



*Facing challenges as the new year begins?*

*Needing fresh ideas for your homeschool routine?*

*Struggling to get past the mid-winter blahs to the newness of spring? (And, it will come!)*

With the gray skies that winter can bring and the post-holiday slump that threatens to steal our homeschool joy, it can be difficult to keep our focus on *why* we homeschool and persevere through the tough winter months. Sometimes, all it takes to reignite our energy and commitment is a little change in the routine or encouragement from someone who's "been there."

Your TOS family members have been there, and many are still in the trenches with you every single day, fighting the world for our children's hearts and souls while trying to provide an academic foundation that prepares each child for the path God has planned for him or her. Others have graduated their children and can whisper in your ear the encouragement that comes from experience and hindsight.

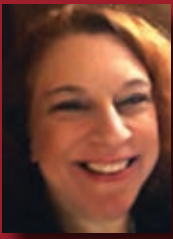
As our gift to you, we have compiled several articles from *The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine* to speak to your heart, reminding you why you were called to homeschool and encouraging you to keep on even when skies (and moods) are gray. **You can do it, Mama—and Dad!** And remember, SchoolhouseTeachers.com and The Old Schoolhouse® are here to help every step of the way from preschool through graduation.

Happy New Year! May your year be blessed with love, learning, and discipleship of your children.

The Team at SchoolhouseTeachers.com

P.S. For even more encouragement all year long, visit or subscribe to these TOS publications:

- [The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine](#) (Remember, as a member of SchoolhouseTeachers.com, you can receive a free print subscription!)
- [The Homeschool Minute](#) eNewsletter
- [Homeschooling with Heart](#) blog
- [The Canadian Schoolhouse](#)



# Hey Mama!

Gena Suarez



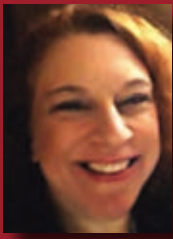
## Hey Mama,

Just a reminder to use the “mama grin” today. The furrowed brow sometimes gets stuck, you know? Un-stick it. Your kids will remember your face forever, and you don’t want that furrowed unibrow to be the first thing they see when recalling your beautiful face in their minds later.

Hey, you’re the mama. They know you’re not perfect, and you certainly know it, too. The problems of today will be the faded memories of tomorrow, boring to think about even. So adapt a carefree spirit to the best of your ability today. Your joy is in the Lord, and He will never leave you. Your joy is also in your imperfect family and those monkey kids of yours. Yes, it’s a zoo. But it’s your zoo. Walk happy. You have so much to be thankful for.

~ Gena





# Hey Mama!

Gena Suarez



## Hey Mama,

This school year has not been easy. There were times when you would have liked to quit. We have those days sometimes. It feels like it would be better to just go back to bed (or hide under it). Seems pointless . . . or downright “over” at times. All of us fall into that rut. Mama, you are not the only one. You’d be amazed. Believe me; you belong to the Mama Club, and it is not easy. Struggles abound. Stress is a beast. And then things start to look up, only to crash a few days later. It’s a bit of a cycle, isn’t it?

Life as a Christian—lots of trials and tests. Pain even alongside the joy. This life has plenty of trouble. And when “those days” hit, it’s so overwhelming you just feel all done. And not in a good way.

But guess what. You have a 100% success rate in getting past the tough days. Things do get better. And in the

midst of it all, your character continues to build because of your Godly perseverance and endurance despite the pain and weariness; these trials produce Godliness—drawing you ever closer to Christ. He will never leave us. He sees; He knows, and there is a plan. None of this is random. But you have learned that, faithful Mama, haven’t you?

Guess what else. When your daughter, or daughter-in-law someday, has one of “those days,” you will know exactly how to minister to her. When in her heart it feels “over,” you can put your arms around her and show her that she actually has a 100% success rate in getting past the bad and into the joy again. God takes care of it all. He did it for you when you were a young mom, and He will do it for her now, when she is dealing with a household, family, and all the trials of life that will come her way.

Things start to look up, only to crash a few days later. It’s a bit of a cycle, isn’t it?

She has you.

Don’t forget that. That day is coming, so prepare. Look up. His hand is on your head tonight. And your future is good. The Author of Goodness says so.

*“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28 ESV).<sup>1</sup>*

See? The Author says so.

~ Gena

Endnote:

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## Editorial

Deborah Wuehler,  
Senior Editor

# Tell Me Again: Why Are We Homeschooling?

We received hundreds of answers that were highly encouraging. Here are a few.

Summertime is a great time to start over, add or subtract curriculum, and try out new extracurricular programs. Even if we school year round, we can take some time in the summer to regroup, reorganize, and make some changes. It is always great to have a time to reset what needs resetting; to have a moment to collect our thoughts, collect our curriculum, and collect our courage.

While in this moment of collecting, I find it helpful to recollect or even rediscover why we are considering this home education idea. It often helps to hear what others are saying. A few months ago, we asked our Facebook community to respond to this: "Give me one reason *not* to continue with public school next semester and *homeschool* instead." We received hundreds of answers that were highly encouraging. Here are a few.

### Biblical Reasons

"God put your children in your family. He called parents to train their children in His laws and ways. God called you and will equip you to do His work."—*Kelley Y.*

"Obedience to God's Word. How can a parent train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord if they daily relinquish their authority and influence to the state, allowing a pagan establishment to disciple their children?"—*Suzanne E.*

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psalm 1:1–2). "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 12:17). —*David and Erika S.*

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deuteronomy 6:6–7).—*Rebecca*

### Time

"Your kids have time to be themselves. They aren't in a classroom all learning at the same pace. They can learn anything they want and take as much time or zoom through it as fast as they can! I wouldn't trade all the time I've had with my kids for anything."—*Kelly G.*

"Time with your children that you won't ever have again in their lifetimes; training and teaching them about life first, academics second. Instilling a love of learning and

reading in your kids to where they can learn anything. Public school sucks the love of learning out of most kids.”—*Anna M.*

### Physical Safety

“Free from bullying, freedom to choose what your child is taught; values.”—*Dotty P.*

“No school shootings, bullying, LGBTQ agenda, gender neutral bathrooms and locker rooms.”—*Becky G.*

### Special Needs

“Public schools require children to fit in their ‘box’ of how they should learn. Our third child is high functioning autistic and tested ‘intellectually disabled’ but she scores academically higher than she should. I credit that to choosing to homeschool. At 17, she passed her driving permit test and competes in ballroom dancing.”—*Becky G.*

### Freedom

“Freedom/flexibility: whether that’s being able to move at your child’s own pace or being able to take a vacation in the middle of the school year.”—*Jennifer M. F.*

“Freedom, privacy, and time with my children. I don’t want a school board dictating what I can or cannot do. My children can learn what they want and at their own pace. We wake, sleep, and eat when we want. I get to be with them all day to watch them grow and learn and ensure their safety. We can use the weekend or summer to do schoolwork so we can take off at other times.”—*Cassandra M.*

### Indoctrination

“Avoid indoctrination . . . into everything of this world and against God!”—*Michele K.*

“Indoctrination-free at home.”—*Andrew J.*

### Family / Family Values

“Strengthening of family.”—*Dawn O.*

“Because relationship is so precious. Also you are in charge of their discipleship rather than trying to counter a secular indoctrination that is instilled in them daily.”—*Chey R.*

“Homeschooling allows you to instill your values and allows you to have a better understanding of your child.”—*Kelly B.*

### Relationship

“The absolutely beautiful relationship you will develop with your child(ren).”—*Lisa R.*

“To build deep relationships that will last long after they become adults.”—*Susan S.*

### Education / Academics

“We saved a lot of money homeschooling and the education was better quality. You know your child better than any public teacher ever can.”—*Kimberly A. P.*

“Personalized education.”—*Sandra G.*

“More time for a well-rounded education: dance, horseback riding, playing instruments, etc. It also allows you to teach real life skills along with book knowledge.”—*Jessica B.*

“The opportunity to learn rather than rote memorization for test prep in a factory designed education.”—*R. B.*

“To allow your children to pursue their passions and interests as much as they want.”—*Caroline K. D.H.*

“You can move along in subjects based on your child’s understanding, rather than moving on before he’s ready, or staying on a topic already mastered.”—*Lynn H. B.*

### Influence: Negative and Positive

“Negative influences from children whose parents are not as involved or protective of their young minds and eyes.”—*Joni A.*

“Daily input into the precious lives of your children without worldly agendas.”—*Terri S.*

“Two reasons why you should avoid ‘public’ school. One: They think they are entitled to ‘teach’ our children without us questioning their motive or curriculum. Two: You have direct influence in what your child learns, in a home-directed course set.”—*Wayne R. T.*

“Removing unnecessary influences.”—*Bri A.R.*

“When you send your kids out to be taught, you give up the chance to be the most important role model that will influence and impact your child’s life.”—*Deidre T.*

“Because we get to teach our kids things of true value. Teaching them about Jesus

and how good He is! I love that I know by whom and what they are being influenced by!”—*Meagan M.*

### Flexibility / Schedule

“To have a more flexible schedule.”—*Amy B.*

“Flexibility for you to teach what you want and how you want.”—*Denise H.*

“Visiting amusement parks, museums, theaters, indoor pools, basically by yourself, because everyone else is in a classroom.”—*Kelly G.*

“Because public schools will not let you wear your fuzzy pj’s all day while sipping hot chocolate and petting your cat.”—*Dianna DJ B.*

### Knowledge of Your Child

“You really get to ‘know’ your children (strengths, weaknesses, desires, friends, habits, fears, etc.)”—*Sue F. B.*

“No one knows your kids better than you.”—*Amanda M. P.*

### Public School / Private School

“I am so grateful that I was able to homeschool. Now I am a public charter middle school teacher. The drama, the meanness, the time that is wasted . . . I love that homeschooling allows for meeting individual needs. Our kids grow up so fast. I am so thankful for the time that I had to invest in my children.”—*Shari L.*

“I volunteer and substitute at a Christian school. Sometimes I just shake my head at the ‘stuff’ that goes on. This is why we homeschool.”—*LuAnn R.*

“For you: no more school pick up and drop off and hurry to leave the house on time.”—*Lizanne C.*

“Stand outside a public high school and watch what walks out.”—*Heather M. G.*

“(Girls) don’t have to share a bathroom with a boy.”—*Gayle M.*

“Active shooter drills and no child left behind.”—*Jennifer S. B.*

“As a school bus driver, I see every day reminders of why I have my child out!”—*Virginia M.*

"Public schools do not allow an active boy to jump on the trampoline between subjects or allow the musically inclined to play music between subjects."—Linda T.

"The homeschooling community tends to provide more positive peer pressure as opposed to the negative peer pressure in the public school environment. The pressure is heavy for kids to fit into a world they don't belong to."—Linda T.

### Health / Sleep / Peace

"Less sickness and, if they are sick, you can still do quiet learning and not have to worry about absences."—Susan H.

"You get to sleep in if you want!"—Jumara L. E.

"Peace, in your home, in your children, and in your heart."—Amanda P.P.

"Your child's overall well-being."—Kindra L.

### Socialization

"They get the opportunity to be immersed in real life situations rather than spending all day with the same age group. That's not

normal 'socialization.' They need to be able to socialize with all ages and demographic groups, and not just what the public school environment is giving."—Michelle D. W.

"I homeschool because I have seen the village, and I don't want it raising my children."—Jess D.

### Love

"Because you love them and want what's best for them."—Kathy M.

"Isn't it enough reason to love your children and desire they spend their lives with you rather than with others?"—Robin B.P.

### Conclusion

Weren't those great reminders to keep going? Especially in this "post-Christian" era we find ourselves in, we must remain steadfast in our conviction and commitment. You will not regret the sacrifices you have made, or the time you spend to disciple these children given by God. I wholeheartedly agree with this sentiment: "No one ever regrets homeschooling their children when they look back at all the blessings."—Amy F.

### Considering Home Education?

In April, we put on an event titled *Home Education: Am I Really Qualified?* (see ad here). Whether you are new to home education or a veteran homeschool family, you will want to take a little "teacher education" time and listen in. Our speakers were incredible! We have made the recording available here: [www.homeschoolshow.com](http://www.homeschoolshow.com).

I hope you are highly encouraged to continue to do the next right thing as you plan to keep God's children **Home Where They Belong.** 🏠

### About Deborah

Deborah Wuehler is Senior Editor for TOS, wife to Richard, and has eight children ages 28 to 11. She writes for The Homeschool Minute ([www.TheHomeschoolMinute.com](http://www.TheHomeschoolMinute.com)) and appears on YouTube with Schoolhouse Devotions ([bit.ly/2MrF8Sn](http://bit.ly/2MrF8Sn)), helping to point homeschool families to Christ as they keep their children Home Where They Belong! You can contact Deb at [dwuehler@TheOldSchoolhouse.com](mailto:dwuehler@TheOldSchoolhouse.com).

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# Burnout: How to Alleviate It and Prevent It



by Nancy Gillard Doran

Let go of unrealistic expectations and be kind to yourself.

**F**or many, the most difficult time of the school year comes during the late winter. The holidays are over, cold and flu season is in full swing, and the school year is no longer fresh and new. Just imagining how much effort and perseverance will be needed to make it until June can be daunting. If you are feeling frazzled and worn out, it is important to take some time to assess what is causing your burnout and what can be done to get you over this difficult patch. It helps to remember that you are not alone! Most homeschooling parents experience burnout at one point or another. Start by making an honest assessment of your health, from all

standpoints—physical, mental, and (last, but definitely not least) spiritual. Taking some time to determine which areas are lacking or overloaded can ease midyear burnout and make all the difference in the world.

Though I believe spiritual health is the most important aspect, since it has to do with eternity and not just this temporal world, I would like to address physical health first since it can have such an impact on everything, including your attitude toward spiritual matters. Speaking from personal experience, it's easy to put one's own physical health on the "back burner" when there are three meals to be prepared every day, loads of laundry to

be done, dishes to be washed, groceries to be bought, housecleaning, and so on—not to mention homeschooling! The list never ends—and neither does the work.

## **Aim for Optimal Physical Health**

The fact that the work never ends means two things: it will still be there later, and it will need to be done again. These are both obvious points, but what might not be quite so obvious is that it is up to you to carve out time in this packed schedule to make sure you are doing what you can to stay healthy or improve your health. Are you eating balanced meals and nutritious snacks every day, stressing lean

protein, whole grains, and fresh fruits and vegetables? Are you avoiding processed and deep-fried foods? The latter keeps people from ever feeling really satisfied and thus contributes to obesity. Are you getting exercise on a regular basis? Even something as simple as going for a walk whenever the weather's decent can have a huge impact on your health. Take the kids if you must, but do try to take a walk by yourself now and then. It can be a peaceful time when you might actually be able to have some undisturbed thoughts and "clear the cobwebs."

### Good Mental Health and Mother Culture®

Being a parent—a homeschooling parent on top of that—very often means that one's entire life revolves around kids, family, church, and school. When we are holding our first newborn in our arms, we aren't thinking about the hobby we loved or all the ways we used to spend our free time. We are just loving our babies and thinking about them. This is natural and beautiful, but it is also really important to take a little time to refresh our minds by engaging in

some type of recreational activity. Do you love to read? Besides all the great books you are reading to your children, find one at the library that's just for you. Have you always wanted to learn to knit? Do it! Take a class at your local shop or ask

**Taking some time to determine which areas are lacking or overloaded can ease midyear burnout and make all the difference in the world.**

a friend to teach you. If neither of those options work, try watching one of the instructional videos online. Handcrafts can be a great relaxation tool, and the bonus is that there is usually something beautiful when you're done!

Homeschool pioneer, Charlotte Mason expert, and well-loved author Karen Andreola has written extensively about what she calls Mother Culture®. Her book, *A Charlotte Mason Companion*, first introduced this concept to me and provided great refreshment every summer when I would read through it to get geared up for the next school year. When recently asked to explain Mother Culture® and why it is an excellent remedy for burnout, she said, "For a mother to allow herself a bit of recreation to refresh herself by exploring her own interests, to find a little time for herself especially when so many others depend on her, this is what I call Mother Culture®. When a dedicated, hard-working home teacher takes part in Mother Culture®, she safeguards her enthusiasm. She is better able to cope with her responsibilities. As she feeds herself with the Word of God, with ideas from books, nature, art, music, etc., she takes care to keep growing spiritually and mentally. How wonderful when she can say, 'My cup runneth over,' because it runs over into the family circle! Thus, the advantages of Mother Culture® do not end with herself."

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### Nourish Your Soul

As just mentioned by Karen Andreola, spiritual refreshment is also critical to avoid or alleviate burnout. Are you hearing sermons on a regular basis that are faithful to the Word of God? Do you have frequent fellowship with other Christians? Hopefully, you and your family belong to a church where you are not always having to defend your decision to homeschool. Constantly feeling like you are on the defensive is exhausting and can put a major damper on any spiritual help you may otherwise be gleaning. Do you meet sometimes for prayer and moral support with other women who are at a similar stage in life, from your church or homeschool support group? These times to relax and “let your hair down” can be very helpful and encouraging. Finally, remember to spend some time each day reading God’s Word and praying. Doing so will refresh and nourish your soul.

It is my sincere hope that the suggestions in this article will help prevent or alleviate burnout. Taking good care of yourself physically, mentally, and spiritually is essential in order for you to retain joy and health. Remember, however, not to make these suggestions another yoke that will weigh you down. These ideas should help, not make you feel more burdened. If they do, perhaps you need to readjust the expectations you have for yourself. I have plenty of experience with perfectionism, and that is an exhausting burden. Let go of unrealistic expectations and be kind to yourself. Remember that an “off” day or week is just that and nothing more. Try to make improvements over time, but when you fall short, if you are a Christian, then you know that Christ has forgiven you, and what could be greater than that? 🏠

*Nancy Doran*

*Nancy Doran has been married to Mark, an attorney, for almost 30 years. They have seven children and have been homeschooling since 1992. Besides writing, Nancy also edits college application essays, proofreads for a book publishing company, and teaches college preparatory writing to homeschooled teens. She is also active in the fight to end abortion. Contact her at [nancygillardoran@gmail.com](mailto:nancygillardoran@gmail.com) or visit her blog at [nancygillardoran.blogspot.com](http://nancygillardoran.blogspot.com).*

Endnotes:

1. <http://momentswithmotherculture.blogspot.com/p/what-is-mother-culture.html>

# TEN Ways to Homeschool through Trials



by Kerry Tittle

Pray that when trials strike we have endurance to hold the line and fight the good fight for the all-worthy Captain of our souls.

The storm of April 27, 2014, forever changed me. We watched in horror as forty-foot oak trees began to fall in our backyard. But before my husband, Rob, my daughters Tori and Rebekah, or myself could get under the stairwell, our home took a direct hit from an F4 tornado.

Using the rubble, I pulled myself to my feet and began to count children. I didn't get far when I saw the horrible truth: Rob, Tori, and Rebekah had been ushered into eternity. I frantically began to look for my seven other children. I saw Isabella, 12, holding her arm, reciting every verse she had ever learned. Whitney saw lights in the distance and ran toward them for help.

I found a deep hole that once contained the roots of a tree and placed the children in it for protection. As the tornado passed, I realized that my children needed medical attention. Emily Kathryn, 17, and I began to carry the little ones and walk for help. We found a neighbor who took us into their home. I watched helplessly

as they took baby Joshua's diaper off and removed all the glass. I saw Isabella laying on the ground with an apparent broken arm going into shock. Emily Kathryn sat on the couch doing her best to console her other younger siblings. It was the most helpless moment of my life.

A part of me died that day. I had lost my husband, two children, all I owned, and even my identity. Even so, I started out with strength and resolve to honor the Lord during this trial. But He knew my frame. I was but dust. When the shock wore off and reality dawned, a dark shadow settled over my soul. I tried to understand this new life God had called me to. The once homeschool supermom of nine children now lay humbled and broken at the throne of grace, quietly begging for help to endure. I sat in the ashes of my hopes and dreams, wondering how to take the next step.

Three months later it occurred to me that people were about to start school. I didn't even have a pencil left from my 20-year custom-built curriculum. I ordered

a full curriculum load for each child. A close friend looked at me incredulously: "Kerry, your family has been through unimaginable trauma. You need to take this easy."

It took about a week to realize the truth. Between nightmares, grief, and enduring other lesser storms, we were not 100 percent. I couldn't wrap my mind around what homeschooling looked like anymore. Everything was different. I had a different life, a different family, and a different home.

The experience of that night had left a very challenging road for us. We have suffered depression, anxiety, conflict, residential homes, and ER visits. It has been nothing short of a nightmare.

*"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds" (James 1:2).*

That verse is not suggesting you need to be "happy" with your circumstances. The circumstance is not where we find our joy. You'll never hear me say losing three family members was joyful. God uses trials to make us more like Him. As horrible as my

# I have completely shifted my faith from me and my abilities to God's sovereign grace.

story is, there has been so much positive change in my life. He has humbled me. My treasures are stored up in a different place. And most importantly, I have a deep love for those who suffer that I didn't have before. I have completely shifted my faith from me and my abilities to God's sovereign grace.

Despite our best efforts, trials come: learning disabilities, rebellious children, divorce, death, job loss, illness, \_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank). Whatever the trial, we must remember to:

1. **Consider the bigger picture.** God is shaping and sanctifying through this time of testing. Don't lose sight of its significance. Keep your eyes on the joy set before you.
2. **Give yourself and others grace.** We often say we are a bunch of wounded people bumping into each other.
3. **Don't be enslaved to your schooling plan.** A curriculum is only a guide. We found creative ways to supplement using museums, nature centers, documentaries, and even friends

helping teach some subjects. During trials children learn aspects of life that will have more impact than how well they know their multiplication tables. Also remember that your homeschool is not more important than your relationship with your child or with God.

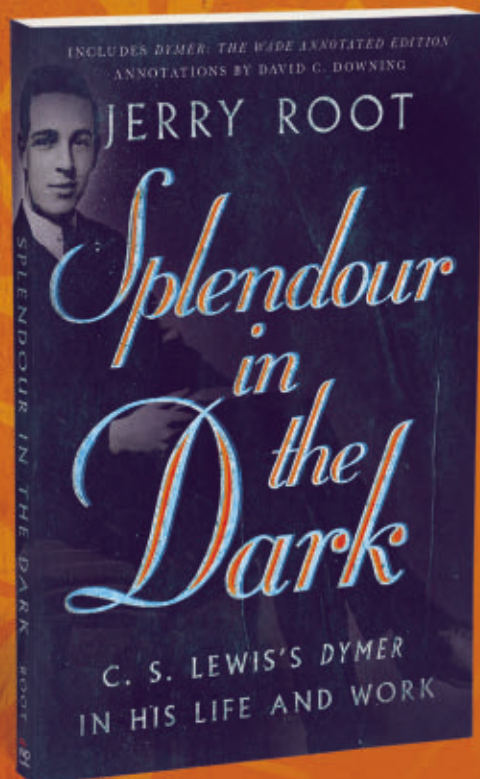
4. **Praise God.** Even when you don't feel like it. Be intentional about giving thanks in front of your children. They need to see that modeled for them. *"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18).
5. **Stay in communication with God.** Even if "Help me" is all you have to offer.
6. **Connect with friends.** You must have those who will keep your mind focused on these truths. The community of God is crucial to enduring trials when life falls apart. *"For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!"* (Ecclesiastes 4:10).
7. **Journal.** Simply write down your thoughts, right or wrong, and compare

them to Scripture. This process was the best way for me to rightly discern Truth when I was at my weakest.

8. **Release your timeline.** God already has one. If we force our own, we will give the enemy a foothold and begin to question God's goodness.
9. **Diet and sleep.** God created you both body and spirit—you can't neglect one without it affecting the other.
10. **Pray** that when trials strike we have endurance to hold the line and fight the good fight for the all-worthy Captain of our souls. 🏠

## About Kerry

Kerry Tittle is a mother of nine children and a 23-year homeschool veteran. She was the owner of ReformationKidz with her husband, Rob, until a tornado destroyed their home and business in 2014, taking the lives of Rob and two of their daughters, Tori and Rebekah. Kerry is the founder of Refined Family, which is created to encourage others to find hope in the gospel in the midst of trials. [www.refinedfamily.org](http://www.refinedfamily.org)



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# Editorial

Deborah Wuehler,  
Senior Editor

## Why Am I So Tired?

How do I get past  
tired and get back  
into the work I am  
called to do?

I know I am not alone in this tired feeling. I hear it all the time. Don't you? I know you have been or will be tired, too. The problem with tiredness is that sometimes it skews our vision and makes us want to quit. However, I have found that if we give up, we will still be tired but will also have added guilt to our burden.

I am sitting here looking at my keyboard knowing that I need to come up with something for this month, and all I can think about is how tired I am. I just don't have the energy for the task. Even my sister's special coffee blend just isn't jazzing this old body. Why am I so tired? Maybe it has something to do with the fact that I am in my forty-ninth year of life and still chasing a 3-year-old (oh, yes, and his seven siblings). Whatever the reason, I am tired still. How do I get

past tired and get back into the work I am called to do?

Here's a true story in history about a great saint of God who wanted to call it quits. We will look at how tiredness played a role in that decision.

### Elijah Quits

In 1 Kings 18 and 19, we see a strong man of God named Elijah. He was one to be feared because he represented the True and Living God. Elijah performed mighty wonders on God's behalf, and people came from miles to see and hear from him. Here is the man who prayed, and the rain stopped for years. Here is a man who showed the greatness of God and the foolishness of the prophets of Baal in a magnificent presentation on Mt. Carmel. Check out his prayer and the people's response:

*Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God (1 Kings 18:37-40).*

But just after Elijah watched God's power show up in that consuming fire and saw people amazingly turn from idolatry to God, he literally ran away and asked to die. But Elijah had just seen the miraculous intervention of God! Eyes were finally opened to who his God was, his enemies

were destroyed, and the heavens opened in rain! Seems like all would be well with his soul, right? But soon threats from the powers that be had found Elijah, and he decided to call it quits:

*And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers (2 Kings 19:3-4).*

Why would Elijah turn from complete and total faith in his mighty God to complete and utter distress to the point of desiring death? I think it must tend to be the human condition. We see God do great things in our families and in us, and then a crisis comes—again—and we seem to wilt down and peter out. I can really relate to Elijah's tired faith and extremely short memory because, when I look carefully at his story, I see my own story unfold:

1. He is physically tired (huge presentation and long marathon). I am easily tired by my to-do list that never ends.
2. Even after a victory, he realizes he has to continue going strong. I must keep fighting for the souls of my children.
3. He believes he is the only one not "bowing the knee" to other gods. I sometimes feel alone in not "bowing the knee" to public education.
4. He becomes depressed and says he's no better than his faithless fathers. I compare myself with others and come up dissatisfied with who I am.
5. Tiredness led to an attitude of defeat. He says, "It is enough." I also go from being tired to saying, "That's enough."

What was God's response? Was God disappointed in Elijah? No. He understood Elijah's humanity. Going back to Elijah's story, when he was at his lowest point, God intervened in several ways. Looking again in 1 Kings 18, God was near Elijah in these ways:

1. He brought Elijah food and told him to sleep. God knew what Elijah needed.
2. Not only did God give him food and rest, but He also gave Elijah strength for the journey to meet Him in the holy mountain.
3. God showed Elijah His glory there in a wind, fire, and an earthquake and then spoke to Elijah quietly and personally.
4. The Lord assured Elijah that thousands had not given up.
5. Finally, God gave Elijah specific direction and sent him help.

I have known God to rescue me in the same ways that he rescued Elijah. I just needed to sleep physically and rest in God's provision spiritually. After this time of refreshment I, too, awoken with the right perspective. I eat of God's Word and worship Him. I then remember He is great, and I engage in the quiet conversation between God and man. I am assured that I am not alone. And ultimately, I have been given direction and help.

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God does.

As I was contemplating all of this, I got a note from a friend. She was telling me of her tiredness. She is the sole breadwinner and is tired of bearing that burden. She is physically ill to the point of causing her family much concern and is tired of being sick. I asked her how she still stands up under all of that. She responded with this Scripture:

*For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him (2 Chronicles 16: 9).*

The New American Standard Bible says it this way:

*For the eyes of the LORD move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His (emphasis mine).*

In 1 Chronicles 16, we see the children of Israel rejoicing that they have defeated the enemy and have the ark of the covenant in their possession. That chapter is filled with song. Look at verses 9–11:

*Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him, talk you of all his wondrous works. Glory you in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.*

Somehow between 1 Chronicles 16:9 and 2 Chronicles 16:9, they forgot. They didn't seek His face continually. They got lazy. They got tired. They began to do what came easy for them and began to lean on their own strength.

In 2 Chronicles 16, we read about how the children of Israel trusted in things other than the Lord and that their enemies triumphed over them and that they were reminded to trust completely in the Lord—and then their enemies were defeated. But because they didn't trust the Lord, they would suffer.

As I shared these stories from 1 and 2 Chronicles with my children, we noted these things:

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1. The Lord is looking for someone. We saw that His eyes were anxious (running) to find someone whose heart was completely His. We decided that we wanted God's eyes to land on us. In order for that to happen, our hearts had to be completely His: nothing held back, relying and trusting only in Him and in no one else.
2. We saw that God wants to show Himself strong to us—all the time, not just when we are tired. In order to receive strength from Him, the requirements were, again, full and complete trust in the Lord. When we are seeking His face continually, our hearts are perfectly ready for receiving His strength.
3. If we want to see victory in areas of our lives where the enemy is attacking, we must remain in full trust of the Lord. If we want His eyes to land on us, we must have hearts that seek Him continually and are fully His. If we lack strength, we find it in coming with full trust before Him. It's a recurring theme.
4. We are easily distracted. We forget. We get lazy. We become tired. We need to keep humble before our Lord and ask for the strength to remain steadfast.

### Created to Serve

With so much schooling and laundry, wiping faces and counters, diaper changes, people coming and going, co-ops and sports and music, often there's not even one minute to rest. These years drain our energy, and discouragement begins to settle in. Before it does, let me say this: We were created to serve. And in this serving, we honor the One who created us to do so. So, take heart—you are only doing what you've been created to do.

And God says that if we *learn of Him*, we will find rest for our souls. Our bodies may get tired, but our hearts don't have to fall apart. We can have inner peace in the midst of tired bodies.

However, our Creator also knows that we need physical rest, so He also said, "Come with me to a deserted (or quiet) place and rest." That's actually in the Bible, and it's actually Jesus speaking to his disciples: "*And He said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a*

*while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat"* (Mark 6:31). He understands and wants to minister to us so that we will be refreshed when we are sent out to serve again.

Are you tired? I sure am. Let's get some sleep and some much-needed rest for our souls as well. Don't easily forget where your strength comes from. Keep on coming back to the Lord; don't get lazy in that area, or you will be tired in every other. Make time to relax and share life and love and God with your

children as they are blessed to be *Home Where They Belong*. 🏠

*D. Wuehler*

Deborah Wuehler is the Senior Editor for TOS, participating author in The Homeschool Minute, wife to Richard, and mom to eight gifts from heaven. She loves digging for buried treasure in the Word, reading, writing, homeschooling, and dark chocolate! You may contact her at [senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com](mailto:senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com).



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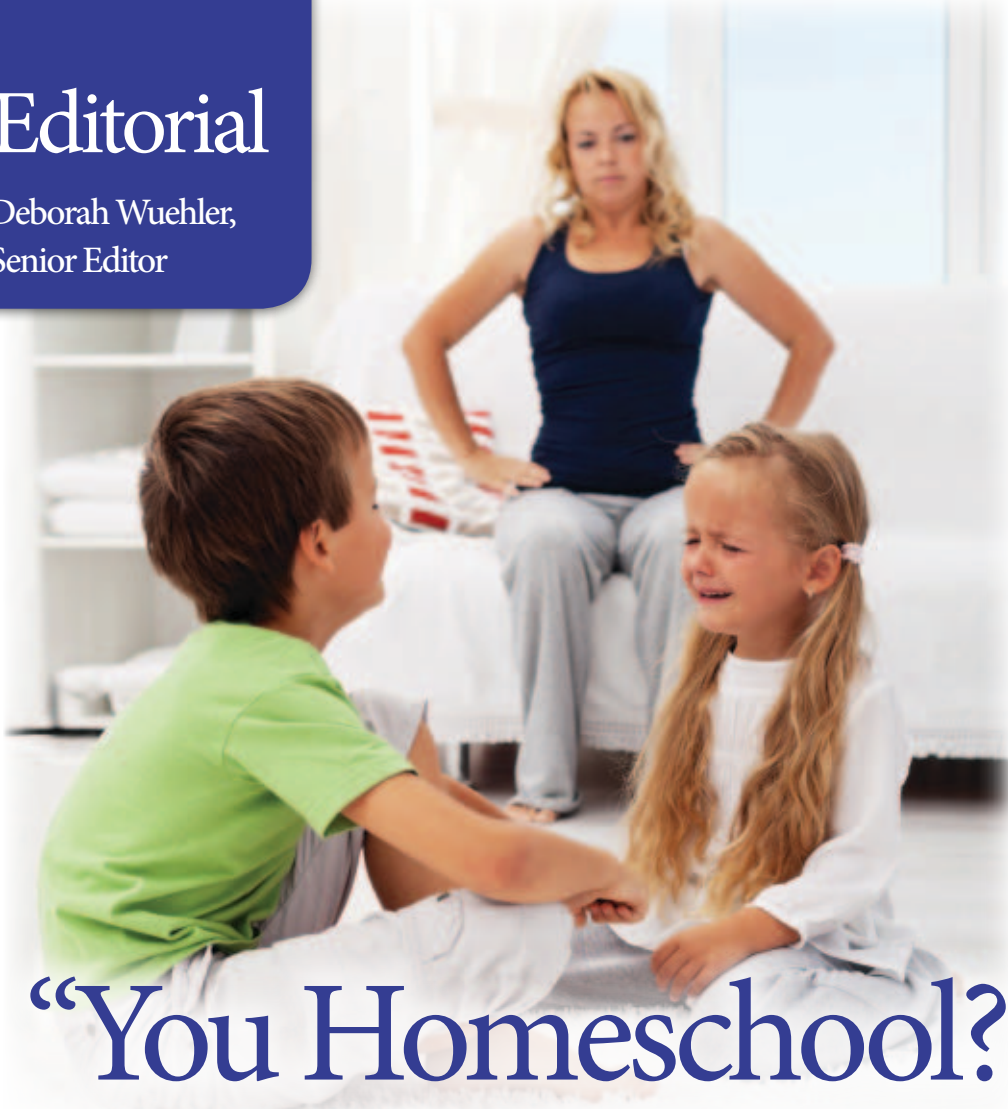


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## Editorial

Deborah Wuehler,  
Senior Editor



# “You Homeschool? You Must Be SO Patient!”

I am sure I am not the only one who has heard that comment. Many people who find out that I am educating all of my own children all by myself and all in my own home give me that wide-eyed look accompanied with “You must be so patient!”

I start laughing about then, but my response normally is: “No, not really. And I am not organized either.” This is when the conversation goes into something about me being a saint or being insane. I guess I am a little of both.

Admittedly, I did start out as a somewhat patient person. I was raised in the military environment of “hurry up and wait.” Throughout school, I learned to wait for all the other kids to catch up with us smarter kids or to wait in line for something or to wait until Christmas for a toy or gadget that kids today receive any day of the year if they really want it.

However, there is a very big difference in the patience it takes to wait for something and the patience it takes to bring up children while you wait for them to grow to maturity. Seems like people today have neither attribute.

Why are we, as a society, so impatient with our children? Maybe it is because we are too busy getting the good stuff of life or too busy consuming the good stuff or too busy gratifying selfish desires of “me time.” Or maybe we have believed the lie that has slowly taken hold of our Western society—that children are indeed a nuisance rather than the Biblical reward they are promised to be. They take too much time, too much money, too much upkeep—too much *patience!* We are too rushed, too busy, and too selfish, and children interfere with our agendas. In our quest for as much as we can get as quickly as possible, we end up with less time for

the patience and love that raising (let alone educating) children takes. We have no national collective patience for children. This opens up a myriad of questions.

### A Myriad of Questions

Parents may have no time or patience to raise their own children, but interestingly enough, the government does. We must ask ourselves not only why the parents of today don’t want the hassle of full-time responsibility for their children, but also why does the government want that job so desperately? Are government intervention and government oversight in the most important facets of our personal lives things we really want? Why does the government want to teach the nation’s children from cradle to college graduation? Do we feel like we owe them a debt and we pay it with our own children? Can this big government-run

institution believe it can do a better job raising society's individual children than the parents themselves?

There's no logic in the oxymorons of this Western culture, where children are portrayed as a nuisance and parents are thought to be ignorant about how to raise them. If these ignorant people are going to have children (and only one or two, please), let someone else raise them. Parents aren't really necessary (see the September 2012 *Editorial*), but then, children aren't really necessary either. If parents aren't necessary and children are a hassle, where does that leave the future of our society? In the meantime, just send all the little ones away and let someone else raise them and provide for them and tell them what to think and feel. Maybe when they grow up, they can solve the crisis.

Where did these ideas come from? Has this always been the case in our nation's history?

### History of Education

Before 1850, most children were educated at home by tutors or parents or in private schools. In the United States, studies included life skills, history, math, reading, and writing. However, between 1900 and 1960, things went to mass public educational venues, even to the point of mandating that education be compulsory.

In the '60s, John Holt began to point the finger of blame for children failing academically at the school system and proceeded to publish a book on how children learn best. Thus began the homeschooling pilgrimages of the '60s and '70s by families who underwent much persecution to blaze the trail ahead of us.

In the '70s, Dr. Raymond and Dorothy Moore published a book titled *Better Late Than Early*, which spoke to the damaging effect of engaging a child in formal education before he is ready. The Moores' ideas were highly promoted through *Focus on the Family*, and homeschooling took off and began to grow in the '80s, although many states still deemed it illegal. *There were 500,000 students being homeschooled in the '80s. By the '90s, homeschooling was legal in all states.*

By the year 2000, as John Taylor Gatto once again exposed the errors of compulsory education and the failure of the public education system to produce anything but assembly line workers, there were close to a million home-schooled students. More and more parents began to finally look at the behavior of the schools and the behavior of their children and consequently pull them out of public schools. By 2010, approximately 2.35 million children were being educated at home in the US.

History reveals that the government education system slowly took on the parent's job and made it their own. History also reveals that parents are tak-ing that responsibility back and keep-ing their children home where they belong. Homeschoolers have proven that home is the best place to raise and educate that child. But do we have the patience to do this job? Let's look at some definitions of *patience*.

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Todd is a husband, dad, writer, conference speaker, and former pastor. His humor and gut-honest realness have made him a favorite speaker at conventions across the country and a guest on Focus on the Family. His articles have appeared in various other magazines, including Christian Parenting Today and Christianity Today. Todd and his wife, Debbie, have eight children.



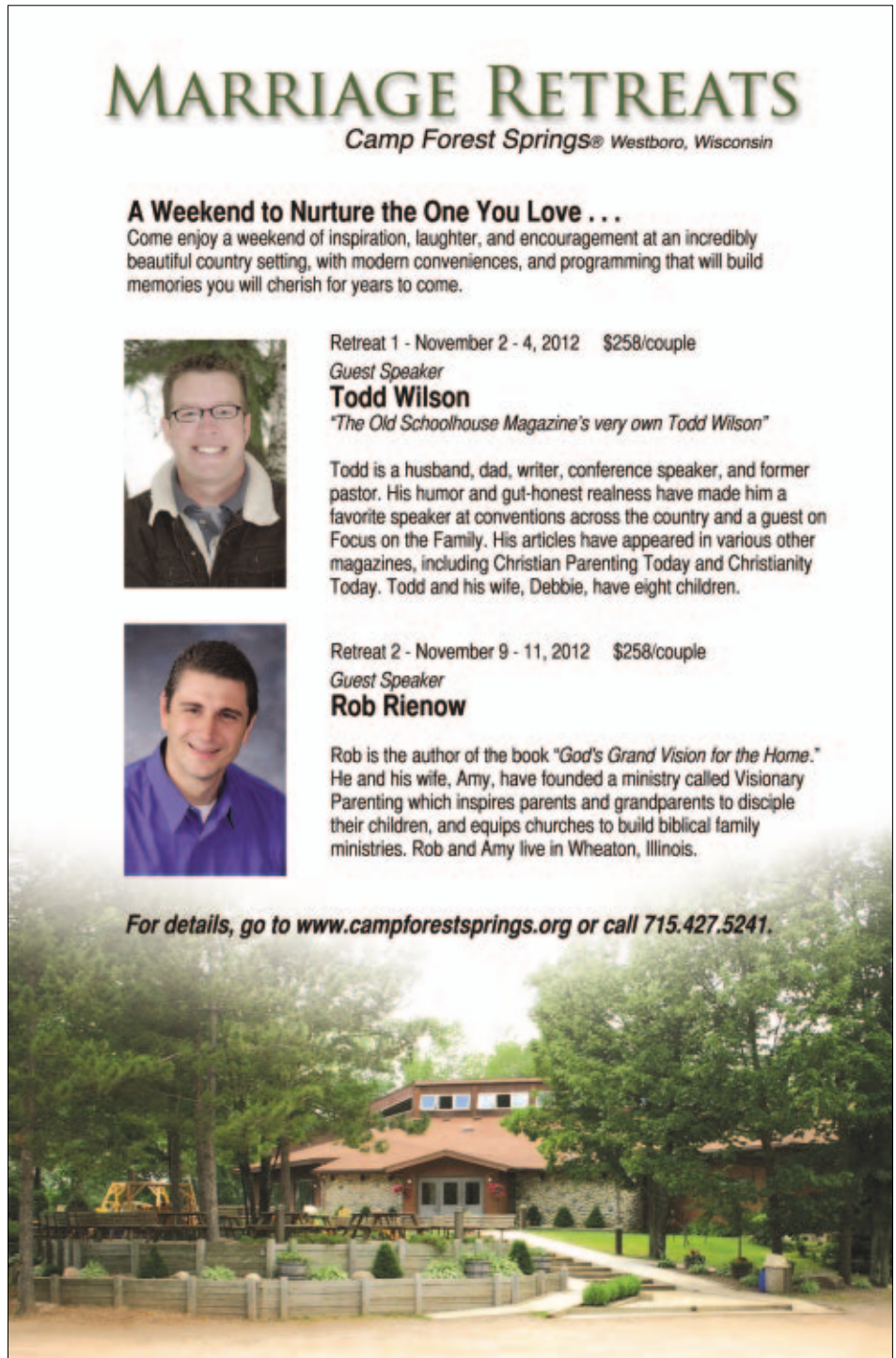
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Guest Speaker

**Rob Rienow**

Rob is the author of the book *"God's Grand Vision for the Home."* He and his wife, Amy, have founded a ministry called Visionary Parenting which inspires parents and grandparents to disciple their children, and equips churches to build biblical family ministries. Rob and Amy live in Wheaton, Illinois.

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# Parents, don't be afraid that you don't have enough patience; God will give you all that you need.

## Definitions of Patience

If we look at the definition of *patience*, we will find it defined as more than just an ability to wait. The modern Merriam-Webster dictionary defines *patient* as “bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint; manifesting forbearance under provocation or strain; not hasty or impetuous; steadfast despite opposition, difficulty or adversity.”<sup>1</sup>

This definition accurately describes what is needed for home education. So if patience is what we are lacking, where do we get more? Let's look at the Scriptures, from whence comes our help.

## Help From the Scriptures

*“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing” (James 1:2-4).*

This is what is lacking in today's parents and why they say they cannot possibly educate their children at home: Biblical patience. Their faith has not been tried through patience. A patience that endures hardship and resists selfish temptation can be found in a homeschool parent. That journey of patience brings forth fullness and wholeness, that we might lack nothing.

Parents, don't be afraid that you don't have enough patience; God will give you all that you need. Not only that, but don't be afraid that you don't have enough wisdom; just ask God for more! The next two verses tell us: *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth*

*to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering” (James 1:5-6).*

We are to be blessed examples of patience through endurance and suffering: *“Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure” (James 5:10-11).*

We must not be lazy but instead must patiently endure until we obtain the promise, like those who have gone before us: *“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. For when God made promise to Abraham, . . . saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise” (Hebrews 6:12-15).*

We can be strengthened with power for patience: *“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Colossians 1:10-11).*

We can clothe ourselves with patience and longsuffering: *“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering” (Colossians 3:12).*

Wisdom gives us patience as we confidently overlook an offense: *“The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it*

*is his glory to pass over a transgression” (Proverbs 19:11).*

The next time you think you need more patience than you have for home education, you will be thinking right—you will need lots of patience. Through every trial and tribulation that comes your way, you will find help as you grow in patience. You will know beyond doubt that God will be with you, and in you, and for you, as you keep your children Home Where They Belong! 🏠

Deborah Wuehler is the Senior Editor for TOS, participating author in The Homeschool Minute, wife to Richard, and mom to eight gifts from heaven. She loves digging for buried treasure in the Word, reading, writing, homeschooling, and dark chocolate! You may contact her at [senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com](mailto:senioreditor@TheHomeschoolMagazine.com).

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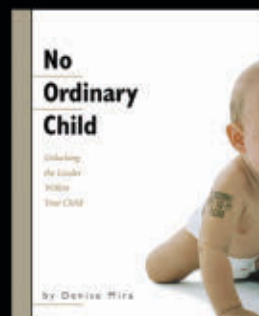
1. [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/patient](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/patient)



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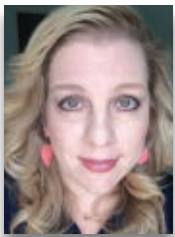




LEFT: Claire Childress Photography work.  
ABOVE: Shandee Childress with daughter Claire at the award acceptance ceremony.



# How SchoolhouseTeachers.com Is Working for Our Family



You never know what talent your student may discover by trying a new elective, so jump in!

by Shandee Childress

SchoolhouseTeachers.com has been useful in many ways to our family. It has a variety of resources for children from grades Pre-K through 12th grade, plus video resources for the entire family. Do you need a curriculum for just one or a few subjects? Is your student struggling in an area and could use some help? Do you want extra electives or subjects for your high schooler? Do you like engaging curriculums that include videos? If you answered yes to any of these, then SchoolhouseTeachers.com may help you just as it has helped my family.

## Core Subjects

We have used the curriculum to provide certain subjects for the school year. For example, my teenager needed high school science, so we researched choices on SchoolhouseTeachers.com. One of our favorites is an informative video science class titled *Earth Science* designed by Dr. Roger W. Sanders. It's packed with information from a creationist point of view, and my children have found the video content enjoyable and engaging. The student completes worksheets on the lessons while you have the option to print out the

answer key or view it online. As mom and teacher, I sincerely appreciate the time and detail that Dr. Sanders passionately gave to make this course educational and interesting.

## When Things Aren't Working

Do you find that your student is struggling or weak in a certain subject mid-year, and the curriculum you are currently using is no longer working? This seems to happen nearly every year with at least one child in our family. So I log on to Schoolhouse Teachers.com and search through the

subject drop-down menu, then select the appropriate grade level.

One year, my high school-aged daughter became discouraged after a college-level entrance exam for dual enrollment. I saw it as an opportunity to help her, by adding an extra course with her school-work. We discovered a class titled *Into the Elements* which was detailed, engaging, and easy to understand. It helped my daughter think about the writing process—how to communicate to the reader more effectively and how to successfully complete short stories. It just so happened that a local literary festival hosted a writing contest on poetry and short stories when my daughter was taking this course, and she entered a story she'd written. To our surprise, her writing won first place in the short story competition! I cried tears of joy and literally leaped up and down when I got the phone call that she'd won. It was so precious that I had walked through the struggle with my daughter and later was celebrating her achievement. I was so proud of her perseverance in a subject in which she initially lacked confidence. This curriculum had the supplemental class my daughter needed to bring her from struggling to winning!

### Electives

SchoolhouseTeachers.com is also a fun way to incorporate electives for your students. Is there something that your child is naturally curious about that you'd like to try risk free without any obligation? Just start scrolling on SchoolhouseTeachers.com. You will find electives ranging from *Bible*

to *Architecture* for all grade levels. I often use SchoolhouseTeachers.com for classes to meet the standards to earn a high school diploma.

## I often use SchoolhouseTeachers.com for classes to meet the standards to earn a high school diploma.

This past year, my daughter completed the *Photography* class designed by Michelle Peterson and made excellent progress in a short amount of time. It was a simple, self-paced class that did not require a lot of assistance from me, because the student is self-guided and self-disciplined to complete assignments. Through this class, my daughter discovered that she has an interest in photography and is considering furthering her study on this. You never know what talent your student may discover by trying a new elective, so jump in!

### The Whole Family Included

The great thing about SchoolhouseTeachers.com is with one cost, your entire family has the flexibility to look at the lesson plans without committing to a class. SchoolhouseTeachers.com has material for all grade levels. You can choose from a full-year school box, a few classes, or just one class for one yearly price for your entire

family. The types of classes vary from self-paced to video instruction, including some courses that are interactive.

### All Grade Levels

Since I teach seven grade levels, our family uses SchoolhouseTeachers.com in various ways. It has helped us complete several subjects and grade levels. Look around the site, and you will find lots of information on courses and extras such as videos, printables, and planning help. Plan to spend some quiet time browsing for all your homeschool needs, but don't expect to learn everything in one day. I am still finding new things, and content is regularly being added. You can also contact SchoolhouseTeachers.com for assistance by email or phone. Zone in on what meets the needs of your family. You might just learn new things, discover a new talent, or earn an unexpected reward. Have fun, and enjoy your journey! 🏡

### About Shandee

*Shandee Childress, married 22 years, has homeschooled her eight children (soon to be nine) since preschool so she can teach them God's Word. She is currently teaching preschool through eleventh grade, and her oldest daughter is in community college. Homeschooling has had challenges through high-risk pregnancies and C-sections, a near fatal accident with an infant, Shandee's husband suffering from an accident with prolonged health conditions and hospital stays, and a child's chronic illness. Throughout these life situations Shandee has leaned on Romans 5:3-5.*



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