

Homeschool INDIANA

a publication of the Indiana Association of Home Educators | Issue 23, Volume 3



Keeping Your
Homeschoolers Learning
All Summer Long
...page 10

Why Is My Child
Struggling to Read?
...page 12

Homeschooling Is the
Norm Across Nation
(Or Is It?)
...page 16

Online Testing
with BJU Press
...page 19

Start Strong Indiana
Homeschool University
...page 26

JUMP START YOUR CAREER

AT IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Develop your skills in high-demand career areas like healthcare, information technology or advanced manufacturing at Ivy Tech. With small class sizes for one-on-one instructor time and more than 40 locations in Indiana, and online, classes have never been this close to home.

Apply now and get started!

"As a homeschool student, going to college intimidated me. Ivy Tech made college a possibility for me, and gave me so many opportunities that I wouldn't have otherwise.

*Rachel,
homeschool student*

Contact us at 888-IVY-LINE or visit IvyTech.edu/Homeschool to learn more.



IVY TECH
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



in this issue

- 10 Keeping Your Homeschoolers Learning All Summer Long**
Stephanie Bishop
- 12 Why is My Child Struggling to Read?**
Heidi Jasper
- 16 Homeschooling is the Norm Across Nation (Or Is It?)**
- 19 Online Testing with BJU Press**
- 21 Help Along the Way: A Homeschool Mom Remembers**
Kathy Balke
- 26 Start Strong Indiana with *Homeschool University***
- 28 Washington DC: The Ultimate Homeschool Field Trip!**
Becky Barnes-Israel
- 30 A Veteran Homeschool Mom's Reflections**
Debi Ketron

departments

- Editor's Welcome...**5**
- Regional Representative Map...**7**
- Days to Remember...**8**
- Reading Corner...**22**

Issue 23, Volume 3

MAGAZINE TEAM

Executive Director & Managing Editor

Tara Bentley

Design Director | Amanda Runge

Writing Director | Amy Sager

Editor | Lacey Hooie

Cover Photo | DepositPhotos.com

#166663684

Page 3 Photos | #78900178, #17588603,

& #10846480

Advertising

For ad information and rates, please download our Advertiser's Packet on our website or contact advertising@iahe.net. Publication of advertisements does not signify endorsement of items or services offered.

Article Submissions

To submit an article for publication in *Homeschool Indiana*, contact us for our Writer's Guidelines: writing@iahe.net.

Copyright

© by the Indiana Association of Home Educators. Permission is needed to reprint any portion of the magazine, except where noted. Please contact us at publications@iahe.net.

Homeschool Indiana Core Values

To be Christ-focused
To be Indiana-focused
To be encouraging
To be a resource



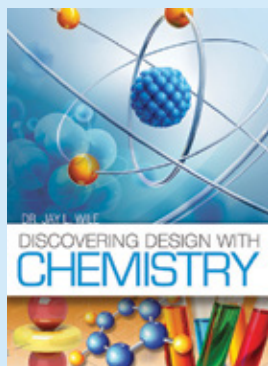
Berean Builders

3001 W Woodbridge Dr
Muncie, IN 47304-1074

<http://bit.ly/berean10>

(877) 794-3005

All-new
Chemistry from
Dr. Jay L. Wile



Award-winning
Elementary Science



build critical thinkers



Welcome

What an interesting time to be a homeschool organization and advocate!

The past three months have turned our world and our community upside down in many ways. From the beginning of March, our team has been working overtime in the face of these significant challenges. Just like so many of you, our work looks very different than it used to.

In an effort fueled by a lot of prayers and very little sleep, we shifted our **35th Annual IAHE Home Educators' Convention** to an online conference, **Keep Calm & Homeschool On**, in only two weeks. Almost 5,000 parents have been blessed by the event featuring over 70 speakers and 170 workshops. The event is still online and available to families through the end of April, 2021. Do you need some encouragement this summer? Looking for curriculum or educational resources? Be sure to pop in to the event for more information.

With the shutdown of traditional schools across the globe, every family with children was suddenly given the label of "homeschooler." As veteran homeschoolers, we know that when "homeschooling" is forced, temporary, and happens in isolation, it doesn't reflect what we know and love as true **home education**.

As we digest all that has changed in our world, millions of families are now faced with the decision of whether or not to send their children back into a school building. Many will not. Many will choose to try homeschooling, and we'll welcome them as we always have. As we strive to meet the needs of the growing homeschool community, we can not ignore the growing efforts of opponents of homeschool freedom.

You can stand with the IAHE in multiple ways. Through your membership, individual donations, and volunteer efforts, we will keep Indiana **#homeschoolstrong**.

Tara Bentley
Executive Director, IAHE
Managing Editor, *Homeschool Indiana*

The Indiana Association of Home Educators

(IAHE) is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1983 for the purpose of serving the Lord Jesus Christ by supporting and encouraging families interested in home education.

We define home education as parent-directed, home-based, privately-funded education.

IAHE

PO Box 217 Stilesville, IN 46180
317-467-6244 | iahe@iahe.net

iahe.net

BOARD MEMBERS

Steve & Penny Taylor
Mark & Tara Bentley
Greg & Kimberly Laskowski





Will you help these moms?

The number of parents considering home education has never been greater. They have questions and you have answers!

Are you looking for a rewarding service opportunity?

The IAHE depends on the dedication of servant-hearted people just like you.

**Mentoring | Regional Representative | Social Media | Fundraising
Research | Project Management | Event Planner | Writing
Editing | Administrative Help & More!**

“We like knowing that our work helps homeschoolers across the state and enjoy the chance to use our degrees. The volunteer team is a supportive and encouraging group to work alongside.”

—Andy & Molly M.



Join #teamIAHE!

“I volunteer because I am a homeschool graduate, and I want to protect the right to homeschool for future generations.”

—Belinda H.



“I volunteer with the IAHE because of the impact that it has had on my life and homeschooling journey. IAHE volunteers literally saved homeschooling for us. Now I can support other homeschool families.”

—Jasmine D.



You can make a difference in the lives of new homeschool families... all from the comfort of home.

iahe.net/volunteer



Have you connected with your IAHE Representative?

Serving the homeschooling community throughout Indiana.

Regional Representatives are veteran homeschool parents who are here to support your family on your home education adventure. Whether you are looking for local activities,

have questions about curriculum, or want to find a support group in your area, your Regional Representative couple is available to help you!

To contact any of our reps by phone, dial 317-467-6244 and then their extension.

REGION 1
Please contact the IAHE Office
317-467-6244
office@iahe.net

REGION 2
Pat & Kathy Balke
Ext #202
rr2@iahe.net

REGION 3
Please contact the IAHE Office
317-467-6244
office@iahe.net

REGION 4
Phillip & Rebekah Ash
Ext #204
rr4@iahe.net

REGION 5
Jeff & Tammy Hierholzer
Ext #205
rr5@iahe.net

REGION 6
Please contact the IAHE Office
317-467-6244
office@iahe.net

REGION 7
Billy & Linda Rose
Ext #207
rr7@iahe.net

REGION 8
Please contact the IAHE Office
317-467-6244
office@iahe.net

REGION 9
Please contact the IAHE Office
317-467-6244
office@iahe.net

REGION 10
Please contact the IAHE Office
317-467-6244
office@iahe.net

REGION 11
Jeremiah & Amanda Alexander
Ext #221
rr11@iahe.net

REGION 12
Dwight & Marsena Hatfield
Ext #212
rr12@iahe.net

REGION 13
Chad & Lori Behrman
Ext #213
rr13@iahe.net

REGION 14
Jared & Melinda Johnson
#209
rr9@iahe.net

REGION 15
Jason & Krystal Armstrong
Ext #215
rr15@iahe.net

REGION 16
Chris & Emily Camenisch
Ext #216
rr16@iahe.net

REGION 17
William & Ann Munro
Ext #217
rr17@iahe.net

The map shows the following counties assigned to each region:
 REGION 1: LAKE, PORTER, LAPORTE, ST. JOSEPH, ELKHART, LAGRANGE, STEUBEN, MARSHALL, KOSCIUSKO, NOBLE, DE KALB, STARKE, FULTON, WHITLEY, ALLEN, JASPER, PULASKI, WABASH, HUNTINGTON, WELLS, ADAMS, BENTON, WHITE, CASS, MIAMI, HOWARD, GRANT, BLACKFORD, JAY, WARREN, TIPPECANOE, CLINTON, TIPTON, HAMILTON, MADISON, DELAWARE, RANDOLPH, FOUNTAIN, MONTGOMERY, BOONE, HENRY, WAYNE, VERMILION, PARKE, HENDRICKS, MARION, HANCOCK, RUSH, FAYETTE, UNION, PUTNAM, MORGAN, JOHNSON, SHELBY, FRANKLIN, VIGO, CLAY, OWEN, BROWN, BARTHOLOMEW, DECATUR, SULLIVAN, MONROE, JACKSON, RIPLEY, GARRARD, GREENE, LAWRENCE, WASHINGTON, SCOTT, OHIO, KNOX, DAVIESS, MARTIN, ORANGE, CLARK, JEFFERSON, SWITZERLAND, GIBSON, PIKE, DUBOIS, CRAWFORD, FLOYD, POSEY, WARRICK, SPENCER, PERRY, HARRISON.

DAYS
TO

REMEMBER

26th Amendment | 1971

Thirty-eight states ratified this amendment, and now 18-year-olds had the right to vote! Proponents argued that if a person was old enough to go to war, they should be old enough to have a say in their government.

★ *Read the speech that Richard Nixon gave praising the swift approval of this amendment.*

★ *Discuss how times might be different if people still had to wait until the age of 21 to vote.*

Rosetta Stone | 1799

During a campaign in Egypt, a Napoleonic soldier found a black stone outside Rosetta, a town 35 miles from Alexandria. Inscribed on it in 3 languages—hieroglyphs, demotic (the common language of the Egyptians), and Ancient Greek is a decree about King Ptolemy V. This discovery was the key that allowed linguists to unlock the secrets of reading hieroglyphs.

★ *Look up pictures of the Rosetta Stone. Can you see the three different languages?*

★ *Print a sheet of some sample hieroglyphs and try writing a message to a sibling or friend.*

I Have a Dream Speech | 1963

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his I Have a Dream speech to over 250,000 people during the Civil Rights rally at the March on Washington in Washington, D.C. He used quotes and themes from the Bible and our country's Constitution to point out the struggles of African Americans and inspire people to action.

★ *Gather your family around and read King's speech aloud. Compare and contrast how people may have thought and reacted to this in 1963 with your thoughts and reactions today.*

★ *Look up and read another of King's speeches. Who is he speaking to? What is his main message?*

July
1st



July
4th



July
19th



August
17th



August
28th



Declaration of Independence | 1776

Although independence was formally declared on July 2nd, 1776, the Continental Congress didn't approve the final draft of the Declaration of Independence until July 4th. Drafted by Thomas Jefferson, this document was adopted by the 13 colonies. The 4th of July is still celebrated annually as the birth of independence in America.

★ *The Founding Fathers pledged their "lives, fortunes, and sacred honor" for the cause of liberty so that we could enjoy freedom today. Find some books about the Founding Fathers to read together.*

★ *Read the Declaration of Independence out loud. Its message is powerful. You can even print a copy for your family and sign it to pledge your support for American freedom.*

The Double Eagle II | 1978

The helium-filled balloon, *The Double Eagle II*, completed the first transatlantic balloon flight. Piloted by Ben Abruzzo, Maxie Anderson, and Larry Newman, the balloon flew 3,233 miles in six days. They lifted off from Preque Isle, Maine, and landed near Paris, 137 hours later.

★ *Find a map and research the lift-off and landing locations of The Double Eagle II.*

★ *How has balloon travel changed since 1978? Do people still do it? How has the actual balloon and basket changed?*



National US Postage Stamp Day

— Wednesday, July 1 —

The first postage stamp was issued in the United States on July 1, 1847. In the 1890s, the postal service began issuing commemorative postage stamps. They highlight famous people, historical events, wildflowers, and more. Did you know that former President, Franklin Roosevelt is known as “America’s number one stamp collector?” Roosevelt collected over 1,200,000 stamps that filled 150 albums! These helped give him an appreciation for art, history, and other cultures.

★ Look up the thousands of commemorative stamps that have been issued. Which are your favorites? Consider starting a stamp collection of your own.

★ Design your own stamp. Who or what do you want people to remember? Be creative and have fun!



National Chocolate Chip Cookie Day

— Tuesday, August 4 —

It is to Ruth Graves Wakefield that we owe our thanks for the pairing of chunks of chocolate and cookie dough. One day in Massachusetts, in the 1930s, Mrs. Wakefield, who ran the Toll House Inn with her husband, ran out of baking chocolate to make chocolate cookies, so she substituted chunks of Nestle semisweet chocolate bars thinking they would melt into the cookies like her baker’s chocolate did. To her surprise and delight, the chunks formed gooey pockets of goodness in the cookies. Mrs. Wakefield soon made an arrangement with Nestle to have her recipe printed on the back of their semisweet chocolate bars.

★ Do you have a favorite chocolate chip cookie recipe? Pick up the ingredients you need and spend some quality time in the kitchen with your children. Enjoy some warm gooey chocolatey goodness right out of the oven!





Keeping Your Homeschoolers *Learning All Summer Long*

— Stephanie Bishop

As homeschoolers, we are always taking opportunities to learn. This does not mean that we are doing workbooks every day or taking classes but learning more organically and making education a part of our daily lives. This is especially true in the summer months. Just because we are not counting these days as school days, does not mean that we are completely leaving learning behind. This homeschool year went a little differently for all of us amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, and there were many challenges that may have changed your school plans. Whether you plan to continue some formal schooling or learn organically throughout the summer, your children will benefit from some fresh new experiences in the weeks ahead.

One thing we do during the school year, that we probably do even more so in the summer, is head to our local library. We are all avid readers in our household, so a weekly or bi-weekly library trip is always on our agenda. Summer is a great time to let your children read more of what they are interested in. Their books make a great jumping-off point for conversations, and we all learn a little bit from each other.

My son's current obsession is checking out books about different types of cars; he can tell me more than I ever really wanted to know about Lamborghinis and Aston Martins. I think he will be taking a deep dive into this subject this summer, and I totally welcome it. He will retain this information better because it is his reading choice, and it is always a joy for him to decide what he is learning about. If your library still has limited access or limited book availability, you could utilize various library apps to access audiobooks and ebooks.

Another fun thing we enjoy doing as a whole family is playing tourists in our hometown. It is as simple as visiting your local visitor's center and seeing what your city has to offer. Go on a tour, visit local museums, bookstores, or coffee shops that you have never been to before. Try a locally owned restaurant. Seeing your town through the eyes of a tourist is a great way to gain a new appreciation for the place you call home. And, it is a wonderful learning opportunity for everyone. This may be an especially good idea this summer when much of our travel could be restricted. Turn staying local into an adventure and keep things from getting monotonous.

We also like to take the slower pace of summer to work on projects and artistic pursuits. You could do extra crafts, visit a local art studio—some give tours, or create a project out of items you find in nature. Ask your children what they are interested in and let them get a little messy with their learning. Joining a robotics team or a Lego class or other class that interests them might be engaging for them as well. This goes for you too, parents! Take some time to do something that interests you. It will set a great example for your children that people of all ages can continue to pursue their interests and learn new things.

Teaching our children to love God and serve others is important. That is why I think the summertime is a great opportunity to serve together as a family. You could volunteer your time to an organization that helps others or sign up to work at your local bible school. We have helped my husband's work with volunteer opportunities, served worldwide organizations with our small group, and more. There are endless ways to serve and volunteer locally. Not only is it a learning opportunity, but it is another chance to show your children that loving others well is just as important as math and science. In the aftermath of Covid-19, there are many people hurting making this a great time to share what we have with others and come together as a community to help those most affected.

Do not discount the fun of a picnic at the park or curling up and reading together in your hammock. Take a nature walk in your own backyard and see how many animals you can identify. Learning while just being together is my favorite way to teach. I think that is one of the bonuses of being a homeschool family. It

does not have to feel like you are stuck in a classroom, which means that summertime gives us even more opportunities to learn.

Yes, in our house we usually have a summer workbook that my son does a few times a week, but I do not really stress if it is not finished. It is just a good way to help him remember what we learned, and it is good for filling in gaps on rainy days. Honestly, a lot of times watching documentaries and having him help me make our grocery list and shop for those items are just as educational.

Making learning fun and having it happen organically is, in my opinion, the best way to keep your children engaged and interested in learning. It does not have to be a lot of work for your kids or you! Summertime really is for relaxation and fun whether you take off two weeks or the full two months like we do. Just remember that there are always small opportunities in your day for learning, but if they do not happen every single day, that is okay too. ■



Stephanie Bishop is a homeschool mom and blogger at mrsbishop.com. She loves using her online platform to encourage her fellow homeschool parents and to share her homeschooling journey. You will most often find her with a book in her hand or driving the backroads of Indiana with her husband and son.

The graphic features a central white square with a blue border containing the text "keep calm & homeschool on" in a blue, cursive font. Below this is a dark blue horizontal bar with the text "AN ONLINE CONFERENCE" in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. The background of the graphic is a blurred image of a book cover. Below the graphic is a dark blue section with white text.

*Missing your annual homeschool convention, with its wealth of knowledge and encouragement?
Looking for curriculum sources for the upcoming school year?
It's not too late!*

Check out IAHE's online conference:
iahe.net/keep-calm



Why is my Child
STRUGGLING
to learn to Read?

— Heidi Jasper

Before you throw out or sell your phonics/reading curriculum and turn around to invest in another phonics/reading curriculum, take these four simple steps first.

1. Take your child to see an Optometrist (O.D.).

Be sure to tell the doctor that your child is struggling with reading. Ask the doctor to do a thorough vision exam for tracking, convergence, astigmatism, depth perception, as well as the usual tests for eyesight—far-sightedness and near-sightedness.

Do not rely on the simple eyesight screening your pediatrician does during a yearly exam. This simple screening is not enough. It only tests for general eyesight, not for vision. Vision is how well the eyes are working in tandem and how well the eyes and brain work together to make sense of what is seen.

About a year ago, I screened one child and found him to be extremely dominant in one eye. This child had passed the pediatrician's eyesight screening. Knowing this was not normal, I referred the parents to a vision therapist. It was discovered during that exam that the child was nearly blind in one eye! He is currently undergoing special treatment to hopefully bring vision back into the eye. He is making strides in his reading ability now.

2. If your child needs glasses or vision therapy, please do so immediately.

You are homeschooling your child because you love them and want the best for them. Please do not refuse to give your child the glasses they need. Your child is struggling to learn to read now and possibly feeling like a failure. That sense of being a failure might be stopped if you take the appropriate steps.

The added energy your child is expending while trying to sound out each word is depleting their body of both physical and emotional energy. With depleted energy from that first task, they are left without the energy needed for comprehension. This may also compromise their ability to maintain emotional stability. Headaches and tummy aches could also be signs of added stress from eye strain.

3. Have your child screened for Irlen Syndrome.

While dyslexia is a right-brain dominant “wiring” difference, there is something that can mimic it or be an additional issue alongside it. It is called Irlen Syndrome. Irlen Syndrome (IS) is not an eyesight, or

vision, or different brain “wiring” issue. It is a brain processing dysfunction. Remember light is made up of all the colors of the rainbow, and each color of the rainbow has a different wavelength. Irlen Syndrome is the brain's inability to process some of those wavelengths. If a child has other brain processing issues (auditory, sensory, speech, motor), this area of visual processing may be dysfunctional as well. Any child with other kinds of sensory processing dysfunction would benefit from being screened for IS as well. Because IS is a brain processing dysfunction, your optometrist may not have heard of it. IS can manifest itself as a reading issue.

Look for reading signs like:

- Skips words or lines of text or rereads lines
- Letters and words not sitting still on the page
- Needs a lot of breaks from reading
- Needs to use finger or a marker to hold his/her place
- Needs to reread for comprehension
- Change of lighting helps (dimmer)
- Colored paper is easier to read than white paper
- Use of computer/whiteboard/tablets causes eye strain and fatigue
- Non-reading issues can include:
- Math not lined up correctly in number columns
- Difficulty telling the difference between the various math symbols
- Uses finger to track music, numbers, lines of text, etc.
- Difficulty getting on and off escalator and using stairs
- Lack of peripheral vision and depth perception
- Feels dizzy or light-headed when in physical motion
- Difficulty tracking a flying ball to hit or catch (sports)
- Trouble learning to ride a bike or jump rope
- Walls or floors moving, throbbing, or spinning
- Bothered by bright sunshine
- Becomes anxious or tired or angry under bright fluorescent lighting or when using backlit technology

Currently, IS is resolved with the use of colored overlays for reading issues and special colored lenses for reading and non-reading issues.

These first 3 steps do **not** require you to change the curriculum your child is using.

4. Know the Signs of Dyslexia

Sure signs when trying to read:

- Sounds out the same word(s) over and over and over and over, every time it is seen
- Misreads words because of letter flipping or syllable flipping (*felt for left, was for saw, no for on, etc.*)
- Swaps the actual word for a synonym (*says house when the word is home*)
- Reads the first syllable correctly then guesses the rest of the word based on the shape of the word (*the word is three, but says tree or the word is color, but says cold*)
- Ignores the little words (*on, no, if, of, an, a, at, by*)
- Struggles to memorize sight words and/or spelling words
- And the most famous—b/d confusion (*may even confuse other strange letter combinations or letters and numbers – e/g s/z w/m u/n 2/z/s/5 6/b/9/d/p 7/L 3/E*)

The signs which have nothing to do with reading:

- Left vs Right confusion (*check for legs, feet, and turning directions, not just hands*)
- Difficulty telling time on a round clock, especially when planning (*20 minutes from now, what time to set alarm, 3 ½ hours ago it was what time?*)
- Difficulty learning to tie shoes
- Highly creative and imaginative
- Mixes up syllables when speaking (*aminal instead of animal past the age of 6*)
- Struggles to tell what happened in the correct order
- Inconsistent spelling of the same word (*child may not be able to “reread” what they wrote*)
- Difficulty saying and using the ABCs, days of the week, and months of the year in order without singing their songs (*which month comes before ___? If today is ___, what day will it be in 2 days? What letter comes before ___?*)

The only reading and spelling method and program which has decades of proven success with teaching people with dyslexia to read and spell is an Orton-Gillingham (O-G) based program. My personal favorite is Barton Reading and Spelling since it has tutor training dvds, scripted teaching, and it covers spelling at the same time as reading.

Only now would you need to sell that phonics/reading program that is not working, so you can purchase an O-G based program.



Your child is a precious gift who deserves the best. Strongly consider making room in your budget for these 3 or 4 items:

- Glasses
- Vision Therapy
- Irlen lenses
- If needed, O-G based reading/phonics and spelling program

After you have gone through these four steps, you will be confident of the reason your child is struggling, what to call the struggle, and how to address the struggle. Our own children needed to have three of the four steps addressed before they could become successful with schoolwork.

Your child desperately needs to know you are on their side and willing to fight for them to be successful. You are not labeling your child when you label the struggle. Name the struggle, so your child will feel empowered. Then the two of you can become a team in overcoming the obstacles together. Remember, God loved you as you were but loved you too much to leave you as you were. Go and do likewise for your child. ■



Heidi Jasper has a B.A. in Elem. Ed., B.S. in Christian Ed, and is a Certified Irlen Screener. A Hope and a Future, LLC provides IN homeschools with affordable Barton tutoring, Learning Style Assessments, Brain Integration Therapy, curricula consultation and screenings for dyslexia, dysgraphia, dycalculia, sensory, vision, Irlen, etc.



Kindergarten through College Credit

Classical Conversations provides community for every member of YOUR family.



Ready, set, go! Community today!

Find a community near you:
classicalconversations.com/iahe-start



Yes, YOU! You can be the lead learner in your home.

Come see how with our FREE equipping events.

PRACTICUM ON-DEMAND

Are you ready to be inspired, encouraged, and equipped from the comfort of your own home?

Watch alone, with a friend, or with your local community members.



★ CLASSICAL CONVERSATIONS ★

EXPLORERS

DIGITAL CAMP

\$99 Per Family

• SUMMER X 2020 •

EXTRA! EXTRA!

HOMESCHOOLING IS THE NORM ACROSS NATION

— (Or is it?) —



▼ Children everywhere around the world are suddenly expelled from school buildings and called "homeschoolers" - but is this the case?

COVID-19 — Are We All Homeschoolers Now?

No. Not really. Millions of school children are suddenly stuck at home working on their public school assignments, but a shift in the location of children to the home does NOT equal homeschooling. For most families, it's temporary. Have you ever gone on vacation and wondered what it would be like to live there? Visiting a city and

living in a city can be two very different experiences. One is temporary, while the other is a longer-term choice. Millions of families are now accidental tourists in our homeschool community, and some may be wondering what it would be like to settle in this "city of homeschoolers." They aren't homeschooling until their child's education is "parent-directed" and "privately funded." This distinction is critical as we strive to protect and preserve homeschool freedom.

35th IAHE Home Educators' Convention Turned into Online Conference

Whoever thought an online conference could be so incredible? Though the cancellation of the 2020 IAHE Convention was disappointing for all concerned, the Keep Calm and Homeschool On Conference continues to be a wild success! With over 70 speakers and 150 workshops, participants are being equipped and inspired. The workshops are pre-recorded and can be enjoyed from the convenience of home. The best part is that all the workshops are available until the end of the year! You don't have to miss a single one! Are you missing those vendors? Check out the Virtual Vendor Hall inside the Convention for resources, special pricing, freebies, and more. Register at:

iahe.net/keep-calm

Did You Grab Your COVID-19 Memory Book?

Children are curious about what is going on in our world. The Memory Book for elementary students and Time Capsule for older students can help them create meaningful memories and have deeper conversations about this unique time in history. Print yours here:

iahe.net/memory-book

A RESPONSE TO THE HARVARD SUMMIT



Your Homeschool Freedom is Under Attack!

In February, IAHE became aware of an event to be hosted at Harvard University titled "Homeschooling Summit: Problems, Politics, and Prospects for Reform." This event was to focus "...on problems of education deprivation and child maltreatment that too often occur under the guise of homeschooling, in a legal environment of minimal or no oversight." The summit was organized in part by Professor Elizabeth Bartholet, who also wrote an article for Harvard Magazine and recommended: "a presumptive ban on homeschooling, with the burden on parents to demonstrate justification for permission to homeschool." Due to coronavirus restrictions, the event was postponed, but the organizers are not slowing down their efforts to challenge parental rights and homeschool freedom. The roots of the Summit hit closer to home than you might realize as two of the event's featured speakers, Dr. Rachel Coleman and Professor Robert Kunzman, both hail from Indiana University. The IAHE and IAHE Action have battled these challenges head-on for years and our team continues to monitor the situation. You can learn more about the Harvard Summit in a 5-part series of interviews with IAHE's Senior Policy Analyst, Alison Slatter, on IAHE's blog.

iahe.net/harvard-response

2020 Legislative Session

This year's legislative session wrapped up quietly in the face of the pandemic. In case you missed it, here are two significant items to be aware of.

SB 428 Targeted Homeschool Families

In January, Senator Jean Leising introduced SB 428 which specifically targeted homeschooling families for scrutiny. With this bill, the Indiana Child Services would have been required to report annually on how many child fatalities "solely received home-based instruction." The term "home-based instruction" is not defined in Indiana code, and no known data indicates homeschooling as a risk factor for child abuse or neglect. Targeting parents because they educate their children at home is an attack on the family and seeks to erode parental rights.

Child abuse is never acceptable and needless reporting that diverts government resources away from children who need it most is irresponsible. Effectively reducing child abuse and fatalities starts with concentrating on documented risk factors. While we were able to defeat this bill with the efforts of IAHE and IAHE Action, we expect this issue to resurface in 2021. With your support, we will continue to protect your homeschool freedom.

Homeschooled Students & Work Permits

For years, homeschooled students seeking employment were required to obtain a work permit from their local high school. Changes to employment law for homeschooled minors went into effect on April 1, 2020, and families can now provide prospective employers with a Parental Permission Form instead. Forms can be printed from the Indiana Department of Labor website and allow a parent to authorize their 16 or 17-year-old to work. Homeschool students must follow all of the same rules and work hour restrictions that a student at an accredited school would follow. ■





Are Indiana homeschool families **REQUIRED** to do testing?

No. It is *optional* for families to test their children in Indiana.

IAHE has partnered with BJU Press Testing and Evaluation to offer the Iowa Assessments from the comfort of your own home! The IAHE will receive a group report (*based on ANONYMOUS student data*) from Indiana families, allowing us to showcase to legislators the test scores of home educated students.

For more information: iahe.net/bju-testing

— Benefits of Testing —

PROVIDE A BENCHMARK

Standardized tests can indicate how your child compares academically to other children at his grade level and can be used to identify learning gaps.

PROTECT HOMESCHOOL FREEDOM

Establishing a snapshot of Indiana students' performance on tests lends credibility to the educational excellence of homeschool students. Nationally, homeschooled students score very high and state-specific results give legislators and policymakers a more relevant framework for the success of home education.

LEARN TEST-TAKING SKILLS

Following directions, relaxing under pressure, pacing oneself, and completing work in an allotted time are all great skills that can be honed through taking tests.



Online Testing

with BJU Press

*IAHE is excited to announce our partnership with BJU Press Testing and Evaluation. We have arranged with BJU to receive a group report (based on **ANONYMOUS** student data) from Indiana families that test with them, allowing us to showcase to legislators the test scores of home educated students. To have your student's data included, visit: iahe.net/bju-testing*

With spring 2020 in full swing, BJU Press can provide a more convenient testing experience for IAHE families.

BJU Press Testing & Evaluation has been working with homeschool families for over 30 years, making us the most experienced and trusted provider of standardized testing. We know the process, and we're ready to help you through every step. Our service doesn't stop even when the tests are graded. Just call in, and we'll help you understand the results—including how you can use the scores to help your child.

And BJU Press Testing & Evaluation is making achievement testing better than ever through online testing on your Mac or Windows computer, iPad, or Chromebook. With faster results (within five to seven days), no shipping costs to pay, and a test administrator provided, the benefits will seem endless. And testing at home will save you traveling and daycare costs!

Benefits of Testing

Achievement tests are a great way to track your student's growth from year to year. The scores analyze their thinking skills and give effective info for planning your school year.

Comparing your children's scores to other students' scores lets you know that your children are keeping up with their peers. Your scores will help BJU Press create a group report for IAHE that will showcase to legislators the test scores of Indiana home-educated students, without revealing any of your or your student's personal data.

Achievement Tests and Abilities Tests Go Hand in Hand

As a homeschool parent, you are working with your student closely. You know which subjects your child enjoys and which ones are less pleasing. But do you know what your child is able to achieve? Is your student measuring up?

Having your student take a combination of the Iowa Assessments™ Form E Achievement Test with the Cognitive Abilities Test™ (CogAT®) can help you answer these questions. Available for grades K–12, the combination test puts the scores together to give you a better view of the results.

Using the CogAT with the Iowa Assessments also helps you see how your child learns, so that you can choose the best way to help your student grow.

What the CogAT is

With its many innovations, the CogAT is a trailblazer among abilities tests. It tests growth of reasoning skills in three main areas: verbal, quantitative, and nonverbal.

You can look at your student's abilities using the profile narrative in the CogAT report. It compares your student to a wide variety of students from various backgrounds in both public and private schools. Students receive age-based scores as well as scores based on their grade level.

Results can be influenced by the following:

- Genetic traits
- Learning background
- Personal drive
- Individual traits
- Awareness or concentration
- Willingness to follow through
- Emotional state

What the CogAT Includes

As you review this section, think about how your child scores in reading, as an example.

The verbal score | This score shows how well students understand words and word combinations. Students are tested in this area by finishing sentences and showing if they are able to see the connections between words that are alike and words that are different.

The quantitative score | The quantitative score shows the students' ability to understand and use numbers when it comes to number relationships, rules, and problem-solving methods. This is tested by asking students to build and solve math problems, recognize number patterns, and show an understanding of how numbers and their values are related.

The nonverbal score | The nonverbal score displays the students' ability to use patterns and shapes. In school, your students use mostly verbal communication, so this score is not always an accurate picture of academic success, but it does give you an idea of your students' reasoning ability. Students who score well in this area learn best visually (i.e., using pictures, objects, models, demonstrations, etc.) and through hands-on activities. A student's nonverbal score is based on the ability to see similarities in figures, classify designs, and show an ability to discern figures beyond the two-dimensional.

CogAT Scores and Education

Homeschool parents can use CogAT results to personalize their teaching methods. What are your goals this school year? Defining these goals will allow you to use test results to support them.

Customizing instruction | As a homeschool parent, you can use CogAT scores to customize instruction to fit your student's needs. The CogAT profile narrative report includes a summary of your student's strengths and weaknesses and also offers advice on adapting lessons for individual student needs.

Matching achievement to ability | Do your student's achievement test scores reflect his or her ability? As a homeschool parent, you might wonder if your student is performing as well as you should expect on standardized tests—and in school, in general. To help with this, you can compare results from the Iowa Assessments to scores from the CogAT. For example, imagine

your child scored in the fiftieth percentile on the achievement test in reading, but when compared with the abilities test, you may see that your child should have scored in the seventieth percentile for that subtest. In that case, your child is performing below his ability.

Identifying gifted and talented students | Find out if your child qualifies for gifted programs using CogAT results. These scores provide homeschool parents with a view of their students' performance in multiple areas. This data is shown on the CogAT profile narrative.

Combining CogAT Scores With Iowa Assessments Scores in One Report

Combined reporting of scores from CogAT and Iowa Assessments produces a single report that displays abilities and achievement scores. In addition to the profile narrative for the CogAT, the Iowa Assessments profile narrative gives a predicted score for how well the child should have done on his or her achievement test, based on the abilities test results.

How to Interpret Scores

Grade placement, textbooks, and other choices should never be based solely on test scores. Such decisions should always take into account the whole picture of your student's ability/progress. Remember that a student's God-given talent affects what should be expected for achievement test scores. For one student, scoring in the fortieth percentile may be an excellent accomplishment, while for another, it would not meet expectations.

Share results with your child in general terms rather than specific numbers. For example: "Your score in math computation is above average when compared with other students in your grade" or "Spelling is an area we especially want to work on together."

Do not assume that an achievement test has measured all the important skills and objectives you are trying to teach. Viewed together with the student's daily work, however, the test scores should confirm the progress you've been seeing.

Two Easy Ordering Steps:

- Call BJU Press at 1-800-845-5731 and press 9. Mention that you are with the Indiana Association of Home Educators.
- Order online using the Parent Portal. Visit iahe.net/bju-testing for more information

How Long Each Test Takes

Abilities testing takes two to three hours and is completed in one day, while achievement testing takes four to eight hours over two days. If used together, the testing is spread out over three days.

At BJU Press, our desire is to partner with you and the IAHE in order to make your student's testing experience as smooth and stress-free as possible. We look forward to helping you. ■

Help Along the Way

A Mom Remembers

-Kathy Balke

After twenty-eight years,

I have graduated all six of my children and am now finished homeschooling. It is quiet here after years of activity and somewhat neater now that the kids' books are where they belong, and the dining room table is not filled with their work. But I miss it, and I miss them. Homeschooling was one of the highlights of my life. I try to encourage those who are still at it that it is over before they know it. This helps give them perspective, but I realize that it does not help them with their day-to-day grind. They need practical help too. As I have spoken to countless homeschoolers, I have seen we all share the same struggles.

First of all, homeschool moms are some of the busiest people around. Not only are we raising a family and running a household, but we have taken on the education of our children. It seems that some of the discouragement comes from an expectation of what our homes and schools should look like—thinking we have to do it all. The first book I read on homeschooling, *Home Grown Kids* by Raymond and Dorothy Moore, freed me from many false notions about education.

Raymond Moore was awarded a government grant in the 1970s to study early childhood education. After extensive research, he found that the best teacher is a warm and responsive parent, and the best school is at home. He concluded that an ideal education would consist of three equal parts: study, work, and service. The Moores published many other helpful books, and woven into each of them were ideas that guided me in our fledgling school.

Reading his thoughts about study, work, and service caused me to look for ways to make that happen in our home. I made a schedule and divided up the housework between the kids and made that part of school. The Moores believe that children not only need structure, but they like it and want to know what is coming next. I learned to make a simple schedule for each child that included when we started, when we finished, and what took place in between. The children did not balk at this but took it as a matter of course and used it faithfully. Although I had not previously been

a schedule-type person, this is the method I found that helped us stay on course. With all the interruptions a busy family can experience, having a schedule helped us know where we were when we got off-track, so we could go back and resume our work.

Another area that causes a mom to get sidetracked stems from her kind heart and inability to say no. When we decide to homeschool, we are making a big commitment to our children and to a lifestyle change. For me, school days became a time when friends knew not to call, and all of our attention was given to learning together. I learned to say no to a lot of activities that took me away from home or caused distractions to our day. As my husband says, "If you want to get something done, you have to do it first." Schooling had to come first, and when that was done, we found that we had ample time to pursue other things.

When I mentioned learning together, I meant exactly that. As I taught my kids, I realized how little I remembered from my own schooling. As I began to learn history from the people who actually lived it, I got excited about it in a way I had never been before. This was also true of literature and poetry. I was introduced to authors and poets who soon found their place on my ever-growing bookshelf. Science also became alive as we walked through woods and identified plants I had never seen before. Such wealth awaited me every day, and because I enjoyed learning so much, it kept me motivated.

Many things can get us off-track, but often a small change can make a big difference. Is the problem a messy house, a disorganized day, some needed boundaries, a curriculum that is not working? We have all struggled with these things, and I hope the help I received from others and passed along can somehow help in your journey. Every homeschool family is different, so do not feel like you have to be a carbon copy of anyone else. Try new things until you find what works for you. Enjoy your children and learn along with them. It will be over sooner than you think. ■



Kathy Balke and her husband, Pat, began homeschooling in 1986. Initially taking one year at a time, they loved it and kept it up for twenty-eight years, graduating all six children. They have served as IAHE Regional Representatives for fifteen years, helping others get started on this adventure called homeschooling.

The Reading Corner

As homeschool moms, we focus on shopping lists of curriculum, school supplies, and great reading material for our children. Check out these recommendations for your whole family.

— Adults —



Animal Farm by George Orwell

Feeling overworked and underappreciated, the animals on Farmer Jones's farm rebel and make the decision to take over the farm, kicking Jones out in the process. Written in 1945, this satirical fiction takes a look at the effects of oppression, how oppression can turn to a revolution, and how that revolution can turn to tyranny. Orwell takes the reader through these steps in a detailed and realistic way. The leaders take the power and change the rules; they do not care about what they have to do to get everyone else to follow their rules. This is an insightful look into the future of societies that do not take care to limit the power of their leaders. *Reviewed by Lacey Hooie – Bloomington, IN*



The Last Year of the War by Susan Meissner

In this World War II-era novel, we are introduced to Elsie Sontag, a typical 14-year-old girl living in Iowa, who happens to have German-born parents. When her father, who has been a legal resident of the United States for two centuries, is rounded up under the suspicion of being a Nazi sympathizer, her life is sent into a tailspin. This excellent novel spans from a bleak internment camp in Texas to life in Germany at the end of World War II to post-war life in California, long after most have forgotten about American internment camps. It is poignant, thoughtful, and beautifully written. Susan Meissner does an excellent job tying in the depth of historical information while weaving a poetic story about right versus wrong and the redeeming power of love and friendship. This is a compelling historical fiction read that you will be glad you picked up. *Reviewed by Caroline Magno – Bloomington, IN*



Five to Thrive by Dr. Kathy Koch, Ph.D.

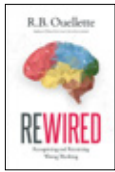
Are you wondering if you matter? If you belong? What your purpose in life is? Then *Five to Thrive* is for you. Dr. Kathy Koch has hit a home run again in her book *Five to Thrive: How to Determine if Your Core Needs are Being Met (and What to Do When They're Not)*. In her practical, down-to-earth, straight up conversational style, Dr. Koch identifies five core needs we all have. Along with discussing how to meet those needs, she identifies character traits that will allow us to "serve well, love well, and live well." *Five to Thrive* is filled with God's truth and wisdom. By weaving in "some slice-of-life stories" throughout the book, Dr. Koch demonstrates how to become the healthy individual God designed you to be. *Reviewed by Staci Morgan – Bedford, IN*



Onward: Engaging the Culture Without Losing the Gospel

by Russell D. Moore

As Christians, we are called to share the gospel with others. That can be difficult in today's culture that views Christianity as a fad of the past. However, Moore does an excellent job of helping us remember that the church has a powerful and unique gospel message that's relevant and necessary, even when it is unwanted. For a time, the truth of the gospel was lost in conversations about "voter values" and "What would Jesus do?" Moore stresses the need to ask the really important question that Jesus asked Peter, "Who do you say that I am?" This book will challenge you to evaluate how you can more effectively engage the culture with the gospel message thereby setting an example for your children to do likewise. *Reviewed by Amy Sager – Ellettsville, IN*

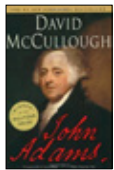


Rewired

by R. B. Oullette

Do you feel the vibrancy fading away from your walk with Christ? Has loving difficult people become too difficult? Does advice frustrate you?

Is there one person that it just hurts to be around because of that one thing that happened? Satan loves nothing more than drowning out the joy of being a Christian by leading us toward strongholds that neutralize us. Through the lens of compelling scriptural insight, R. B. Oullette reveals the path to rewiring our minds by recognizing and retraining wrong thinking. This is the path to the victorious Christian life, free from Satan's strongholds dragging us down. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" (2 Corinthians 10:5)
Reviewed by Grace K. – Marion, IN



John Adams

by David McCullough

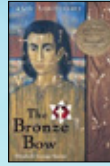
The years surrounding 1776 were full of patriotic activities, revolution, and the founding of a new country. John Adams, a true patriot and our second President, lived his life for his country. He crossed the Atlantic and spent many years traveling through Spain, France, England, Prussia, and Holland as an ambassador. Though he was met over and over again with defeat and was weakened in spirit and health, often when far from home and family, Adams persevered in serving his young country. McCullough reveals Adams' strong character through the thousands of letters Adams wrote to friends and family. This thick book may seem daunting, but it will lead you on a journey of inspiration to preserve the liberties that Adams spent his life fighting for so that future generations might live in freedom. *Reviewed by Emma E. S. – Ellettsville, IN*



Rifles for Watie

by Harold Keith

This is a historical fiction book on the Civil War. Jeff joins the Union side at age 16 after bushwhackers come to his family's farm and steal their horses and point guns at them. Jeff fights some battles and encounters deafening artillery and soldiers that suffered debilitating wounds. He spies on the rebels, makes friends with them, and then fights alongside the Confederates. After hearing a useful message, he tries secretly to escape back to the Union lines, but his plan is exposed, and he is chased 100 miles on foot. Rifles for Watie helps the reader understand what life was like in the Civil War. *Reviewed by Ben B. – Indianapolis, IN*



The Bronze Bow

by Elizabeth George Speare

The Bronze Bow, written by Elizabeth George Speare, is a heartwarming, adventurous story. It is about a young man named Daniel on a life journey that begins with a desire for revenge but ends with an encounter with grace and "peace that surpasses all understanding." The story holds the reader captivated with the relationships Daniel develops and the choices he has to make to move toward forgiveness. It definitely appeals to a variety of ages from middle school age to adults. Although set in the historical biblical time period, the story is a life lesson of forgiveness and mercy that all can find relatable to life today. *Reviewed by Ezra P. – Bloomington, IN*



Benjamin Rush

by Janet & Geoff Benge

This biography tells the story of a man who chose to be a doctor even though he had a strong aversion to the sight of blood. He wanted to help people, no matter what it took. Rush was also good friends with many Patriots, including John Adams, and was committed to the cause of liberty. As a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Rush bravely stood up to tyranny and risked his life for American freedom. The Benge's account of the life of this devoted Founding Father is very interesting. The young and the old alike will be inspired to greater patriotism. *Reviewed by Gabriel S. – Ellettsville, IN*



Anne of Green Gables

by L.M. Montgomery

This is a very entertaining book with creatively taught life lessons interwoven into an amusing and often heartwarming story to which children of all ages can relate. The book highlights the value of a strong imagination in children but also the consequences of an unchecked overactive-imagination. Anne has many adventures in the book including dying her hair green, learning to control her imagination and falling prey to peer pressure. Though the book does end on a slightly sad note that might upset younger readers, it is mostly filled with humor and lighthearted fun that the whole family can enjoy. *Reviewed by Emma S. – Bloomington, IN* ■



"Nothing ever invented provides such sustenance, such infinite reward for time spent, as a good book."

— David McCullough

Introducing the 1st Annual IAHE Summer Reading Challenge—children of all ages can stretch their imaginations, build their vocabularies, and broaden their horizons.

What you get:

Reading log

Tips for making reading exciting

Book ideas for all ages



Get yours at
[iahe.net/
summer-reading](http://iahe.net/summer-reading)



Your support matters!

Today, more than ever, our organization needs YOU as we serve the homeschool community together. You can support the IAHE in many different ways. From a recurring monthly donation, membership, attending IAHE events, shopping online, and more, it's simple to be a part of keeping Indiana #homeschoolstrong!

iahe.net/support



DONATE

Clicks-4-CASH

Use links on our website to buy your homeschool curriculum and the IAHE will earn a small rebate on your purchase.

Start Strong

INDIANA

Homeschool University

A unique 14-day online course designed to help homeschoolers take flight! Whether you are a brand new homeschooler or already have some experience, this course is for you! Below is an excerpt from Start Strong, called The Elementary Years—Loving Learning.

Check out
[IAHE.net/
start-strong](http://IAHE.net/start-strong)

The elementary years are a time of rapid physical and intellectual growth. Children grow from learning the fundamentals of reading to tackling chapter books and textbooks on their own. They grow from learning how to add numbers to solving equations. These are foundational years for our children, and the skills they learn now will form an important base for the rest of their schooling. However, there is something even more important that they will develop during this time—their attitude toward learning.

Children will either develop a negative attitude toward learning or a positive attitude. They will either view learning as a tedious chore (or possibly even as something to be dreaded), or they will come to love learning about and exploring the world around them. As a homeschooling parent, you get to play a huge role in the development of this attitude in your children. This does not mean that we only teach our children things that are fun, or that if our child doesn't enjoy something, then we stop teaching them that. We must all learn to obey and do what is right whether we enjoy it or not. What it means is that we get excited about learning and let our kids see that every day. We can strive to teach everything in a way that is engaging and interesting. Besides the fact that they will enjoy it more, they will actually learn it better.

Here are some suggestions and ideas for you to think about as you head into the elementary years:

Put character training first. Our children's character training should be built on a growing knowledge of God's

word. Spend time each day reading the Bible together and learning about God's love for us and his good commandments that are for our own good. Gently but firmly require obedience and respect from your children. Help them grow in biblical virtue. If this is in place first, and well-maintained, learning will be easier and more enjoyable for everyone. Your children will thrive when they feel secure within the boundaries you have set for their behavior.

Keep the lessons short. In the early elementary years, formal learning time need not take any more than an hour or two a day. When they reach the later elementary years, they may need to spend a little more time on it, but not much more. This formal learning time can be broken down into smaller chunks with frequent breaks for your child to do jumping jacks, run around the yard, or have a snack. Our children's brains can focus better when they have plenty of time for physical activity. Smile and praise your children when they focus well during these short sessions. Keep them fun and interesting. Believe it or not, much of your children's best learning may actually take place throughout the day as you do life together.

Focus on basic skills. Remember the three R's? Now is the time for these—reading, writing, arithmetic. Spend time each day working on these three areas. Be patient and gentle so they look forward to these times working with you. If that is all you do for formal learning time in the early elementary years, your children will have a great start to their education. Of course, you can always read to them about historical people and events and go for nature walks to help them see the beauty of God's creation. In the later elementary years, you can continue this way with history and science, maybe adding projects and experiments, or you can add in more formal curriculum. It is completely up to you to decide

how your child will learn best and progress with their education. Remember that a strong foundation in the three R's will set your child up for success in the middle school years.

Don't forget their learning style. Sometimes we can start out strong with customizing our children's education based on their learning style and then gradually just fall into doing school in a way that's easiest for us. Remember our goal here? It is to help our children learn to love learning. Teaching them in a way they learn best will make your homeschool a happier place.

Make your home an inviting place to learn. Do you have comfortable places to cozy up with a good book? Do you have art/craft supplies that are easily accessible? Do you have bookshelves filled with wonderful enriching choices? Do you have a project area where your child can build and create and not worry about making a little mess? Sometimes we can say with our mouth that we want our children to learn all day long, but then prevent that from happening by the way we set up and run our homes. By creating inviting places to learn, we enable our children to follow their interests and attract them to exploration. Once you have inviting learning spaces, don't forget to give them the time to pursue their interests and passions.

Read aloud as much as possible. Children are sponges at all ages, but their capacity to absorb information is especially large in the elementary years. Reading aloud to them is beneficial for a few reasons. It is a great way of sharing facts, ideas, beauty, and truth, while at the same time fueling an excitement for stories. They may hear something that sparks an interest in them to learn about a certain topic that they hadn't even thought about before. Reading aloud quality literature ingrains proper grammar and vocabulary in their brains—it is actually the most important thing you can do to help them be successful readers and writers. Reading aloud with your children will create warm family memories that they will carry with them into their own future families. Pass the gift of reading aloud to future generations.

Make time for field trips. Elementary-aged children thrive with hands-on and relevant experiences. Field trips most definitely count as school days. You can coordinate field trips with what you are studying, or pick them based on your child's current interest, or simply go on one because it looks exciting. Here are some ideas of places to go or things to do: history museum, science museum, aquarium, zoo, children's museum, historical festivals, reenactments, state or national parks (they often give guided tours), behind-the-scenes tours, art gallery. Field trips are an excellent way to keep your children engaged in learning and motivate them to want to learn even more about the world around them.

The elementary years are a time of character and attitude development, rapid physical and intellectual growth, and fluctuating interests. We can either crush their budding desire to learn and explore, or we can encourage, support, and fuel it. Let's choose the latter. Let's get excited about learning ourselves, so we can pass that onto our children, and provide them with an environment, resources, and experiences that prime them for a lifelong love of learning. Cherish this time with them. Happy learning! ■

Get Equipped!

Whether your kids are 5 or 15, this course will empower and equip you to successfully homeschool your children. We will teach you how to be intentional in raising your children from academics to discipleship to continuing education for you, so you can be the best parent and educator.

"I wish I had this course when I first started my homeschool journey, but it's never too late to learn and grow, and that's exactly what this course is helping me do!"

— Kelly Cox

"I was blown away by the amount of content provided! This course has reminded me that all homeschools are different, and I can focus on my children's needs."

— Lacey Hoisie

"This is perfect for new homeschoolers like us! Everything's in one place—from creating an educational home to age-appropriate education. I loved the personal experiences the veteran homeschoolers shared."

— Joann Wong

Videos | Articles | Panel Discussions
Bonus Sessions | Resource Center
Printable Planners & More!

iahe.net/start-strong



WASHINGTON DC

ULTIMATE HOMESCHOOL FIELD TRIP!

— BECKY BARNES-ISRAEL

Did you have spring or summer travel plans

for your family that had to be canceled? Maybe you have had quite enough time at home now and are ready to plan an exciting trip for your family. Our country's capital might be just the place for you. What better way to learn American history than to experience it up close and personal? If you are teaching American history at all in your homeschool, I recommend planning a trip to Washington DC and seeing first hand the heart of our nation.

I planned a trip for our family last fall, and I hope the tips that I learned help you as you plan your trip. Going to DC can be overwhelming and expensive if it is not carefully planned, so here is what we did to maximize our experience and keep costs down. With careful planning, you will be rewarded with wonderful quality family time, while also counting this vacation as school!

Schedule Your Tours

First I made a list of the places I wanted my family to go. My kids are all in elementary grades still, so your goals may be slightly different than mine. I wanted to take my kids to the White House, the Capitol Building, and several other places.

Secondly, I began requesting my tours. Many places provide free tours if they are planned in advance. Here are the places we went that needed advance notice for tours:

THE WHITE HOUSE I applied through our Congressman's office. His staff directed me to a website where I had to provide information for background checks. I was told that 80-85% of applicants are denied access to the White House and applying early is best. I recommend applying **at least two months in advance** of your trip.

THE CAPITOL BUILDING Did you know that your Congressman's office provides tours of the Capitol Building at no cost? Congressmen love when someone from their district comes to visit their DC office, and they are happy to provide a personal tour. We were given a delightful hour and a half tour. **Call a month or two in advance** to get on the schedule! If you are lucky, you can even request a Dome tour and get to go up into the tallest part of the Capitol Building.

THE PENTAGON The Pentagon ironically was the most difficult to get a tour secured. **You must apply 14-90 days in advance.** Here is the website where you apply: pentagontours.osd.mil/Tours/tour-selection.jsp

Reserve Your Lodgings

Once I had our tours in order, I scheduled our lodging. While there are many lodging options, from camping to extravagant hotels in Washington DC, we chose an Airbnb that was situated relatively close to public transportation. It was \$80 a night and comfortably fit our family of five. If you have never used Airbnb, (or other companies that enable you to rent a home or apartment) I highly recommend it! You get the luxury of being in a home at a reasonable price. Because we were staying in one of these, I was able to cook every meal we ate, saving quite a bit of money.

Plan Your Meals

Now we were ready! Our tours were booked and the Airbnb was reserved! The next step was to make a meal plan and grocery shop. I planned our meals to be easy-to-prepare foods such as chicken nuggets, precooked hamburgers, etc. I knew we would be tired from walking, and that I would not want to do a ton of nightly food preparation. We also packed sandwiches and snacks every day for lunch while we were sight-seeing. It is usually not difficult to find a grocery store within walking distance or use public transportation to pick up some easy-to-prepare items.

Something I did that I recommend everyone packing their lunches also does, is to plan your day around your lunch. Some places do not allow any food at all, and if you try to go through security with it, they may throw it out. Security at the White House threw out a protein bar I had in my purse. So check ahead of time! The only day that I couldn't plan that was Friday, the day we went to the White House. Having our food planned for each day gave me peace of mind and helped our wallets.

Our Schedule

Those of you with older children can do more in a day, but little legs cannot walk as far, so we were happy we saw what we did! I have included our transportation as well.

FRIDAY We drove into DC and parked our van in a parking garage spot that I had reserved ahead of time using an app called SpotHero. We had a White House tour and visited the White House Visitor's Center that morning. We then took the Metro to the Capitol Building for a tour in the afternoon. The Capitol Building tour was our favorite! We were able to enter the floor of the House and stand where the congressmen stand. This is where the State of the Union address occurs!

SATURDAY We walked fifteen minutes to Union Station in the morning and looked around. We then walked across the street and visited the Postal Museum. After that we sat outside the Museum and ate lunch, before taking the Metro to the Library of Congress and spending the entire afternoon there. The Postal Museum is a hidden treasure trove of history and one of the lesser known Smithsonian Museums. My children tout it as their favorite part of our entire DC trip!

SUNDAY We took an Uber to the Washington Monument. Not realizing that tickets were required to go inside, we chose to view it from the outside. We then proceeded to walk down to the World War II Memorial, Reflection Pool, Lincoln Memorial, Korean War Memorial, FDR Memorial (ate our packed lunch in the quiet park there), and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial. From



Levi, Cora, & Ben Barnes-Israel in the Blue Room at the White House.

there we had an Uber take us to the Air and Space Museum. We spent the afternoon at the Museum and then took the Metro and Streetcar back to our Airbnb. The Lincoln Memorial is such a special place for everyone who visits. It brought out wonderful discussions for our family and actually was the catalyst for a huge Civil War unit we began when we arrived home from our trip!

MONDAY We took the Metro to the National History Museum and enjoyed the entire morning there. We ate a packed lunch in the museum. From there, we walked to the National Archives to see the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. We waited in line for quite some time. Tickets to get in without waiting are available online, but I chose not to get them as I didn't know when we would be done at the History Museum that morning. Seeing the actual documents that form the foundation of this country, was very impactful and worth the wait.

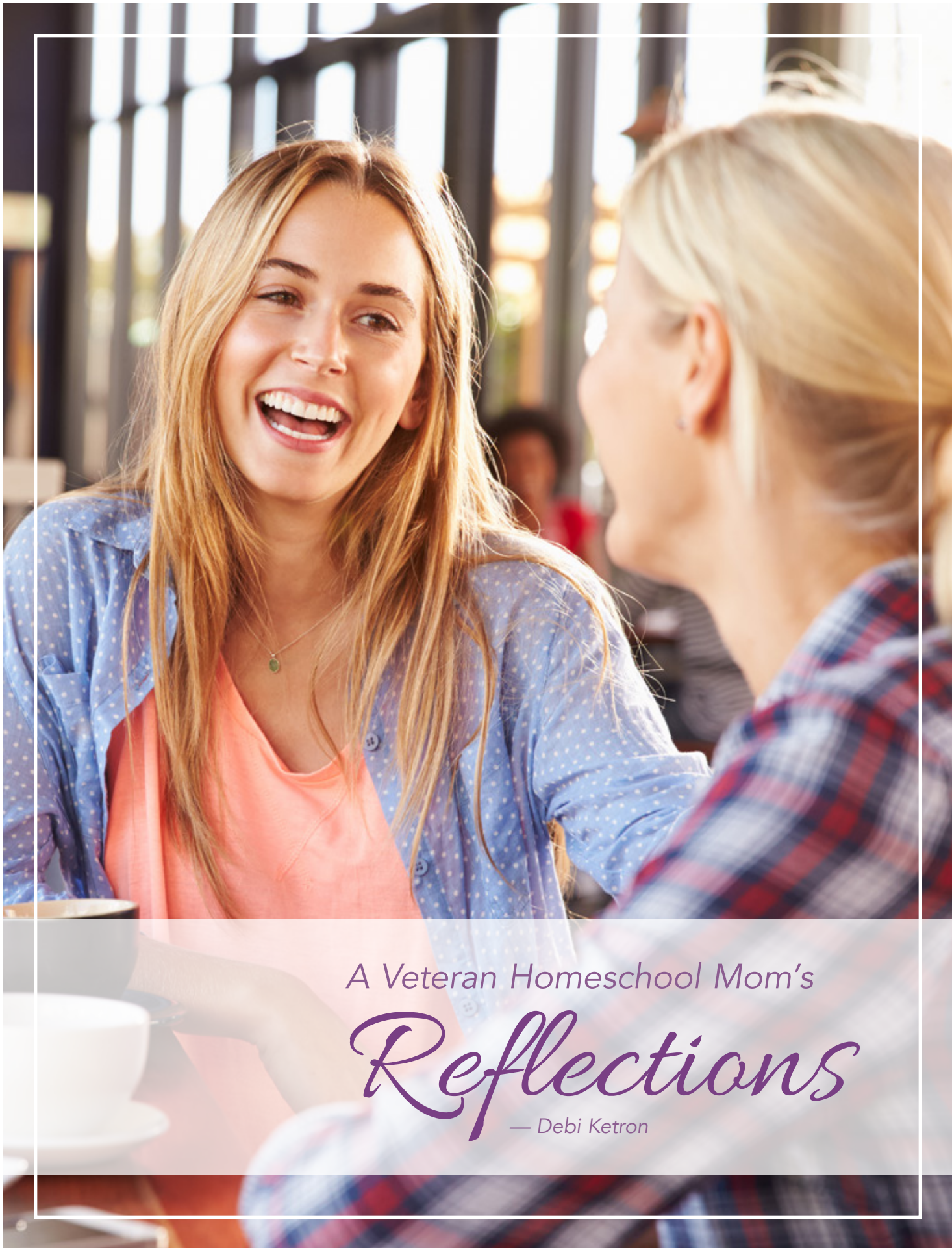
TUESDAY This was our last day of touring, and we had a Pentagon tour scheduled for 1:00pm. The Pentagon is a maze, and it is so easy to get lost! We tried to stay close to the soldiers who gave our tour, so we could hear them well. The 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon had an impact on all of us, and we spent quite a bit of time there reflecting on the tragedy that took place. It is well done and not scary at all for young children. After the tour, we drove back home eight hours!

Like most homeschooling moms, I bought thirty-three books in DC and all were for our homeschool. Everywhere I bought books, I asked if they had a teacher discount. I learned that the Smithsonian Museums and the White House Visitors Center do not have a teacher discount but any gift shops, such as the one at the Lincoln Memorial, run by the National Park Service (NPS) offer a 10-20% teacher discount. So be sure to have your Indiana Association of Home Educators (IAHE) teacher ID with you.

We had a great time in Washington DC, and our family loved spending so much time together. I highly recommend taking your family to see and learn about our nation's rich history. You will make great memories and talk about your trip for years to come!



Becky Barnes-Israel is a homeschool graduate who is married to her Hoosier hubby Spencer. Now a former Indiana public school teacher, she educates her three children at home while running a successful dog-sitting business. Becky is a graduate of Northern Kentucky University and is very active in her church.



A Veteran Homeschool Mom's

Reflections

— Debi Ketron

We sat down with Hoosier veteran homeschool mom Debi Ketron. Debi has served over the years in the following capacities: support group and co-op founder and leader, IAHE Regional Representative, IAHE ACTION co-founder, IAHE & IAHE ACTION Board Member, and Director of Government Affairs for IAHE & IAHE ACTION. She is a wealth of knowledge, and she shares with us some aspects of her journey through homeschooling.

How many kids do you have, and how many years did you spend homeschooling them?

We have four children that we homeschooled from kindergarten through graduation, making a total of 21 years of homeschooling.

Briefly tell us what your kids are doing now.

Three are married and are homeowners. They funded their own college educations, and they have no college debt. Two are stay-at-home mothers, one of which works out of the home for various clients and is beginning to homeschool her children. One son works in the finance department for an Indiana-based corporation. One is in the process of learning a trade.

Share one of your greatest memories from your homeschooling days.

We enjoyed bringing history to life. While traveling to the beach in North Carolina, we read a biography about Francis Scott Key and listened to an Adventures in Odyssey cassette tape about the battle of Fort McHenry. On our way home, inspired by the book and tape, we decided to visit The Smithsonian and see the actual Ft. McHenry flag and visit Ft. McHenry in Baltimore.

Another great memory is when our son qualified to go to the NCFCA National tournament at the end of his only year of Policy Debate. He worked extremely hard and had stiff competition, so it was a wonderful surprise.

How did you balance housework, meals, laundry, etc. when your kids were young and needed more direct instruction and attention?

We tried to stick to a schedule and kept the house fairly clean. I did once a month grocery shopping and planned out a month's worth of meals. Once the kids could read, they had more independent work, so I could work more intensely with the little ones who couldn't read. I was available to help the older ones when they needed it. Each day was a juggling act between the four children.

How did you handle the high school years to make sure they would be accepted into a college, or be prepared for an apprenticeship or job?

They each received a college-prep education that would allow them to pursue whichever path they would eventually choose. We followed the requirements for the Indiana Honors Diploma because we felt the Core 40 would not properly prepare them for college-level work. (To be clear, homeschoolers are not required by law to follow either one, but we felt it was a helpful guideline.)

I kept excellent records. For each subject on the transcript, I wrote a course description and bibliography. I kept the transcript up to date each semester. The children were involved in extracurricular activities and three children took at least one college class during high school. We began this practice when dual credit classes were still an uncommon practice. Our youngest graduated early and began college courses while working full-time to save for college.

Of course, they took the required college entrance assessments as well.

Sometimes homeschoolers can wonder if we are doing too much or not enough for our kids. What advice do you have for us?

Be diligent each day. Have high expectations for your kids, and allow them to work independently as they mature while still being available to assist and guide.

What, if anything, would you do differently if you had to do it all over again?

I asked our adult children for their input on this question. I thought we were too busy in the evenings with extracurriculars and if I could do it again I would possibly consider limiting them to a couple of activities in which they could all participate, but none of our children agree with me. They loved their extracurriculars.

One child wished I had given more autonomy in learning subjects this child wanted to learn. I felt like we tried to do that, but this child has since told me more was desired.

Another child, who now has a bachelor's degree and multiple professional credentials, believes we overemphasized the expectation they would receive a college education.

What encouragement can you offer to other homeschool moms who may be feeling discouraged or overwhelmed by the task ahead of them?

You can do it, but it takes time, effort, and diligence to have a successful home school. There will be some hard lessons that your children will have to learn that they will not learn from you. God may use other means to teach them. With adult children, it is painful to see them make certain choices, but you must love them despite it. We have seen good fruit after difficult periods. Do not be weary in well-doing. As Christians, daily rely on the Lord for strength and guidance. ■

Indiana Association of Home Educators

P.O. Box 217
Stilesville, IN 46180

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
INDIANAPOLIS, IN
Permit No. 9395

Encourage • Protect • Serve • Established 1983

Be a Homeschool Advocate!

Your IAHE membership, IAHE event attendance, and donations

support the work of a non-profit organization run by a volunteer board of directors and team. Since 1983, the IAHE has worked to **Encourage, Protect, and Serve** Indiana homeschool families.

When you join the IAHE, you are working alongside our team to keep homeschooling strong in our state.

You are the missing puzzle piece!

Premium Membership

\$40/year

Email newsletters

Support Group and Co-op Directory

Printable Teacher & Student ID Cards

High-quality, laminated Family Membership Card

Featured Convention Audio of the Month & One FREE Workshop Bundle

Discounts from select homeschool curriculum & service providers

Print & digital issues of Homeschool Indiana

NEW for 2020
Become a
Supporting Member
with your
Premium Membership
+ Monthly Donation.

Your Support Matters

The IAHE stands in the gap and helps safeguard your legal right to homeschool by keeping its finger on the pulse of what's happening in Indianapolis.

iahe.net/join