Father Son Retreat is the Father Son Walk. The dads are pro-

shared experience at camp and bring it home.

home." Eddie and his father were able to take their



vided with a list of questions to talk over with their sons. For many dads, this is one

of the most memorable

experiences of the retreat. Proverbs 23:26 (ESV) says, "My son, give me your heart, and let your eyes observe my ways." Sons have a unique opportunity to observe their dads and other men while they play, worship, compete,

win, and lose at camp. With the busyness of life, men typically don't spend enough time with their sons for them to truly "observe their ways." After attending the retreat this year, a father named Ryan shared, "The services are great, but the intentionality with my boys is the most memorable time."

For the last two years the Father Son Retreat sold out. For 2023 we have decided to offer TWO RETREATS so more fathers and sons can attend. The dates are August 17-20th, and August 24-27th. Registration will be open soon! Go to **www.ColoradoFatherSon. com** and add your name to the 2023 early notification list to be one of the first to hear when registration

opens. 2023 will not be a year you want to miss! We hope to see you in 2023!



Ted Jones, Marketing Director, joined the CHEC team in 2021 and works remotely. He and his wife Erin have been married since the year 2000. They have 7 kids, whom

they have homeschooled from the beginning and graduated their oldest in 2021. They are passionate about home education and seeing the family strengthened. In his free time, Ted enjoys yardwork, camping, and family game nights. Ted and his family live in California's Central Valley, where they are very active in their local church.





### **About HCF**

Established in 2019, the
Homeschool Community
Foundation was created to fund
innovative projects that increase
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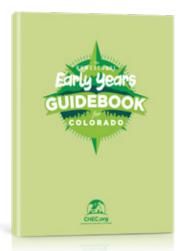
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Charitable gifts to the unrestricted fund allows the HCF to respond to changing needs and opportunities in the homeschool community.

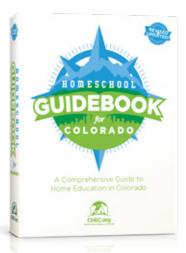
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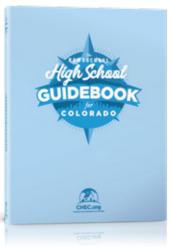
# RESOURCES TO EQUIP YOU FOR THE homeschool journey



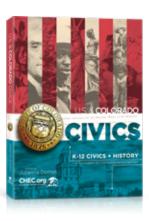
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# Confused ABOUT COLORADO HOMESCHOOL LAW?

Let's clear it up! If you are enrolled in an Independent (Umbrella) School, you do not need to fill out a Notice of Intent (NOI).

### 3 Different Ways to Homeschool in Colorado

### Home-Based Education Program

- File a Notice of Intent (NOI) with any Colorado School District and follow the homebased education law.
- Enroll in an Independent School
- Obtain a Colorado Teacher's License

### Independent (Umbrella) School

- Enroll in an Independent School and follow their rules.
- File a Notice of Intent (NOI) with any Colorado School District
- Colorado Teachers
  License

### Certified Colorado Teacher

- Obtain/maintain
  a Colorado
  Teachers License
  and that's it!
- File a Notice
  of Intent (NOI)
  with a Colorado
  School District
- Enroll in an Independent School







For more details go to CHEC.org/law



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- Our staff of homeschool parents and graduates receive phone calls 5 days a week, so answers to your homeschooling questions are only a phone call away.



### **PRIVACY**

- Your records are kept private and confidential with the CHEC Independent School staff!
- You are not required to file any records or a Notice of Intent (NOI) with a school district.
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s pareine, our primary ens parents, one of deavors is to equip our children with the character and skills that will enable them to become independent adults. Whether our children grow up to become employees, entrepreneurs, or missionaries, they must have the practical tools that make them "hireable."

When preparing our children for that future day, of course we think about education, test scores, and competency. This is evident because parents are spending more time and money than ever before focusing on building their children's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) skills. However, less time is being devoted to learning good manners and basic social skills. So, what's wrong with that? A study by Harvard University in 2018 showed that companies were willing to hire and pay more to candidates who had good social skills over someone who was technically superior. Yes — more willing to hire and pay more for someone with good social skills over technical skills.

Now before you panic because you think your child is shy or awkward, consider this — good social skills can be learned. Your child doesn't have to be Mr./Ms. Popular, a good storyteller, or quick with wit. Good social skills in the workplace simply means someone who is easy to work with. That's it! Someone who is aware of making those around him or her feel valued and comfortable in their presence. This person comes across as professional. This means knowing:

 How to greet others when first seeing them for the day. You can help teach this by establish-

- ing a routine of having your children greet family members when they see them for the first time each day. This will ensure they know how to do this later on when on the job.
- The importance of good hygiene (clean body, breath, wearing deodorant). Even your sixyear-old can understand that it's much nicer to be around others when they're not stinky.
- Knowing how long to talk before letting others get a word in — typically about two minutes. You can practice this at dinner with a timer. Ask a question of your children and have them talk until their two minutes are up. This helps them get a feel for how long two minutes actually is.
- To clean up after ourselves and put things back. When working, we might be sharing a workspace, an office, kitchen, or tools. Rotating household chores when kids are young will go a long way in making your child a coveted coworker.
- Basic dining etiquette. Chances are you'll be eating lunch around others. At a minimum, we must chew with our mouths closed! Try to plan

sit-down meals together regularly so that you can monitor and model good table manners for your children.

- Proper telephone, social media, and email etiquette. Don't allow slang, swearing, or offcolor jokes. This has come back to haunt many employees. This message should be drilled into our children and monitored very early on. Also, children can practice their telephone skills by calling to schedule or change plans with friends, grandparents, the dentist, etc. (rather than texting).
- Show gratitude. Using 'please' and 'thank you' goes a long way to let others know that we appreciate them. However, try to avoid withholding treats or privileges until your child says the 'magic words' as this teaches children to use 'please' and 'thank you' to get what they want as opposed to showing gratitude. Rather, remind them how good it makes others feel when we use the 'magic words.'

If we parents devote as little as 10 minutes a day to teaching our children these basic skills, they will come naturally to them when your child hits the pavement looking for that first real job. Waiting until the week before an interview or a job begins is going



to put extra stress on that young person because they will have to constantly remember what to do and what not to do.

If you have a child who is going out for that first interview, make sure that he/she knows that their potential employer is not just looking to see if he has certain knowledge, but if he is someone they would want to work with day in and day out. If your child shows up late to an interview, makes excuses,

is unprofessional in his speech or dress, comes across as overly self-interested, interrupts, or talks over others, etc., chances are this employer is not going to want to work with him, especially if there is someone else who has almost the same skills set, but does not do these things.

If your child arrives neatly dressed and on time, gives his undivided attention to the interviewer, and sends a follow up thank-you for their time, he will have impressed the interviewer no matter how advanced his technical skills. We all want our children to be successful in life, so don't forget to include some good manners and etiquette lessons in their academic day.



Staci Erikson is the co-founder of Fundamentals4Kids.com, an innovative subscription program that teaches children one new manner, character, or life skill per month. Staci is a multi-

award-winning game designer and children's author. She has written articles for parenting magazines, produces a YouTube Quiz Show on manners, and has been a guest speaker on podcasts, blogs, and the national radio show, "Supermarket Guru." Staci has two children ages 24 and 17. A retired homeschooler, she lives in California with her husband of 30 years. You can follow her on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.



### **COLORADO HOMESCHOOL**

SPELLING

SATURDAY, January 28, 2023

Save the date!

WHO All Colorado homeschooled children are invited to join CHEC's annual spelling bee! Winners are then eligible for the statewide Denver Post Spelling Bee, and qualifiers from that competition will compete in the National Scripps Spelling Bee.

HOW Be creative and have fun with your preparation. Spelling study groups can be formed from your support group, with other families, or within your own family with multiple siblings. Work hard to prepare, then bring the family for competition day. It is a positive experience for all participants and will help students prepare for the statewide bee. **Register for \$25/student today!** 

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od's way of educating children is to disciple them in the way they should go (Proverbs 22:6). He puts the responsibility of nurturing, guiding, and providing for the physical, mental, and spiritual development of children squarely on the shoulders of parents (Deuteronomy 6:6-9).

The founders of our country understood that role and further, they understood that each individual was not only uniquely made in the image of God, but they are each accountable to Him for the stewardship of the abilities and gifts that God endowed them with.

The compulsory education system in the United States of America (USA), which has evolved over the past hundred years, is firmly rooted in the Marxist ideology of the collective. Individuals do not matter; only the so-called common good does. The goal of education is no longer the acquisition of knowledge that leads to the discovery of truth, but it

is the shaping of attitudes, beliefs, and values of all people, young and old alike, ensuring they become global citizens [in the "new world order"]. Worldwide equity is a key value taught in this system. That is why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Critical Race Theory (CRT), Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Media Literacy, and Action Civics standards are being heavily pushed in American education at the expense of reading, writing, and arithmetic.

The values of our founding — equality, individualism, personal responsibility, and liberties rooted in God and His authority — are a threat to the global order the world is trying to build. The labyrinth of organizations driving our education system are striving to implement the United Nations' (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) even though the USA has never ratified the UN's Agenda 2030. The goal is to bring all nations together under one world government consisting of global citizens. The USA, as a sovereign, constitutional republic, certainly stands in the way of their agenda.

Even more so, homeschoolers who are not under the dominion of the state, stand in the way of that lofty goal. During the 2022 Colorado General Assembly, the legislature attempted — through several

proposed bills — to give money to homeschooling families. It was made clear during the committee hearings that any money provided for education would necessarily come with state controls. Exploring the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) research and initiatives, whose aim is to fulfill the goals of SDG4, it is easy to see what kinds of controls they seek. Some of those include incorporating into all education the standards listed above, collecting data on all students to ensure their compliance with the goals of the collective, and ensuring all education feeds into the state's workforce goals.

"School choice" advocates who suggest "the money should follow the student" choose to ignore not only history but the clear goals currently driving the American education system. Homeschooling in America stands squarely in opposition to those Marxist (communist) goals.

Maintaining the freedom to educate our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord against a global force will require great foresight and fortitude. It is imperative that we stand together and look to the Lord to sustain and equip us!



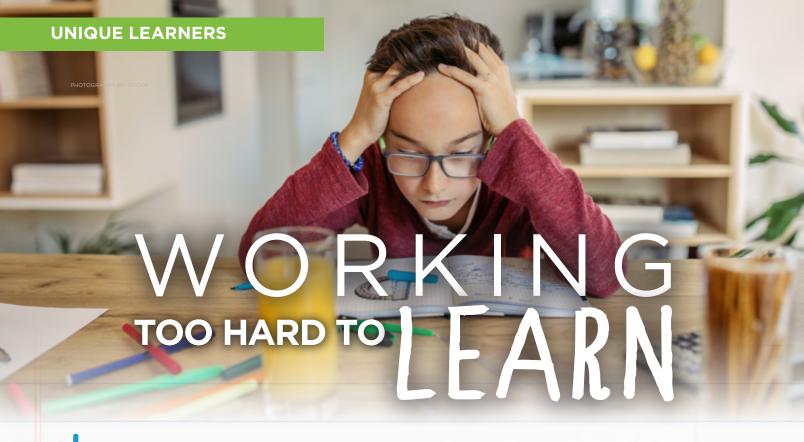
Join the Colorado Homeschool Freedom Team (CHEC.org/freedom) to stay informed and watch for action items to help keep homeschooling free from government control! Please make sure you and all persons in your household who are 18 years and older are registered to vote in Colorado, then vote your values in the upcoming midterm election, November 8, 2022. Each of your votes are crucial, because the next Colorado legislative session begins on January 9, 2023.



Carolyn Martin, CHEC's Director of Government Relations, and her husband, Todd, began homeschooling their

three children in upstate New York before moving to Colorado in 2004. Her passion is to see homeschooling remain free from government intrusion for future generations. Email her at Carolyn@CHEC.org.





T'S MONDAY MORNING and you've assigned an easy copying lesson to start the week. As you watch your boys, you see Tommy, age 10, and Joey, age 9, doing the same lesson. Joey is finishing quickly, with fairly good handwriting. But you watch with a heavy heart as Tommy struggles with something "as easy as" (... in your mind) copying.

You watch as he looks from board to paper frequently, pressing down so hard with his pencil that it breaks, continuously erasing and crossing out his mistakes.

For the 100th time, you think to yourself, "Is he just tired, lazy, and unmotivated, or is something else going on? It's like he has a "block" when he has to use a pencil for anything.

What's going on? He reads well, likes math, but writing is such a struggle for him." You don't think he has a learning disability, but something is not right.

### **Understanding the Four Learning Gates**

There are four learning gates. When these gates function well, learning is easy. When they are "blocked," learning takes much more effort than it should. The four gates through which learning occurs are Visual Processing (eye tracking, eye teaming, etc.), Visual/Motor Processing (writing; cutting, left/right orientation; all eye/ hand processes), Auditory Processing (phonics, remembering sounds, sequencing information; understanding conversation), and Attention/Focus (remaining focused on a task, retaining previously learned information).

### Characteristics of a Blocked **Learning Gate**

#### Visual Processing

- Reading reversals after age 7 (on = no, was = saw, of = to)
- Skips small words frequently
- Behind level in reading
- · Oral reading has no fluency
- Yawning shortly after reading begins

#### Visual/Motor Processing

- · Frequent or occasional reversals in writing letters and numbers
- Poor spacing in writing
- Difficulty lining up numbers in math
- · Hates to write
- · Tells great stories but writes very little
- Does all math mentally to avoid writing down
- Copying is hard

#### **Auditory Processing**

- · Phonics sounds do not stick
- · Sight words are hard to memorize (sounds out all words)
- Easily misunderstands verbal information
- Guesses at long words frequently
- · Below level in reading

#### Attention/Focusing/Behavior Gate Blocked

- Needs to have someone sit with him or her to finish work
- Inconsistency in performance from one day to another
- Impulsive behavior
- · Easily upset and angered when things go wrong
- Sensory Processing problems (little things) bother him or her: tags on shirts, loud noises, textures, transitions, etc.)

Remember that no child has all the characteristics. However, any time a reversal is checked, it is a large red flag, alerting us that the child has not yet internalized directionality. This affects learning in so many subtle ways.

#### **Levels of Processing Problems**

There are three levels of processing blocks that children can have: glitch, dysfunction, and severely blocked learning gate.

#### Glitch

- Child has to work harder but is not behind
- This does not need intervention, but it would help

#### **Dysfunction**

- Child has to work harder and is about a year behind
- Intervention can remove the learning block, and the child can get caught up

### Severely Blocked Learning Gate (Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Auditory Processing Dysfunction)

- Child has to work much harder and is about two years behind.
- Intervention is vital to remove the learning blocks and help the child learn.

You can use these quick checklists to see if your child may have a learning block, versus a lack of desire to learn. I have found that so much revelation can come just by using these checklists. Parents around the country have been using these for the past 10 years, to answer those nagging questions they have had. The next step, if you see some issues, is to start some type of intervention at home that will help alleviate these issues.

In my years as a special education teacher for bright, hard-working kids (1st through 8th grade) who had to work too hard to learn, I found that the most basic need for all processing skills to be intact, is for the connections between the left and right hemisphere of the brain to be strong. Many of these students have become "disconnected" in their processing. These disconnections can be "re-connected" by using carefully designed physical exercises. God has designed it so that we can

use the "body to heal the brain." It is a marvelous process to watch!

In my teacher education to obtain a Masters Degree in Special Education, I never encountered the idea that the body and brain were connected in the process of learning, and remediation of learning glitches or disabilities. When I did learn of this vital connection, my entire approach to working with kids with struggles in processing changed. I began midline brain exercises immediately at the start of my lessons and saw changes very quickly. For many of my students, word reversals when reading began to dissipate within two weeks. Words did not seem to move when they were reading. These midline exercises were quickly helping their eyes team together automatically. Their reading fluency improved so much that the other teachers asked what I was doing. As I explained the power of these simple midline exercises, they also began to employ them in their class lessons. The students who needed the boost in connections, did very well.

Can you do this at home? Yes! Hundreds of parents are doing these simple exercises to remove blocked learning gates. You can do this yourself, in about twenty minutes a day, or outsource to places that do this for you. Either path will be beneficial for your child.

### **Correcting Blocked Learning Gates**

In my classroom, I used three methods to make learning easier for my students.

- 1. Midline strengthening
- 2. Memory hooks
- 3. Brain fats to strengthen connections

#### Midline Strengthening Exercises:

At the beginning of the year, I began doing six exercises that crossed the midline of the body for visual, auditory, and visual/motor processing. At home, this can be done with the whole family. It only takes 20 minutes a day and can be broken up throughout the day if needed. I incorporated this routine into my beginning reading lesson for the day. The kids liked them, and after a while, they also noticed the ease in learning.

### Memory hooks on all content I taught (phonics, sight words, spelling words, multiplication facts, etc.):

The other change I made was the method in which I taught reading. I used powerful memory hooks to embed the phoneme sounds into their long-term memory. They learned to decode longer words using this strategy that used their strong visual (photographic) memory. Phonics was no longer hard, and many more words were learned in a week. Reading scores leaped quickly. This strategy helped in math fact memorization also. I called this "healing teaching" as we used color, picture, and humor embedded right on the phoneme, spelling word, or math fact, to make them stick. This didn't require any curriculum change ... just a teaching method change.

#### Brain fats to strengthen brain connections:

Research has clearly shown that Omega 3 fatty acids, like fish oil, improve the connections in the brain, leading to improved memory and learning ability. When I talked to parents, I encouraged them to investigate this simple way to make learning easier.

Hopefully, the homeschool curriculum you are already using allows some flexibility, so you have freedom to add these helpful interventions. If so, you can stay within a manageable daily framework teaching the content while removing learning blocks. God has such good ideas for us for which we can be grateful.



Dianne Craft, MA, CNHP, has over 35 years experience teaching bright, inquisitive children who are struggling with learning because of a "glitch" in the processing of information. She has a Bachelor's

in Elementary and Special Education and a
Master's in Special Education. She created and
began teaching the "Brain Integration Therapy" in
1988, then began teaching these life-changing
concepts to parents so that they could also work
with their children through her private consulting
firm, Child Diagnostics, Inc. Dianne became a
nutritionist after realizing that there was another
important puzzle piece to these struggling learners.
She lives in Centennial, Colorado and continues to
run the Dianne Craft "Right Brain" Learning System
with her granddaughter, Cassie Moore. They can
be reached at Child.Diagnostics@gmail.com.



"A couple nights ago, I sat in a room with about a dozen single homeschooling moms. There was so much pain that I sensed in that room. Pain from a failed marriage, the death of a spouse, loss of relationships, children turned against God and Mom, children confused about their gender, the struggle of trying to keep it all together, being overwhelmed with everyday life — so much pain. But in that pain, so much strength and faith in God... Us single, homeschooling moms often feel unseen, unheard, and unappreciated. Thank you CHEC...for seeing us and hearing us and appreciating us! The Casterline Banquet is a place where you see, hear, appreciate, and offer us hope and encouragement... I always feel very pampered and loved. Thank you, CHEC, for everything you do to support single, homeschooling moms!"

-PAULA, 2021 CASTERLINE BANQUET ATTENDEE

CHEC's Casterline Single Moms Fund supports widows and single moms who desire to homeschool, yet may not have the means for practical items, such as curriculum, CHEC Independent School enrollment, and other needs. Additionally, this fund makes the Casterline Banquet possible. To give to this fund, go to CHEC.org/donate.

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# EAD LOUDS

BY CINDY PUHEK

eading stories aloud takes the traditional bedtime story to a new level and has been one of the most impactful activities during my years of homeschooling.

I continued to read novels aloud long after my children could proficiently read for themselves. Sharing an epic story together builds relationships across the different ages and allows parents to introduce advanced literature to younger children while the older siblings listen along. And while finding quality literature can be challenging, I have some ideas where to look for good recommendations.

Reading aloud takes the individual activity of reading a book and turns it into a group experience. Everyone listening can discuss the book and discussion will often happen without any encouragement. The one presenting the book

can stop at any time to explain historical aspects or complicated vocabulary, making reading sessions academically rich. We all want our children to become avid readers and reading aloud painlessly introduces children to the wonderful worlds and characters contained within the covers of a book. This can whet their appetites for more stories. However, to avoid frustration among the listeners anxious to discover what happens next, it is important to find a consistent time to read. I typically read aloud during breakfast and my husband reads before bed. If you keep a record of the books you read, you will be astounded by how much literature you can consume in a year.

I have four suggestions concerning where to find good literature recommendations. Gladys Hunt's book, Honey for a Child's Heart, is full of short synopses of books for children ages 0-12 years old. Gladys

highlights books that emphasize truth and goodness. Homeschool curriculum catalogs can also be good places to find book recommendations. I have discovered many delightful pieces of literature by researching the books used by different curriculums as part of their course work. Next, look for literature from a few generations ago. Companies like Lamplighter Ministries search for books from the 1800's

and 1900's that were written to teach and edify the reader to republish in beautiful, hardback editions or record on audio books. Lastly, Exodus Books is an online homeschooling and Christian bookstore that has lists of book recommendations by age. Parents can purchase their book recommendations directly from the website: https://www.exodusbooks.com/summer-reading-booklists.aspx.

An actor once brought an iconic character from literature to life on the screen. When asked where he found the voice for this character, the actor replied he was merely giving a poor imitation of the voice his father used when he read this classic novel to the actor during his childhood. I am glad my children will hear my voice in their heads when they revisit some of the books we have read together. All my children agree, reading together has been one of the richest and most rewarding aspects of our homeschooling. Some of my kids have even expanded this practice into a lifelong skill by reading aloud to each other.



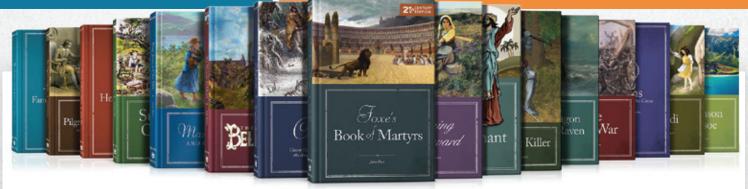


Cindy Puhek resides in Colorado Springs and has been married to Peter for over two decades. They are well into their second decade of homeschooling their six children who range in age from

toddler to high school graduate. Cindy holds a Master's degree in chemistry. You can visit her blog at HomeschoolEnrichment.com/blogs.



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But there are still Christian families and churches living in the English-speaking world and they still want to read good Christian books. For the Generations team, we see this as the time to re-Christianize our literature, our school curriculum, and our media for our children.

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The CHEC Homeschool Update is published triannually by Christian Home Educators of Colorado, 19039 Plaza Drive, Suite 210, Parker, CO 80134.

The purpose of the Homeschool Update is to provide information, resources, and leadership for home educating families while effectively communicating the activities, opportunities, and needs of Christian Home Educators of Colorado.

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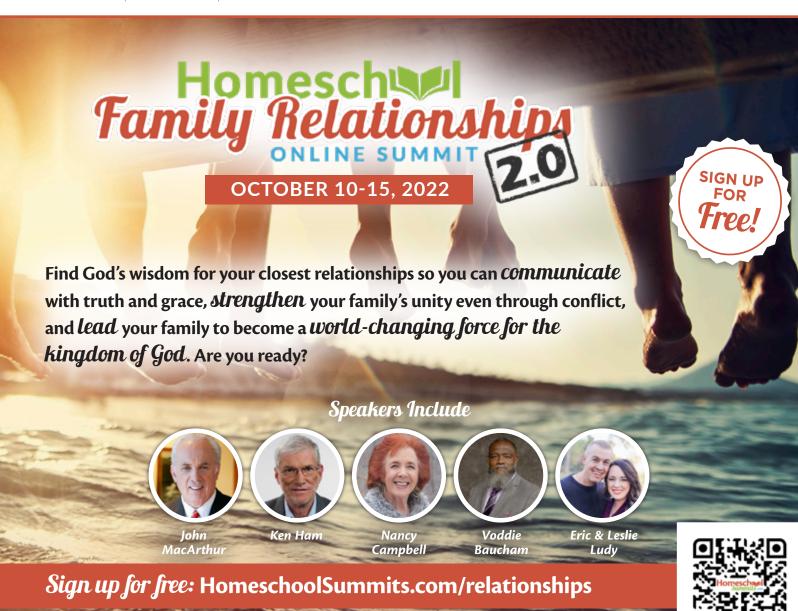
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