

HOMESCHOOL *Arizona*



A PUBLICATION OF ARIZONA FAMILIES FOR HOME EDUCATION

Summer 2025

Choosing Homeschool Curriculum for a Child Who Learns Differently

Kathy Kuhl

2025 Legislative SUMMARY

Dear Homeschool Parent: Read This on the Hard Days

April Edwards

Why Your Family Needs Read-Alouds

Cindy Puhek

In This Issue: Celebrating 2025 Graduates & Scholarship Winners! Plus highlights from our 42nd Annual Convention!

ABOUT AFHE

Arizona Families for Home Education (AFHE) is the statewide organization that has been serving the needs and protecting the rights of Arizona's homeschooling families since 1983. AFHE is a 501(c)(3) non-profit educational, religious, and charitable corporation directed by a Christian board. AFHE membership is available to all Arizona homeschool parents.

OUR MISSION

AFHE exists to **INSPIRE** parents to homeschool their children; **PROMOTE** parent-directed, privately funded, home-based education; **PRESERVE** the freedom to homeschool; and **SUPPORT** parents who choose a home-based education option for their children.

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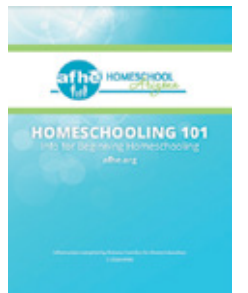
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What will you find at AFHE.org/Get-Started?

AFHE's free e-booklet, Homeschooling 101, is a step-by-step guide to getting off to a great start! Download this guide and you've already taken a smart first step in the homeschool journey.

Homeschooling 101 is an overview of recommended steps and preparation for homeschooling, and a compilation of advice from experienced homeschool parents. Work through it on your own or with a group!



Are you ready to grow as a home educator? Would you like to delve into learning styles, testing, record-keeping, time management, homeschool success stories, and more?

Homeschool University's Start Strong online course is for you! It is loaded with videos and written content to equip and inspire you! Move through the material at your own pace with lifetime access.

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- Get Inspired And Equipped
- 14 Day Course
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AFHE.ORG/START-STRONG

\$79
\$25 off for the rest of 2025!
Just \$54 for the course!

Follow a link to our **AZ Law & Affidavit** page, where you can:

- view a brief video reviewing the role that AFHE has played since 1983 in protecting homeschool freedoms in Arizona
- read Arizona's legal definition of **homeschool** and the statutes that pertain to homeschooling
- view a walk-through video for filing the Affidavit of Intent to Homeschool (the only legally required paperwork in Arizona!)
- download the affidavit and simple instructions



Discover even more!

Free MP3 downloads: Listen to recorded workshop sessions to help you launch well on the homeschool adventure!! Session titles:

- Too Many Choices? Making Sense of Educational Styles and Curriculum
- Stepping Outside the School "Box": Creating a Home Where We Learn

Link to our FAQs about Getting Started, Homeschooling & the ESA, Testing, and Graduation & Diplomas





Kathy Kuhl

CHOOSING HOMESCHOOL CURRICULUM

for a child who learns differently

Parents often ask me to make curriculum recommendations for their children with special needs. But it's like asking me to recommend shoes. I have questions: what size, width, and activity? Any colors you or they can't stand? What have you tried and how did it work?

Every child is unique, but here are my steps to shopping for a curriculum.

1. Study your child first

Make a short list of their strengths, weaknesses, and interests. Sometimes we parents are tempted to focus on our child's weaknesses. List them, but also notice strengths. Passing math or spelling is something to celebrate! Being able to explain 27 kinds of horses, rocks, or locomotives is a strength—even if you hear way too much about it.

Note those passions. If your child loves music, drawing, storytelling, or talking to people—even if they aren't good at it yet—write that down. Build your plans around their passions, strengths, and weaknesses.

Keep it short. When you've got that written, you are ready to:

2. Set goals for the year

Not too many. One new homeschooler showed me her goals for three months. It was more than could be done in a year. You might hire a special education consultant to help you.

Don't neglect basic life skills, whether it's learning to wash hands, fix dinner, balance a checkbook, or deal with a disagreement with a friend. If the child is doing something that drives you crazy, like not putting away shoes, even that is a candidate for your list of goals.

3. Network

Now that you know what you want to focus on, ask friends with kids with similar issues what curriculum they use. Don't know anyone homeschooling a child like yours? Join Facebook groups and online forums. Search the groups' archives, in case someone asked your question last year.

If you aren't in any online groups yet, search for groups for "homeschool" plus whatever special needs you are working with; e.g. "homeschool autism" or "homeschool dyslexic." Also search with more general terms, like "homeschool special needs."

Look carefully to see who sponsors the forums. A forum for users of one curriculum, hosted by that curriculum, may have 95-100% positive reviews. Caveat emptor.

4. Please touch the products

If you can go to a convention, go. When you handle the materials, you learn things that a catalog or website won't reveal. For instance: how big is the type and spacing? Is it colorful? (That's engaging for some students and distracting for others. Ask your child. Observe what bothered them before.) How many practice problems are provided? Are there alternate versions of quizzes and tests? (Some of our kids need second and third chances.)

Talk to the representatives—many know the products very well. These publishers are often small businesses and homeschool families, so support them by purchasing from them. If you need time to go home and think, do, but purchase from their sites if you can.

If you cannot go to a convention, download samples and examine them well. Take advantage of free trials. (editor's note: Your local support group can be another great resource for investigating and

researching curriculum options. Ask in your support group's forum or chat group if anyone has used the curriculum you're considering, and then set up a time to meet and compare notes.)

5. Watch for bargains and surprises

Sometimes you'll find something marvelous that doesn't fit your plans. Perhaps you had other plans for science, but then you saw something you know your child would love. Would it fit your larger goals?

Once when I was shopping for shoes, I was looking for a pair of ivory pumps. I never imagined I'd buy pink slings. But I saw a well-made pair I liked, marked down. I changed my plan, kept to my goal, and stayed under budget.

By studying your child, setting goals, networking, handling the merchandise, and thinking creatively when you find unexpected bargains, you can turn the chore of shopping for curriculum into—if not fun—at least a satisfying shopping experience.



KATHY KUHL equips parents to help children with learning challenges, combining information and insight with practical suggestions, humor, and personal experience. After homeschooling a bright, dyslexic, creative, and highly distractible son, she interviewed 64 families and wrote *Homeschooling Your Struggling Learner* to help anyone supporting teens and children who "learn differently." Kathy was a featured speaker at the 2025 AFHE Convention. This article is adapted from a guest post that originally appeared on Jolanthe Erb's blog.

LEARNDIFFERENTLY.COM

Try these websites
that offer curriculum reviews
or detailed overviews:

Cathy Duffy Reviews
cathyduffyreviews.com

The Homeschool Resource Roadmap
homeschoolroadmap.org

The Old Schoolhouse
theoldschoolhouse.com/product-reviews

Homeschooling with Dyslexia
homeschoolingwithdyslexia.com/
?s=curriculum+review

Proverbial Homemaker
proverbialhomemaker.com/?s=reviews

Rainbow Resource Center
rainbowresource.com

(select your desired product, then click on
"description" and "category description")

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2025 AFHE SENIOR HIGH GRADUATION *Ceremony & Celebration*

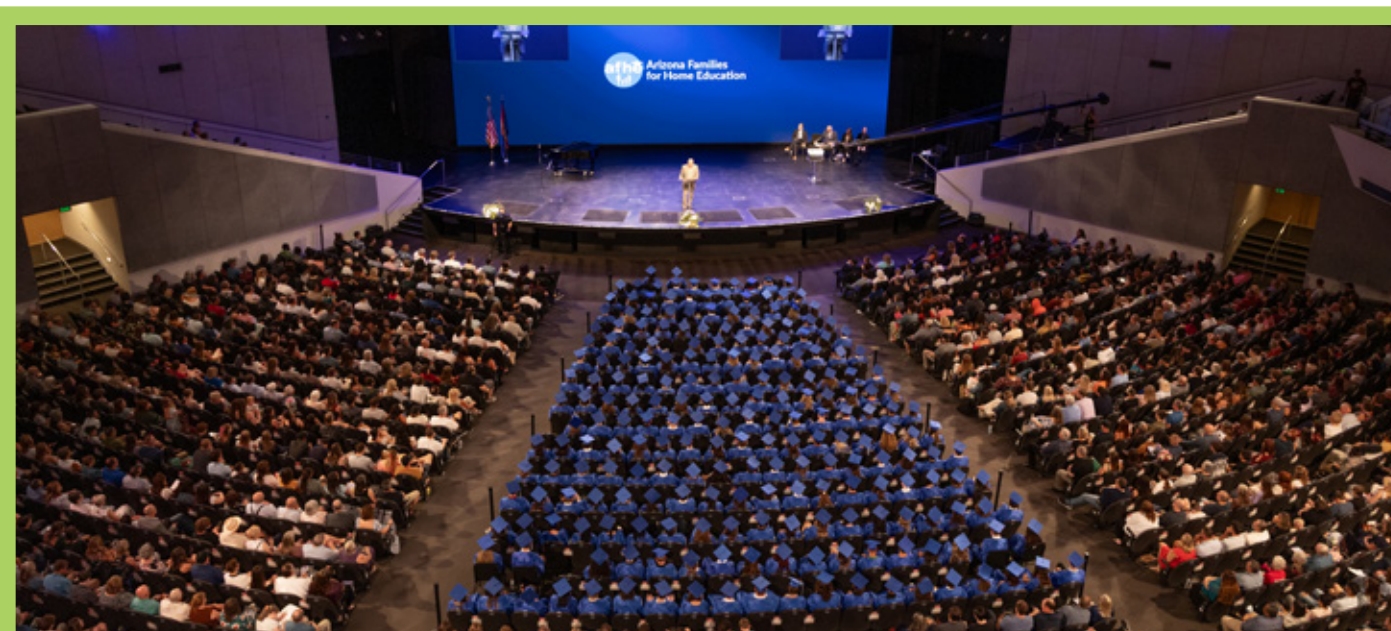


On Friday, May 23, nearly 3,500 family members and friends celebrated with the Class of 2025 at Dream City Church. This moving cap and gown ceremony honored 217 excited graduates from many locations around Arizona. It was a wonderful demonstration of the extraordinary education—rooted in the context of home and family—that parents are providing for their children.

Several 2025 graduates were selected to make special contributions during the ceremony. Our music committee selected performances from two graduates. On the piano, Lily Potter opened the program by performing “Snapshots: Flame.” Later in the program, Elizabeth Land, accompanied by her father, sang “Lord I Give You My Heart.” And when graduate Julia Spinker delivered the Senior Address, her wonderful message encouraged and uplifted her fellow graduates.

The Commencement Address was delivered by Jim Mason, President of Home School Legal Defense Association.

Before the members of the Class of 2025 came onstage to receive their diplomas, everyone enjoyed a video montage of the graduates’ baby and senior photos—always a favorite part of the celebration! The ceremony concluded with the presentation of the graduates, the turning of the tassels, and a closing prayer. Fellowship and refreshments capped off this memorable evening. AFHE congratulates all the graduates and their families as they observe this special milestone. We are especially thankful to the Graduation Committee for their hard work in preparing this beautiful ceremony and for the many volunteers who made this evening a great success!



— Congratulations — AFHE Scholarship Winners

The Arizona Homeschool Scholarship Fund (AHSF) administers an annual scholarship opportunity which allows eligible Arizona homeschooled students to earn financial awards to help them pursue post-secondary education from a college, university, or trade school.

On behalf of our members and donors, AFHE is proud to award these scholarships to assist exceptional graduates achieve their goals in higher education. Homeschool graduates from Arizona attend college, launch businesses, learn trades, raise families, and engage throughout civic life as citizens and leaders. These 2025 winners exemplify the outstanding benefits of homeschooling all the way through high school.

The Scholarship Committee thanks all of this year's applicants for allowing us a glimpse into your personal achievements and goals—so inspiring and impressive! We congratulate all the 2025 graduates and their families for persevering and reaching the milestone of high school graduation.

Applications for the 2026 scholarship competition will open in January.



Isaiah Blair
\$2,000
Lewis Scholarship



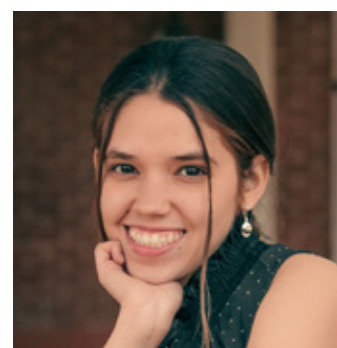
Abigail Burgess
\$1,000
AFHE General Scholarship



Jordan Collier
\$1,000
AFHE General Scholarship



Summer Genaro
\$1,000
AFHE General Scholarship



Caridad Legere
\$1,000
AFHE General Scholarship



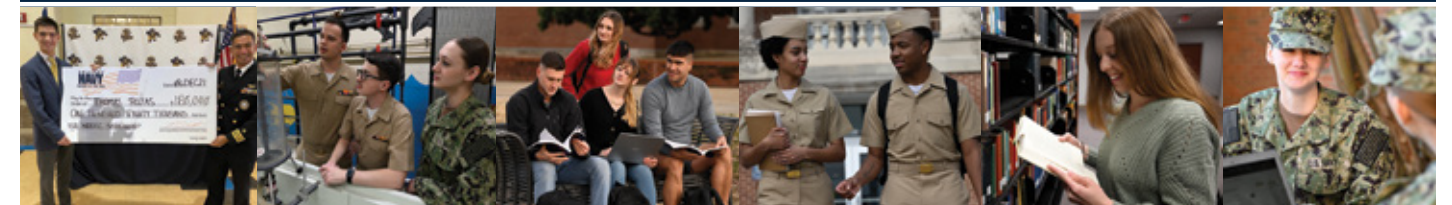
Andrea Wang
\$1,000
AFHE General Scholarship

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- Health Professions Scholarship Program (HPSP)
- Health Services Collegiate Program (HSCP)

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LEARNING TOGETHER ARIZONA

AFHE Home Education Convention

— 2025 Highlights —

This July, AFHE presented our 42nd Annual Home Education Convention,
LEARNING TOGETHER ARIZONA!

Attendees were inspired and encouraged during this two-day event built for all of Arizona's parent home educators!



We heard strengthening and hopeful messages from keynote speakers Heather Haupt and Abraham Hamilton, who shared about preparing our children to live faithfully in the time and place that God has ordained for them. Special guest Mark Hancock motivated us with the benefits of intentional and engaged parenting. And the program for the weekend offered over 100 additional workshops to equip homeschool parents in areas such as homeschooling through high school, getting a good start on the homeschool path, meeting your child's special learning needs, the history and current issues of the homeschool movement, teaching multiple levels in your home, scheduling and organization, how-tos for various academic subjects, navigating family relationships, and much more.

Teens chose between two programs designed specifically for them: a photography class, and a program about the world of animation. Both programs blended science, art, technology, creativity, and interactive engagement with friends. Our Hands-On Tutorials provided parents and kids with tools, materials, and lessons they can use at home. And our third *Educación en el Hogar Mini-Conferencia* provided practical and inspiring content for parents in Spanish.

In the Exhibit Hall, AFHE welcomed more than 140 exhibitors and vendors ready to serve our attendees: educational companies, publishers, authors, service providers, colleges, nonprofit organizations, and innovators. It's always fun to discover new exhibitors and welcome back our returning favorites! These were joined by 25 Young Entrepreneur vendors from our community, offering their unique products and skills. Parents also stopped by the Mentoring Connection booth with their questions and concerns, and learned more about AFHE at our booth and the AFHE History display. Younger attendees appreciated the KidsCorner play area and the short programs offered there throughout the afternoon, our game|district area for older kids, and fun activities at vendor booths.

Whether this was your first time at the Convention or you have a collection of name badges and programs from multiple years, we hope the time you invested at the 2025 Convention is yielding pleasant and productive dividends in your family and your homeschool! Providing this annual event for you is AFHE's privilege and joy. It involves many volunteers working together through the year and serving on site—**thank you, volunteers!!** Plans are already underway for 2026, so mark your calendar for JULY 17-18 when we will convene once more at the Phoenix Convention Center for our 43rd Annual Arizona Home Education Convention.

*"You guys always do a wonderful job,
and every year we walk away encouraged
and blessed! Thank you for all
the hard work that goes into this.
It does not go unnoticed."*



"Great organization and vendors."



*"We loved all
the homeschool
children sharing
their talents in
their booths!"*

*"Thank you for all your hard work and time that is invested in
each homeschool convention. It is an invaluable support
and encouragement to our family each year."*





"Thanks for your ministry. It takes a lot of people to pull this off, and I appreciate each one."



"I loved my first experience! I can't wait to come again!"



"Over the years, four of my six children have had (Young Entrepreneur) booths. It's been a huge blessing and valuable learning experience."



"It was a very nice opportunity, and I'm very grateful that you offer this."



"Loved all the amazing curriculum and resources available that would enhance our homeschool experience."



"I'm very thankful to be a part of such a great community and look forward to next year."



Save the date for the
2026 Arizona Home Education Convention
LEARNING TOGETHER ARIZONA
 happening July 17-18, 2026
 at the Phoenix Convention Center.

Convention Help Wanted!

You can get involved now for the 2026 Convention!

Plans are already being made for the next AFHE Convention! Our team is seeking several responsible, dedicated volunteers who can begin working in January in critical volunteer roles. AFHE membership is required. For some positions, we will also consider applications from qualified homeschool graduates.



- Graphics assistant
- Contest manager(s)
- Supply/storage manager
- *America Celebrates 250!* special projects team
- Volunteer service or in-kind donations of services such as: marketing, video production, hospitality products/services

If you are interested in any of these roles, email the Convention Director at convention@afhe.org by 12/1/25 with a brief personal introduction and description of your interest. Please use "2026 Convention Team" in your subject line.

For some roles, there will be an application to complete and an interview process for qualified applicants.

AFHE thanks our
Convention Sponsors



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WARNING!

Adding Trail Life to Your Homeschool Community May Cause the Following Side Effects:

• DIGITAL DETOX SYNDROME

Immersion in outdoor activities may cause a drastic decline in screen time dependency. Side effects include a boy who actually wants to talk—without a device in his hand.

• CHRONIC LEADERSHIP PREDILECTION

After conquering challenges, your son may begin to lead more confidently and to walk taller—perhaps even smacking his head on doorways.

• APATHY DYSPHORIA

Watch for signs of increased work ethic, spontaneous "thank yous," and a shocking willingness to help with chores. You might not recognize him anymore—but you'll like it.

• ACUTE LEADERSHIP PROLIFERATION SYNDROME

Your son may develop an irresistible urge to organize, lead, and inspire. Symptoms include spearheading school projects, arranging youth group outings, and commanding patrol-level efficiency among his friends.

• RAPID ONSET FATHER-SON BONDING

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- Trail Life Dad

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Stop By the Trail Life Booth

Learn How to Bring Trail Life to Your Homeschool Community!



AFHE'S Government Affairs Team At Work

by Michelle Jibben, Director of Government Affairs

2025 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

The 1st Regular Session of the 57th Legislature began on January 13th and ended after 166 days on June 27th. During the session, 1,854 bills, memorials, and resolutions were introduced. Of the 439 bills transmitted to the governor, 265 were signed into law.

As AFHE has done since 1983, every bill introduced is evaluated for potential impact on homeschooling in Arizona, and some of those bills are then monitored throughout the session. If any bill could have an impact on homeschools, we work with the bill's sponsor as well as other legislators to resolve any concerns. Our primary goal is to ensure the homeschool freedoms that took decades to establish are protected now and for decades to come.

This year, we identified and monitored 26 bills. Of those, one had the potential to impact homeschool families who utilize public schools for interscholastic activities. We had the opportunity to meet with the bill's sponsor as well as other legislators in the Senate and House, and to secure an amendment that would eliminate potential negative impact to homeschool families should the bill pass. We are thankful for the positive relationships that have been fostered over the years, and the legislative support that exists for homeschooling. The bill ultimately did not progress through its final read, but we are there to watch and to speak for you every step of the way.

Homeschooling is a distinct educational option that can erroneously be intermingled with other at-home educational options, including the Empowerment Scholarship Account. Because of the potential for confusion, we also pay attention to bills related to ESAs in order to ensure that there is no impact on homeschool freedoms. Every parent in Arizona must continue to have the option to choose the maximum freedom option – homeschool.

We also monitor homeschool legislation throughout the nation as bills in other states can have ripple effects. Some positive highlights include a reduction in regulations for homeschool families in **Utah**, **Wyoming**, and **Tennessee**. Parents in **Indiana** gained protections for the fair treatment of homeschool diplomas, and **Georgia** is now the fifth state to guarantee fair access for homeschool students when it comes to standardized testing.

There are also coordinated attempts to roll back homeschool freedoms nationally. A bill introduced in **Virginia** would have eliminated a religious exemption-related right to homeschool that has been in place since the 1970s. In **Illinois**, a bill would have required homeschool parents to maintain a portfolio for their children's work that could be reviewed at any time, for any reason, with unrestricted frequency. Parents would have automatic criminal truancy penalties if they were late in filing their required annual notice. And it would allow the state education department to further regulate at will without legislative direction. **New Jersey** still has active bills in progress that could result in curriculum reviews, alignment with state standards, evaluations by the state, and random health and wellness checks. An incredible amount of work goes into defeating these bills by state homeschool organizations, by HSLDA, and by homeschool parents and supporters.

What does homeschool freedom in Arizona look like? **Filing a one-time affidavit with the county school superintendent** within 30 days of beginning homeschooling, **along with your child's birth certificate**, then **providing education in the five required subject areas**. When AFHE was founded, there were significantly more requirements on homeschool families: student testing, teacher testing imposed on homeschool parents, curriculum reviews, required number of hours of instruction, submission of grades, proof of academic progress, even evaluation of student work by the county superintendent. We are thankful for the incredible freedoms that have been gained, one victory at a time, in over four decades of advocacy.

Preserving statutory homeschooling as a separate, nonpublic educational category is critical to keep it free from excessive regulations and unwarranted oversight. Arizona parents have a wide range of educational options. **AFHE is committed to preserving your ability to choose homeschooling—parent-directed, privately funded, home-based education—whether today or in the future.**

QUESTIONS ABOUT INTERSCHOLASTIC ACTIVITIES? READ ON...

In 1995, Senator John Huppenthal sponsored SB 1348, an education bill granting homeschool students the right to participate in interscholastic athletic competitions.

In 1997, the statute was amended to include all interscholastic activities (not just athletics) via HB 2057, sponsored by Rep. Debra Brimhall.

Both bills easily passed with bi-partisan support.

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE TODAY?

A.R.S. §15-802.01 grants homeschooled students the opportunity to try out for interscholastic activities at the public school to which their residence is assigned. Students must be passing each of their courses and be making satisfactory progress towards advancement. All standards and policies applied to homeschool students must be consistent with those applied to the enrolled public school students.

TO WHOM DOES THIS APPLY?

The statute applies to homeschool students who have a valid homeschool affidavit on file with their county school superintendent. (Per A.R.S. §15-2402(B)(5), the parent of an ESA student agrees not to file a homeschool affidavit, and per the ESA Parent Handbook, a homeschool affidavit that is on file for that student with the county superintendent should be withdrawn.)

Regarding other non-enrolled students, public schools have the discretion to decide who will be allowed to participate, and may set their own policies and fee scales. This includes students who have ESA contracts, students who attend private schools, and others who are not enrolled in the public school.

Questions?

Feel free to contact us at: homeschool@afhe.org



The 1st Regular Session of the 57th Legislature lasted for 166 days, from January 13 to June 27, 2025. During this session, AFHE's team observed these legislative actions:

1,854
bills, memorials,
& resolutions
introduced

439
bills transmitted
to the governor

265
bills signed
into law



Dear Homeschool Parent: Read This on the Hard Days

*12 lessons from 15 years of homeschooling—
what I’ve learned, what I’d do differently,
and what I wish I knew sooner*

April Edwards

Over the past 15 years of homeschooling and 19 years of parenting, I’ve learned so much—through trial and error, through wisdom from others, and through simply living the days.

Sometimes, I wish I could sit down with my younger self over coffee and share what I know now. I think she’d be eager to listen, but also confident in the skills she was slowly growing.

So let’s imagine we’re having that coffee together! If we were face-to-face, I’d want to hear about what’s hard for you right now. I’d listen to your struggles, your frustrations, and the moments that didn’t go as planned.

If you asked me for advice, I’d share one (or maybe a few) of these 12 things I’ve learned along the way.

#1 - You are doing enough.

The culture that you are creating in your home means so much more than the actual lessons that your children are learning. Yes, a very small number of homeschoolers are indeed teaching their first graders Latin. Yes, catalogs and emails are showing up with stacks of curriculum and things to try. Yes, there are books you can read that say with rude authority that “This is the right way to do homeschooling.” But, you are doing enough. Don’t get distracted from what is important to your family.

#2 - Your learning and personal growth matters just as much as your kids.

You can not give unless you have something to draw from. It is so important to read and gather new ideas, work on relationships, and learn about topics we find interesting. We each need our own full wells of information to draw upon and use in conversations and life.



Depositphotos.com: #625567222, #30624439, #547793176; snapshot photos provided by author

The culture that you are creating in your home means so much more than the actual lessons that they are learning.



#3 - Take your time and do things your own way.

There is no magical time schedule to follow to meet other people’s standards. Even the areas that seem rigid are much more flexible than you think.

There is no perfect way to do things or a perfect time to read a specific book. Listen to your gut and you will know when your kids are ready.

#4 - Bring in other teachers as part of your homeschool team.

Choose to teach the areas that you love and then outsource the ones you dislike or take too much energy. This is not failure, this is smart planning.

Kids learn in so many different ways. Sitting next to me while I guide them through a lesson is only one way. You can use online teachers that offer free resources on YouTube, you can use a curriculum with a built-in teacher, and you can participate in co-ops and classes.

#5 - Include quiet time in your day, but not necessarily in the mornings.

Make space in the day for everyone to be alone. Being together all day long is hard on all of us. Be kind to yourself and give everyone a break from each other after lunch. I wish I had done this more. We all need to learn to spend time on our own. This will take training but will be useful down the road.

#6 - Invest in friendships.

Friendships are so very important. You can not do this alone. Create community and participate in quality friendships. Be the kind of friend that you need. Ask other people good questions and listen well. Offer help and ask for it. Let there be a give and take. Do not be the only one giving of yourself and your time.

#7 - Enjoy each season that you are in.

Every year will be different. This is the only year where I have a student in 12th grade, 7th grade, and 4th grade. Next year will be different. Each season of parenting and homeschooling is hard in its own unique ways. But, it will only happen once.

Find joy and focus on the good things. It is so easy to get bogged



down in our failures and mess-ups, or to be distracted by the noise and chaos that small kids make.

#8 - Spend time thinking about routines and rhythms.

Create routines for all the necessary things that must be done: household tasks, planning and making meals, yard work, paperwork, cleaning, etc. When we automate pieces of our lives with routines we remove decision fatigue, we become more efficient, and we can relax into the rhythm of the tasks ahead of us.

I enjoy sitting down with a cup of tea and doing all the thinking once. I plan out what tasks need to be completed and then write them out for myself.

#9 - Take more time off.

Take breaks. Be creative with your holidays and school schedule. Unless your state requires it, you have the freedom to get school done on whatever days you choose. Maybe it works for your family to do school lessons 4 days a week or to take a break every 6 weeks. Would it be helpful to do more school in the heat of the summer and less in the enjoyable spring weather? Figure out what your flexibility is and then work with it.

#10 - Don’t grade the papers in elementary school.

Just check them over and stamp them for fun. You would not believe how much time I wasted on grading work when my kids were younger. Because of the one-on-one instruction our kids are getting, we know how they are doing. We know when they get a lesson and when they are struggling. We will not move forward without them. Grading can be a time waster.

#11 - Make space for questions.

Questions can be valuable even if they do not pertain to the assignment or that topic. Follow the rabbit trails and have fun learning something together. Recently we attended an orchestra concert that sparked some questions about instruments and how they are part of a piece of music. We have enjoyed learning about all the families of instruments and different composers. It has been a pleasant unexpected learning journey for all of us.

Ideas for learning as you follow an idea:

- Go to the library and find stacks of books on topics that grab your kids’ attention.
- Look up YouTube videos on things they enjoy.
- Stretch your knowledge with a field trip to a museum or science center.
- Have a conversation with a relative who has experience with the topic.

#12 - Know that you have plenty of time to teach all the subjects.

If you don't get to something this year, you can do it next year. Leave behind the school teacher mindset of cramming as much knowledge into the kids as you can. You have a lifetime to share ideas, teach them new things, and grow in knowledge. There will be gaps no matter how amazing you are as a homeschool teacher. We can only do our best. I hope that they remember the fun Egypt unit from 2nd grade, the Tall Tales books read-aloud, and the European Geography lessons.

You might choose one additional subject to teach alongside the basics this year. Have fun with it and don't try to cover everything.

Some theme ideas for elementary years:

- Art History & Masterpieces
- World Geography
- Botany
- Inventions
- Baking
- Famous Landmarks
- Drawing
- Computer Coding
- World Language Lessons
- Sculpture
- Airplanes and Flight
- Astronomy
- Sewing & Weaving
- Cooking
- USA Geography
- Zoology
- Ancient Cultures
- Composers & Musical Instruments
- Weather & Seasons



I hope you've found some encouragement here.

Whatever your school year looks like—whether it's going smoothly or feels like a daily uphill climb—you can move forward with fresh ideas and renewed energy. Remember, homeschooling is not about perfection; it's about growth, connection, and showing up, day after day.

Have grace with yourself as you guide your kids in their education and daily lessons. Celebrate the small wins, embrace the messy moments, and trust that what you're doing matters. Your kids are learning from more than just books and lessons—they're learning from you.

You are doing important, beautiful work. Keep going!



APRIL EDWARDS writes for the quietly overwhelmed: those who look like they're keeping it all together but feel like they are running on empty. A lifelong learner and idea-gatherer, she's passionate about helping others embrace intention over perfection. She spends her days homeschooling and writing, with breaks for iced tea, reading, or a new sourdough experiment. April lives in the Arizona desert with her large family and a house full of creativity and cozy routines. Join her free community: embracinghome.substack.com.



Correction Notice:

At our convention in July, attendees received a copy of *Practical Homeschooling* magazine in the welcome bag. The issue included a mistake in the description of Arizona's educational categories. In their next issue, the publishers kindly provided this correction requested by AFHE:

Arizona Families for Home Education has let us know that the chart provided with the overview of state Education Saving Accounts (ESAs) on page 23 of issue #162 included an error.

Arizona does indeed define homeschool in statute as a distinct category of education, separate from all others.

However, if a parent signs an ESA contract (in Arizona this stands for "Empowerment Scholarship Account"), their student is no longer considered a statutory homeschooler but an ESA contract student. In fact, they must agree to not file a homeschool affidavit and are expected to withdraw it if there is one on file.

AFHE's new series of articles regarding homeschool freedom in Arizona is a very helpful read. All the articles can be found at afhe.org/blog, or may be downloaded as a single, attractive PDF.

Practical Homeschool magazine has been a highly regarded and valuable resource for homeschool families for 30 years. **Through October 31, 2025, AFHE members can access a discounted subscription offer with bonus material at the following link:**

practicalhomeschooling.com/discount-offer





Cindy Puhek

Why Your Family Needs Read-Alouds

(and How to Find Good Books to Enjoy Together)

Most kids have very fond memories of taking trips in their imagination to a different time and place while snuggling and reading bedtime stories with Mom or Dad. Regrettably, reading aloud often stops once children are old enough to read stories for themselves.

Sharing books as a family, even as children grow older, has many advantages. The book becomes a shared experience, and the themes, plot, characters, and literary devices can be discussed organically as the story unfolds. Children can be introduced to advanced literature at an earlier age when an adult guides them through the story and helps them process it. Story time can become a vocabulary lesson as the definitions of words are looked up and discussed. Every family struggles to find quality, non-screen, non-headphone, relationship building time between parents and children; reading aloud provides this while also helping build character and build good memories.

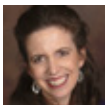
However, finding good literature can be challenging, so I want to give a few ideas where to go to find books worthy of investing the time and effort needed to read aloud.

Honey for a Child's Heart and *Honey for a Teen's Heart* by Gladys Hunt are wonderful sources for finding quality literature. Now in its fifth edition, *Honey for a Child's Heart* gives literature recommendations for kids aged 0-12 years, and the teen book recommends books for kids 13 and older. This book challenged me to read Beatrix Potter and A. A. Milne's "Winnie the Pooh" stories to my young children. Even though the language is complex, and the humor is very dry and British, my kids loved these books and discovered early that complicated stories are memorable and enjoyable. Gladys Hunt's philosophy concerning what constitutes quality literature makes this book a good place to look for read-aloud recommendations.

Another place you can look for literature recommendations is homeschool curriculum catalogs and websites. I have discovered literary gems from Timberdoodle, My Father's World, and Veritas Press. Some of these companies have listings of historical novels that take place during specific eras, allowing me to choose books that align with the period of history we are currently studying.

The website exodusbooks.com is also a rich resource for book recommendations based on area of interest and grade level. This site is run by generational homeschoolers who understand the needs and standards of our community.

Why is reading aloud important? Couldn't the kids listen to audiobooks and get the same benefits? While audiobooks can increase the number of stories a child consumes, it removes the relationship-building aspect and the in-person discussion that occur when a book is shared as a family. Our breakfast read-aloud time is one of my children's favorite homeschool memories and one of the time investments that had indisputable educational and character-building dividends. And when my kids read books to my grandkids, I think they will remember when we read the same book together and smile.



CINDY PUHEK resides in Colorado Springs and has been married to Peter for over two decades. They are well into their second decade of homeschooling their six children. Cindy holds a Master's degree in Chemistry. This article originally appeared in *The Homeschool Update*, May V2 2025, a publication of Christian Home Educators of Colorado (used with publisher's permission).

Depositphotos.com: #339298588, #658159820, #25418675

Additional recommendations for finding booklists for your family



Honey for a Child's Heart



Honey for a Teen's Heart

by Gladys Hunt

Booksellers in the homeschool market

such as Grace and Truth Books, Lamplighter Ministries

The Unlikely Homeschool

theunlikelyhomeschool.com

Read-Aloud Revival

readaloudrevival.com

Christian Novel Studies store

found at TeachersPayTeachers.com

Raising Lifelong Learners

raisinglifelonglearners.com/book-list-for-your-homeschool

Exodus Books

exodusbooks.com/summer-reading-booklists.aspx

Curriculum publishers:

Sonlight

Veritas Press

My Father's World

Timberdoodle



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