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GREENHOUSE

Nurturing Home Education in North Carolina and Beyond



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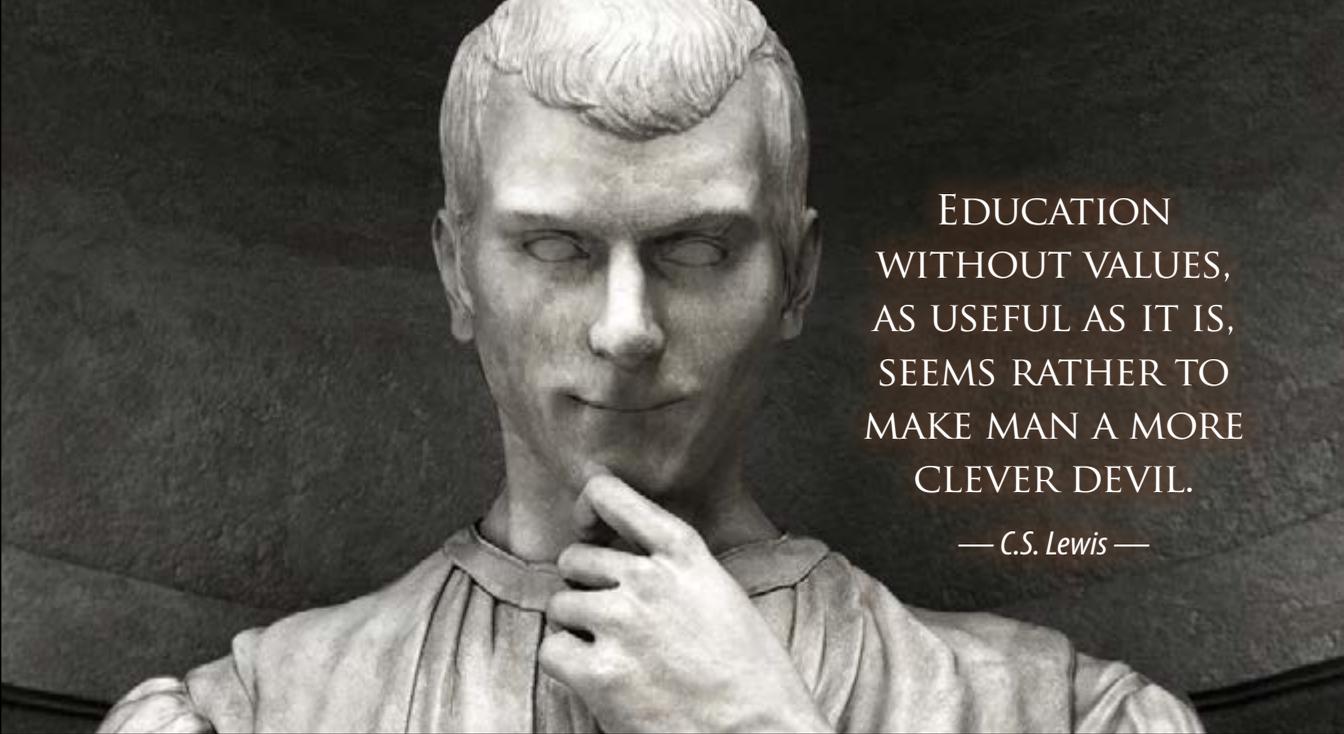
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AS USEFUL AS IT IS,
SEEMS RATHER TO
MAKE MAN A MORE
CLEVER DEVIL.

— C.S. Lewis —

About GREENHOUSE

GREENHOUSE (ISSN 2169-916X) is the periodical of North Carolinians for Home Education. It is a quarterly—four regular issues, plus a bonus graduate issue. It is mailed to subscribers and posted online. The name GREENHOUSE was chosen to represent the type of care homeschooling parents are able to give to their children. Children are lovingly “tended” in a protected and nurturing environment until they are sufficiently mature to go out and take a place of service in the world. Letters and articles addressed to the GREENHOUSE become property of NCHE with full right to publication without further permission required. Ideas and opinions expressed in letters and articles do not necessarily represent those of NCHE.

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Summer - Jul/Aug/Sep	May 20	Jun 1
Fall - Oct/Nov/Dec	Aug 20	Sep 1

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Image above: NICOLÓ MACHIAVELLI by Lorenzo Bartolini

Image on back cover: The Little Scholar by Johann Georg Meyer von Bremen

On March 3, 2015, NCHE hosted their bi-annual Capital Fest. It was a huge success with more in attendance than ever before.

A Busy Season

by Kevin McClain



Kevin McClain, NCHE's president, and his bride, Brea, are embarking on their tenth year of homeschooling. Kevin recently earned his Ph.D. in educational philosophy from UNCG where he is employed as an educational technologist.

It has been a busy season for the organization, and the busyness reinforces my belief that NCHE serves a critical need among North Carolinians. While the day-to-day work of homeschooling is done by parents and guardians, NCHE serves as an essential hub that links those who are curious about alternatives to the traditional classroom and are often struggling to learn exactly what it means to homeschool in North Carolina to resources that may answer their questions. Increasingly, I am convinced that NCHE serves a vital need of providing not only information but also the listening ear of an experienced home educator.

NCHE has several very visible activities including our legislative efforts and our annual conference, which clearly demonstrate our commitment to those who are interested in the practice of home education in the state of North Carolina and beyond. But in addition to these activities, NCHE has several ongoing information-sharing outlets. The organization is over thirty years old, and for that entire time, NCHE has had a print publication. From what was originally a publication of just few pages, the periodical *Greenhouse Report* has developed into a quarterly magazine called GREENHOUSE. This publication continues to be a major outlet for the organization to share information and encourage home educators. You may, or may not, be holding the publication as you read. As electronic publishing and the Internet have brought significant change to information access, NCHE has changed as well. We now publish GREENHOUSE articles on our website nche.com. So, you may be reading my column online. The organization spends significant time and energy maintaining a website that is packed with useful information. We repeatedly get emails from people telling us just how appreciative they are for the website. I think I can confidently (but humbly) say it provides the most comprehensive information about homeschooling in North Carolina of any single website. A large number of the emails thanking us for the website come from experienced homeschoolers moving into NC from other states where homeschooling laws differ. It is important to recognize that while many organizations exist to aid home educators, and some

of these organizations produce vast amounts of information, NCHE stands for North Carolinians for Home Education. The board of NCHE, its directors and liaisons and staff are, quite literally, your neighbors, and almost all are volunteers. We are North Carolinians, and therefore, we've experienced the conditions of homeschooling in the jurisdiction of the state of North Carolina. We have to complete the same paperwork as you do. We visit the same places for field trips. We carefully consider the ramifications of potential changes to North Carolina society and its laws because these changes directly impact us also. We continue to seek and keep abreast of information on the issues concerning home education in North Carolina, including: attendance, immunizations, diplomas, transcripts, resources, driver's education, athletics and virtual-charter schools. We seek to share what we know and what we are learning on any issues of importance to home educators.

In addition to providing the annual conference, the GREENHOUSE and the website (an enormous undertaking!), the organization also maintains a strong social media presence. Just before the New Year, the NCHE Facebook page surpassed 10,000 fans. We are discovering that this is a major source of information sharing and encouragement for many. If you are not a fan, let me encourage you to become one. When the organization has announcements, we post on Facebook. Its interactive nature allows people to ask and get questions answered. If you are not on Facebook, but are more of a "tweeter," the organization also has a Twitter account that echoes the Facebook posting.

Recently, I have gained new appreciation for how the telephone continues to be a major service the organization provides. As a product of my age, I'm more in the habit of searching the Internet for answers. However, as we've made recent changes, the organization is now better capturing the number and nature of the calls coming into the office. The simple fact is that for many, especially those who are on the edge contemplating exiting the traditional classroom and embarking on the journey of homeschooling, what is needed is the reassuring voice of an experienced person offering advice and explaining complex issues. For most of you, it may be hard to remember what it was like when you were contemplating bucking the system. I think you will admit that it was a bewildering time. And while it is likely that there was less information available, fewer books and websites, you probably knew a person or two of a similar mind and with whom you could work through the decision. The odd reality is that, even though today we have sophisticated technological devices like smart phones and social media, many are disconnected from

those outside their immediate circle. Many have commented that our society's social fabric is increasingly thin: children don't play in the streets like they used to, and neighbors often don't know each other's names. My impression is that for many who are now frustrated with the traditional classroom, they struggle to find others with whom to talk through the ramifications of the decision to homeschool. The NCHE office, with a phone number and a friendly voice, provides this connection. The frequency of calls to the office and emails we've recently received expressing gratitude convince me that NCHE serves the state well through a staff member who is there to answer the phone.

But the organization is more than just a board of directors and staff. One important component is our regional liaisons. I mentioned earlier that many don't have a group of neighbors they can rely on in their homeschooling journey. Part of that may be that they just yet haven't found a local homeschool group that fits them. NCHE continues to believe that local homeschool groups are an important and vital part of the homeschool experience. Finding groups, however, can be challenging. One role of NCHE is providing of a number of regional liaisons, each in a different area of the state, who work to build relationships with local homeschool group leaders. As noted earlier, the social fabric of society does seem to be growing thinner, but homeschoolers have a history of developing strong local groups who provide mutual support. NCHE wants this tradition to continue, and we continue to question how best to be advocates for and partners with local groups. As part of our annual conference we offer a free luncheon and seminar to local group leaders. This helps connect them with each other and provides them with helpful up-to-date information. The nche.com website lists dozens of groups because our goal is to link people together. We want local groups to flourish because we believe that homeschoolers, parent-educators and students, have a better chance of flourishing when actively engaged in a community of mutual support.

I started this column by saying it is a busy season for the organization, but honestly, we are always busy. We are constantly working to serve. "Many hands make light work" is an often-quoted saying, and it rings true for NCHE. We are always looking for fellow workers. Most in the organization work long hours *volunteering* to help their neighbors. If you are passionate about home education, please consider partnering with us. Whether you give time, talent or your treasure in the form of a (tax deductible) financial donation, please know that NCHE will put it to good use in the task of developing and protecting a strong community of parent-educators. 



2015 NCHE Annual Conference

M.C. Benton Convention Center, Winston-Salem, NC

May 21-23, 2015

The NCHE annual conference serves as a celebration of the multi-faceted face of home education in North Carolina. The goal of the NCHE conference is reflected in our new name, Thrive!, and mirrors the NCHE mission "NCHE has a vision for flourishing families and thriving generations in which people remain passionate, curious and actively engaged in their faith and in their learning..."

Our mission is to:

- Equip and encourage homeschooling families through an abundance of outstanding speakers and workshops
- Connect homeschoolers with quality curriculum resources through our extensive vendor hall
- Celebrate our teens and alums through special workshops, fun activities, fellowship, the talent showcase and our state-wide graduation
- Encourage our leaders with a special luncheon and a workshop just for them

The NCHE conference offers:

Nationally Recognized Speakers
Knowledgeable and Experienced NC Speakers
Inspiring Workshops
Huge Vendor Hall

Fun Teen Activities
Entertaining Talent Showcase
Engaging Children's Program
Informative College and Camp Fair

For details about the conference go to nche.com/conference.

Pre-registration prices end May 15.



Teen and Alumni Dance



Keynotes and Workshops

Conference Speakers and Workshops

Featured Speakers



Debra Bell, Ph.D., is the best-selling author of the award-winning *Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling*, *Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling Teens* and the *Ultimate Planners* for moms, teens and students. *Writers-in-Residence: A Writing-Focused*

Language Arts Program and *Readers-in-Residence: A Literacy Program* will be released in 2015. Debra and her husband, Kermit, home educated their four children K through 12. All four are now married, degreed, employed, and they also love Jesus! She has been a keynote or featured speaker at numerous international and national venues for more than twenty years. Debra and her sons were featured on *NBC Nightly News* for a story on homeschoolers and their participation in scholastic sports. After homeschooling, she completed a Ph.D. in educational psychology at Temple University in Philadelphia, PA. Her research interests include identifying how, why and when homeschooling works; and she looks forward to using her training to better serve the homeschool community well into the future. A pioneer in online education, today she is executive director and lead teacher for Aim Academy, which provides online college prep and AP® courses for seventh through twelfth graders. More information about her online classes, books, forthcoming curriculum and speaking schedule can be found at DebraBell.com.

- Twenty-first Century Homeschooling: What Leaders Need to Know
- Eight Reasons Kids Learn Best at Home
- Education by Design: Understanding God's Blueprint for Your Child
- Cultivating a Love for Learning in Our Homes
- The Six Traits of Great Writing
- Developing Motivation and Interest in Kids of All Ages



Jon Erwin and his brother, Andrew, are a writer/director duo. Together they have created feature films, TV series, documentaries, reality television, music videos and commercials. These unorthodox artists are anything but traditional. They

focus on innovative ways to produce a diverse portfolio of work—from their multi-award winning documentaries such as *The Cross and the Tower* to the dramatic and reality TV series, *Life After* and *Real Strength*, to their feature films *October Baby* and *Mom's Night Out*. Jon began his career working as a camera operator for ESPN. He eventually worked on everything from ESPN College Football Primetime to FOX NFL. In 2005, he began to venture into directing commercials and music videos. He found his greatest success in the world of music, directing music videos and producing concerts and television programs for platinum artists like Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, Switchfoot, Skillet and Montgomery Gentry. He has

received ten nominations and three consecutive wins for Music Video of the Year at the GMA Dove Awards. From second grade on Jon was homeschooled and frequently credits his career in the film business to this. He is now a homeschool dad and an advocate for the benefits of homeschooling.

- Teaching Your Kids to Dream
- How to “Break In”—Getting a Job in the Entertainment Business
- The Importance of Storytelling
- The Incredible Influence of Film and Television



Steve Lambert and his wife, Jane, have been married forty-three years and have two daughters and six grandchildren. They began homeschooling in 1981, and today all six of their grandchildren are also being homeschooled. Jane Claire Lambert wrote



Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Jessica Thompson

are a mother-daughter speaking team. Elyse is a retreat and conference speaker and is the director of Women Helping Women Ministries. She has authored numerous books, including *Give Them Grace: Dazzling Your Kids with the Love of Jesus* (co-

authored with her daughter Jessica) and *Found in Him: The Joy of the Incarnation and Our Union with Christ*. **Jessica** speaks at women’s conferences and other events. She is the author of a devotional book for families, *Exploring Grace Together*. Jessica has a bachelor’s degree in theology. She and her husband have three children ranging from elementary school to high school.

- What Makes “Christian” Parenting Christian?
- How to Raise a True Believer Instead of a Pharisee
- Good Parenting in, Good Kids Out
- Practical Help for Christian Parents

the award-winning curriculum “Five in a Row” and together they have been traveling the country and encouraging homeschoolers for more than twenty years. Each year Steve speaks to thousands of homeschoolers offering the perspective, wisdom and insight that comes from nearly forty years in the homeschooling field. Steve’s mixture of inspiration and information will leave you better prepared for the wonderful adventure we call homeschooling. Without PowerPoint presentations or thick handouts, Steve simply shares from his heart, telling stories that will have you laughing and crying and thankful for the priceless gift you’ve been given: the privilege of teaching your own children with faith and confidence.

- For Men Only
- Raising World Changers
- Becoming Your Child’s Favorite Teacher
- You *Can* Do Unit Study



John Stonestreet

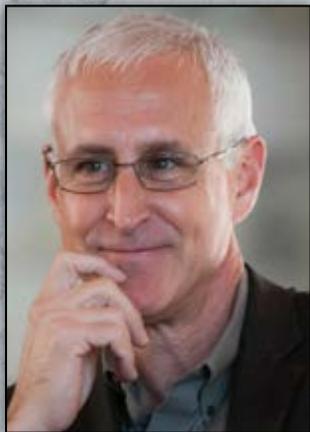
is executive director of the Chuck Colson Center for Christian Worldview. He is a gifted communicator on areas of faith and culture, theology, worldview, education and apologetics and is a sought-after speaker at conferences, colleges,

churches, schools and other types of gatherings each year.



John is the co-host, with Eric Metaxas, of *Breakpoint*, the Christian worldview radio program founded by the late Chuck Colson, and is the voice of *The Point*, a daily national radio feature on worldview, apologetics and cultural issues. He also serves as a senior content advisor for Summit Ministries in Manitou Springs, CO. John holds degrees from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (IL) and Bryan College (TN), and is the co-author of *Making Sense of Your World: A Biblical Worldview*. John is a frequent speaker at homeschool events across the country and is married to the amazing Sarah, who takes the lead in homeschooling their three daughters. (John is in charge of field trips.) Connect with John at ThePointRadio.org.

- How We (mis)Handle the Scripture: Teaching the Bible Biblically
- Same-Sex Marriage: What Now?
- About the “Talk”: Preparing Students for a Culture of Sexual Brokenness
- Discovering God’s Will: How to Know What to Do with Your Life
- Living What We Believe: How to Connect Belief and Behavior
- Have We “Lost” the Culture? God’s Command to Be People of Hope
- Amused to Death: Living in a Culture of Perpetual Distraction



J. Warner Wallace is a cold-case homicide detective, a Christian case maker and an author. Jim was a conscientious and vocal atheist; he always considered himself to be an “evidentialist.” His experience in law enforcement served to strengthen his conviction that truth is tied directly to evidence. At the age of thirty-five, Jim took a serious look at the evidence for the Christian worldview and determined that Christianity was demonstrably true. After becoming a Christ follower,

Jim continued to take an evidential approach to truth as he examined the Christian worldview. He created the PleaseConvinceMe.com website, blog and podcast as a place to post about his discoveries related to the evidence supporting Christianity. Jim has appeared on television and radio, explaining the role that evidence plays in Christian *faith* and defending the historicity of Jesus, the reliability of the Bible and the truth of the Christian worldview. Jim’s professional investigative work has received national recognition; his cases have been featured on NBC’s *Dateline*. Relying on over two decades of investigative experience, J. Warner provides readers of his book *Cold-Case Christianity* with the tools they need to investigate the claims of Christianity and to make a convincing case for the truth of Christianity.

- The Cold-Case Reliability of the Gospels
- Belief That vs. Belief In
- The Cold Case for God’s Existence
- Who’s Waiting for Your Kids?
- Cold Case Resurrection
- The Case for Truth
- The Cold Case Problem of Evil





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Online Instruction:
The New Frontier
Elements of
Style: How to
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Cathy Barnett

Let's Get
Organized!



Dee Black

Legal Issues
Affecting
North Carolina
Homeschoolers



D. Kevin Brown

Why Don't They
Believe Like I Do?



Janice Campbell

Become the
Mom You Want
Your Children to
Remember
Be the Learner You
Want Your Child to
Become



Debbie Crawford

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Andrea Daley

High School
Smorgasbord



**James and Tanya
Dickens**

Striving Past
the Culture of
Mediocrity
The Thrill of a
Thriving Marriage



**Kristen
Eckenwiler**

Seven
Things about
Homeschooling I
Have to Keep Re-
learning

Do You Have a Struggling Reader?

Strategies to Teach a Struggling
Reader

Teaching the Learning Disabled Child



Mari Fitz-Wynn
Elements of
Style: How to
Homeschool in
the Twenty-first
Century



J. Mark Fox
How to Raise Kids
to Be Best Friends
How to Do
Church Where
Homeschoolers
Thrive



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**Kathryn (Bell)
Gomes,**
Six Secrets of a
Successful College-
Prep Math Program

Homeschool to
Campus: Ten Things You Should
Know Before You Leave Home
Five Ways God Used Homeschooling
to Strengthen My Faith and Prepare
Me to Engage the World
What Our Mom Did Right; What Our
Mom Did Wrong



Dara Halydier
Gracefully Letting
Go: Preparing You
and Your Teen for
the Next Step

High School Fun! All the Subjects
without All the Textbooks
Raising Exceptional Children:
Geniuses to Those with Learning
Disabilities



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Homeschooling—
the Adventure
Begins!



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Jerby**
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Homeschooling:
One Family's
Experience



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What Is Christian
Classical Education
(and How Do I Do
It)?



Laurie Lollar
Homeschooling in
the Furnace



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Macdonald**
Struggling
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Color and Visual
Stress



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Marshall**
Choosing
Curriculum
Getting Off to a
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High School
Avoiding Burnout
Parenting the
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Kevin McClain
Homeschooler
Identities: Looking
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Matthew McDill
How to Stop the
Fighting in Your
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Ten Ways to Teach
Your Children to
Know God's Will for
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 Noah’s Ark: Where
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Homepreschooling: What to Do with
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 The Most
 Fascinating
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 History of the

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 The Why and How of Dads Telling
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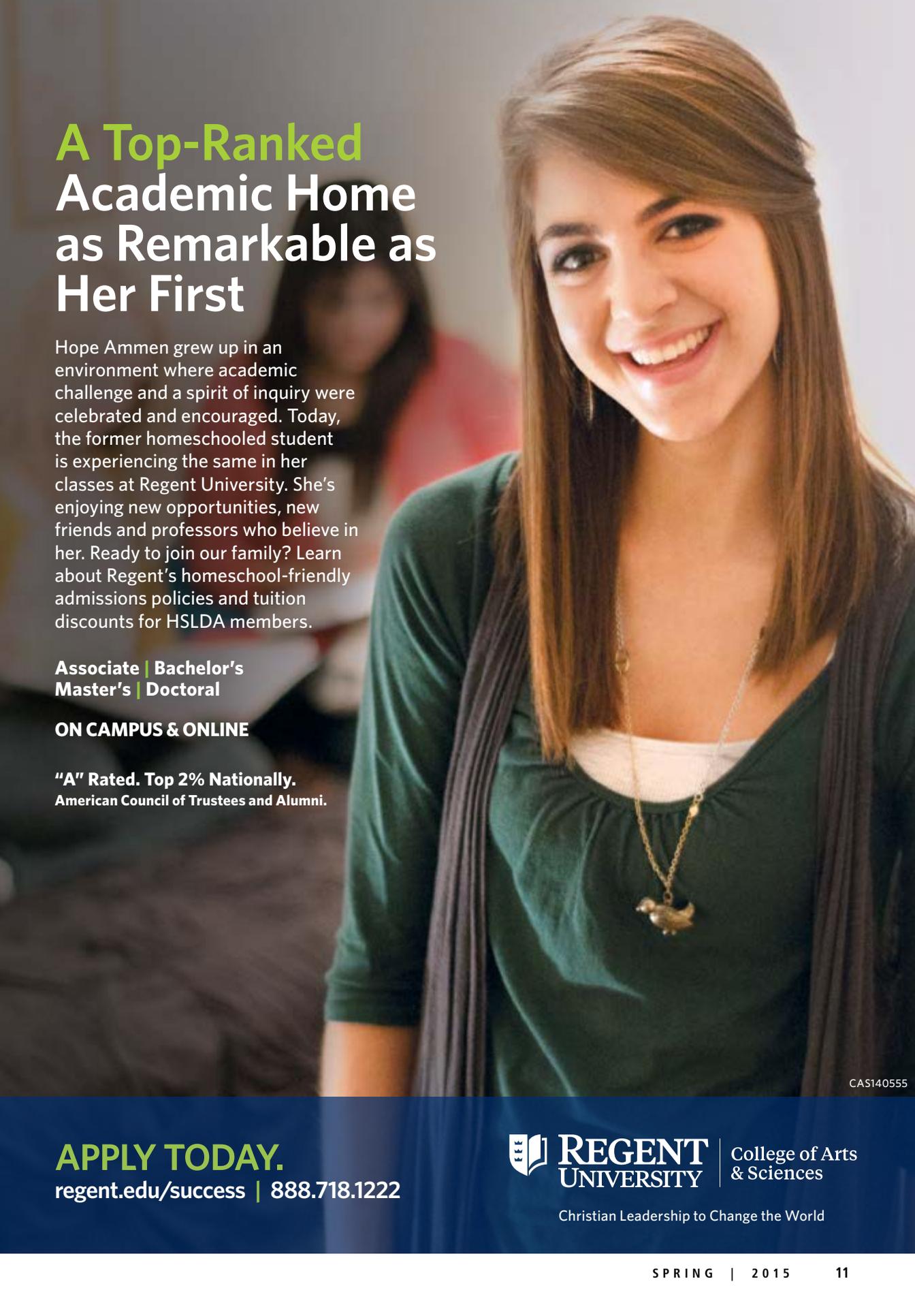


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Homeschool Children: A Risk to Other Children?

by Spencer Mason

Three large multi-state outbreaks of measles in the US have prompted numerous articles about the need for children to be vaccinated. Many of the articles have been critical of parents who choose not to have their children immunized against measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). The World Health Organization is recommending that all healthy children should be immunized with the MMR vaccine.

A few NCHE board members have been asked to be interviewed by the news media about homeschool parents and the lack of state regulation regarding immunization. Early in February, I saw a Facebook post titled “NC home-schooled children get free pass on vaccination requirements.” It cited a newspaper article titled “State doesn’t verify whether homeschoolers are vaccinated.” These types of articles imply that we homeschoolers are a health threat in the communities in which we live. What are the real facts?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report on measles cases from January 1 through February 20, 2015 has some answers. Measles is a highly contagious disease, and the largest outbreak started in California. As of February 20, a total of 154 cases have been reported, and at the rate it is spreading, the number of cases for all of 2015 could eclipse the record number of 644 cases in 2014. About 15% of those contracting the disease end up in the hospital. Most affected in this outbreak are adults,

and the median age is greater than 20. By February 20, there were no cases reported in North Carolina.

All parents in NC are free to opt-out of vaccinations for their children for religious reasons no matter what school their children attend. I believe that homeschool parents are not any different than other parents when deciding to have their children immunized. If a poll was taken, I believe the percentage of homeschool parents taking an immunization waiver would be similar to that of the general population. Every public school, parochial school, private school and homeschool is required to keep records of their students' immunizations, but none of those schools are required by state law to keep records of the teachers or other adults working with the students. Adults are more likely to travel abroad than are children, and this is a common way to contract these contagious diseases. On January 29, the assistant surgeon general, Dr. Anne Schacht, said "... we assume that someone got infected overseas, visited the parks and spread the disease to others. Infected people in this outbreak here in the US this year have exposed

others in a variety of settings including school, day cares, emergency departments, outpatient clinics and airplanes." The threat is catching the disease not only from other students but also from teachers and other adults in a classroom setting. Because most homeschool students are not regularly exposed to classroom settings, they are less likely to contract or spread measles.

The implication that homeschool students are exempt from immunization requirements and are not having their children immunized is not supported by evidence.



Spencer Mason and his wife, Debbie, homeschooled their four children for twenty-six years. They have served on the NCHE board since 1988. Spencer served twice as president, from 1998-2000 and 2008-2012. He now serves as law and policy director. 



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What I Wish I'd Known — about Homeschooling

by Debra Bell

My son Michael wasn't all that thrilled to be homeschooled the first year we started. He gave me a month and then took matters into his own hands. He said we needed to set a schedule. We were doing something different every day! He wanted to have math at the same time followed by spelling (which I should be teaching, by the way) and then he wanted to go outside at 10:15 AM. I said "sure," and did my best to accommodate his desires because I was that kind of child-centered homeschooler. At the end of the first week I asked him why he was swinging so furiously on the swing set when he took his morning break. He hadn't been interested in that for quite some time now.

Turns out, he'd surveyed the neighborhood kids who went to a "real" school and following a schedule was how they did things there. The best part of the day, they had reported, was recess. Mike probed deeper and found out what you do at recess is swing on the swings. Like the Velveteen Rabbit, Mike was doing his best to be a "real" student so he could hold his own with his more conventionally-educated friends.

Many of us start our homeschool adventure with the same concerns my son Mike had. We want to be taken seriously, and we want others (including our spouse and children) to treat our homeschool as a "real" school, too. If you are anything like me, this can lead to a lot of angst and earnestness that puts undue pressure on us and fills the air with tension (just sayin'). Now with the benefit of 20/20 hindsight (my gang of four are all graduated—and they even have jobs!), I'm eager to pass along a few things I wish I'd known. It would have made the journey a bit more pleasant for all.

1. There is a learning curve. My good friend, Marie, an experienced homeschooler, told me, “The first year’s the hardest. It gets easier after that.” I didn’t really believe her. I mean I was only tackling kindergarten back then. I couldn’t imagine that being harder than, say, high school physics. Now speaking from the other side of high school physics, Marie was right. *Figuring out how to homeschool* is really the toughest task of all. Tell your kids to expect the unexpected. In fact, the first years of homeschooling are really about finding out what doesn’t work. Ask any veteran, they’ll tell you, “Nobody does what they did the first year again!” So relax. Enjoy the process. That’s part of the fun. There isn’t just one way to homeschool your kids. You have a lot of options. It’s okay to try out a few different resources, schedules, philosophies, curricula, etc. until you finally settle into a groove. And just when you think you’ve found that groove, your kids’ needs will change; your family circumstances will shift; new options will come down the pike, and you’ll be on the upside of that learning curve again.

2. Kids are resilient. Just in case you fear all this trial and error will mess up your kids, the good news is kids are pretty adaptable. Learning how to adjust and flex is an important life skill they are going to need in the future—you’re just giving them a head start. The best thing you can do is admit that you don’t have it all together. Ask your kids to pray for you. Mine let me know they were already on that when I suggested this source of comfort.

3. You are going to skip something. And worse, it will be something *really* important. My twin sons enjoyed calling me from college their freshman year to report in on yet another news flash *that would have been good to know!* I told them thanks, and that I’d make sure their younger siblings benefited from their feedback. Seriously speaking, we are living in a world of rapid transformation. The skills and knowledge base our kids will need for their future lives is anybody’s guess. That’s why majoring on learning how to learn is the very best use of our time. My sons were teasing me when they called; they knew I was at

home sweating bullets that first semester they were away at school. Fortunately, raising an independent learner had been a focus of our homeschool. And they just headed over to the library, searched online or visited their professors during office hours to get the information they needed to be successful.

Posture yourself as a fellow lifelong learner alongside your kids. Modeling a love for learning and taking joy in the process will be a powerful influence on your children’s attitudes toward education and the effort they put into it. It’s also the best backup plan to offset the effects of your inevitable failures and oversights.

4. What’s the rush? You have a lot more time than you think. I was always in a hurry with my homeschooling, fueled by a nagging sense of falling behind. I see now that was just a cultural norm not rooted in reality. God has created an inner timetable for each child called development. And it is not the smooth trajectory we see drawn on the pediatrician’s charts. Our kids’ physical, psychological and cognitive growth moves forward in fits and starts often preceded by seasons of dormancy. Kids need time to ponder, to experiment, to rest and to play—even into their teenage years. That’s how their brains develop; that’s how they learn anything deeply. We support this God-designed process by filling our homes with books and resources that pique their curiosity, by building leisure into their schedule and by bringing a sense of playfulness to our homeschooling endeavors.

And who says they have to be ready to leave home or go to college at age eighteen? Gap years are

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becoming far more common, as is a part time start to college or gentle entry into the work force. Don't be afraid to slow down your curriculum and to draw out the time allotted for completing algebra or learning how to read. What matters is consistency, not the pace we set.

5. Enjoy the choices. A couple of decades ago, we didn't have a lot of options. There were only a few curricula suppliers; co-operative activities for homeschoolers were non-existent; the Internet was in its infancy. Today, the challenge is sifting through all the choices available. There are any number of good phonics-based reading programs you can try; conventions are held in nearly every state with a full slate of speakers and a vendor hall filled with wares; support groups and co-ops in many towns offer monthly opportunities for parents and kids, and even those of us living remotely can find virtual classes and support online. For most of us, all these options are stress-inducing. We assume there is only right answer in each of these decisions, and we equate a choice that doesn't work out well with failure. Not true. As long as we learn something from decisions we later need to abandon or tweak, our kids benefit from the process. It will help them become risk-takers themselves and give them a healthy attitude toward their own missteps and mess-ups.

6. Don't try this alone. I need my girlfriends, and I'm grateful the women I shared my homeschooling years with are still among my dearest friends. My kids are still close with the friends they made during our homeschooling years, too. I didn't anticipate this side benefit to homeschooling. Find out where your local homeschool community is hanging out (in real time or online) and start networking like a pro. Your best advice is going to come from those in your neck of the woods. They'll know the ins and outs of complying with state regulations; they can recommend the resources that have worked best for them; they can keep you abreast of all that's happening in your area. Your kids will likely enjoy homeschooling more if they have their own network of support as well. So don't

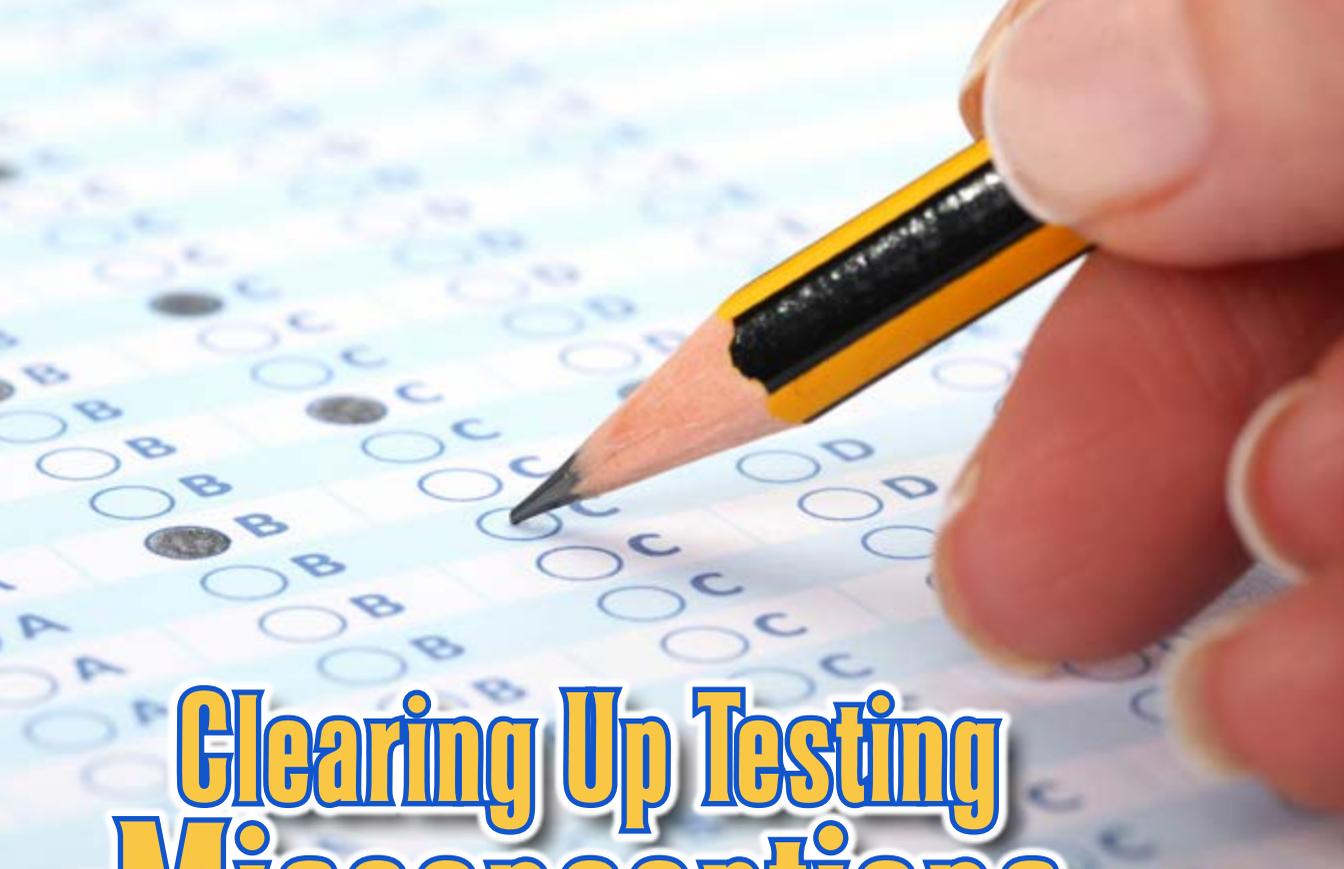
let the curriculum enslave you. Seize opportunities to take field trips with others or join in some co-operative classes such as, a homeschool chorus, Spanish class or basketball team.

7. Exploit the advantages of homeschooling. Don't re-create conventional schooling in your home. There's no need to. Homeschooling looks more like mentoring or tutoring. You don't have to use materials created for a classroom of twenty kids—you can use your local library for a lot of stuff—and it is usually more engaging. Tests and quizzes don't need to be the only method of evaluations. You have time for projects, papers and performances—the kinds of activities that kids will remember and value. Get out of the house and into the world; you have the time and freedom to explore. When I was a classroom teacher, I could only take one field trip a year with my students. With my own kids, we did a dozen or more a year. Some were pre-planned and carefully built into the curricula, but some of the best were on a whim often after catching a notice in the morning's paper.

I enjoy asking my adult children what they remember most from our homeschooling years. They each take a shot at teasing me about the math program that flopped or the history lessons I skipped. But then they list the field trips, the projects, the friendships, the plays, the interesting people we met and the wonderful children's literature we shared together. Their childhood friends from our homeschool community tell me the same. Homeschooling your kids will certainly give them a different education but it will be a "real" education, too.



Debra Bell homeschooled her four children K-12 and holds a Ph.D. in educational psychology. She is the author of the award-winning, best seller The Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling along with The Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling Teens published by Apologia Press. She is a popular convention speaker, and will be speaking at the 2015 NCHE annual conference in May. She may be contacted at www.debrabell.com.



Clearing Up Testing Misconceptions

by Pat Brewer

As someone who deals daily with questions and concerns about testing homeschoolers, I have encountered a number of misconceptions and some erroneous information concerning testing of homeschoolers. I hope that this article will clear up some of these misunderstandings for the homeschool teacher!

First of all, it is the parent's responsibility to follow the law in their state. Just because a testing company offers a particular test does not mean that it will qualify for meeting the requirements of our NC homeschooling law. One big misconception is that survey tests are acceptable in NC, but most survey tests do not test spelling and grammar, which are two areas required in NC. Most of the Survey Plus tests have added these subject areas, but it is your responsibility to check. The Woodcock-Johnson III and IV tests are both survey tests. These tests are administered professionally, but the information you receive, especially in math, is very limited because they are survey tests. For example, with the Math Calculation subtest, there are only two to three problems per grade level. A survey test gives you a sampling of the areas tested, and you have to be careful in using the results of a survey test for curriculum decisions. Math, especially, has too many building blocks, and you are not testing many of those skills. If your desire is to use your scores to plan your instructional program, more information is obtained from using a complete battery test. With any of these tests, the science and social studies tests are optional in NC.

As the teacher, you make the decision about what grade level testing you



want to use with your student. It is important to keep in mind that if you chose to re-enter a public or private school, your grade level recommendation does not have to be accepted by the school. The principal will make that decision, and they often will do their own testing for placement. Generally, public educators are not very trusting when parents are allowed to do their own testing, as is allowed in NC.

It has been reported, erroneously, that some tests are aligned to the Common Core Curriculum. The Iowa tests,

Form C, which have been recently released for homeschool use are one example. Form C of the Iowa Test is a *parallel form* to Form A, which has a number of outdated questions that are irrelevant to students in today's world. (The most famous question from Form A that has frustrated parents is the question about the card catalog.) Both Form A and Form C use the exact same norms of 2005. In order to use the same norms, Form C has to have the exact same subtests, the same number of questions and the question types cannot be changed. Since the Common Core Curriculum was written in 2010, it is impossible for the publishers to develop a test aligned to the Common Core and use the older 2005 norms.

The California Achievement Test publishers have done the same thing with their TerraNova-First Edition and the TerraNova-Second Edition (also known as the CAT/6). Both of these tests also use their norms from 2005. The second edition is only an update of some question content and pictures, to make it more relevant to students today. It would be impossible for the TerraNova/CAT 6 to be aligned to the Common Core since it uses norms from 2005.

The CAT/5 is still allowed in NC, though many states will not accept tests that were not normed in the last ten years. I used this test when I was a teacher in the 70s, when this test first came out. There was a kindergarten test, but kindergarten was not part of the public school system in many states. It is important to keep this in mind because the first grade test from the CAT/5 is more similar to the kindergarten tests that are used today. How many public

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school parents have you heard say kindergarten is what first grade used to be when they were in school? Curriculum has definitely changed over the last forty years since this test was published. There is a much greater emphasis on the higher order thinking skills in the later curriculum guidelines because of the emphasis of preparing our students for the technological world they will be working and living in. This test meets state guidelines in NC, but the information you receive will be limited because of the age of this test. This test was renormed in 1991, so if you have a high schooler taking this test, that student is compared to students who are forty years old or older now.

The ACT college entrance exam/achievement test does count in NC for homeschool guidelines. The SAT college entrance exam is a cognitive abilities test, used to predict student success in college, so it does not count as an achievement test unless you take the subject area tests that meet NC guidelines.

When looking at your score report, keep in mind that none of these tests are pass/fail. This decision needs to be made by the teacher using information from the total school year. The purpose of these tests is to meet state requirements and/or to give you information about your child's strengths and weaknesses so that you can gear your instruction to the meet the needs of your student. The most helpful score for you is the national percentile ranking of your student in each subject area. If your student scored at the eightieth percentile, then that tells you that your student scored as well as or better than 80% of the students who took the same test in the year that particular test was normed. When comparing your scores year-to-year, a year's growth would be indicated with approximately the same percentile score. GE (Grade Equivalent) is the most confusing and misunderstood score on the report and has limited meaning. Keep in mind that your student is only being compared with other same grade students in the same grade *normed* sample. The students are not being compared to other grade level students. If your student is in third grade and scores a GE of 6.8 in math, it only means that your student scored as well as a student in the eighth month of sixth grade would score on that same third grade test. There are no sixth grade math skills on a third grade test, so your student is not being evaluated on skills other than the skills of a third grader. Some grade level material is included that is slightly above and below the level of the test.

What makes a test standardized is that the directions are exactly the same for all students taking the test. Time limits must be followed or your results will not be valid. If your child has a diagnosis of a specific learning challenge, then you may make modifications to the testing administration. A note should be made as to what modifications are made, and this should be included on the child's score report. One modification that is never allowed is reading a reading test to a student. This would make the test a listening test, so the child has to do the best he can with the reading. Extended time is an allowed modification for a child who has a diagnosis. You are allowed to choose a lower grade level test that is more appropriate to the level of your student. Your scores compare your student to students who took the test with the time constraints, so this must be considered if modifications need to be made. If time restrictions are not followed with students that do not have a diagnosis, then your testing is not standardized and your results are invalid.

The last misconception on my list is that we don't need to worry about being comfortable with our homeschooling law in NC. As someone who deals with testing across the United States, I am seeing considerable tightening of homeschooling laws in many states. It takes only one legislator in NC to get the ball rolling towards tightening our present homeschooling law. We need to continue to be involved advocates for our homeschooling rights in NC. We must not allow ourselves to become too comfortable, or we may lose some of the benefits of our present homeschooling situation in NC.



Pat Brewer, M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction, is the director of Brewer Testing Services. Pat served for fourteen years as a classroom teacher and then another eight years as a curriculum/testing coordinator for the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools in North Carolina. She retired early to homeschool their youngest son, who is now a junior at NC State. She has had a passion for helping homeschool families. 🇺🇸



Of the Lord

by Jessica Thompson

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." Ephesians 6:4

"Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged." Colossians 3:21

These two mirroring verses are actually the only two commands to parents in the entire New Testament. In them, at first glance, most of us see a command to dads to be careful not to anger their kids and to raise them with discipline and teaching. A myriad of books has been written on the meaning of *discipline and instruction, bringing them up* and *provoke*.

The parent's job is to share. The Spirit's is to change.

But we have focused on the wrong parts of these verses. We have solely focused on what we are to do and forgotten what Jesus is about and what he has done. Without the *of the Lord* at the end of Ephesians 6:4, we would have no good news to give to our children. They would have no motivation for obedience, and we would miss out on sharing the joy of the gospel of Jesus with them.

These three words, *of the Lord*, would have been revolutionary to the early readers in Ephesus and are still today.

A break from cultural norms

The Greeks in the city would have brought their children up in the discipline and instruction of the philosophers of the day. With Socrates, Aristotle and Plato leading the pack of great thinkers, the Greeks would have prized their wisdom and taught their children to do the same. Their thoughts would have been the accepted wisdom. Modern-day, pop psychology is our equivalent—such as Dr. Spock, Dr. Phil and maybe even Oprah. (Poor comparisons, I know.)

Deeper than the Law

These same three words would have shocked the Jews who received the letter from Paul. They would have brought their children up in the discipline and instruction of the Law. The Torah was the rule of the day, and fathers spent their time learning it and training their children in it.

The majority of the church today also thinks of discipline and the Law. We want our kids to know and obey the rules, and this is where we spend the bulk of our time—in trying to get kids to simply follow the rules. We too often forget about their hearts.

Training our children of the Lord

To train our children in the Lord is gospel-centered parenting. So we tell them about Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension and his intercession for them. We tell them the good news of all that salvation brings: full forgiveness, adoption, redemption, atonement and propitiation (Romans 3:25, 1 John 2:2). You don't have to use all those big, delicious theological words, but you can break them down for your kids teaching in their own words and everyday situations. The following are examples.

- When your child lies because he doesn't want to get into trouble, you can tell him that his life is hidden in Christ and the very sin he is trying to cover up has already been paid for. (Colossians 3:3)
- When your child steals, you can tell her that God promises to take care of his kids and give them everything they need. (Matthew 6:25–33).
- When your child feels alone, you give the comforting words of Christ, "I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:20)
- When your child is troubled by his sin, you can tell him, "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." (Psalms 103:12)

- When your child feels friendless, you can tell her that Jesus calls us his friends. (John 15:15)
- When your child feels like no one understands, share that Jesus sympathizes with him, in his weakness, and Jesus prays for him with understanding of what he's going through. (Hebrews 4:15)

Jesus is strong enough to use our failures to glorify Himself.

The gospel really does change everything about our lives—that is the good news! It is *good news* that informs each situation we encounter. As you share these truths with your children, you can know that the Holy Spirit's job is to open up their hearts to the beauty of God's truth. Your job is to share; his job is to change. You can rest; you can enjoy your kids, and you can pray that the Holy Spirit will open your eyes and that he will use you in their lives.

The good news for us parents is that Jesus is strong and faithful enough to use our failures to glorify Himself. He works in our weaknesses and He proves Himself strong.



*Jessica Thompson speaks at women's conferences and other events. She and her husband have three children ranging in age from elementary school to high school. She is the author of a devotional book for families, *Exploring Grace Together*. She is the co-author of *Give Them Grace*, along with her mother, Elyse Fitzpatrick. Jessica and Elyse are featured speakers at the NCHC 2015 annual conference.*





Are You Considering Military Service?

by Jonathan Shockey

Spring is the time to take action if a home-educated child is interested in a military academy nomination or a Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) scholarship leading to a commission as a military officer. Note that spring is specifically time to take action, not just time to prepare.

Preparation for the successful pursuit of any form of military service is a long-term endeavor as our shrinking military has high moral, academic and physical standards. While recruitment standards do vary in response to the needs of the Department of Defense, per a 2013 DOD study, only twenty-nine percent of seventeen to twenty-four year-old Americans even qualify to serve. Requirements to serve as an officer normally, almost always, include a college degree. According to the "2013 Demographics Profile of the Military Community," officers comprise 16.6 percent of the total military force. Competition for service academy admissions (full-ride scholarships) and college-funding ROTC scholarships is keen and the formal journeys normally start in the spring of a student's junior year of high school, culminating with final selections in February or March of the year of entry.

The first step in the military academy application process is to determine basic eligibility: a U.S. citizen, of good moral character, unmarried with no dependents and at least seventeen but less than twenty-three by July 1 of the year of entry. Before requesting and completing a pre-candidate questionnaire, aspirants should familiarize

themselves with the entry process and requirements of the specific academy in order to consider the level of competition, as the academies seek evidence of well-rounded leadership, academic and athletic abilities.

Numerous ways for the home-educated to show leadership abilities include activities such as church organizations, scouting, civil air patrol, public speaking, musical performance/instruction, camp counseling, team/club sports and community service. Note that the academies look for specific leadership positions, awards received and documentation of achievements or services provided, more than just membership or participation.

Regarding academics, academies do place a greater weight on standardized test scores of home-educated applicants due to the absence of graded coursework and/or peer comparison. Curriculum should follow a typical college preparatory model with emphasis on English and math. Average SAT scores of those gaining admission to a military academy are in the mid to upper 600s in both verbal and math categories. Mean ACT scores are about 29 to 30.

Air Force Academy Class of 2017 Candidate Fitness Assessment		
EXERCISE	Average for Men	Average for Women
Basketball Throw	70'	42'
Pull-Ups	12	3
Flexed Arm Hang (women)		24 sec
Shuttle Run	8.4 sec	9.5 sec
Modified Sit-Ups (crunches)	81	81
Push-Ups	63	43
One Mile Run	6:12	7:03

Athletic participation is an important indicator of an applicant's potential. Suggestions for the home-educated include club or individual competition in swimming, tennis, gymnastics, baseball, basketball, track/cross-country and 5K road races. During the competition for admission, a candidate fitness assessment (CFA) will measure and evaluate a candidate's potential. The assessment, completed in less than forty minutes, will include two minutes for each of the first five exercises, with three minutes rest between each, followed by a one-mile run. Average CFA scores of those gaining admission to the various academies are similar.

A military service academy appointment also requires

a nomination, the majority of which are from the Congressional or Vice Presidential categories. While a nomination does not guarantee an appointment, no appointment can be offered without a nomination. For nomination processes, contact or refer to the website of your senator or representative, or search for academy nominations at <http://www.whitehouse.gov>.

Considerations and standards for attaining ROTC scholarships, which fund attendance at civilian colleges and universities, are similar to those of the academies. Application for an ROTC scholarship is a separate process from the college application. The student must apply to each school just like any other student, while also applying for an ROTC scholarship that the student can use at any school offering the programs.

Even without a scholarship, students can enroll in ROTC at schools that offer it and compete for other-than-four-year ROTC scholarships. While acceptance of a scholarship will entail a military service commitment, taking ROTC classes alone will not. Standards for acceptance to an ROTC program are obviously not as high as the scores required to obtain a scholarship. Completion of ROTC training requirements

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or completion of Officer's Candidate School after college graduation, acceptance to which is more competitive than ROTC, may lead to a commission as an officer, depending on how well the student performs in the programs.

<http://www.goarmy.com/rotc.html>

<http://www.afrotc.com/>

<http://www.nrotc.navy.mil/index.aspx>

<http://todaysmilitary.com/>

While the preceding information highlights paths to funding a college education enroute to a commission as an officer, the commission itself, or enlistment in the military without a college education and commission, are worthy endeavors that offer many benefits. The same considerations for attaining appointments and scholarships are good indicators of future success in ROTC and military service, including special operations.

Consideration of a military enlistment should also involve significant preparation and consideration of available



programs, especially if the desire is to serve in a specific capacity such as Special Forces. Review recruitment material, seek wise counsel and prayerfully consider decisions leading to such a commitment.

As military service does include inherent risk, stress and enormous responsibility, seeking military service should be in response to a perceived call, a sincere desire to serve or at a minimum, individual acknowledgement that the benefits are worth the cost.

Note that the information presented indicates the standard or typical paths to the most competitive military service entry points. There are many other avenues. An individual with an extreme desire to serve, not barred for medical, substance abuse, aptitude or conduct reasons, can overcome most other obstacles to service.



Jonathan Paul Shockey, Lt. Col. (retired) and his wife, Joy, are the homeschooling parents of Savannah and Landen. When Savannah was two years old, they accepted an invitation from Joy's sister to attend the 2001 NCHC Conference.

By the end of the conference, they knew that homeschooling was part of God's plan for their family. After living and being active in several communities and churches while serving in the United States Air Force, the family now resides in Sanford. Jonathan is currently an assistant director of operations at Pope Army Airfield and serves as NCHC region 6 liaison. 

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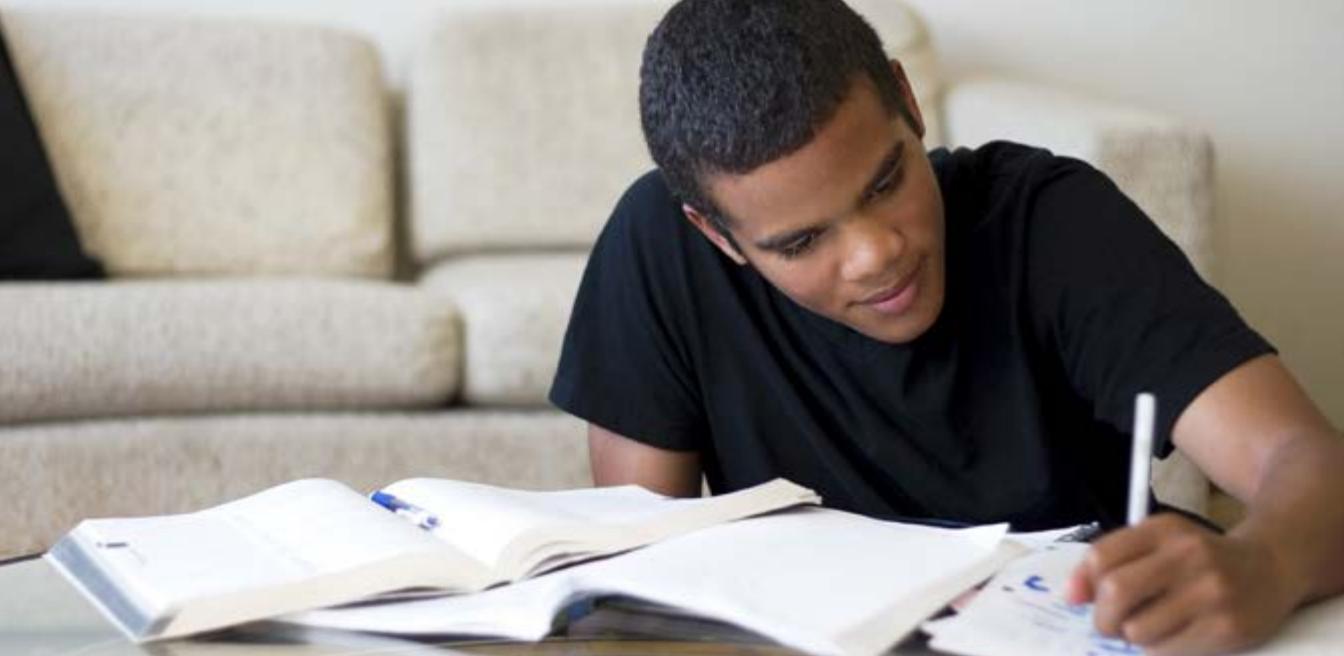


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How to Give Yourself a Scholarship

by Evelyn Bickley

One February morning a few years ago, I stood in my son's bedroom looking at his Apologia biology textbook. He had been diligently working his way chapter by chapter through the book, and I was preparing to quiz him on the vocabulary and end of chapter review questions. "This is such a thorough course," I thought to myself. "It's too bad that he'll have to learn it all over again in a few years when he goes off to college."

That's when it hit me, like an "I coulda had a V-8" moment: this son was not heading in the direction of a math/science degree. He was clearly heading toward the liberal arts. Why should he have to repeat this same material at a college, at the cost of thousands of dollars and spend extra time in class? He could take a CLEP test!

I was familiar with the concept of CLEP tests since I had taken an educational psychology test many years ago in college. CLEP, which stands for College Level Examination Program, is an alternative way to earn college credits. Developed by the College Board, the same company that owns the SAT and AP exams, CLEP tests are accepted by more than 2,900 colleges and universities. They are ideally suited for individuals who have already learned college level material either by independent study, life experiences or military training. The thirty-three tests that are currently available cover a wide variety of subjects including history and the social sciences, composition and literature, science and mathematics, business and foreign languages.

The tests roughly correspond to the kinds of classes most colleges and universities require in their general education core curriculum taken by students in their first two years of college. Regardless of the student's major, most colleges require some general English (composition as well as literature), math, science, history, social science and humanities/arts classes. CLEP offers five English options, four math, three science, four history and eight social science tests from which to choose. There are also five business and three foreign language CLEPs available.

How does this apply to you and your student? If, for example, as the administrator of your school, you require your students to study American government as part of their curriculum, they can study for you, fulfilling whatever reading, papers and exams you wish and then also take the American government CLEP. Each CLEP taken and passed (usually with a scaled score of fifty or better) can potentially earn the student three to twelve college credits. The student will have earned a transcript-worthy high school credit *and* college credit at the same time. If the student takes the CLEP test and does not earn the minimum passing score, all that has been lost (besides the potential emotional toll), is the \$80 test fee plus any administrative charges added by your local testing center. When it comes time to submit the scores to your student's college, you need only to request the passing scores to be sent, so the attempt will not be noted.

There is no stated minimum age to begin taking CLEP tests. I know of some middle school students who have already begun putting college credits *in the bank*. Additionally, the test results are good for twenty years, so even if your student chooses not to go to college right away, they are a long way from having their scores expire.

Colleges accept different CLEPs and grant varying numbers of credits. If your student is already in high school and has begun to narrow his college choices, check those college websites for their CLEP policy. NC State, for example, accepts only thirteen of the tests while UNC Charlotte accepts twenty-nine. Also, especially in the foreign language tests, a higher score can earn greater numbers of credits. At UNC Charlotte, a score of fifty on the French exam will earn the student six credits while a score of fifty-two will earn twelve.

The exams are offered at approximately 1,800 testing centers nationwide. Most community colleges and colleges aimed at the returning, adult student such as Strayer, University of Phoenix and Pfeiffer offer the tests. Administration fees vary, but are generally about \$20 to \$25. Registration can be made on-line at the College Board website or directly with the testing center. Either way, though, you'll need to contact the testing for a testing appointment.

In addition to the CLEP website (<https://clep.collegeboard.org/>), I have found great help from a couple of other sites when selecting which exams to pursue and how to prepare. Two of the best are ClepPrep (<http://clepprep.tripod.com/cleplessonplans/>) and Free Clep Prep (<http://www.free-clep-prep.com/index.html>). ClepPrep is produced and owned by a homeschooling mom of four, two of whom have already graduated from college using credits by examination. She offers lesson/study plans and

lots of practical advice. Free Clep Prep is operated by *Justin* who began earning credits by examination while in the military to gain his degree. One of the features I like best about this site is his purely subjective evaluation of the difficulty levels of the different tests. Both sites offer great insights and help on this journey.

So, how does all of this translate into a scholarship-like savings? Well, according to the College Board's most recent figures, tuition/fees, room and board for in-state residents attending public universities runs about \$19,000 per year and \$40,000 for students at private schools.¹ If you divide that by the ten classes (thirty credits) a freshman typically takes, each class averages \$1,900 to \$4,000. Therefore, for every three credits your student earns by CLEPPing, he has given himself between \$1,800 and \$3,900 in scholarship money (after deducting the approximately \$100 cost per CLEP).

If a student earns five classes worth of credits, he will have saved an entire semester's expenses, opened up the option of taking lighter class loads and gained priority in class registration over others in his cohort. Even if the student earns fewer than a full semester's worth of credits, it still allows him the potential for lighter class loads or completing a semester over a summer.

College credit by examination is an achievable and economical way to stretch the family budget and speed the student on their way to a college degree. And that son of mine who was taking biology? CLEP tests, along with some dual enrollment classes, allowed him to enter college as a second semester sophomore. He has had priority registration status, has been able to take more electives of interest and will complete his bachelor's degree in three years, saving more than \$30,000.

¹ http://www.collegedata.com/cs/content/content_payarticle_tmpl.jhtml?articleId=10064



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



Read a Good Book to Your Children

by J. Mark Fox

When my children were little, we would read good books together several nights a week. We spent time with Peter and Lucy in Narnia, with Laura Ingalls on the Minnesota prairie and we even walked the battlefields of France with Sgt. Alvin York.

We also read about Daniel in the lion's den, David and Goliath and three Hebrew boys thrown into a fiery furnace who lived to tell about it. These stories, of course, come from the best book ever written. Our children never got tired of hearing the stories of daring and adventure that we find in the Bible. There we came face to face with ordinary people like ourselves who did extraordinary things for God. Just this week, I wished that my children were little again so we could curl up on the sofa, sip hot chocolate and watch the fire while we read Acts 27.

It's a sailor's tale, a tale of the high seas, and Paul is right in the middle of it. A prisoner on his way to Rome to stand before Caesar, he has two traveling companions, Aristarchus and Luke. The other 273 people on the ship consist of the owner, the captain and crew (sailors), and the soldiers who are charged with transporting Paul and other prisoners to Rome. The soldiers are led by a centurion named Julius. The other prisoners are most likely being transported to Rome to provide entertainment in the coliseum as they are chased down and killed by lions. So here we have sailors, soldiers and slaves

all thrown together by God for a most unlikely adventure. It is a study in itself just to observe the tension between the sailors and the soldiers as Army and Navy each take a turn at elevating self-protection above sworn duty. The sailors, at one point, lowered the lifeboat, pretending to be putting out anchors, but were in fact trying to escape. Then later, we find the soldiers planning to kill the prisoners to make sure that none of them escape. And of course, all of this is taking place in the middle of a hurricane as this ancient vessel is tossed around the Mediterranean like a toy. The climax of the drama comes after the ship has been battered by the storm for fourteen days, and Luke writes, "all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned." When the storm started two weeks earlier, the ship lost its way, and was blown off course, away from the island of Crete and into the middle of the sea. The men must have lost their appetite, for they had gone without food for fourteen days while they did everything in their power to save the ship. Do you see the progression, the downward spiral? Lost their way. Lost their appetite. Lost their hope. And it is precisely at this point that the character and the leadership of Paul have their greatest impact.

As you read the story to your children, see if you can find the three things Paul said to the other men on the ship to encourage them not to give up. Notice how God used the least likely character on board to lead, simply because he kept his head while everyone else was losing theirs. Learn how a plot to have Paul murdered is discovered and foiled. Mostly, observe how God intervenes in the affairs of men and shows them His grace.

A quiet evening with your family, hot chocolate, a warm fire, an amazing tale that really happened, that reveals the graciousness of God—it doesn't get any better than that.



Mark and Cindy Fox have been homeschooling since 1988. They have seven children and only one more graduate to go. Mark pastors Antioch Community Church in Elon and writes a blog at www.jmarkfox.com. Mark has led numerous seminars, including ones for pastors, men and couples. Email Mark at markfox@antiochchurch.cc. 🍷

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EVERYONE WINS WHEN SPOUSES SHOW

by Tanya Dickens

It's never healthy for people in a relationship to compare responsibilities, but if someone feels their role in the home is minimized or taken for granted, it's easy to get caught up in this game. Even though I am a homeschool mom who works harder than I ever did as a business owner, I am well aware of the tremendous role and responsibility my husband carries as the primary source of our household income. I witness the stress he experiences in keeping his boss happy, especially when he had a boss that was never pleased with his efforts. I sympathize when he goes to work sick as a dog, because he has a deadline to meet. However, if we moms are influenced by our self-centered universe, and surrounded by self-centered little people during most of our waking hours, we may find it hard to walk in our husband's shoes and encourage him along the way. This is why I think it's more important for husbands and wives to join forces and work together, to encourage each other, and to find ways to give each other a reason to get up and take another one for the team. James and I have become very good at working as a team during our nearly seventeen years of marriage. We even like to take it a step further by each continually sharing with our children the tremendous value of the other person and how their various attributes, jobs and roles play into making our family successful.

When our children complain about Daddy having to work instead of doing whatever they would like, I immediately point to the purpose and benefit of having a daddy who is responsible and willing to get up and go to work to provide not only for our basic necessities, but also for many luxuries. The clothes, warm home, family vacations, not to mention our ability to homeschool, are all products having of a godly husband and father. During these teachable



MUTUAL LOVE AND RESPECT

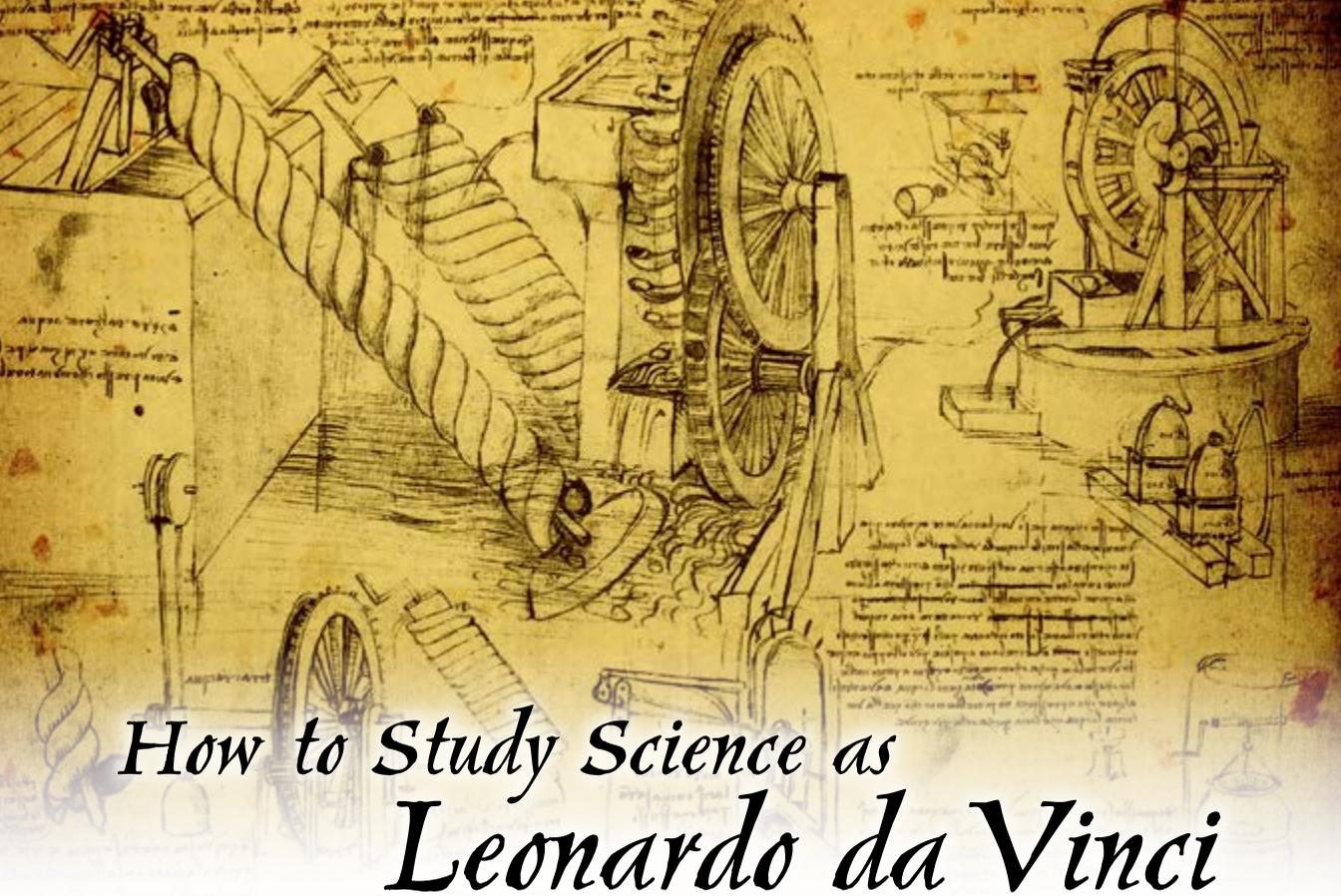
moments, I urge them to also encourage their father. It's amazing to see how our children respond when daddy comes home at the end of a busy day. They treat him like a king! Our four-year-old always greets him with, "Daddy, how was your work?" Our daughters cater to him, offering to make him tea if he's coughing. They're constantly making him pictures and cards to decorate his office. In the same manner, my husband is constantly complimenting and verbally acknowledging his appreciation for all that I do. He brags about me to his co-workers and friends telling them about all of the things that I do: caring for the children, decorating and remodeling the home and cooking. One of his favorite compliments is, "He that findeth a wife, findeth a good thing; and he that findeth a wife that can cook, findeth an even better thing!" Therefore, the end result is two happy parents who feel loved and appreciated by each other and their children.

As we model a mutually appreciative and loving relationship, our children see a beautiful portrait of marriage. Observing us will help them learn how to function as husbands and wives themselves when the time comes. This

approach, showing mutual love and respect, is so much less stressful and more rewarding than the unhealthy alternative that literally sucks the life out of everyone under your roof. If you are struggling in this area, I urge you give this model a try. It will become second nature to you before you know it and everyone in your household will reap the benefits.



Tanya and James Dickens have been married for fifteen years. They both were workaholics driven by the possibilities of building an empire. However, God had a completely different idea of success for their lives. After nearly ten years of marriage, they decided to adopt a child, but God thought it better that they adopt two. One year and three preschools later, homeschooling became the perfect way of life for the Dickens family. They are now the parents of five. Tanya serves on the NCHC board as treasurer.



How to Study Science as Leonardo da Vinci

by Jen Greenholt

What do Leonardo da Vinci, Mark Twain, Thomas Edison, Marie Curie, Thomas Jefferson and John D. Rockefeller have in common? Not all of these individuals were professional scientists, but all of them used the same simple tool of scientific inquiry to pursue their passions: a notebook.

Leonardo da Vinci's scientific notebook is perhaps the most famous. The Renaissance artist's "Codex Arundel" was handwritten in Italian and features mirror writing (legible only when held up to a mirror), diagrams of the human body and sketches for flying machines, catapults and other devices.ⁱ

Two hundred years later, U.S. President Thomas Jefferson kept meticulous records of weather, geography, climate and plant and animal life at his home in Virginia. It is said he carried a compass, a level and a thermometer in his pockets everywhere he went so that he could document accurately. He took notes on a set of ivory tabs connected at one end,ⁱⁱ very much like the resources homeschool families use today.

In the 1800s, American author Mark Twain sketched characters for his novels, but he also sketched inventions, some that he later patented. In 1883, he sketched plans for a memory-improving game that would cover 4,000 historical facts, including "Beginning and ending of Dynasties; Revolutions, Plagues, Discoveries, Introductions, Inventions, & Memorable Earthquakes, Fires, Storms, & other Calamities."ⁱⁱⁱ Imagine using that game in your history studies!

Can you picture the austere scientist Thomas Edison tearing pages out of a notebook and tossing them over his shoulder? Edison kept hundreds of softcover and hardcover notebooks during his career. In them, he wrestled with names for his experiments, in one case vacillating between "auto-electrograph," "electrophone" and "acoustophone," before

settling on the now-famous “phonograph.”^v When he filed patents for his inventions, he had all the sketches and descriptions ready at his fingertips.

Businessman John D. Rockefeller, Sr., jotted down detailed information when he toured his oil refineries in the early 1900s, making notes for improving his business model. He started with a single, red-covered notebook he called “Ledger A.”^v That first notebook reflected the accountability and diligence that would characterize his work and philanthropy throughout his career.

Nobel Prize winner Madame Curie kept detailed records from her chemical experiments, and because her notebooks were always by her side in the laboratory, they are still radioactive more than a hundred years later.^{vi}

As they rose in their respective fields, each of these men and women kept meticulous records of their ideas and experiments, using simple notebooks to achieve great things. Today, keeping a journal of observations and ideas remains an inexpensive and invaluable tool for science students. Innovators in a wide range of disciplines have discovered the value of a simple notebook to improve the skills of memory, observation and recordkeeping. Your family, too, can benefit from adding this tool to your homeschool.

Follow these guidelines with your children to make the most of your journaling.

- Choose a notebook that is comfortable to use, easy to transport and sturdy enough to survive the rigors of science, from the kitchen sink to the backyard.
- Use a well-sharpened pencil, in case you need to erase and rewrite.
- Always start by writing your name, the date and the name of your project or experiment at the top of the page, so you can find it later.
- Be neat: Illegible handwriting may be faster, but it will slow you down later when you (or others) attempt to re-read your notes.
- When possible, use a notebook with grid lines for sketching, to capture proportions accurately.
- Leave room for marginal comments on one side of the page. Some scientists draw a vertical line to separate their results (large column) from their comments and tangential ideas (small column).
- A good principle is to record more than you think you will need. Later, you can weed out unnecessary information.

Very young children may start by sketching what they observe in their backyard: flowers, leaves, interesting bugs and unusual plants. Older children can apply these same observation skills to more complex experiments and projects. Many lab journals are designed for use in science labs, but do not be afraid to apply your skills to other *field research* as well, such as visiting the Grand Canyon, testing a recipe in the kitchen or going snorkeling.

Opportunities to practice science are everywhere. When your children practice good science, taking notes and recording the findings in a lab journal, they walk in the footsteps of Jefferson, Edison and Curie—but, one hopes, with a little less radiation.

Further reading:

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Footnotes

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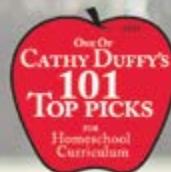
Jen Greenholt, a homeschool graduate and North Carolina native, is the author of the Words Aptly Spoken series of literature study guides and co-author of the Classical Acts & Facts History Cards. A Shakespearean at heart, she completed a BA at Bridgewater College of Virginia and an MA in English at Wake Forest University. She currently serves as the production director for Classical Conversations MultiMedia.

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Email addresses wanted. Since NCHE uses email for much of its communication, we need your email addresses to stay in touch. If you would like to receive our weekly emails, you can go online to nche.com and sign up for the weekly email.

NCHE Changes Regions. Good changes are happening to the NCHE regional map. There will be fewer regions and a shifting of some counties to new regions. Originally, when communicating with support groups in the state was by phone, we needed more regions to reach a smaller area.



With the ease of email and Facebook, it is now much easier to reach homeschoolers and support groups, and so, we are able to increase the size of the regions and decrease the number of regions from twelve to nine. We paid attention to not dividing counties where homeschoolers network together. We also welcome several new regional liaisons to the NCHE board: Diane Helfich, Briggs Greenwood, Fran Jones, Matthew McDill and April Briley. They join those who are continuing: Jerri Neal, Anita Hudson, Jonathan Shockey and Kathryn Landoli.

Please examine the regional map and see the region where your county is located. Then get to know your regional liaison; they are here to serve you.

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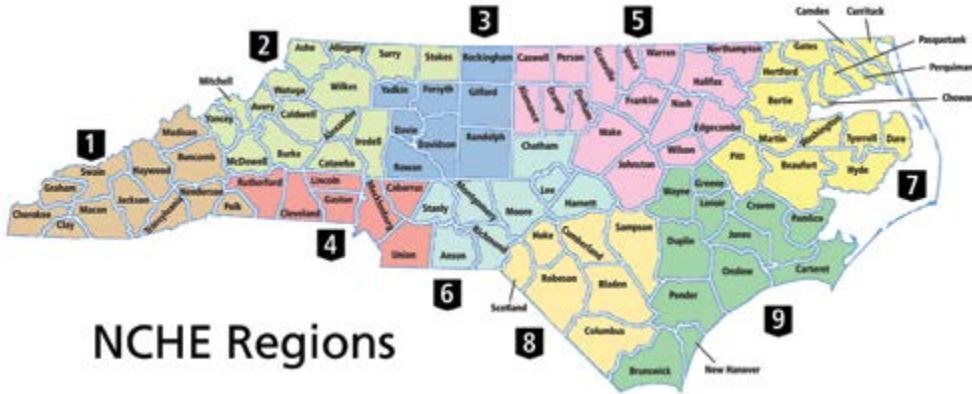
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North Carolina Homeschool History

Although home education is the oldest form of education, it was not officially recognized in North Carolina until a Supreme Court decision in 1985 ruled that a homeschool could operate under the existing private school law. Through the efforts of concerned members of North Carolinians for Home Education, a bill was passed in 1988 that specifically named home education as an alternative for complying with compulsory school attendance requirements.

About NCHE

Our purpose is to protect the freedom to educate at home, to provide encouragement and support to families choosing home education for their children and to promote home education as an excellent educational alternative. Since its beginning in 1984, NCHE has grown from a few pioneering families to a statewide association of home educators that promotes home education and supports home educators. NCHE is governed by a working board of directors who volunteer their time and efforts to represent homeschoolers in every part of the state. A non-profit organization, NCHE operates on the basis of biblical principles and living faith. NCHE welcomes members of all races and religions.

NCHE Membership

Membership in NCHE is available to anyone who supports home education. NC residents who are homeschooling must be in compliance with the North Carolina homeschool law. Membership is obtained by donating any amount to NCHE (suggested donation is \$25). The service of NCHE is made possible by the generous and consistent contributions of its supporters. The NCHE ideals are: educational excellence, parental authority and responsibility for education, protection and promotion of the family, diligence in moral and ethical instruction, responsible citizenship, freedom of choice among educational alternatives and defense of constitutional rights.



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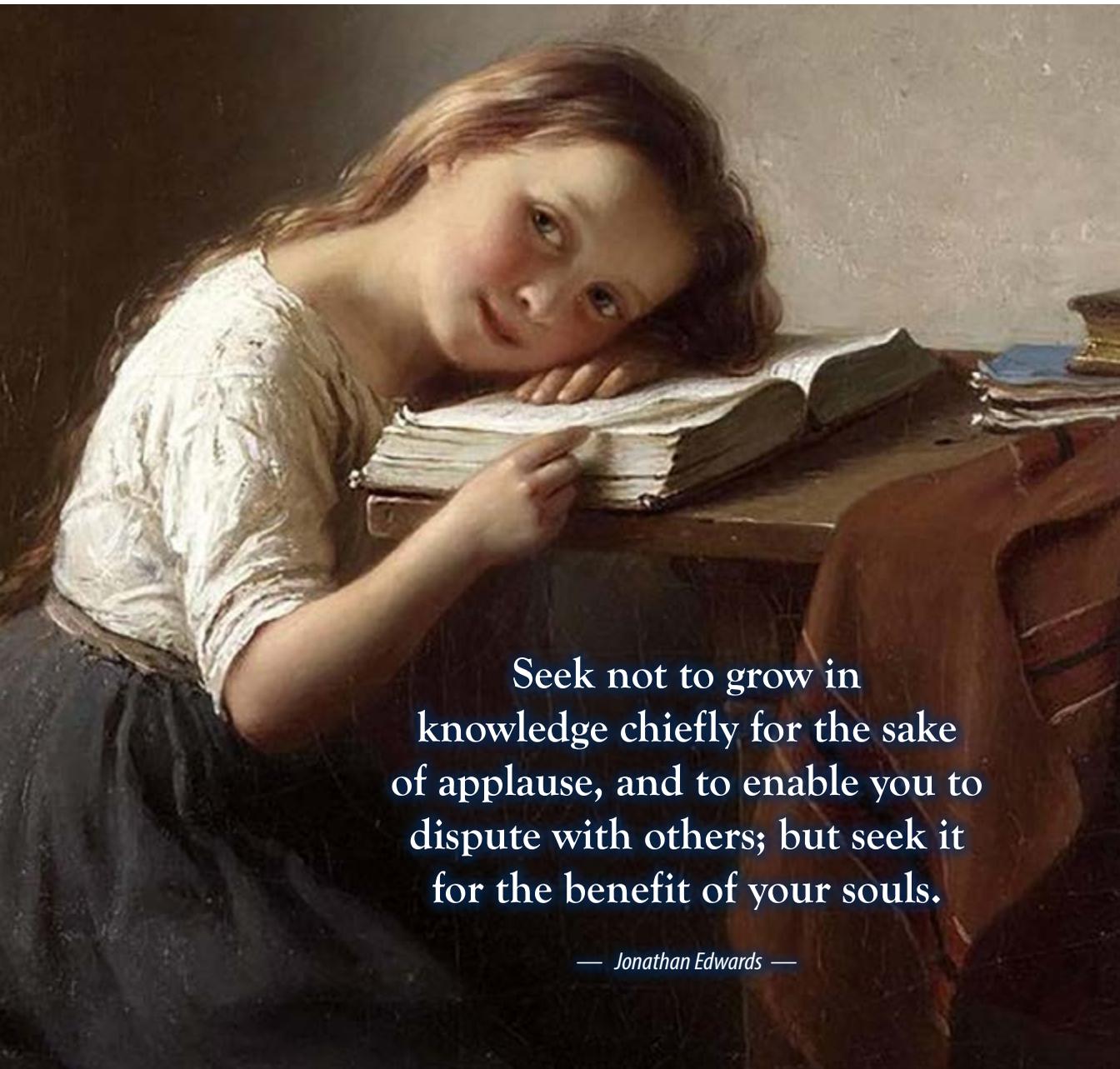
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