

Spring 2013

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—Kirk Cameron



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Chairman's Corner

In the

By Bruce Eagleson

early days of homeschooling there was only one real distinction to be made. Did you homeschool for educational values or for spiritual values?

You may have noticed in the previous CHAP Magazine I said that CHAP (The Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania) advocates for Christ-centered, parent-directed, private, home-based discipleship. In the early years of the movement I would have simply said we advocate for Christian homeschooling. Now it seems we need a lot more modifiers to make it clear what we do.

Why is this? Going back to the beginning, we were not doing anything that most people wanted to imitate. People wanted to avoid homeschoolers apparently out of fear of being tainted. Because of this there were only two groups who were claiming the title. One group homeschooled because they perceived that it was somehow better educationally. The other group was the families that initially formed CHAP. We were people who believed that our children would be more godly if we taught them ourselves.

In the beginning this led to only two categories for homeschoolers: secular homeschoolers and Christian homeschoolers. What happened to change this? The most significant thing that happened is we were successful. When Mary Ann and I started, people asked us if children who are homeschooled would get into college, get jobs, and be successful in life. Now I rarely hear such comments. It seems that everyone knows that homeschoolers are academically successful and successful in life as well. Homeschooling went from being a title that few would want to claim to one that many claim.

It seems to me that the good outcomes are not random results of just “homeschooling.” The way you homeschool affects the results dramatically. Thus we need to be more careful in describing what we do precisely, so that people will understand that the results we get are attached to what we do.

Each of the modifiers that we've added to the homeschooling term came because of a particular assault on what we were doing. First of all I like to make clear that when CHAP says “homeschooling” we mean Christ-centered, parent-directed, private, home-based discipleship. This is in response to what I mentioned earlier - the secular versus Christian approaches. We chose to have Christian in our organization's title because we think it is central to what we do.

The second modifier, parent-directed, is also essential to what we do. We have added this adjective because so many people seem to feel that others would be better able to organize a homeschool than the parents. We've never believed that, and there is no evidence for it. If the parents are truly in charge the children do well. Therefore we added parent-directed to our description of what's necessary for successful home education. Interestingly enough there is evidence that non-parent directed cyber schools don't work as well as even public schools. <http://virtualcharterschoolmyths.com>

Private. We believe the schools work better when funded by the parents. Unfortunately the schools that are publicly funded seem to cost more and more per student, and the results seem to be less and less acceptable. Thus we have added private as one of our modifiers to our creed.

The final change that has happened over the years is the change from homeschool, or education, to discipleship. It is because we want to emphasize the importance of training up the next generation of believers. As important as it is to educate our children, it is much more important that they know the living Lord Jesus.

So now you know the rest of the story. CHAP supports Christ-centered, parent-directed, private, home-based discipleship.

The CHAP Magazine

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Photo: Mihai Tamasla, <http://mihaitamasla.blogspot.com/>

CHAP Teen Track 2013

May 10 - 11
in association with Miracle Mountain Ranch

Topics:

- Life Purpose: The Fuel to Do Great Things – Donnie Rosie
- Humility: Strength through Yieldedness Due to Properly Placed Confidence – Matt Cox
- Forgiveness: God's Key to Humility – Mark Brenner
- Commitment: Focusing on a Commitment to God's Plan Despite the World's Pressures – Matt Cox
- Online-Offline Responsibility: Your future is at stake – Donnie Rosie
- Leadership: Lessons from Abe Lincoln – Tonya Rosie
- Resurrection of Jesus: Strong Evidence Gives Us a Reason for Faith – Mark Brenner
- Your Turn to Lead: Wake up call, you're building the next generation – Donnie Rosie



About MMR

For 49 years Miracle Mountain Ranch has been helping thousands of youth develop a firm foundation, rooted in Christ.

From their Discipleship School, to Summer Camps, youth is something they are passionate about. We bring this same passion to the Teen Track as we have carefully chosen topics that relate with today's young adults. The Miracle Mountain Ranch speaking team is ready to bring it as they deliver eight sessions.

Topics Include: Life Purpose, Faith, Humility, Leadership, Forgiveness, Responsibility, and Reason. We are bringing as much of the Mountain to CHAP, as we are able, some sessions will even include animals. Join us as we join the CHAP theme in developing a Firm Foundation.

– For more information about us, visit mmrm.org



Matt Cox came to Miracle Mountain Ranch as a youth in 1976 and joined the staff in 1992. Matt has served as Farmer, Program Director, Director of Equine Ministries and now as the Executive Director. Matt teaches Conflict Resolution, Public Speaking, and Marriage Dynamics classes for the School of Discipleship. Matt's wife Jenni home schools their 5 children as well as assisting with the "Marriage Dynamics" and "Preparation for Ministry" classes. Both Matt and Jenni are School of Discipleship alumni.



Mark Brenner is the Chief Financial Officer at Miracle Mountain Ranch where he has been discipling young adults for 18 years. He teaches Music Appreciation, Introduction to Christian Ethics, Responsible Relationships with the Opposite Sex, and Salvation and Soul Winning classes for the School of Discipleship. He is currently pursuing a Bachelors Degree in Religion from Liberty University. Mark and his wife, Jen, are both graduates of the School of Discipleship and have three children from 11 to 15 years old. He is passionate about helping others grow in the Lord through discipleship. His other interests include leading an annual mission trip which ministers to the Pima Indians in Mexico, and long-distance bicycling.



Donnie Rosie has been with Miracle Mountain Ranch for 12 years, first as a student and currently serving as Marketing Director, student advisor, and instructor. During this time at Miracle Mountain he has been marketing national events, producing media content, speaking, and consulting for other organizations. After being home schooled through high school, he pursued a degree in Business from Edinboro Univ. of PA. He is married to his awesome wife Tonya and they have two sons, George and Cole. As a family they enjoy the outdoors, travel, and history.



Tonya Rosie graduated from Malone University with a B.A. in Integrated Social Studies. Tonya married her husband, Donnie, in 2008 and joined him on staff at Miracle Mountain Ranch and there she teaches several classes for the discipleship school. Tonya also teaches U.S. History for the Potter's School. When not teaching, Tonya is pursuing her Masters of Education Degree in Middle and Secondary School Instruction, with a Social Studies focus. Tonya has a great love of history and enjoys sharing that love with others. Tonya and Donnie have two sons, George and Cole.

Side by Side in Pennsylvania

Side by Side Through the Storms - One Family's Journey Through Cancer

Parents

Jim & Tami Perrin

Children

Jimmy & Cody

Hometown

Hatfield, PA

We are privileged to have the Perrin family share with us in this issue - both their homeschooling journey and their struggle and victory with cancer. We hope that you find this testimony as encouraging as we do!

Tell us a little bit about your family...

My name is Tami Perrin, and I am a 36 year old wife, homeschool mom, former marketing planner, multi-pet caretaker, lover of chocolate, breast cancer survivor, and most importantly, a sinner saved by grace.

God has blessed me with an amazing husband (Jim) and two wonderful boys (Jimmy, age 9 and Cody, age 6). Jim and I have been married for 13 years, and I am proud to say that he is still my best friend, my greatest spiritual encourager, and the one whom I look forward to growing old with.

Our two boys keep us busy and laughing on a daily basis. I could not imagine life without them. They are both typical boys who love to get dirty, play rough, and almost never sit still. Although they will probably never admit it, they do have a close relationship and are somewhat dependent on each other, despite the three year age difference.

I would describe us as a down to earth family who cherishes time together in the midst of a busy schedule: school, soccer practices, guitar lessons, church activities, and family functions.

What made you decide to homeschool?

When Jimmy was born, we threw around the idea of homeschooling and went back and forth for the next few years. After

much prayer, we enrolled him in kindergarten at a wonderful, private, Christian school. When it came time for first grade enrollment, we realized that tuition was a major hurdle in our decision. Once again we took this to the Lord, and we saw Him quickly close the door to Christian school and open the door to homeschooling.

It was within a matter of weeks that the Lord transformed my heart from sadness and fear to a joy and eagerness to school my little cowboys at home. I began to see those countless benefits of homeschooling, and I was hooked! The Lone Ranger Academy opened its doors in August 2010.

We are currently in our third year of homeschooling, and I still love it. I love seeing their faces when the light bulb goes on or when we're out and one of the boys says, "Hey Mom, we learned about that." I love that we are learning together.

But like anything in life homeschooling comes with good days and bad days. Let's be real! Hasn't every homeschool mom had that fleeting vision of the big, yellow chariot whisking their kids away, leaving eight whole hours of solitude? I often hear exaggerated comments like my nine year old telling me that there is no such thing as a noun and my six year old telling me he'll never have to use math in his life. This is when I take a deep breath, have another cup of coffee, and give my Facebook friends a good chuckle. These difficult days are the times I covet the support and encouragement from my husband and other homeschool families who remind me why I homeschool. It's so easy to lose sight of God's big picture when the circumstances are less than perfect.

You've gone through the whole process of cancer. Can you share what that journey has been like?

After an 18 year history of breast lumps, I was diagnosed with Stage 2 Breast Cancer on December 1, 2011. Treatment included eight rounds of chemotherapy, a bilateral mastectomy, and six weeks of radiation. I lost 12 pounds (not a lot, but I was only 100 lbs to begin with), my energy, my appetite, my hair, and my pride. This trial has by far been the hardest thing I've ever had to endure in my life. However even on my worst days when I could not get out of bed, I knew God was right there giving me strength for

each moment. He taught me that His grace truly is sufficient for me.

How did you continue to homeschool through it all?

We have been tremendously blessed to have such a wonderful support system through our family, friends, and caring church. People cooked for us, scrubbed our floors, washed our clothes, and helped keep up with homeschooling. I was very worried about falling behind in school, but we were still able to complete the year by the third week in June and completed almost the entire planned curriculum. I was thankful that I had forced myself to be organized to the point that anyone could step in and teach.

Homeschooling through my sickness gave us great flexibility in terms of when and where we were able to do school. My boys quickly adapted to doing math while waiting at the doctor's office or reading history with dad after dinner. Jimmy and Cody were able to stay with friends and family for days at a time when I received treatments. Their school books went right along with them to Nana and Grandpa's house. Pop-pop and Mi-maw were often substitute teachers on those days that I just didn't have the strength to make it downstairs.

When I look back, I see so clearly how God used homeschooling in preparation for the hardships that were to come. He knew how difficult it would have been for us as a family to have our children in school and keep up with their homework and activities.

What has God taught you and Jim and the boys?

My cancer journey has been a wonderful example for Jimmy and Cody to see Mom and Dad trust God in all circumstances. They have seen firsthand how the body of Christ comes together to support one another. I want them to know that God is sovereign and that His timetable is not always ours. And I want them to know that God is still good no matter what circumstances He brings; He is still good!

Are there certain things that cause fear in you as a family or as individuals?

While I have been deemed "cancer free," I have had several minor health issues that keep

popping up and send my heart on an emotional roller coaster. A sore knee after running is no longer just a sore knee. Back pain from sleeping the wrong way is no longer just back pain. My immediate thoughts go straight to, "It's cancer," and Satan relishes every moment that I take my eyes off Christ.

I try to surround myself with Scripture and encouraging words that remind me of the truth. My heart is human and my emotions are all over the place. I need to keep reigning myself in with words of truth. This is a daily, sometimes minute by minute, struggle.

What advice, encouragement, and hope do you have to offer other families who may be battling sickness?

To those who are dealing with sickness and trials, do not lose heart. It's always much easier to say that to someone than to believe it, but I am living proof that God is faithful and He is enough. John 16:33 says, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

I would encourage you to keep your eyes on Christ, get involved in a solid church, surround yourself with those who will encourage you, and focus on the big picture. We will most certainly fall along the way, but God is always there to pick us up with loving arms.

And don't forget to keep humor in your life. I have made several jokes about me losing my hair. There is nothing funnier than a Korean woman wearing a curly, blonde wig. A joyful heart is good medicine!

Have you found a new normal?

I do feel like we are slowly finding our way to a new normal. Physically we are there: get up, do school, run errands, go to soccer practice, teach Sunday School, resume our social activities. But the emotional wounds from a trial of this magnitude will be there for a lifetime. I pray that in time we will learn to deal with them, and that they would continue to grow us closer as a family and closer to the Lord.

Any favorite curriculum choices?

Over the past three years we've had the opportunity to use many different curriculum choices: Sonlight, A Beka, Saxon, Modern Curriculum Press, Horizons. I've been blessed with having three sister-in-laws and numerous friends who have had years of homeschool experience to pass on.

We love Sonlight history and science. The curriculum can be a bit time intensive and pricey, but the content is just excellent. We rely a lot on the library, and I often substitute readers here and there as I feel necessary.

We've recently settled into Saxon Math after trying two other programs. The repetition and practice best suits our learning needs.

Handwriting Without Tears and Cheerful Cursive are wonderful writing curriculums that I'm using for both boys.

I'm anxious to start Jimmy on the Excellence in Writing program next fall. I purchased it this past year to get myself familiar with the content and it sounds fantastic.

Have your priorities changed at all after your diagnosis and treatment?

A dear friend has been encouraging me with a certain phrase for years, and I always thought I understood it. Boy, was I clueless! I'm five months past my cancer and it's just now starting to click. "IT'S NOT ABOUT ME. IT'S ALL ABOUT HIM!"

It's not about me staying cancer free for 50 years, my boys scoring in the 98th percentile on their standardized tests, or that we have the perfect house. It's about me submitting my all to my Lord and Savior. Only then will I have true peace and contentment. For so many months now my heart has been on a quest for true peace and contentment, and it's been there all along. I just couldn't see the forest through the trees.

Don't get me wrong, of course I desire that my children excel in their studies and score high in

their standardized tests, and I definitely want to stay cancer free for 50 years, and I would love that picture perfect house... But that all takes second place to truly knowing and yielding to our Creator.

Last thoughts...

We strive to maintain that balance between teaching academics and building godly character in our boys. I am so thankful that we've had the opportunity to homeschool. There is nothing else I'd rather be doing right now. We take it year by year and continually seek God in this decision. We pray that He would bless our endeavors both academically and spiritually.

Psalms 73:26 best sums up my 2012 and has become one of my favorite life verses: "My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; He is mine forever!" (New Living Translation)





Do Two Halves Really Make a Whole?

by Thomas Clark

The word “legacy” comes from the Latin “legare,” meaning “to bequeath.” Of course that generally brings to our minds, an inheritance, in the form of money, or property. As parents I am sure we will be bequeathing something to our children. Will it be of any more value than the material goods we have acquired? While it may be somewhat narrow in perspective, here is something else to consider.

As you educate your students, can you say they are involved in concept development, or are they learning passively? Are they figuring things out for themselves, or are they learning tricks and shortcuts? Do they see the logic in what they are learning, or are they just memorizing information for a test? Are they analyzing their mistakes to find the reasons why they answered incorrectly, or are they just accepting their fate and recording a grade?

A legacy can mean many things, but helping our children learn to think, may be one of the more long-lasting tools we can bequeath to our children. Of course we need to carefully consider the educational materials we use to teach our children, and those materials need to be developed “logically.” Unfortunately traditional mathematics instruction is often driven by programs which

are developed “topically,” instead of logically. The following article, regarding the traditional scope and sequence of Algebra, was written with that in mind. I trust it will give you food for thought as you strive to leave an educational legacy to your child.

Do Two Halves Really Make a Whole?

Such a simple question! But is the answer that obvious? Not when it comes to high school Algebra! And I’m not talking about some new way to add algebraic fractions. I’m referring to the age-old practice of teaching two years of Algebra in high school which, presumably, make up a complete course in Algebra. They may have been called Algebra 1 and 2, or they may have been called Beginning Algebra and Advanced Algebra. In either case the implication was that each comprised one-half of a complete Algebra course. However if you look at the table of contents in any “2nd year Algebra” book, you will find that at least 50% of the book is a repeat of “1st year Algebra.”

So really there are “no such things” as Algebra 1 and Algebra 2. These are courses (or names for courses) which came about as a result of school scheduling. Many years ago, when it was the norm to require only 2 high school math credits to graduate from high school, a study of Algebra was a natural beginning credit. Of course since it was generally taught “mechanically,” utilizing many formulas and rules, a lot of practice and repetition was involved and, in fact, the study was not even completed in one year. So for another math credit, Geometry was taught for a year. It was considered “another

discipline,” involving a significant amount of logical reasoning and proof, and it gave students “another math experience.” That took care of the required credits.

Then the next year students interested in going further in their study of mathematics were offered the opportunity to continue, and finish, their study of Algebra. Of course because of the “procedural” way it was taught initially, students simply didn’t remember much of that first year. So they started over, re-studying many of the same things. This time however, it was called “Advanced Algebra.” Something of a contradiction, don’t you think? In fact, the word “advanced” is a relative term anyway. Chapter 2 of an Algebra book is “advanced,” compared to Chapter 1, isn’t it?

This has been perpetuated through the years, primarily because of that traditional implementation. When you try to memorize rules, formulas, tricks, and shortcuts, without really knowing “why” they work, it will take a lot of drill and review, just to remember the material for a test. Yet even today, that approach is often considered to be the “normal way” to teach Algebra.

Therefore I would suggest to you that one of the most fragmenting things we have done in mathematics education is to “forcibly insert” a Geometry course into the middle of an Algebra course. Algebra is a single course, a “complete” course, divided only by concept areas. It is the study of RELATIONS (equations and inequalities), and it develops by DEGREES (as defined by the exponents.)

It begins, very logically, with a study of FIRST-DEGREE relations (all of the exponents are “1”), and continues to develop by exploring other types of exponents. Included are HIGHER-ORDER relations (with integer exponents), RATIONAL-DEGREE relations (with fractions as exponents), and LITERAL-DEGREE relations (when the exponents are variables, or “letters”). As such, Algebra is the basic language of ALL upper level mathematics courses, including Geometry.

Not only is Geometry NOT a prerequisite for Advanced Algebra (whatever that is supposed to be), but you really need a good understanding of Algebra, as a complete course, before you can fully understand a complete Geometry course. That means there is a “disadvantage,” from an instructional point of view and from the viewpoint of subject integrity, when you study Geometry in the middle of an Algebra course. The analogy may be somewhat over-simplified,

Photo: Paul Bodica



Thomas Clark is a life-long teacher of mathematics and science with 47 years experience in education, at all levels, from elementary through adult. He is convinced that everyone has the ability to understand mathematics. In the last 18 years he has focused on the development of multimedia programs that challenge traditional methods of instruction and which help with both individualized and group learning. He is president of VideoText Interactive, a company that specializes in bringing the textbook to life through technology, and author of Algebra: A Complete Course and Geometry: A Complete Course. Thomas Clark will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.videotext.com

Convention Fast Facts

» Registration is open! Don't delay in signing up. Early bird registration is \$30 for the first person or \$55 per family. Early Bird Registration ends at 11:59 PM on March 31, 2013.

» Shopping only pass! For the first time, CHAP is offering a shopping only pass: Saturday from 2-5 PM for \$20 per person.

» Convention will be open each day from 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM

but it is a little like someone beginning to learn English and before they reach a reasonable level of mastery in the structure and syntax of the language, we introduce them to a study of Classic Literature. They are just not ready for that yet.

Of course all of this would be irrelevant if Algebra were taught analytically without dependence on rules and shortcuts. If students were taught the “why” of algebraic principles, then less repetition and practice would be necessary, and Algebra could be studied in one school year. Then the two “halves” would truly make a “whole.”

CONVENTION Etiquette

by Mary Shenk

This is a tricky article to write as I’m sure all of us have been guilty in some way or another. My hope is that you will be able to take it with grace and understand the Golden Rule.

Etiquette Rule 1

Please, please don't scan products with your phone, find the cheapest price, and ask our vendors to beat it. And when they can't, please don't stand there in front of them and order it from the cheaper place.

For five years I served as the vendor coordinator for the CHAP Convention. This meant that I worked with each vendor that set up a booth in our hall - from first contact to tear down to follow up. Might I just say that we have some amazing people who come and share their time with us every year. The large majority of them are on the road for months at a time in an effort to serve homeschoolers all over. They sleep in different beds, eat on the road, home-school on the road, and work extraordinarily long hours to minister to us. They are heroes to me.

The cost of coming to a convention for a vendor is not cheap. Hotels, gas, food, convention costs, loss of product due to damage, and yes, even theft, all weigh in on them and account for their pricing structure. Furthermore our vendors aren’t just book shops - they are people with experience with the products they are selling. How many of us have gotten good, solid information from these vendors who have either developed the materials or have used them extensively with their own family?

If your money is so tight that every penny counts and you must buy from the cheapest source (which I know is true for some of you), please do it at a different time and place. For the rest of us, spend the extra dollar or two and consider it money well spent.

Etiquette Rule 2

Please leave a speaker session if your baby or children are crying or unable to stay quiet.

Speakers work very hard to prepare for their speaking slots. They

too spend months on the road to serve the group of people to which God has called them to minister. Crying babies and loud children (even talking parents) are a distraction, not only to them, but also to the others attending the session. If you have babies or children with you, sit towards the back so that you can make a hasty exit if needed.

Etiquette Rule 3

Please do display common courtesy to all you come into contact with, even if the computers break down in the registration area.

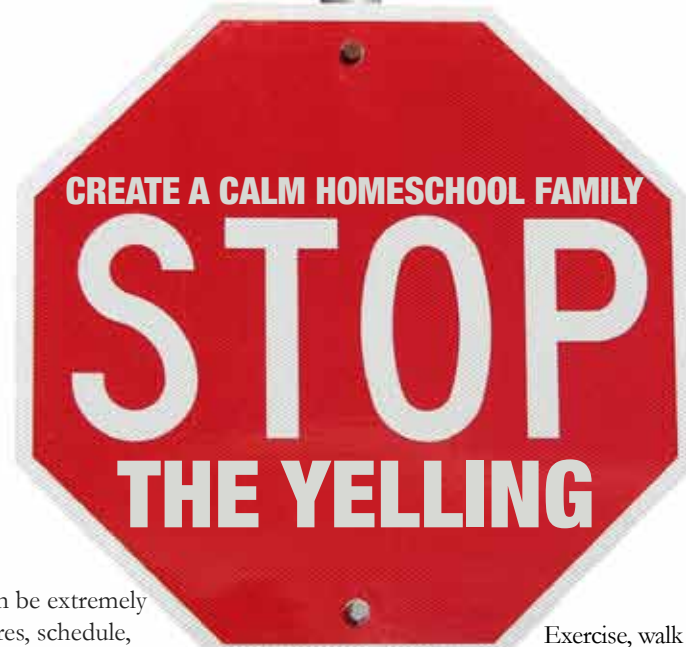
We live in a time when entitlement has touched each of us in some way. Some of us feel entitled, while others of us have been on the receiving end of that entitlement. The truth is that none of us are entitled to anything. God in His grace and mercy has given us the gift of salvation through His Son Jesus. We can’t do anything to deserve it or prove that we are the ones that should receive it. “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

Do your best to enjoy the days of the convention. Reach out and help another homeschooler, be positive and kind, think of what is best for the other person, and above all let’s honor the King.



Mary is married to her best friend Duane. They have homeschooled both of their sons (Jeremy and Derek) since the beginning in the style of Charlotte Mason. Jeremy is now married to his sweet wife

Amanda, and granddaughter Skylar was born this past June. Derek is a sophomore this year. Spending time with family and friends, working with kids, being outdoors, traveling, and riding motorcycles are some of their favorite pastimes. Mary enjoys helping and mentoring moms on their homeschool journey.



by Kirk Martin

Homeschooling children can be extremely frustrating. Power struggles over chores, schedule, and school work can leave parents frazzled. Consider the following common question parents ask.

“Kirk, I walked into my son’s bedroom last night while he was saying his prayers. ‘Could you help my Mom and Dad not be so angry and yell all the time?’ It broke my heart. My husband comes home from work and yells, but I’m no better. I’m constantly on the kids like my mom did to us. I’m afraid of what it’s doing to our kids. I know I need to change myself first, but how do I become calm when the kids are so intense?”

You are not alone. Most of us inherited patterns of behavior that, left unchecked, will cause destruction over time. I repeated the patterns learned from my father and came very close to destroying my relationships with the people I loved most. In working with thousands of sensitive kids, what we heard most was, “I wish my parents didn’t yell so much.” More than anything teens crave no drama at home.

Realize that we cannot control our kids, nor should we want to. Our primary job as parents is to control ourselves, model proper behavior, and teach our kids how to control their own behavior. How many of us throw adult tantrums when something goes wrong, then expect our children to remain calm?

GIVE YOUR INTENSE, EMOTIONAL INVOLVEMENT TO CONNECT.

No matter what your child or spouse does, we must connect. Screaming or withdrawing emotionally only makes the situation worse. When we are calm we can be fully engaged and put our intensity into solving problems, instead of creating more of them. When do we give kids our undivided, intense emotional involvement? Usually when we’re upset at them. Let’s reverse this so they seek our praise.

ASSUME A CALM POSTURE

Each time you approach your child or spouse, ask yourself, “Do I want to have a conversation or a confrontation?” Instead of standing and barking orders, sit down. Kids are drawn to adults who sit. Sitting says, “I am in control. I cannot be manipulated. I’m not going to yell, lecture, or overreact. I want to connect with you.”

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Exercise, walk your dog, pray, listen to music—do whatever helps you feel at peace. The quickest way to get respect is to demonstrate self-respect. If you do not take care of yourself emotionally, physically, and spiritually, no one else will care about you – you will become exhausted and needy – it will be easy for kids to push your buttons.

BE THE CALM IN THE STORM

The most effective way to calm an emotional child is for us to be calm. Instead of threatening an upset child (which makes them more upset!), we need to draw the child into our calm place. Sit down and color or build with Legos. Play catch or do push-ups with your child. Invite him into your calm. This will freak him out at first because he is used to seeing you get upset. What you are communicating though is: (1) Your actions cannot control or manipulate me, and (2) No matter how out of control you may feel, I am a rock you can count on. I am a safe place.

CHANGE PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOR


What are your triggers? Write them down. Then develop a specific action to counter each trigger. I cannot control what other people do, but I can always control my own behavior. When I am running late, I will slow down and allow a stranger to cut in front of me. When kids are getting upset, I will become more calm and draw them to me. When my kids are demanding or disrespectful, I will firmly reply, “I respect myself too much to listen to you speak that way, but if you want to come talk to me like an adult, I’d love to listen while we walk/cook dinner/fold laundry/have a snack.” Instead of lecturing and yelling, I will sit, speak softly, and ask questions.

Practice these new traditions, and you’ll see your entire family calming down. Casey and I look forward to meeting you personally at the 2013 CHAP Convention!

Kirk Martin is Founder of CelebrateCalm.com.

Along with his teenage son, Casey, Martin has shown 300,000 parents how to eliminate defiance, power struggles, and sibling fights. His strategies are biblical, practical, and work in everyday situations for toddlers and teens. He can be reached at kirk@celebratecalm.com Kirk Martin will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.celebratecalm.com





Fishin' For Wisdom™

2013 CHAP CONVENTION CHILDREN'S PROGRAM

This year's children's track at the CHAP Convention features
“Heart Binders Innovations” (HBI)
a one-of-a-kind illustration company that designs Bible Memory Systems and
Bible Comprehension Systems for children. No longer is Bible memorization a chore!
With HBI, children have fun memorizing God's Word.

- Story-book style system
- Full-color illustrated flashcards
- Contemporary e-books

Friday's Session: "Fishin' for Wisdom." Children will memorize scriptures from the book of Proverbs in regard to wise and foolish behavior. Proverbs 3:14 says: “Wisdom is more profitable than silver and her wages are better than gold”.



The Foolish Man



Hates Knowledge

Saturday's Session:
On Saturday Children will memorize Psalm 91 and take comfort knowing that God desires to empower them to thwart all the hidden traps of the fowler and walk victorious with God for life!



The young lion and the serpent
you shall trample underfoot.
Psalm 91:13



PSALM 91:
GOD IS MY PROTECTION IN
TIME OF TROUBLE



Vicki Palaganas HBI Founder & 2013 CHAP Children's Program Coordinator

**Heart Binders Innovations
Children's Program
(8 sessions over the 2 days)**

"You can visit Heart Binders Innovations' booth in the Vendor Hall and note that HBI's learning system has no prep work for parents or teachers. It is a fool-proof method to make Bible memorization fun for the whole family. Student comprehension can be measured through tests incorporated into the curriculum."

DON'T FORGET Biblical Instruction

by Vicki Palaganas

In my 15 years of service and dedication to children's ministry in New Jersey and now as founder and CEO of Heart Binders Innovations, a children's biblical illustration company, I have been witness to the second-hand treatment adults give to the spiritual development of children. Many Christian parents, including homeschool parents, have admitted they just do not give the time they should to Bible education and worship at home. Many parents buy into the notion the child's spiritual nurturing comes solely from the church or children's programs like AWANA. This is true to some extent but outside children's programs are no substitute for biblical instruction inside the home.

Research has showed us that parents take first place in their ability to influence their children to do what God expects; whereas the church and other Christian education groups take a distant third. Hence we have a dichotomy, or contradiction, in thought and action when it comes to the most significant aspect of every person's life, his or her spiritual health. The dichotomy here is as follows: as parents we know we are the biggest influencers in our children's lives, but we must be honest and ask ourselves to what degree do we abdicate our responsibility by putting an outside group in charge to spiritually train our kids?

Perhaps we feel other things take higher priority, like academics or household chores? Let me challenge you: spiritual growth in children is not just an added bonus to the overall development of the child, but it is the single most-important centerpiece in their lives. It is more important than their physical, emotional, and intellectual development. To make this matter more urgent, it is said that we only have

an eight year window to shape their spiritual destiny. Apparently it is between 5 to 12 years old that lifelong values, beliefs, and habits are formed. Therefore the most lasting legacy you can leave on this earth is to shepherd your child's spiritual health.

If we agree that biblical training in the home is paramount, and some may even say it is the main priority at home, then let us take this a step further and ask ourselves how are we doing in this area? When I surveyed homeschool families, (besides the parents who told me they do not have time for Bible study or those who told me AWANA takes care of their children's need for biblical instruction), one mom disclosed she averages \$50 per year for her children's Christian education. If the popular adage that one's checkbook identifies one's priorities is correct, then could it be that some of us who teach Bible at home may consider it a secondary concern and not even realize it? Can more be done?

Let's first address the money issue. Is the problem here that we cannot afford spiritual training? To answer this let's consider our nation. In the United States it is estimated that we spend roughly 68 times more money per capita on caring for the average felon than on a spiritually hungry child. The money is not the issue. The issue is we fail to understand the importance of developing strong, spiritual foundations early and reinforcing as the child ages. (Barna, 42).

I have to agree with George Barna in his book *Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions* where he indicates that few adults have a view of what it takes to help children grow into active, complete, and passionate followers of Christ. The problem is that as parents we really do not know what our kids need.

If that is how you feel, let me recommend a few things that I have learned that can deepen your spiritual training in the home:

1. Think about a strategic and purposeful plan to influence your child's spiritual development every day. It is said that when you focus on purposefully impacting someone's thoughts or behaviors, the chances of having a greater effect are increased substantially.
2. Find ways to quote specific measures of your child's spiritual growth. Assessment is crucial and you do not want to be confused on where your child lies in his or her spiritual progress. This can be done by tests, observing behavior, demonstration of memorized beliefs, self-report evaluation tools, journaling, and even surveys.
3. Reallocate your resources that God has entrusted you and put more into biblical training. This cannot be emphasized enough. Partner with your church for ideas and/or patronize companies that produce high-quality curriculum for home Bible study. Try not to fall into the rut of one style of teaching since children will develop the attitude at an early age that they have God all figured out and do not need to learn and grow in the faith.
4. Be fun and creative as you help your child develop a biblical world view. Kids need diversity and are often visual learners. Look for picture Bibles and illustrated biblical curriculum because these visual aids are a powerful tool to enable children to interpret scripture and, as a result, learn to please God in their ways.

Let me pass along a great suggestion that I learned from George Barna's book and is something I have incorporated in my own home. This is a special project that will help you assess your child's spiritual progress. With your child's help type out the below list of what God expects of them. Then cut out the phrases, back it on different colored construction paper, and then paste it on a poster to be hung in a prominent place at home. Be sure to entitle the poster, "A Robust Guide To Personal Holiness." Here is the list: Worship only GOD. Speak without profanity. Honor the sabbath. Honor your parents. Avoid murdering people. Exhibit sexual purity. Honor people's possessions. Be truthful and honest. Be humble. Promote justice. Forgive people. Be a peacemaker. Be committed to Jesus. Avoid gossip. Celebrate and enjoy life. Love other people. Show kindness to all. Be generous with resources. Pray constantly. Be self-controlled. Be gentle. Refuse to be judgmental. Trust God, and don't worry. Remain obedient to God.

Parents, be sure to write a resolution and attach it to the poster or near the poster to hold yourself accountable. The resolution should go as follows: as parents, these are the outcomes that we seek to facilitate in our children's lives so that they become mature disciples of the Lord. Our assessments should reflect the presence or absence of these attributes. We measure this in degrees based off the child's reactions to statements about parents and family, the language used by the child, facial expressions and body language, the type of presents given to parents on special occasions if any, efforts to respect parents through remaining self-controlled without complaining, etc. We are not content to abdicate the spiritual development of our children to other influences, but as parents will evaluate where our children stand and help them advance in their development. Why are we willing to do this? The reason is because we would not want other people to spiritually abandon us in this way.

I hope you find this exercise beneficial and one of many ways to monitor your child's spiritual growth. My prayer is that we are more diligent in our efforts to raise children who love the Lord. Because the

alternative, as Barna points out, is a lackadaisical approach where by default we produce children who make our future society less healthy and productive.



Vicki Palaganas has taught Bible to children since 1998 after leaving a full time job teaching biology in the New Jersey Public School System. She founded Heart Binders Innovations to address issues that cause children to misinterpret the scriptures. She is a skilled illustrator, a student of Hebrew, mother of four boys, and she has already designed two successful Bible memory and comprehension systems. Vicki Palaganas will be running the "Fishin' for Wisdom" Children's Program at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.heartbinders.com

Convention Fast Facts

Used Curriculum Sale



» The Used Curriculum is in its fourth year. Visit our website to learn how you can sell your items! <http://convention.chaponline.com/ucs/>

» Parking at the Farm Show Complex is \$8 per car, per day. Please be sure to get a ticket/receipt so that if you leave and come back (on the same day) you don't pay twice! Parking for handicapped and late term pregnancy is close to the entrance.

» Volunteer at the Convention. Not only are we unable to run the convention without you, but we do our best to make it worth your while! Free admission for your service (two shifts must be worked for the family to gain free admission) and 90 minutes of early bird shopping at the Used Curriculum Sale on Friday morning. We extend our deepest appreciation for the team of people who are dedicated to serving us in this way each year. We couldn't do it without you! Be part of the team this year. Check out our site and learn how you can serve. www.chaponline.com/convention-info/

Encouraging Our Children

by Kathy Kuhl

Our culture offers cheap encouragement. “Feel good about yourself!” “You are special!” advertisers tell us, whoever we are. But how do we offer our children meaningful encouragement that will help them keep going in tough times?

First let’s not accidentally discourage them. I’ve done it. Does your tone of voice often express annoyance, despair, or disgust? If you aren’t sure, make a recording of your voice as you teach your children. (If you find yourself self-consciously sounding very nice, leave the mic on until you return to normal.) Then play it back. Would you want your boss to talk to you that way? Or maybe you often scowl or frown as you teach. Try to “freeze your face,” walk over to a mirror, and see what your children see, as Melinda L. Boring suggests in her book, *Heads Up Helping!*¹

Your mind may be on the bills or twenty

other things, but your children don’t know that.

When your child finishes a task early, don’t make a habit of piling on extra work. It sounds absurd, but sometimes we do that. We may be so relieved that our child has reached a goal, (and maybe so worried about how we will finish this school year before it’s time to start the next), that we sometimes turn to the next goal too quickly. We don’t let him savor the satisfaction of a big job well done. Instead do you ever tell him, “You finished early? Good, now you can do this too”? What a letdown! We are really saying, “What you achieved was insignificant. There are a thousand more things to learn.” How discouraging we can be! Unless your child wants it, do not reward him for finishing early by giving him extra work.

How do we encourage our children? First we savor their accomplishments. We celebrate their progress.

What if we see no progress?

We can still praise them for not giving up. Trying again and again is heroic. My son worked harder for his C’s in geometry than I did for my A’s. So I told him many times that I respected the way he did not quit. (And I’m bragging on him now.) Have you ever struggled hard in a class, only to get a low grade?

It is not much of a prize, considering the effort it may cost. Is your child doggedly keeping on? Who will notice and praise them if you do not?

Your praise should be specific. It is easy to let our criticism be specific (“You forgot to take out the trash.” “I can’t read this handwriting.”) and our praise be vague (“Nice work.” “Good job.”) Tell your child what you like about his work. Maybe he struggles with school, but has a kind word for everyone. Perhaps he cannot capitalize, but he had an unusual insight, a creative idea, or a well-turned phrase. Any personal computer can fix spelling, but your child may become one of many fine writers who need spell-check software. Look for something to praise.

Don’t gush over his work as if you are homeschooling a little genius. Even if you are, you do him no favors with extravagant praise. Children recognize baloney. You may teach him that you are easy to fool or the rest of the world should treat him that way. It will not. Offer specific, brief, positive praise.

Several experts, including psychologists Drs. Robert Brooks, Sam Goldstein and Nancy Mather² and special educator Joyce Herzog,³ recommend that we should offer more praise than criticism. I never managed it, but it is worth aiming for. Children are born wanting to learn. Lots of failure and criticism can drive it out, but we can rekindle that passion with time and care.

What about rewards? Just as adults appreciate paychecks even when they love their work, so children appreciate rewards. Occasionally you might say, “If we get these four assignments done by noon, I will take you skating.” Some parents told me that their children responded well to token or point systems, earning that skating trip or other privilege by earning points for various kinds of good behavior through the week.

When you offer incentives, make sure that your child has a reasonable chance of reaching the target. Remember, “Hope

deferred makes the heart sick.”⁴

Finally build his self-esteem by helping him develop his gifts. This can take time with children who mature slowly. Let them try different activities. My son tried soccer, swimming, karate, and two scouting programs before he found what he liked. Even then, at times, it was still very frustrating. Several times I thought he would quit. But he did not. He stuck to it and became an Eagle Scout.

If you cannot tell what your child is good at yet, ask other adults who know him well. When my son was seven, if you’d asked me what he was good at, I didn’t have a quick answer. Legos[®]? Talking to strangers? Neither seemed like a promising strength at that age. But your child’s ability to imagine, to ask good questions, to engage with others, to create, to be attuned to nature around him, can become the basis of a life’s work. Give him time. When noted English composer Ralph Vaughan Williams was a young man, his family complained that he “would go on working at music when ‘he was so hopelessly bad at it.’”⁵ Your child’s talents may not yet have blossomed, or they may be in an area so different from your talents that you have trouble seeing them.

In his lecture, “You Get More With Honey: Tools to Avoid Emotional Escalation While Working Toward Behavioral Goals,” psychologist Dr. Mark Hurley urged parents that when they need to punish a child, not to take away the activity the child excels in. If your child struggles with school and only succeeds in soccer, and he needs to be punished, don’t pull him off the soccer

team. It discourages him too much, and his coach probably won’t have him back later, either, Hurley added.⁶ Dr. Temple Grandin, a leading speaker and writer on autism, and autistic herself, agrees, saying, “Never take away something that could be the child’s career, like musical instruments, arts, or computer programming. We’ve got to nurture the things that could turn into careers... Talents are like fragile flowers. They can be stomped on and they’ve got to be nurtured.”⁷

Real encouragement begins with recognizing that each person is made in the image of God, and therefore valuable. We each have our own blend of gifts. We are creative, loving, wise, insightful, kind, funny, compassionate, patient. We are lovers of justice, lovers of beauty, defenders, nurturers. What a terribly boring world it would be if we were all alike. Look at each child. We have the privilege of teaching our children. Let’s do it in such a way that, twenty years from now, they’ll be glad we did.

This article is adapted from “Helping Your Child Keep Going,” from Kathy Kuhl’s book, *Homeschooling Your Struggling Learner*, ©2009. All rights reserved.

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Kathy Kuhl helps parents help children overcome learning challenges. As a veteran homeschooler and author she offers ideas and encouragement for all

parents, but especially those whose children are struggling, discouraged, gifted—or all three! The author of Homeschooling Your Struggling Learner, Staying Sane as You Homeschool, and the upcoming Encouraging Your Child, she gives phone consultations, speaks internationally, and offers book reviews and tips at her website. Kathy Kuhl will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.LearnDifferently.com or you can also write her at Kathy@LearnDifferently.com



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First Things First

by Steve Demme

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 is probably one of the most quoted Scripture references when speaking of home education: "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise." (ESV)

I thought of this verse many, many times as we home educated our four sons, who are now 25, 28, 31 and 33. I often pondered how teaching my sons as I sit, walk, lie down, and rise would look. Did this mean having regular family worship times? Did it mean memorizing Scripture and plastering our walls with Scripture?

In looking back, these are all worthwhile activities and this kind of thinking is correct, but I always seemed to miss the order in which the Holy Spirit has orchestrated His Word. There is a reason verse 5 precedes verses 6 and 7. Deuteronomy 6:5 says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might." (ESV)

Before I can expect to teach my children the words of God, I must be in a heart relationship with God myself. So for the past year and a half I have been asking God to help me to love Him with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.

I didn't know how He would answer this prayer, but since it is clearly according to His will, I knew He would answer my request. I kind of expected that I would experience some sort of quickening, and I would find my affections being drawn heavenward.

But the opposite happened. Instead of my feelings toward God changing, I have been increasingly aware of His affection for me.

Through a series of experiences and Scriptures, over the past several months God has been teaching, showing, and conveying to my heart how much He cares for me. Through these providences He has been communicating to me how much he loves and even likes me.

As I pondered this, I realized this is consistent with how our heavenly Father operates. We read in 1 John 4:19 that "we love because he first loved us." As I have been shown how much God loves me, I am finding that I love God more than ever.

My newfound appreciation for my Savior is in direct proportion to the revelation of His love for me. Once again God

has taken the initiative and made me know that I am His and He is mine.

The most powerful Scripture that the Holy Spirit has quickened to me in recent months has been John 15:9: "As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved You. Abide in My love." (ESV) To think that Jesus loves me as much as His Father loves Him. This truth is difficult to absorb, but it is the Word of God.

I see with new eyes that the best thing I can do for my family is fall in love with God and His Word continually. A heart relationship with my heavenly Father is what prepares and equips me to teach my children. In fact as I love God and His Word, discipleship will flow from my heart to the heart of my family.

This summer a friend sent me an e-mail describing what God has been teaching him and his wife about home-based discipleship. With his permission I am sharing a few paragraphs with you:

"We are in a time of real soul-searching and transition of heart and mind from external-based, legalistic forms of 'family discipleship' to which we'd been exposed and thought, 'Well, that's how the so-called experts seem to be doing it.' Our new goal is heart-based, humility-powered 'just loving each other.'"

"'Just loving each other' doesn't sound nearly as noble and high-minded as 'family discipleship,' but honestly it's what we need to do. We are desperate to see something of Jesus in our home these days."

Home education is not a formula but a relationship. This relationship begins with our hearts as parents turning toward God and then toward home. May God save us from the external forms and appearances of homeschooling and do a deep work in our hearts that will birth relationships with God and each other that will last for eternity.



Steve Demme and his wife Sandra have been married for 33 years. They have been blessed with four sons: Isaac, 33; Ethan, 31; Joseph, 28; and Johnny, 25. With God's help, they have all

been home educated. Steve is the author and founder of Math-U-See. He has served in full or part time pastoral ministry for many years after graduating from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and has served on the boards of Joni and Friends, Christian Freedom International, and Lifework Forum. Steve Demme will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.BuildingFaithFamilies.org



by Laure Covert

When I started homeschooling back in 2000, some blessed person told me about the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Convention. With trepidation I attended, not knowing what to expect. It was wonderful! At first that is. I handled beautiful, interesting, and colorful books, maps, and DVDs. I moved through milling throngs of other women (and men) who were my comrades because they had also been called to do this hard homeschooling thing. I sat spellbound in seminars with well known speakers who published curriculum and were experts on a variety of issues. And I got great deals on the curriculum I purchased.

But then slowly a headache - a throbbing, aching, nauseous headache - grew as the day wore on. Uh-oh, I was experiencing stimulus overload. It was no one's fault, just the combination of too many great resources and so much variety on how to homeschool. It was also the fallout from a deeply-rooted shortcoming of mine which is to compare my insides to others' outsides. I began thinking of my kitchen sink full of dishes, my undone projects, and my lack of knowledge and experience. Then I imagined that the homeschool mom next to me at the vendor table faced none of that in her life.

After this first experience I was certain that avoiding the CHAP Convention was not the solution. Although there are still some years I come home Saturday evening and immediately crawl under the covers to nap, each year I faithfully return to the CHAP Convention. I now arm myself with Tylenol, protein snacks, comfortable shoes, a water bottle, and time with a trusted friend. The friend part, I must say, is crucial for me. Under the influence of so much new information, my friend keeps me grounded in the reality that no one is homeschooling perfectly and I am not alone. As Todd Wilson of Familyman Ministries says, "Homeschooling is not easy, but it is best." (*Lies Homeschooling Moms Believe*, Live Seminar CD, www.familymanweb.com)

Lo and behold those same women in the milling throng and the neighboring seminar chairs, who I tend to envy and compare myself to, offer me - every year - great ideas, comfort, and a solidarity that we are in this together. It is as if an invisible banner is flying over the entire CHAP Convention declaring in bold orange words: "Homeschooling is GOOD, and YOU can do it!"

For me last year's CHAP Convention was unmatched in its joy - all due to the fact that my oldest child graduated high school after being homeschooled all the way. I felt as if we were crossing the finish line of a marathon in first place. And like icing on a cake, my son gave an acceptance speech for a CHAP-sponsored scholarship, and I experienced a moment of pure bliss. I listened to him tell other students to dream big and that his homeschool experience gave him the opportunity to pursue his passion of filmmaking.

Even after this high water mark and many years of homeschooling, I am still not immune to discouragement as I school my younger kids. But now at each CHAP Convention I fly my own banner over myself as I volunteer, shop, listen, and converse during those two days. I want to fly this banner over you too, as I invite you to come to the well-organized and inspirational CHAP Convention this year. "Homeschooling is GOOD! You can do it!" See you in May! And if you see someone with slumped shoulders and a glazed look in her eyes, offer some of your own experience and hope.

Laure Covert and her husband Glenn make their home in Harrisburg, PA, and have homeschooled their three children through many stages. Currently Laure teaches high school level Spanish to homeschoolers and blogs on "finding hidden treasures in books" at www.pineneedlesandpapertrails.com

CHAP Fundraising Dinner

Mark your calendars for CHAP's 1st Annual Fundraising Banquet. We invite you to join us September 14, 2013 at Acorn Farms in Mount Joy, PA 5:00 - 8:30 pm. CHAP will be casting a vision *For Generations to Come*. An evening that is to be filled with good food, fellowship, encouragement, and a challenge to be fathers and mothers that move together faithfully, discipling one generation to another. Admission is free, but reservations are required. Adults only (with the exception of nursing infants). Dressy business attire is expected. Visit our site at www.chaponline.com/fundraiser/ for more information.

"Teach this testimony and law to your children, so that the next generation would know it, so that the children not yet born would themselves arise and tell their own children, who could then put their confidence in God." Psalm 78:5b-6

The Throne of Grace: Reflections on Prayer

by Charles Spurgeon and Sue Eckert

The great British preacher, Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892), wrote an amazing sermon on prayer basing it on Hebrews 4:16. *Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.* I would like to share a few of the insights I have been pondering from this sermon that make me feel like my life will not be the same if I take them to heart.

- Notice that the object of Hebrews 4:16 is a throne.

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. (Isaiah 6:1)

Power and majesty in its fullness. The doorposts are shaking. The angels are flying and calling out to each other, "Holy is the Lord Almighty." Isaiah feels his unworthiness. The Lord of the universe is seated on His throne. Of this throne Spurgeon writes, "If in prayer we come to a throne, it is clear that our spirit should, in the first place, be one of lowly reverence. It is expected that the subject in approaching to the king should pay him homage and honor. In our case, the king before whom we come is the highest of all monarchs, the King of kings, the Lord of lords. Emperors are but the shadows of His imperial power. They call themselves kings by right divine, but what divine right have they? Common sense laughs their pretensions to scorn. The Lord alone hath divine right and to Him only does the kingdom belong. He is the blessed and only potentate."

- Our action is to draw near to it.

This is both an invitation - "*let us approach*" - and a command - "*draw near to God*." (James 4:8)

We come with a purpose. Majesty Enthroned Above bids us approach. He is The Great "Have" and we, without Him, are the deplorable "Have-nots." Spurgeon elaborates, "If a person should ask for audience with royalty and then should say, 'I hardly know why I have come, I do not know that I have anything very particular to ask; I have no very urgent request,' would he not be guilty both of folly and baseness? As for our great King, when we venture into His presence, let

us have an errand there."

- We draw near with confidence.

Yes, in the light of this grandeur, we need encouragement to approach. We all know we don't deserve an audience with Him. It is grace that extends a smile. We have every reason to expect great things consistent with His Perfection and Love. Spurgeon writes that our confidence should be staggering. "Who shall doubt the King? Who dares impugn the Imperial Word? ...with our God before us in all His glory sitting on the throne of grace, will our hearts dare to say we mistrust him? Such blasphemous thoughts should be banished, and if they must come, let them come upon us when we are somewhere in the outskirts of His dominions, if such a place there be, but not in prayer when we are in His immediate presence and behold Him in all the glory of His throne of grace."

- We are expectant but not presumptuous.

"If it be a throne of grace," Spurgeon reasons, "then all the needs of those who come to it will be supplied. The King from such a throne will not say, 'Thou must bring to me gifts; thou must offer to me sacrifices.' It is a not a throne for receiving tribute; it is a throne for dispensing gifts."

Have you ever tried to be God's advisor? It's embarrassing to admit, but God knows I have tried to play the role of counselor. Of this matter, Spurgeon writes, "We are permitted to say to God, 'Thus and thus would we have it,' but we must always add, 'but, seeing that we are ignorant and may be mistaken - seeing that we are still in the flesh, and, therefore, may be actuated by carnal motives - not as we will but as Thou wilt.' Who shall dictate to the throne? No loyal child of God will, for a moment, imagine that he is to occupy the place of the King, but he bows before Him who has a right to be Lord of all." I like the way Spurgeon addresses the need for humility. "Boldness there should be, but let it not be impertinent."

- We draw near to receive help.

Our King knows what we need and deftly sifts through the babble of our jumbled

and confused thoughts. *We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. (Romans 8:26-27)*

Spurgeon, who was a father himself, touches our hearts with a familiar illustration. "Have you never seen a parent when his child is trying to say something to him, and he knows very well what it is the little one has got to say, help him over the words and utter the syllables for him? If the little one has half-forgotten what he would say, you have heard the father suggest the word. Similarly the ever-blessed Spirit, from the throne of grace, will help us and teach us words and even write in our hearts the desires themselves. The Spirit will direct your desires to the things for which you ought to seek; He will teach you your wants, though as yet you know them not; He will suggest to you His promises that you may be able to plead them. He will, in fact, be Alpha and Omega to your prayer, just as He is to your salvation."

To which we say, "*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out!*" (Romans 11:33) Let's encourage one another to approach this throne of grace at every moment and in every situation. Our lives, our example, our homes, our world will be shaken and changed forever as we draw near to and treasure the One on the throne of grace.

Spurgeon, Charles Haddon. "The Throne of Grace." *Classic Sermons on Prayer*. Compiled by Warren W. Wiersbe. 18987: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. edition.

The Lord has opened the doors for the Eckert family to return to Niger Republic. Please pray for divine appointments to lift up the name and the love of Jesus Christ in a needy place. Three of their seven children are with them. Pray that the Lord will bless them and make them a blessing. Sue's e-book, Mamane's Journey: An African Muslim Youth Learns of Christ, is available at <http://masterdesign.org/eckert.html> and makes a great family read-aloud.

Four Ways to Find More Margin in Your Day

by Crystal Paine

Over the last few years I've become a firm believer in the need for margin in my life. Without it, I become overwhelmed and overworked.

Having white space in my day allows me to breathe, think, and keep my creative juices flowing. It gives me energy and zest for life - which is a beautiful thing.

Now I know that about right now, most of you are simultaneously nodding your head and shaking it back and forth. You long for that breathing room in your day, but it seems impossible to pull off with your current packed-to-the-max schedule of must-dos.

Well here are four suggestions that have helped me achieve that much-longed-for and greatly needed margin in my life:

1. Have a Plan

Brian Tracy, author of *Eat That Frog* (a book I love!), has well said, "Every minute you spend in planning saves 10 minutes in execution; this gives you a 1,000 per return on energy!"

While I think there is such a thing as spending too much time planning to stall the actual execution, I'm a big proponent of spending at least 15 minutes mapping out my day *before* my day begins.

I just jot down the things I need to accomplish, and am planning to accomplish, that day and the approximate times when I plan to do them. I typically write these lists out for each day in a cheap notebook. It's nothing sophisticated, but having a simple plan for each day improves my productivity and focus in a big way. When I finish one thing, I move onto the next.

Of course there are interruptions and things that come up. And some days, if some fairly big disaster happens, I end up chucking the list or completely re-vamping it. But if I didn't have a plan in the first place, I'd be guaranteed to not get as much done. In fact I'd probably spend most of the day running around in circles.

2. Simplify and Say "No"

Want to know a surefire secret to having more margin in your day? Plan less to do from the get-go. It works every time!

In this day and age it's almost as if there's some sort of holy merit in packing our day to gills. As if busyness is next to godliness. But all that sets you up for is exhaustion, burn-out, and a mom who doesn't have time to enjoy her kids and nurture her marriage.

So when I'm done writing my daily to-do list or plan, I try to make a habit of immediately evaluating the list and crossing off three non-essentials before I even start on the list. This exercise not only instantly frees up some space and time in my day, but it also helps me to focus on the most important things instead of getting caught up spending a lot of time on something that might not really have much worth or value.

3. Get Up Early

I'm not sure what it is, but I've found that when I get up at least 30 minutes before my family does, I seem to have at least an extra hour or two in my day. However when I wake up when my kids do - or am awakened by them telling me excitedly that it's time to get up, I start the day behind. And I rarely catch up.

Being intentional about setting the alarm clock at least 30 minutes before I know anyone else in my family will wake up gives me time to sip some coffee, read my Bible, and then make a game plan for the day. If I'm able to get up a little earlier, I can also slip in some blogging, exercise, and maybe even a shower before the whole house is up and bustling with activity.

4. Do the Hardest Things First

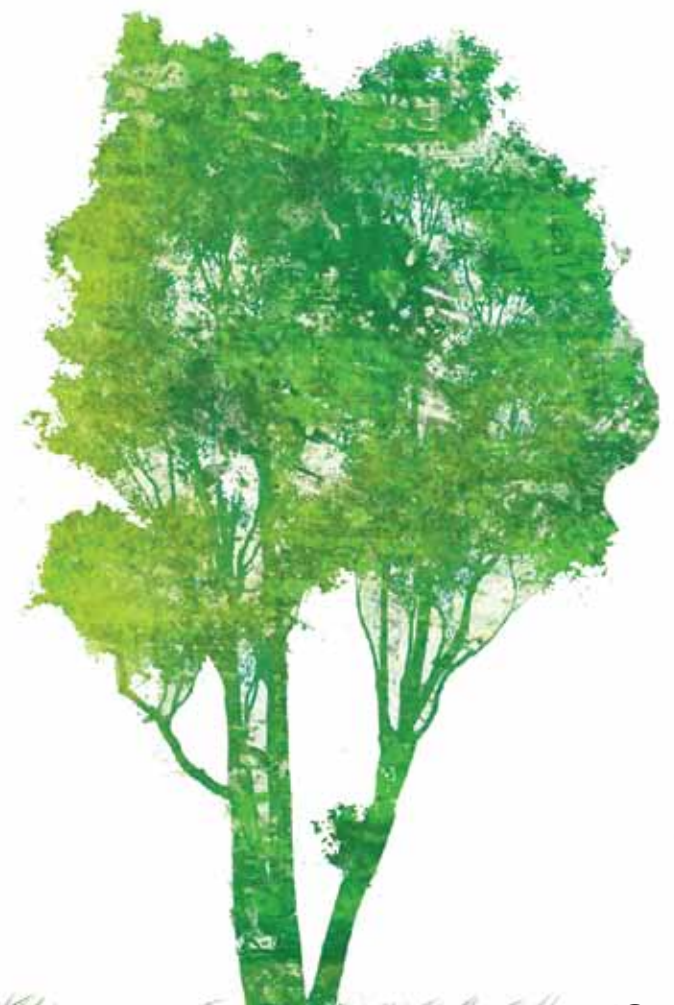
I've discovered that I'm really good at spending the day stalling - keeping busy with lots of different non-essentials to avoid doing those things that really need to be done but that I dislike doing. This leaves me exhausted at the end of the day with little to show for my efforts but a lot of busy work.

As I've realized this I've been challenging myself to stop putting off that thing that I wish I could avoid but must do. Instead I make myself just do it. And do it first thing.

It's amazing how much more I get done when I start my day by doing the hardest things first. You know what else? I seem to float through the rest of the day with ease and cheerfulness because I got the burden of my hardest thing off my back first thing in the morning.



Crystal Paine is a wife, homeschool mom of three, and bestselling author of 21 Days to a More Disciplined Life. She is passionate about encouraging and challenging women to wisely steward their time and resources and live life on purpose. Visit her blog, www.MoneySavingMom.com, for high-value coupons, online bargains, freebies, practical ideas, and inspiration to get your life and finances in order. Crystal Paine will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention.



The Five Critical Elements of Reading Instruction

by Kristen Eckenwiler, M.Ed.

Experts in any field are always looking for the most effective way to master the skills necessary to succeed. We start children in music lessons or gymnastics at an early age, hoping that the earlier we start the greater the chance of success. If they cannot yet hold the musical instrument, then we will at least have them listen to lots of music. We wonder what the research has to say about the best age to begin something or what skills should be emphasized first. These same sorts of questions have been asked about learning to read.

We have nearly a century of authentic research on how children learn to read. Much of it is all but hidden from common view in scholarly journals. Occasionally an idea will reach a more popular audience, and we go through a period of emphasis on one concept or another. For example, some of us have witnessed the move away

from phonics, and back again. In spite of all this research we hear a rather unrelenting concern about too many of America's children not learning to read. While most of the conversation about this topic comes from the world of public schools, we know that learning to read can also be a struggle for homeschooled children and those that attend a private school.

As a result of this ongoing concern about America's children not learning to read in our public schools, Congress asked the director of The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to convene a national panel to examine all the research on learning to read and report its findings. After two full years of intensive work this blue-ribbon panel submitted its findings to Congress. The "Report of the National Reading Panel" has been widely viewed as a landmark work which has brought much needed clarity to our understanding of the reading process. Although the report was quite long and very detailed, its findings have been distilled to five essential ingredients to effective reading instruction. Those five are:

1. **Phonemic awareness**
2. **Phonics**
3. **Fluency**
4. **Vocabulary**
5. **Comprehension**

All five of these areas of instruction are necessary to provide a full, balanced program of reading instruction. The National Reading Panel did not recommend a particular curriculum as being the best. Most credible reading curricula will address these five areas, but not all will emphasize them equally. Some will treat one or more of these "big five" areas rather lightly. If you examine your present curriculum and find a lack of emphasis that does not necessarily mean you need to throw it away in favor of something hopefully better, but it does mean that you will want to identify those areas that you will need to supplement or strengthen for the sake of your child's success.

A quick glance at the "big five" elements of effective reading instruction listed above leaves most people reasonably comfortable with all but one. That is to say, most have a general understanding of what is meant by phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. But what is phonemic awareness? Not only is phonemic awareness the least understood of the big five, but it may well be the most critical. For that reason we will take a few extra moments to discuss this important reading element.

What is Phonemic Awareness?

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in human speech. By themselves phonemes do not carry meaning. For example, the sound of the letter "b" does not mean anything. The word bed contains three phonemes: the initial sound represented by the letter "b," followed by a vowel sound represented by the letter "e," and the final sound represented by the letter "d." It is important to remember that when we are talking about phonemic awareness we are talking about the sounds, not the names of the letters. Thus when we speak of phonemes, and not the letters themselves, the phoneme will be placed in brackets. For example, the phoneme for the letter "b" would

be represented as /b/. The /b/ tells us that we are talking about the sound of "buh," not the name of the letter. This is what distinguishes it from phonics, which connects both the sounds and the symbols (letters) used to represent the sounds. It has been said that phonemic awareness is the one element of reading that can be tested in the dark, because it is strictly concerned with the sounds of the language.

Asking young children to become aware of phonemes is a challenging and unnatural act for them. Both adults and children do not normally think of the linguistic characteristics of the words they speak or read. We simply use words, like tools, to help us communicate meaning to another person. Nevertheless the demands of learning to read require that the young learner attend to the smallest units of sound in their native language, even though those sounds do not carry any meaning by themselves.

How Important is Phonemic Awareness?

There are a wide variety of factors that contribute to eventual reading success, some more crucial than others. For example, researchers have long spoken of the benefit of parents reading aloud to their children, the importance of talking to children, or the value of an environment that is "literacy rich." What has caused reading specialists to focus so intensely on phonemic awareness is the dramatic impact this skill seems to have on reading success or failure. The following comments from two well-known reading specialists are just a small sample of the countless declarations made regarding the profound impact phonemic awareness has on a student's growth as a reader.

"Measures of schoolchildren's ability to attend to and manipulate phonemes strongly correlate with their reading success through the twelfth grade." - Marilyn Jager Adams

"Phonemic awareness has been shown to be the most powerful predictor of later reading achievement." - Gail Tompkins

These reading experts echo the convictions set forth by the National Reading Panel that there is something about phonemic awareness that is absolutely crucial to reading success. Although other ingredients are a necessary part of the reading recipe, nothing else

seems to predict a reader's success like their mastery of phonemic awareness skills.

Put briefly research tells us two critical things about phonemic awareness: 1) It makes a powerful difference in a student's ability to read, and 2) it can be effectively taught. The second item is just as important as the first. Not only do we know that phonemic awareness is vitally important, but it is also something that can be effectively taught. We have every reason to be encouraged in our efforts to understand and teach this skill to our readers.

Some children seem to learn to read with ease. It appears that our approach or our curriculum material choice hardly matters. Others, however, do not always respond as readily. Their struggle is the source of frustration for them as well as their parent-teacher. Understanding the reading process and its critical elements becomes an important part of figuring out how to help. As you move forward in your efforts to teach your child to read, keep in mind the five core elements of reading established by the National Reading Panel and pay particular attention to your child's abilities in the area of phonemic awareness.

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Kristen Eckenwiler graduated with honors from the University of Central Florida



where she earned a Masters degree in Reading. Along with experience in a clinical setting she has taught first, second, and fourth-graders in a public school setting. Additionally she has taught courses in reading, language arts, children's literature, and educational psychology at the collegiate level. She and her husband, Dr. William Eckenwiler (also a reading specialist) currently homeschool their boys

(age 8 and 14), and serve as co-president of their local homeschool association. Kristen Eckenwiler will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.TheStrugglingReader.net

Convention Fast Facts

» First-time attendees that are Parents of Preschoolers (POPs) attend free! If you or someone you know has never been to the Convention before and all your children are 4 and under, you may attend the Convention free of charge! Spread the word - this is a sweet deal!

» In an effort to serve you better, several area attractions will be offering discounts/coupons for the days prior to and after the Convention. We are pleased to announce that Lake Tobias in Halifax, The Hershey Story and Hershey Gardens in Hershey, and the PA National Fire Museum in Harrisburg will be participating. Keep checking <http://www.chaponline.com/coupons/> as we add more.

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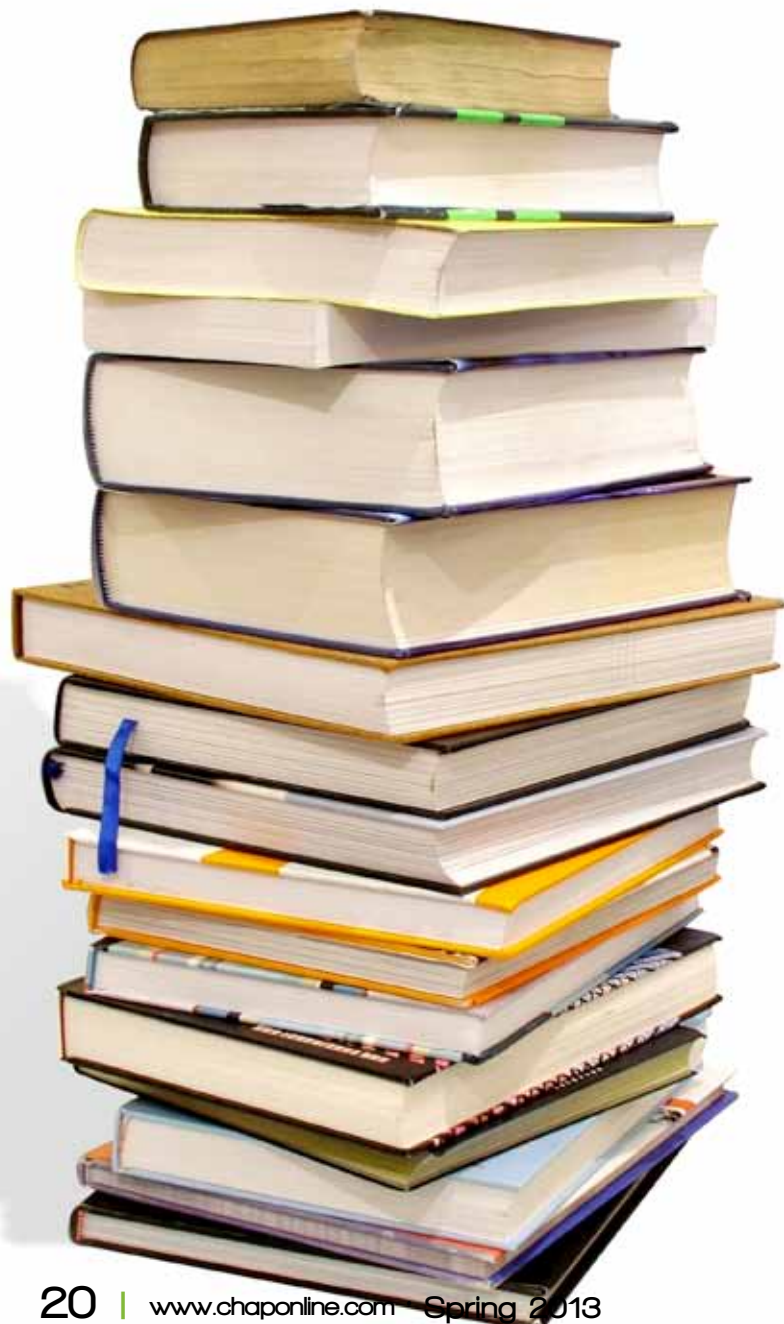


Photo: Antony Ruggiero, www.stripeddog.co.uk

How to Make Bedtime Prayers Sparkle!

by Travis Zimmerman

Regarding parenthood someone once wryly quipped, “The days are long, but the years are short.” Poetry! My wife Suzanne and I speculate that someone *must* have penned that spot-on quote immediately *after* another long, drawn-out bedtime routine. If your house is anything like our house, the homeschooling days actually jet by like a rocket gone rogue, but it’s the bedtime routine that crawls along, panting like a sorely dehydrated dog. You know it well: the teeth brushing; the stalling; the “what are we doing tomorrow?” questions; the stalling (did I mention that already?); my personal favorite where’s-my-blankie-that-I-can’t-sleep-without-it scavenger hunt; and, of course, the hastily mumbled prayers. These trifling tactics and a soon-to-be-closing bedroom door are the final remaining obstacles standing between us and our dearly anticipated mommy/daddy talk time – peace!

So why would I have the audacity to suggest that we abandon our way-too-often hurried and muddled prayers for a nighttime fellowship with God and our family? Because God will bless bedtime in both profound and astounding ways. We take heart from the encouragement God promised to Jeremiah: “Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)

Family Prayer – Round-robin rocks!

We found that, many times, bedtime prayers can get stale because there’s often little variance; prayers can border on rote rituals. We parents are exhausted, and we unfortunately view leading bedtime prayers as “just one more thing.” I know, I know, it’s terrible to think that way, but God knows our thoughts and helps us in our times of need. That’s why it’s so refreshing to add your kids into the mix – we *never* know what they’re going to blurt out! God laid it on Suzanne’s heart several years ago to rotate prayer leadership among family members to keep things sparkly. In this way everyone gets a chance to experience how to lead prayer, and the topics stay new and ever-changing. For example: Daddy leads Sunday, Mommy leads Monday, Elizabeth leads Tuesday, and so it goes. We round-robin it, providing each family member a chance to talk to God – prayer at its best!

And you will not believe some of the insights the Holy Spirit places into our kids! These are the same kids who, just hours before, were waging a battle over who left the Legos on the floor that Daddy stepped on, and who gets to get their shower first, and who didn’t let the dog out that pooped on the floor. Yet the Holy Spirit is as strong in our children as He is in us, and you’ll consequently learn AMAZING insights from your kids as they pray to Jesus. Check out these gems:

God’s REALLY big...

Our 5 year-old son Braden is learning homeschool math which is intertwined with God’s creation of the world. One recent night in prayer went something like this:

Braden: I bet it takes God a really long time to get dressed.

Mommy: Why’s that, honey?

Braden: He probably wears size 100!

Daddy: Yeah, it probably takes Him a year to get dressed!

Wisdom from the mouths of babes! Never mind me stumbling over explaining the concept of infinity – size 100 nails the concept in 5 year-old parlance.

Crazy Questions

After wrapping up *Prince of Egypt*, the Genesis account of how God guides Jacob’s son Joseph from prison to prominence, we discussed slavery, how the Israelites were forced to work without pay, and how God guided them as they fled Egypt. This Joseph, while certainly in mind, led to a discussion with our then 4 year-old Elizabeth about another famous Joseph – Jesus’ earthly father:

Elizabeth: “Daddy, who was Joseph and what did he do?”

Daddy: “He was Jesus’ earthly father and he was a carpenter.”

Elizabeth: “Why was he a carpenter?”

Daddy: “He worked to make money for his family just like I do in my job.”

Elizabeth: “Did he work for money so Mary could spend it?”

Daddy (giggling): “Well sort of, but you know your mommy works all the time and doesn’t get paid.”

Elizabeth (confused...): “Daddy...Is Mommy a slave?”

We’re reminded that one of the beautiful aspects of talking about God in everyday life, especially in bedtime prayers, is that our kids’ thoughts will turn to God and His Majesty...and even to uncanny comparisons!

Moving Mountains

After the kids have all taken their turns talking to God, I’ll occasionally pray a short Scripture passage over my family to close down our prayer time. And often times our kids will want to talk through the insights God’s laid on their hearts. Friends – and I’m

totally guilty of this as I shared in my opening paragraph – don’t be in too much of a hurry to rush to shut it down and close the door. Check out this astounding insight from then 8 year-old Grant.

Dad (praying): “Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.” (Mark 11:22-24) In Jesus’ Name we pray, Amen.

Grant: Dad, what do you think Jesus means that God can move mountains?

Dad (tired, ready to go to bed himself): Well Grant, I think Jesus is talking about how God can do anything. Jesus may have been using an exaggeration here when he said that God could move an entire mountain – all at once – and throw it into the ocean.

Grant (pondering all of this with a contorted, confused look on this face): But Dad, don’t you think that Jesus might be saying that God could choose to move the mountain one stone at a time so that, over a long time, the whole mountain is eventually thrown into the ocean?

Dad (in his best Chevy Chase voice): Good talk, son!

Wow. God really blew me away with that one! I’m explaining biblical hyperboles in 8 year-old-ease, and Grant’s dismissed those for a plausible – and probably actual – way God can choose to move mountains in our own lives – stone by stone, day by day, and prayer by prayer. What an incredible insight shared through the haze of my bodily fatigue.

Finish Strong

So bedtime prayers can be a precious time of sparkling insights, right from God Himself! Yes, there are and always will be evenings where we just have to settle for 30 second bedtime prayer, but fight the temptation to make that the norm. Carving out just a little more time at night –

when most of us are ready to prematurely shut down the day – will often yield divine insights from a loving God who loves to hear from His children in prayer!



By God’s grace Travis and Suzanne Zimmerman have been homeschooling their five children for the past seven years. After God called Travis

out from Sight & Sound Theatres in 2009, he and Suzanne co-founded Speak My Word Ministries to encourage people to wholeheartedly seek Jesus Christ, read, pray, and speak God’s Word. Travis Zimmerman will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.speakmyword.org

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Young Entrepreneurs Section

You Won't Want to Miss It!



Convention

Fast Facts

» We are excited to announce that we will be doing a giveaway prize again this year. Many of you expressed your appreciation of getting to know vendors that you would never have visited without this incentive. We hope that you will be encouraged to participate again this year! Make sure to pick up your card at the Registration area.

» The Art Contest is also returning this year! Please visit www.chaponline.com/chap-art-contest2013/ for all the details. Act quickly as the deadline is March 31, 2013.

CHAP Giveaway 2013

Returning this year is the CHAP Giveaway 2013! A Google Nexus 7 has been donated by Cherry Crest Farms and one week of summer camp has been donated by Spruce Lake Retreat. Don't forget to pick up your participation card at registration!

Spruce Lake
Pointing People Toward Christ



by Kathie Morrissey

If you were to ask the question, “Who are the most powerful people in the world?” the answers would vary. Some would say those that are on Wall Street, the big oil executives, or the President of our country. That is how most people judge importance and power. But if you think about it, a more accurate answer is that the most powerful and influential people on earth are parents with the faith to raise their kids and to direct their families in a way that is pleasing to God. That is powerful! What does the cliché say? “The hand that rocks the cradle, rules the world.” Don’t underestimate the power of being a godly parent.

“If you want your ideas to last for years, write them on paper. If you want them to last for decades, write them on a brick. If you want them to last for centuries, write them in stone. If you want them to last forever, write them on the heart of a child.” – author unknown

As parents we are privileged to mold a life that will live forever. This life will be greatly affected by the kind of teaching that is received from the parent. What an awesome responsibility we have!

What is your vision for your family? It’s easy to view academics as an end in itself, but no amount of education can guarantee success for our children. God’s vision for prosperity and success is found in Joshua 1:8: “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; and thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” (KJV)

We need to talk about God’s Word, meditate on it, and obey it. This should be our guide as we strive to teach and train our children! I want to share three keys to help us be successful in our homeschooling and parenting.

1st Key to Success: Continual Focus on the Bible

As parents we must make it a priority to spend time in God’s Word. As we focus on God and His Word, the teaching of His Word will be a natural outpouring of our thought life. We talk about what we are excited about, worried about, focused on, etc.

The Power of Being A Godly Parent

So it only makes sense that if we want to give our kids a love for God and His Word, we have to make sure that He is first in our life and thoughts. Then it will be a natural thing all through the day to talk about what God is doing in your life. Your kids will sense your love for God and your desire to please Him in everything.

It is said that faith is caught, not taught. If we want our kids to have a real relationship with the Lord, we need to make sure WE have one. We can’t force their hearts to love God, but we can give them a thirst for Him by our example. You can lead a horse to

2nd Key to Success: Growth in Character

Since godly character springs from a deep relationship with Jesus, it rests on the foundation of faith. As your child learns to read God’s Word, memorize, and obey it, he will then be able to grow in character.

The most important fruit we can nurture in our children is character. If our kids learn nothing but character alone, they will be better prepared for life than those who are taught pure academics, but no character.

“True education seeks to train not just the mind, but also the heart and soul. This is what we call character training.” – Ray Ballman

Be sure and teach character regularly. Have a plan, and every morning after everyone has had their time in God’s Word, have a lesson on character. If things get crazy that day, and you don’t get to the academics, or only get some of them done, you will have accomplished what was most important. You can also teach character all through the day as you encourage kindness, diligence, initiative, etc.

3rd Key to Success: Prayer

One of the most important parts of the educational process of teaching and training our children is the prayer that goes on behind the scenes. Prayer is the most important part of raising our children, because God can do what we can’t do! We need to saturate the lives of our children in prayer. I often tell parents that we need to work as though it all depends on us, but pray as though it all depends on God. We need to seek His wisdom in training our children, then use His Word to teach them, while praying the whole time that God will take that teaching of His Word and work in their hearts!

Daily go to God in prayer and ask Him for wisdom in your parenting and

teaching. Then bring your child and his problems to Jesus in prayer. Ask God to do a mighty work in their hearts and lives. God invites us to come to Him in prayer, and we have His power available to us, but so often we fail to take advantage of it. If you haven’t already done so, may I encourage you to make a commitment to pray daily for your children? None of us can be perfect as parents, but we can all be praying parents!

Remember, the most powerful people in the world are parents of faith. Why? Because of who we have on our side. Never forget or underestimate the influence God has given you as a parent as you teach and train your children for Him. Keep His Word as your focus, character training as a top priority, and regularly claim His power in prayer!



Kathie Morrissey, the mother of eight children, is a committed homeschooling mom of 26 years. Kathie is the founder of the Courtship Connection, as well as a popular speaker at homeschool conventions and support groups, family seminars, and mother/daughter banquets. Her heart’s desire is to help and encourage parents in raising godly children with strong Christian character. Her seven oldest have graduated from their homeschool, and she continues to teach her youngest son. Kathie Morrissey will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.courtshipconnection.com

STORY TIME

by Mary Shenk

Everyone has a story. Some of our stories are more dramatic than others, but we still have a story. It’s what makes history exciting - one person’s choices leading to an impact greater than anticipated. Did Joseph really understand that his choice to do right would lead to becoming the second greatest in Egypt and save the lives of millions? Did Mordecai realize the impact of his words to Esther “for such a time as this?” We often think of Esther as the hero of that story, but I am drawn to Mordecai. His faithful obedience and service to God had such an impact on his niece’s life who in turn saved the nation of Israel.

I am always intrigued by the fact that Jesus does so much of his teaching by way of story and illustration. I think it is probably true for most people that stories make a dull lecture come alive, a rainstorm less scary, bedtime more comforting, and family time filled with laughter.

What is your story? Do you think that you don’t have anything all that great to share with others? Or perhaps you know you have an amazing story to share. Maybe you’re in the middle of some difficulty and you would rather not have this included in your tale. Most of us also have chapters of sadness, tragedy, or trial. Might I suggest that God is doing his redemptive work in those stories as well? The greatest story of all is not of human

origin, but rather the redemption of man by a gracious God. Opportunities abound to share with our children; let’s be faithful storytellers in giving God all the glory for how He is weaving our lives into HisStory.

In the coming months you will find some of these stories in the *CHAP Magazine* and on our blog. You will read how the paths individuals would not have necessarily chosen, have become the plot lines for God’s amazing grace. My hope is that you will be encouraged in your own journey through the lives of others and that you will pass it on to others. Don’t be afraid to tell your story. If you would like to share your journey, we’d love to hear what God is doing in your life. You can send your account to mshenk@chaponline.com I’ll be looking forward to hearing from you.



Mary is married to her best friend Duane. They have homeschooled both of their sons (Jeremy and Derek) since the beginning in the style of Charlotte Mason. Jeremy is now married to his sweet wife Amanda, and granddaughter Skylar was born this past June. Derek is a sophomore this year. Spending time with family and friends, working with kids, being outdoors, traveling, and riding motorcycles are some of their favorite pastimes. Mary enjoys helping and mentoring moms on their homeschool journey.



Many Hands

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HSF Ambassadors help families homeschool through hard times.

www.homeschoolfoundation.org/volunteer



Convention Fast Facts

Silent Auction



» Our Silent Auction is returning this year! Be sure to take some time to look at the items up for bid. If you know of a business, service, or attraction that would be a good fit as an auction item, please contact Sam Furches at samsfurches@gmail.com

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What is Classical Education?

by Christopher A. Perrin, M.Div, Ph.D.

Most of us have a difficult time defining the word “education”—it has a wide range of meaning and is used in different ways in different contexts. Certainly education can be formal (as in a college education) or informal (his stern aunt provided him a fresh education in manners).

The word “classical” is no easier to define. It can refer to a certain kind of music (that came well after the Greeks and Romans) and a certain kind of literature (the “classics” of western civilization). It can refer to a historical period (The Greeks and the Romans) and architecture (style, concepts, and motifs from Greece and Rome). Of course it can also refer to Greek and Latin when used in the phrase “classical languages.”

But classical can also refer to anything that has become standard and authoritative (in a given field) as opposed to novel and experimental. Thus we can speak of classical physics and even classical book-making, bread-making, or beer brewing, and of course, classical education.

Given the wide semantic range of both “classical” and “education” it is not surprising that the phrase “classical education” is also used with various meanings. Language is flexible, and so we have some varied and flexible uses of “classical education.” This means that there can be several legitimate uses of the phrase—but it would be wise to know just what a given speaker means by “classical education.” Here are several ways the phrase is used:

1. classical education: a study of the Greek and Latin languages (linguistic definition)
2. classical education: a study of the Greek and Latin languages and the history, literature, art, philosophy, and culture of Greek and Roman civilization (linguistic and cultural definition)
3. classical education: a study of the great ideas of western civilization as contained in the classic “great books” produced by that civilization; a study of the “best that has been thought or said.” (intellectual history definition)

4. classical education: a study of the seven liberal arts of grammar, logic, rhetoric (the trivium) and arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy (the quadrivium). (curricular definition)
5. classical education: a study of the seven liberal arts employing traditional teaching insights and methods (such as singing, chanting, Socratic discussion, and debate) passed down to us by past educators. (pedagogical definition)
6. classical education: the cultivation of wisdom and virtue by nourishing the soul on truth, goodness, and beauty by means of the seven liberal arts (soul-ish or psychological definition)
7. classical education: an approach to education that seeks to create a community of learning, characterized by academic rigor, warmth, and delight and involving vibrant interaction of teachers, parents, friends, and others. (communal definition)

Now all these definitions reflect current use. This is because classical education, as a rich, complex 2,500 year-old tradition, does contain many important elements (linguistic, cultural, intellectual, curricular, pedagogical, psychological, and communal). Because classical education is so rich and complex, it is hard to sum it up in one or two sentences. Here is a crack at it—this time including a theological element: **classical (and Christian) education**: a traditional approach to education that blends Christian theology with the historic curriculum and pedagogy of the seven liberal arts in order to produce societal leaders characterized by wisdom, virtue, and eloquence.

This may be a decent “dictionary definition,” but like so many brief definitions of complex topics, it is so general that it lacks clarity and punch. What, after all, is Christian theology, pedagogy, and the seven liberal arts? And if we listed the liberal arts, how many of us would like to know more about grammar, logic, or rhetoric as an art? How many of us have a clear sense of what “virtue” and “eloquence” mean? But alas when we abbreviate we must leave things out. So where do we go from here? To the same place we go after

putting down the dictionary—to an article, encyclopedia, pamphlet, or book – another level down.

Going another level down we would discover that classical education has also traditionally emphasized:

- The training of leaders: those governing and leading culture were educated classically, while others were trained for particular jobs and tasks
- Reflection and leisure: time for discussion, thought, and application was a necessary part of acquiring wisdom, capacity, and skill
- A common curriculum: students all study the essential curriculum of the seven liberal arts which were thought to prepare students for any profession or field of endeavor
- Interaction with tradition: the knowledge, wisdom, and art of the past were honored and studied for present use
- Innovation according to need: classical education adapted to new geography, circumstances, and discoveries and continued with “theme and variation”
- Partnership with the church: education was informed and guided by church liturgy, teaching, training, and financial support
- Training affections and the intellectual virtues: educators sought to shape and form the student and not merely inform him. Students were taught to “love that which is lovely” and acquire the virtues necessary to be eager and excellent seekers of truth.

You can see how easily we could now write an article, pamphlet, or book! Each of the items above deserves to be further expanded and explored.

With homeschooling parents talking increasingly about the classical approach to education, it will do everyone good to become familiar with the basic contours or essential elements of traditional,

classical education. We should avoid facile, “straw man” constructions of classical education that are easy to dismiss as much as we should avoid glowing and sentimental descriptions that present it as a cure-all. By becoming more familiar with this rich tradition in education, we will better communicate and better make use of its riches.

For another level of exploration, I recommend the following:

An Introduction to Classical Education: A Guide for Parents (45 page pamphlet available in paperback but also available as a free download at ClassicalAcademicPress.com)

Classical Education: The Movement Sweeping America (Gene Edward Veith and Andrew Kern, published by the Capital Research Center)



Christopher Perrin is a publisher, writer, and consultant with Classical Academic Press. Dr. Christopher Perrin will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention.

Find more information online at www.classicalacademicpress.com or you can also write Christopher at cperrin@classicalsubjects.com

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WHAT Does It Take?

by Mary Shenk

Ever wonder what it takes to put on the Convention?

Are you one of those people who loves behind the scenes info? For the next several issues we'll take an inside look.

The Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP) Convention is put on by a team of workers that we grandly call: The Convention Committee. We have some fantastic people who work hard to make this event happen. They are the real heroes of that weekend! Our current breakdown of committee members is as follows: Convention Coordinator, Speaker Coordinator, Vendor Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, Registration Coordinator, Safety and Security Coordinator, Recording Coordinator, Book Check Coordinator, Graduation Coordinator, Audio Visual/Technology Coordinator, Used Curriculum Coordinator, Support Group Coordinator, Media Coordinator, Advertising Coordinator.

Each one of these positions performs a vital role in the Convention. Some jobs are large and some are smaller, but none are less important. This series will introduce you to

committee members and their jobs. We hope you enjoy it. Be sure to look for us at the Convention and stop by to introduce yourselves.



Speaker Coordinator - Nada Rothgaber

How long have you been Speaker Coordinator?

I started working with some of the speakers in 1995 when Doug and I came on the CHAP Board. By 1997 I was coordinating all the speakers, but at that time we didn't have the title "Speaker Coordinator."

What does your job entail?

Each year I review hundreds of possible speakers and their topics. I research speakers that attendees recommend on the Convention evaluations each year, speakers who are recommended by board members, volunteers, and staff, speakers which leaders in other state homeschool organizations recommend, and speakers who submit their information to speak at CHAP. Unfortunately we are not able to invite all those who apply or are recommended to be speakers just by the sheer numbers and time constraints. The information is reviewed and we try to include those speakers and topics that we feel would be beneficial to the majority of the attendees. It is a process that we bathe with prayer as we seek God's direction. Once the slate of speakers is chosen, I go through the process of obtaining all their information and formulating it into an orderly fashion for posting on the website and inserting in the Convention program.

Why did you make the decision to help with the CHAP Convention?

We first attended some homeschool group meetings for L'CHEA (Lancaster County Home Education Association which was the forerunner of CHAP) because we couldn't find any that were local to us in Dauphin County. That led to us first volunteering at the CHAP Convention where we

saw more of the ministry of the organization which had evolved into CHAP. When we were asked to join the CHAP Board in 1995, we saw it as a chance to be part of a ministry doing something we believed in – serving others in parent-led discipleship.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Each year I get to read the summaries and listen to possible topics from many great speakers. It is a great learning and uplifting experience. Also getting to meet and work with some of the great homeschool speakers has been a blessing to me and to my family. Through the years we have developed life-long friendships with speakers and their families across this great country of ours.

When do your preparations for the Convention begin?

Coordinating the speakers is a year-round job. Normally I am working on two Conventions at the same time. As I work on pulling the details together for this year's Convention, I am also contacting possible guest and featured speakers for the next year's Convention.



Book Check Coordinator - Hillary Lalone

How long have you been the Book Check Coordinator?

This is my second year as coordinator. I started volunteering at the Book

Check booth six years ago.

What does your job entail?

My job involves recruiting volunteers, writing blurbs for advertising, and running the booth. I am very grateful to those who volunteer at Book Check each year. It takes a team to make sure each box is packed correctly, stored, and delivered to the customer, whether they pick it up at the booth or the curb.

When do your preparations for the Convention begin?

Preparations begin in October of the previous year and continue right up to the

Convention, then comes my favorite part. The doors open and in come the attendees!

Why did you make the decision to help with the CHAP Convention?

When Sharon Waddell could no longer be coordinator and asked if I would be willing to take her place, I wondered what I was getting myself into! As I said before I had volunteered many times, but somehow the coordinator's position seemed overwhelming! After praying for God's direction, I did accept this position. It has blessed me in many ways, both through the many people I have met and through giving back to the homeschool community.

As someone who was homeschooled I know the importance of the Convention in offering encouragement and resources to homeschooling parents, as well as giving youth a chance to mix with peers who are also being home educated. I am grateful and blessed to be a part of the CHAP Convention.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Because Book Check is centrally located we are able to talk with many of the attendees whether it is storing their purchases, answering questions, or helping them find where they need to go.



Volunteer Coordinators - Denae Freed and Darra McDowell

How long have you been Volunteer Coordinator?

Darra: I have been the CHAP Volunteer Coordinator since September 2009. Denae joined me in 2011 when I was due the following

month with my first child and the possibility of attending the Convention that year looked slim. It turned out I was able to attend, but Denae stayed on as Co-Volunteer Coordinator and we divided and conquered the role together. I love working with my sister. She brings her skills and personality to the position which enhances the way we can serve those volunteering at the Convention.

What does your job entail?

Darra: I update all the volunteer letters and online volunteer information, gather volunteer needs from each of the area supervisors, answer emails from our wonderful volunteers, organize what takes place at the volunteer booth during the Convention, and oversee set-up and tear-down of the areas under my responsibility.

Denae: I assist Darra in any way she needs, such as: checking and restocking our supplies at the CHAP office, proofreading her letters before they go online, assisting her at the Convention, "being there" to carry out what she needs me to do, and taking notes for her during the meetings. These are just a few things I do to make her job a tad bit easier.

Why did you make the decision to help with the CHAP Convention?

Darra: I was approached by the former coordinator in August of 2009 to pray and consider serving as Volunteer Coordinator. She was moving to Alaska and saw in me the potential to carry out the responsibility. I felt like I jumped into the deep end to learn how to swim, but with help from several of the committee members and support from my husband, we made it. I have grown a lot over the past years and have enjoyed every moment.

Denae: As noted above, I came to CHAP to help with the volunteers as my sister was going to be on "maternity leave" in 2011. It turned out she was able to make the Convention that year after all, and so I have just been able to be the extra support she has needed since then. I've purely enjoyed working with the CHAP team and pray God continues to do mighty things through each of them in the years ahead.

What is your favorite part of your job?

Darra: I really enjoy answering questions and helping volunteers figure out what they need both prior to and during the Convention. I also love seeing return volunteers and meeting new volunteers - putting faces with the names. I'm so grateful for each of my volunteers and count it a blessing to serve this wonderful group of people.

Denae: First I enjoy working with all the different people, from the CHAP Board, staff and committee members, to the CHAP Convention attendees and the volunteers themselves. Second, during the Convention my favorite part of all can also be my least-favorite part. Just before the doors are open on the first day, and everything is about to take off with a massive start, you look around and see all the hundreds of people that are there making this event possible. It's because of each of these individuals that I enjoy serving the Lord in this way.

When do your preparations for the next Convention begin?

Darra: During the Convention, Denae and I are making notes for changes, updates, or things that worked well. Immedi-

Do your feet grow weary during the Convention? Do you find yourself needing a break during the day? We have just the thing for you! From 12:30 - 1:15 each day you can make your way to the beautiful Keystone Rooms (where the Children's Program and Teen Track are held) to view the following movies: *Act Like Men* or *Samuel L. Collins and the Search for Biblical Truths*. These movies will offer a break from the day for the whole family.



101 years ago, courageous men sprang into action when the R.M.S. Titanic struck an iceberg and sank. These men paid the ultimate price to ensure that women and children were saved. What did they know about manliness that we have forgotten? How is "women and children first" relevant today? Will our civilization survive the decline of manliness? What does it really mean to be a man? In *Act Like Men*, viewers will be challenged and inspired as we explore these questions and seek to reclaim a biblical vision for manliness.

ately following the Convention I record those notes while they are fresh in my brain. Late autumn is about the time I start making those changes official, but I'm already looking at next year while we're finishing up this year.

Convention Fast Facts

» Coming on Thursday night to the area and need a great place to eat? Isaac's is running a fundraiser for us at the Trolley Run Road, Lititz, and Paxton Street, Harrisburg, locations. Eat there between 5:00 PM and 9:00 PM and 25% of your bill will be donated to CHAP. You must present the form (be sure to fill out the one for your location!) which you can print from our website - www.chaponline.com/isaacscoupon/ Thanks in advance!

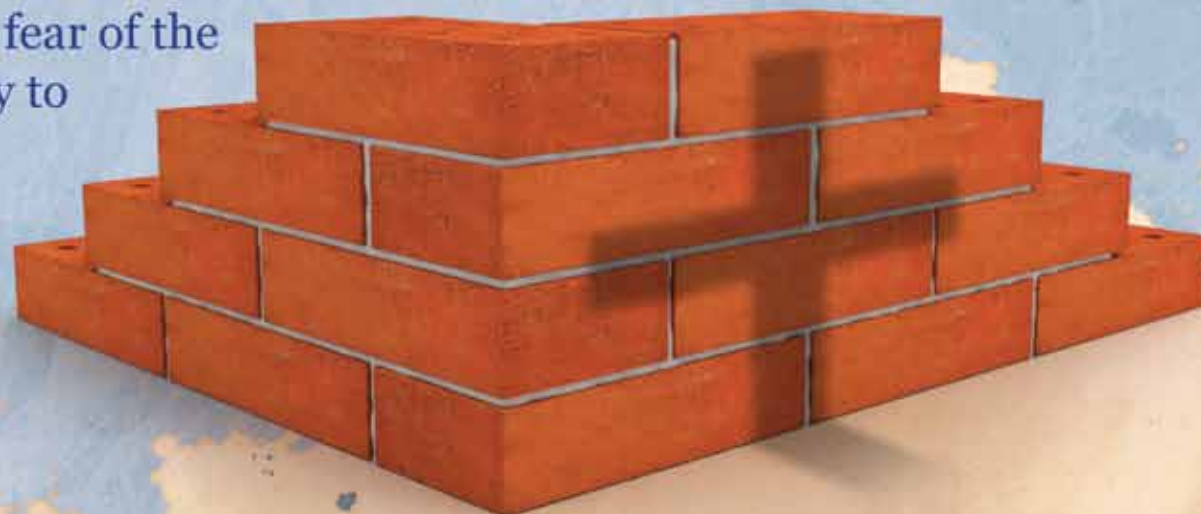


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this treasure.

Isaiah 33:6 (NIV)



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When Worlds Collide: Your Child's Active, and You're NOT! *Now* What?

by Stephen Guffanti, MD

"Yes, I make my son sit in a chair to read! If I let him stand, he starts walking around and pretty soon walks right out of the room, and that's the end of his reading!"

Sound familiar? Or how about this one: "My son starts reading on the couch, but before I know it he is on the floor with his feet on the couch, reading upside down! How can anyone read upside down?"

If you have an active child, these probably do sound familiar. Every year I get questions like these. My response is simple: "Does your child understand what he reads?" If so then his upside-down position or movement stimulates his brain and helps him focus. So all that moving around (that drives *you* crazy) helps your child learn better. It might help to read those last two sentences again.

People who learn through touch and movement change position often. It drives the visual learner crazy, because visual learners thrive on order and constant movement creates chaos in their world. I'll tell you how to handle your wandering walker in a moment.

Will your child grow out of his need to move? Maybe, maybe not. Up until age eight, most boys learn through movement; after eight they may develop a visual or auditory learning style preference. (Girls develop their learning style preference a few years earlier.)

When my wife and I were first married, we went to a Disney movie. As we walked out of the movie, I said, "The music was stunning." My wife Maureen asked, "What music?" As an artist she was lost in the movie's breathtaking art effects.

I experience the world through movement; Maureen experiences the world through her visual sense. We both grew into our learning style. This difference provides for both joy and frustration. The joy comes when I can see the movie through her eyes – the depth and details the artists put in. The frustration comes when my office is too messy for her to handle, so she refuses to

even come in although she really wants some information I have there.

Research indicates that most brains focus on one or two senses and occasionally three: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (touch and movement, also called active or hands-on learning). This focus filters out the other senses and builds a more effective neural net in the chosen sense. In my wife's case she is high visual – good for painting and paying attention to details. I am high kinesthetic – good for sewing people up.

As important as it is to know our strengths, it is important to know our weaknesses. Our weaknesses are created in the sense we choose least often. For example, I use my auditory pathways the least often. As a result, over time I became dyslexic – a poor listener with poor self-talk. This left me believing that my behavior was the fault of everyone who bothered me.

I remember once telling my parents if they didn't want me throwing a fit they shouldn't deliberately annoy me! (It wasn't until later I realized how out of line I had been.) This behavior is called Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD), or what I call the angry child.

From the upside-down child to the angry child, the misunderstandings that learning styles can create, and the misery that follows, can be confusing and at times overwhelming. Let me lighten your heart with two solution stories.

Jon was sitting at the kitchen table while his mom quizzed him on his spelling. He had studied very hard, but was getting every answer wrong. As tears rolled from his eyes his mom said, "Let's take a break." Jon immediately went outside to climb on the swing set. As she watched him climb with such energy and ease, Tiffany remembered my talk about how hands-on learners think better when they move. So she called out, "Jon, you keep climbing and I will ask you

your spelling words. If you get them right, great! If you get them wrong, that's fine too. To Tiffany's amazement, he got his spelling words right – every single one!

Scott was having severe problems with math, so I was asked to help him. I dropped by one evening to see what I could do. Scott was doing his math homework with no perceptible problem. In fact he had an intuitive sense of what the right answer was. After 30 minutes he popped a hard candy into his mouth and within minutes he couldn't answer even one question right. I pointed out to him the difference, and he readily admitted it. My advice to him: "Don't eat candy before you take a test." He ended that year with the best math grade in his class – no tutoring needed!

You can hear about these solutions and more, why they work, and how to find the solutions to your situation by coming to my talks at the 2013 CHAP Convention. If you can't wait or just want to get a head start, you can go to www.ADHDorActiveChild.com and listen to my free podcasts.

What about your wandering walker? One idea is to give him a big, bouncy exercise ball to sit on when he reads. And place the ball inside a tire so the ball—and your child—stays put.



As a medical doctor, author, and homeschooler, Stephen Guffanti offers a unique background and tremendous insight as he communicates with warmth and humor. Not only is Stephen a physician, but he's also dyslexic and ADHD, and from this unusual perspective he brings hope, understanding, and practical solutions to families. Dr. Stephen Guffanti will be speaking at the 2013 CHAP Convention. Find more information online at www.adhdoractivechild.com and www.rockethonics.com



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Dear Friend,

As a supporter of the Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania (CHAP), you are well aware of the fight that goes on to preserve and protect your hard-won freedom to educate your children in the way that you see fit. However, that freedom is continually under attack, and the enemies of homeschooling are well funded.

Is there a way that you can support the work of CHAP that doesn't crimp your already stretched budget? If you own or manage a home-based or commercial business that does credit card processing of any type, the answer is YES.

CHAP has been a credit card processing client of Cornerstone Payment Systems (www.cornerstonepaymentsystems.com) for over five years. Cornerstone has developed a program called "Processing With A Purpose," which allows you to save money on your existing credit card processing while donating 50% of their profits to CHAP to assist and protect the homeschooling movement in Pennsylvania.

Isn't that great? You can save money on your business costs and support the critical work of CHAP at the same time. This will aid us greatly in our ongoing efforts to support homeschooling families in our state.

The program does not cost anything; rather Cornerstone is committed to funding an ongoing donation to CHAP for as long as you maintain your processing relationship with Cornerstone Payment Systems. Simply apply for a free rate quote with the below link and Cornerstone will provide you with a quote for your business' credit card processing. If they beat the current rates your company pays and you switch to their service, they make ongoing monthly donations to CHAP based on your processing volume, as long as you remain a customer. If they do not beat your current rates, they donate \$500.00 to CHAP. This is a win-win situation for your business and CHAP!

Furthermore with Cornerstone Payment Systems and "Processing with a Purpose" you can rest assured that your dollars spent in card processing fees will NEVER go to support unbiblical political agendas. Also Cornerstone has a corporate commitment that they will refuse to do processing for morally objectionable businesses.

To take advantage of this program or have any questions answered, visit <http://cornerstone.cc/chap/> or call them directly at 855-644-1870 to get a free quote.

Sincerely,

Duane Shenk
CHAP Co-Executive Director