

abekamazing

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The Gift of Homeschooling


Prepare to Be Amazed | **8**
Homeschooling Through A Medical Trial

WINTER 2018
ISSUE 3
VOLUME 2

YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOLER
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**THE GIFT OF A FRESH
START** *Begin the new year
with a new perspective p. 18*



What makes you a great mom
is what makes you a great teacher.

Thanks for being both.



What inspires you to teach? Visit [Abeka.com/wsats](https://www.abeka.com/wsats) and share your story, read stories from other homeschool teachers, watch videos, and more. Thanks for all you do and thanks for letting us help.

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Meet the Campanile family and
PREPARE TO BE AMAZED

Abekamazing is a service of Abeka, Pensacola, Florida. Our mission is to support and equip students, teachers, and parents by providing amazing Pre-K through Grade 12 academic resources based upon biblical values.

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Letter from Abeka

THE GIFT OF HOMESCHOOLING

Dear Friends,

People who unwrap gifts calmly *amaze* me.
I have never opened a present slowly in my life.
I can't stand the excitement.
To me, nothing beats the thrill of an unopened gift.

Years ago, my husband hid a present under our baby's crib. He didn't tell me that's where it was. Instead, he handed me a clue which led to more clues. By the time I found the gift, I'd already unwrapped a lot of fun!

Inside the box was a food processor. I was excited to try it, but I didn't really know how it worked. Once I got the hang of it, I began to understand its true value.

A homeschool parallel is easy to make.
Homeschooling is a precious gift. Just ask any

homeschool mom whose kids are grown. And what's the *true value* inside? That's the best part!

When we start homeschooling, we don't really know how it works. It takes time and effort to get the hang of it. After a while we're surprised to find that it comes with *more time*. It comes with *more choices*. It comes with *more influence*.

At *Abekamazing*, it comes with feature articles! One mom (p. 12) uses her *gift of choice* to feed the family. Three teens (p. 14) use their *gift of time* to start a business. Moms from all over (p. 20) use their *gift of influence* to unite their families.

This homeschool gift has your name on it.
The tag reads: With love from Abeka.
So start shaking the box!
Rip open the paper!
And unwrap the gift of homeschooling... ■



Tabby

Tabby Hershberger

Senior Editor

I'd love to hear from you! Write to me at amazinghomeschool@abeka.com.

Homeschool ideas with high resolution photos (> 1.5Mb) always welcome.

Tabby homeschooled for two decades. She is also a former elementary school teacher and newspaper editor. She has four kids and has been married to her husband, Dan, for over 30 years.

INTRODUCING THE FIRST *Homeschool Family Spotlight*

Gwen L. of East Tennessee calls herself an accidental homeschooler but found that her son excels academically, spiritually, and socially in the homeschool environment. To her great satisfaction, it's a gift that's become a way of life.

It's the positive effects on her son that keeps Gwen going in their homeschool journey; the "yay" moments she calls them, which are the little instances of growth that she'd otherwise miss if Trenton were still in public school. "This is why God made families," she said. "We are able to give our son the love and attention he needs to help him succeed in life."

Read Gwen's full homeschool journey at abeka.com/Gwen.

Homeschool Family Spotlight

“

The character development and moral compass you are allowed to instill in your child as a homeschool parent is unparalleled. —Gwen L.

”



Submit your homeschool story by visiting
abeka.com/homeschoolteacher.

 **abeka**[®]
We make it easy so you can make it amazing.

The **GIFT** of **TODDLERS** Who Get Along

by Renee Bryant

If you'd like to have a toddler that is able to get along socially, you must provide opportunities to develop social skills. Young children will not know how to interact in social settings unless instructed. Practice is as important to social learning as it is to academic learning.

Social Skill is a Gift We Give to Others

Help your toddler give the gift of kindness by encouraging him to smile at others. Help your preschooler give the gift of respect by saying "hi" or "good morning." Reinforce this behavior by keeping a small gift box in your child's travel bag. Each time he smiles, speaks, or displays kindness, add a small treat to the gift box. If he misses or refuses an opportunity, remove one treat.

Giver or Grabber

For most parents, the idea of a child grabbing to get what he wants is not pleasant. Help your child understand what it means to ask and to give by playing a giving game. Pass an object back and forth while saying or signing "please" and "thank you." Demonstrate kind, polite movements and words.

Introvers or Extrovert

For the introvert, it's helpful to bring a security item along. Identify areas

of interest for your child and others to have "somewhere to start" the conversation. Encourage your introvert to make eye contact.

Your extrovert may need simple, safe guidelines for emotional behavior. Having a code word or phrase to signal that he needs to come back or settle down keeps you and your child working together.

Talkative or Tongue-tied

Both traditional signs or their invented counterparts help in communication. I made a reminder sign of tapping my chin for a child I know. Every time I noticed him sucking his thumb, I made eye contact and tapped my chin. It wasn't long before he no longer needed my help. Be careful that signs don't become a substitute for verbal communication.

Timid or Tantrum

Recognizing anti-social behavior and addressing extremes early will help overcome negative behavior. Children learn "this is how we act" or "this is what we do" most often by following a parent's example. Encourage your timid child by helping him acknowledge someone who has spoken by giving a wave or a smile. Prepare the reactive

(explosive) child by providing something positive on which to focus or look forward. Identify potential difficulties, talk about solutions, and develop a plan for a positive outcome should your child keep himself in check. Be sensitive to timing. A toddler in need of a nap during a long wait should be given adjusted expectations. ■

How to Keep Toddler Hands Polite in Public

Give hands a job to do:

- Hold the gift box already mentioned. It will increase your child's attention span by helping to focus on the task.
- Keep hands in pockets. Give a tiny toy to play with which is kept inside their pocket.
- Wear mittens. This is so much fun for toddlers and keeps "grabbers" occupied.



Renee Bryant taught preschool and has been a nursery director for over 20 years. She has four grown children.

Renee



The Gift of Literacy

by Emily Howe



Emily Howe is the daughter of well-known Abeka teachers Dave and Judy Howe. She grew up using Abeka and now is a top-notch first grade video and classroom teacher.

Reading is the key to learning, and phonics is the tool to make reading a reality.

We all want our children to master reading. But what can we do if our child struggles? Give your child the gift of literacy by applying phonics using Abeka's six steps to reading.

1 STEP 1 Start with the basics. Teach the five short-vowel sounds. As your child reads the sounds, have him eat an apple, walk like an elephant, wiggle like an inchworm, run like an ostrich, and open an umbrella.

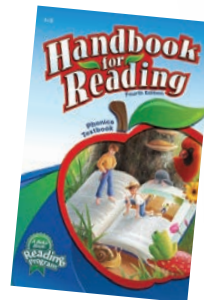
2 STEP 2 Teach the consonant sounds. As you say them, have your child point to objects or words that begin with that consonant.

3 STEP 3 After the short-vowel and consonant sounds are mastered, join them together to make blends. Blends are the bridge to reading words. A blend is one consonant joined to one vowel such as *ba, be, bi, bo, bu*. Learning and reviewing the blends is more fun when singing the blend song found on abeka.com/BlendSong.

4 STEP 4 By adding the ending consonant, the blend becomes a word. Add an ending *t* consonant to *ba, be, bi* and you have *bat, bet, bit*. If your child struggles with the word, cover the letters and reveal them one by one. Challenge your child to make his own words by adding a consonant to the end of a blend.

5 STEP 5 Once your child has begun reading one-vowel words, the next step is to learn the long vowels by reading the vowel name. A in acorn, E in eagle, I in ice cream, O in open, and U in uniform. Now your child is ready to read two-vowel words. Take it slowly and encourage accurate reading. A struggling reader should mark the vowels short (with a smile mark above the one vowel) or long (with a line above the first vowel and a line through the second vowel to make it silent). Macaroni noodles and spaghetti work great for this!

6 STEP 6 The last step to reading is the special sounds. In this step, repetition is important. Have your child practice the special sounds by writing and saying the Abeka phonics charts. Record your child saying the special sounds; have him listen to his work. Help him find special sounds in words he sees as you shop or travel. One of the best tools for applying all six steps is Abeka's *Handbook for Reading*.



Handbook for Reading
For more information, see abeka.com/Read



Encourage Your Child to read for **ACCURACY, COMPREHENSION, and EXPRESSION.**



Accuracy is reading words correctly. Boost accuracy by drawing stars or placing stickers next to sentences read accurately. Applaud your child when he realizes his own mistakes.



Comprehension means understanding what is read. As your child reads, occasionally stop and ask content questions.

Expression gives life to words. Encourage good expression by reading with it to your child. Offer opportunities for your child to read aloud to the family.

Reinforce reading by practicing whenever you can. While in the car, have a stoplight challenge to see how many words your child can read before the light turns green.



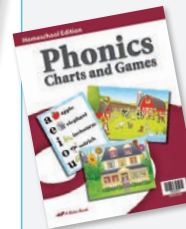
Family Fun Readers

For more information, see abeka.com/FunReaders



Phonics Charts

For more information, see abeka.com/PhonicsCharts



Blend Song

For more information, see abeka.com/BlendSong



The Gift of Healing: Homeschooling through a Medical Trial

Meet the Campanile family—Anthony, Amanda, and children Juliana (8), Dominick (6), twins Vincent and Sophia (4), Gia (2), and Salvatore (1)

In March 2017, the Campanile family faced an unexpected trial when Mom, Amanda, suffered a life-threatening stroke while in the hospital with pneumonia. "A blood clot traveled from my leg to my lungs and through a hole in my heart straight to my brain," she explains. "For three days, I couldn't say my husband's or my children's names, but I could say Jesus' name. I kept saying it on my way to MRIs and other tests. After 3 days, my speech came back because the Lord heard the prayers of His people and healed me!"

The Campanile's homeschool journey began a few years earlier. "The Lord led us to homeschool," said Amanda. "Since my husband teaches at a Christian school, we assumed



our children would attend. A friend's question about homeschooling made me think, 'That's something I should pray about!' We prayed, and the Lord confirmed our homeschooling."

Homeschooling from the Hospital

Before Amanda's stroke, the family had been praying for wisdom about how to homeschool with their growing

family. She remembers, "We had newly mobile twins, and I couldn't find the time to school the older children. As we prayed for wisdom, the Lord opened our eyes to Abeka Academy."

"Abeka Academy has been a God-send," Amanda continues. "Without it, I don't know how I would have homeschooled during what became a season of medical challenge. Abeka allowed us to meet the needs of our



“My children’s faith has grown seeing the healing that occurred in me; they have become real prayer warriors.”

children’s education while giving me time to recover.”

After Amanda’s stroke, the prognosis did not look good. The doctors discovered she had been born with a hole in her heart that was now

24 mm in length. Initially, the couple shielded their children from knowing the seriousness of their mother’s condition.

After a few days, the children were able to visit. “I was so grateful to be alive to see them again,” Amanda said. “Their faith has grown seeing the healing that occurred in me; they have become real prayer warriors. Not a day goes by that they don’t pray for me.”

Homeschooling by Grace

Miraculously, the hole in Amanda’s heart shrunk to about 1 mm within months of her stroke. “It was the Lord healing her—many prayers were being lifted up on her behalf, and now you wouldn’t even know she had a stroke,” her husband, Anthony, said.

“We had an unbelievable support group,” Amanda recalls.

“My mom moved in while I was in the hospital and my mother-in-law was

a huge help as well. Our friends were amazing with food shopping, bringing toys for the kids, and babysitting.”

“Our secret to homeschooling through a medical challenge is simply to trust the Lord,” Amanda says. “The Lord has called us to do this, and He won’t leave us. We all have good days and tougher days, but the Lord is right there to help us through; we just need to depend on Him. I am thankful for each day He gives me with my amazing husband and these six blessings that call me mommy. Life is truly a gift!”



abeka Academy

For more information, see abeka.com/AcademyDVD

For more information about video streaming, see [abeka.com/Academy Streaming](http://abeka.com/AcademyStreaming)



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your
MIDDLE SCHOOLER

The Gift of a Parental Buffer



by Laura Allnutt



Middle school is the bridge between elementary and high school, child and teenager, long division and calculus. These years come with challenges of comparison, peer pressure, and temptation. Fortunately, homeschooling can provide the gift of a parental buffer. Here's how.

Diminishing Unhealthy Comparisons

Middle schoolers are prone to comparing themselves with others. This can be a good thing if peers exhibit strong faith or advanced skill. But young people are more apt to make unhealthy comparisons. Homeschooling allows a child to succeed and fail in a healthy environment. John Wesley Taylor's researched comparison shows that homeschoolers are typically

“Homeschooling allows a child to succeed and fail in a healthy environment.”

“My kids measured themselves against themselves. They were able to grasp that education is not about how much smarter you are than the person beside you. Education is about how much you are learning and progressing.”—Richelle, South Carolina

succeeding. He concludes that “50 percent of the children scored above the 90th percentile, and only 10.3 percent scored below the national average.”¹

Preventing Peer Pressure

Peer pressures increase when approaching the teen years. Dr. Robert Epstein suggests that “the strong and largely negative influences of peers, schools, and the media are the main forces driving teen behavior in developed countries.”² Homeschooling allows parents to monitor their children's friendships and influences.

*“Middle schoolers are still just kids in their growing up bodies. When you homeschool, you can allow your middle schooler to be a little kid without the outside peer pressure to grow up faster than necessary.”
—Michelle, Louisiana*

1 Chris Klicka, “Socialization: Homeschoolers Are in the Real World” Home School Legal Defense Association (accessed May 22, 2018), <https://hsllda.org/content/docs/nche/000000/00000068.asp>.

2 J. Michael Smith, “The Best Kind of Socialization” Home School Legal Defense Association (accessed May 22, 2018), <https://nche.hsllda.org/courtreport/V23N4/V23N411.asp>.

“ At home, parents can reduce temptations and provide an open, nonthreatening environment to discuss difficult issues and answer necessary questions. ”

Tempering Temptations

Researchers for the US National Library of Medicine National Institutes of Health reported that “homeschool students are significantly less likely to use drugs, alcohol, and tobacco than non-homeschooled students.”³ Temptations don’t always happen on school property, but they often happen with school peers. At home, parents can reduce temptations and provide an open, nonthreatening environment to discuss difficult issues and answer necessary questions.

“When a child feels safe, he can ask questions . . . in an honest and open way that a classroom student might not feel comfortable doing.”—Kim, Nevada

Blocking Bullying

One of the most prevalent issues in education today is bullying. According to *School Psychology Review*, “44% of middle schoolers experienced name-calling, 36% suffered rumors and lies, 27% confronted threats and theft, and nearly 60% endured physical harm.”⁴

3 Michael G. Vaughn, et al., “Are Homeschooled Students Less Likely to Use Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs?” NCB (August 25, 2015). <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4652803/#R24>.

4 C.P. Bradshaw, A.L. Sawyer, and L.M. O’Brennan (2007), “Bullying and Peer Victimization at School: Perceptual Differences between Students and School Staff” in *School Psychology Review*, 36(3), 361–382.

5 Alysse ElHage, “Most Teens Aren’t Having Sex, and They Deserve More Support for That Choice” Institute for Family Studies (accessed May 22, 2018). <https://ifstudies.org/blog/most-teens-arent-having-sex-and-they-deserve-more-support-for-that-choice>.

Homeschooling protects students from many forms of this abuse, though parents must still monitor for online bullying.

Regulating Relationships

It’s in middle school that students exchange cooties for cupid’s. While there’s nothing wrong with developing relationships, a traditional school environment adds unneeded pressures for physical contact.

Research from the Institute for Family Studies highlights parental influence. “The bottom line is that parents still wield the most influence over teen sexual decision-making, and ideally, parents should be the primary resource for schooling young people on the ins and outs of sexual behavior.”⁵

Homeschooling provides an excellent opportunity for this kind of parental buffer during the middle school years. 🇺🇸



Enough Is Enough

The (EIE) mission is to make the Internet safer for children and families.

Enough Is Enough (EIE) is an American bi-partisan non-profit organization who has led the fight to make the Internet safer for children and families by incorporating a three-pronged prevention strategy urging a shared responsibility among the public, technology industry, and legal community. EIE is dedicated to promoting child dignity in the digital world by raising public awareness about the harms of Internet pornography, child pornography, sexual predators, sex trafficking, cyberbullying, and other dangers. EIE played a role in the passage of the Communications Decency Act of 1996, the Child Online Protection Act of 1998, and the Children’s Internet Protection Act of 2000.



Visit enough.org

Three Top Tools from Enough Is Enough

- Internet Safety 101 video clips: Cyberbullying 101
- Internet Safety 101 Workbook and Resource Guide
- Rules N’ Tools Checklist

Visit: internetsafety101.org.

The Gift of Food Choices

by Jill Dewhurst



Jill Dewhurst is a nurse, author, musician, and mother of two.

As homeschool parents, we have an often-overlooked blessing. We get to choose what our families eat throughout the day.

Choose wisely.

I learned the hard way that even the snacks my boys eat greatly affect how well they learn. One day they were wound up through science and lethargic during history because they had eaten juice treats. Their snack contained nothing but sugar. As a nurse, I know protein stabilizes blood sugar and provides an even dose of energy to the brain. As a busy mom, I had chosen what was easy.

Investing a little time can greatly improve our children's health and learning. We have many alternatives that allow us to tailor our food choices to meet our families' needs. Start with your favorite recipes.



Be adventurous. Substitute natural Stevia, agave, or honey for sugar. Try coconut or almond flour. Add an ingredient or two such as a few chia or flax seeds to increase protein levels. Do you have restless learners who struggle to focus? I do. Try using more turkey. Turkey is a natural

source of tryptophan, an amino acid that is the precursor to serotonin in the brain. Serotonin, a natural relaxant, is the reason you feel sleepy after Thanksgiving dinner. When my oldest eats more turkey, I see a visible difference in his attention span. Blend ground turkey with beef in taco

meat or spaghetti sauce. Make turkey roll-ups (turkey sandwich without bread). Choose turkey

sausage for breakfast. Little changes can equal big results.

The answer is a meal plan with themed nights.

The thought of turkey reminds me that we are in the fastest moving season of the year. When Thanksgiving dinner is over, our hearts turn toward Christmas, holiday parties, and a string of events until New Year's Day. During this busy season, our families still need to eat well. If you count breakfast, lunch, and dinner, we must plan over 90 meals between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day! Overwhelmed? Here's the good news: a simple plan makes it possible.

If you struggle to meal plan like I do, let these ideas give you inspiration to try again. Rhonda McLaughlin, mom of eight, is my meal planning mentor. Her family is physically fit and nutrition-conscious. She admits, "Eating healthy

is a priority, but balance is key. "How does she plan meals for such a large family? Rhonda schedules a dinner theme for each day of the week: salads, homemade pizza, Italian, Mexican, breakfast-for-dinner. Within each theme are many ideas. Italian, for example, could be spaghetti, lasagna, ravioli, or fettuccine alfredo.

Make your crockpot your best friend.

Themes are great, but how do you actually get food on the table? Rhonda's solution: "Make your crockpot your best friend." Have your kids take turns helping you assemble the ingredients and let dinner cook throughout the day. When evening events prevent supper at the table, avoid the drive-through by browning several pounds of ground meat the weekend before. Divide it five ways to form the basis for chili, tacos, quesadillas, sloppy joes, burritos, or baked ziti. If you need to eat on-the-go, crunch a small bag of nacho



flavored chips. Add taco meat, cheese, sour cream, and a dollop of salsa to make a taco-in-a-bag that fills the tummy and contains the mess.

What about breakfast and lunch?

Keep breakfast simple. Healthy cereals, oatmeal with fruit, and egg sandwiches are all good choices. Freeze large batches of pancakes or French toast for hectic mornings. Lunch should be protein-rich to feed the brains of our learners. Cut down on those 90 meals by serving dinner leftovers for lunch. Or fill the crockpot with baked potatoes, chopped ham, and cheese. Need lunch to-go? Chunks of smoked sausage and squares of cheese skewered on pretzel sticks makes little sandwich kabobs that are fast and portable.

Get the kids in the kitchen.

Involve your kids. This gets easier as they get older, but even Rhonda's two-year-old helps her with recipes that don't require exact measurements. To him, cooking with mom is a game. My boys still remember learning measurements and basic fractions while making and

cutting a pan of brownies. Rhonda's oldest son, now in college, was home on break when she left these instructions: "Please throw something together for dinner." She returned home to a multi-course meal! Including our children in the kitchen is worth the investment.

Choose one thing to change. Only one.

The New Year typically signals a focus on healthier eating. Choose one thing to change—only one. Perhaps you want your family to limit soda or drink more water. Maybe you desire to transition from refined sugar to natural sweeteners. Whatever you decide, start small and wait for the change to catch on. Remember that we all have some of those days. The ones when life doesn't go as we planned. Allow yourself some grace. Heat the frozen entree, order a pizza, or serve cereal for dinner, guilt-free, because we've all been there. Enjoy your homeschool gift of food choice. 🍴



Taco in a bag

Add your child's favorite meat, cheese, sour cream, and salsa.

More Themed Meals

If you like themes, here's a chance to be creative.

Build-Your-Own Night (potato bar, salad bar, taco bar)

Casserole Night

Soup and Sandwich Night

Kids' Choice Night

Backwards Night (eat dessert first)

No Utensils Night (finger foods only)



YOUR UNRUSHED LEARNER

The Homeschool Gift of Time



For many families, homeschooling means greater flexibility and more control of daily schedules. So how can homeschoolers make the most of this gift of time?

Three young homeschooled entrepreneurs in Louisiana are using their time to create a successful business and help others!

For Ryker and Hailey Holloway and their friend Benjamin Schafer, homeschooling gives them time to learn outside their textbooks. Since Ryker and Hailey launched Barefoot Nation last November, their lifestyle clothing business has taught them real-world skills and life lessons, too.

Meet the Team

With his entrepreneurial spirit, Ryker (15) leads Barefoot Nation as CEO.

Hailey (12) is the source of creative inspiration for Barefoot Nation's logo and designs. She works with designers and invents taglines like "Get Grounded" and "Freedom for the Sole."

Benjamin (17), a self-taught photographer and videographer, contributes his valuable technical skills. He collaborates with Ryker and Hailey and creates videos that communicate their message.

Together, these three have a chemistry that mom Alicia Holloway describes as "really amazing."

Whether they're eating pizza while brainstorming new strategies or working in the distribution shed in the Holloway's backyard, they make the business fun.

Barefoot Beginnings

Barefoot Nation grew out of Hailey's love for going barefoot. When she was younger, she created an imaginary restaurant with one important rule: No Shoes Allowed. Ryker overheard her

Ryker, Hailey, and Benjamin have had the time and freedom to pursue their dreams because of homeschooling.

say "Barefoot Nation" and thought it was brilliant.

He started researching lifestyle clothing brands and trademarked Barefoot Nation. Knowing that the brand would need a manufacturer, the Holloway family took off for Dallas.

While driving, they called the manufacturer and got a 30-minute appointment. When the family shared their story, the manufacturer loved it. Those 30 minutes turned into a 6-hour meeting!

Barefoot Nation products share the message of taking life at a slower pace and enjoying the freedom of being yourself. For Ryker, Hailey, and Benjamin, homeschooling helps them live this message every day. With the time and freedom to pursue their dreams, they can discover who they're meant to be—before even graduating from high school!

Mission: Miracle Feet

Hailey always wanted Barefoot Nation to be more than a successful business. "I wanted to do a purpose for the



brand, not just selling things," she says. "I wanted to make a mission."

When they heard about Miracle Feet (an organization that helps children with clubfoot), they knew it was the perfect fit. Barefoot Nation is excited to partner with Miracle Feet by giving a portion of its online sales to benefit children with clubfoot.

Balancing Work and Homeschool

"Homeschooling is really one of the core, key aspects of Barefoot Nation," Ryker explains. "If I get an order overnight, I can go in our warehouse and package something before I need to go to school. Or I can do school in the middle of that. Or instead of taking a lunch break, I can call back a customer."

Sometimes, they substitute practical experience for classwork, like writing a blog article instead of a class writing assignment.

"With being homeschooled, you have a great advantage because in a sense you control your own

schedule," Benjamin says. "And for me, the whole filming and video side, homeschooling has allowed me to dedicate a lot of my life to that."

Plus, they now have time to travel to trade shows and festivals.

"There are just so many places that we've traveled because of Barefoot Nation and because we're so free now," Hailey says. "Since we homeschool, we just bring school with us."

Looking Ahead

As they work to grow their brand, Ryker's dream is to get Barefoot Nation into a huge travel center/convenience store chain that he loved visiting while growing up.

And at the heart of their business is a mission to help others. "I really hope that Miracle Feet and our sole mission takes off," Hailey says. "And I

can see myself maybe actually at the hospital, helping and visiting some of those little kids."

Ryker, Hailey, and Benjamin can't imagine running a successful business without homeschooling. And they want other homeschoolers to know they can use their time to do what they love, too.

Benjamin recommends, "If you have a passion for something and if you have the drive to work at something, then there's really nothing that should stop you. Even if there's no clear goal, if you keep working toward what you want to achieve, doors will eventually open."

Take a tip from Ryker: "Don't let anyone tell you that you're too young to start a business or start anything that you want to. Because as long as you have the drive, the determination, the confidence, and God—nothing can stop you; the sky's the limit." ■

“With being homeschooled, you have a great advantage because in a sense you control your own schedule.”

The Gift of BEING EDUCATED Abroad

International Abeka Academy homeschoolers were at Pensacola Christian College for graduation last May. Here are six things they said about their homeschool-abroad experience.



Private education is expensive in Peru.



Abeka helped me overcome our small New Zealand library.



I live in a remote area of Brazil where there are no Christian schools.

1 UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE

"Private education in my country is quite expensive," says **Grace Alvarez** from Lima, Peru, "and the academic requirement is not what the universities demand. Because of this, my parents chose Abeka Academy."

Pablo Prado homeschooled in Guatemala. "The academic level of Abeka Academy is far better than that of any school in Guatemala. It helped me obtain a higher level of education than most Guatemalans.

Patricia Gregorio homeschools in Los Banos, Philippines. "I have the honor of qualifying for the Philippines' top two universities. Having studied under Abeka Academy for over ten years has helped shape who I am today."

2 RESOURCE SUPPORT

Deborah Howell notes the resource challenges. "I'm a missionary kid in New Zealand. We live in a very little town, so it has a very small library. The Abeka program helps counteract this because textbooks are so informative that on many occasions I have used an old science or history book as a source for a report."

"Homeschooling in Guatemala was a great challenge for me," says **Jose Prado**. "My parents received much opposition. Many people said that we would not have any friends, a good academic level, or be able to adapt to society. They were very wrong. I have

many godly friends. I found that Abeka gave me a higher academic level than any of my college classmates."

Daniel Cabildo schools from the United Arab Emirates. "Independence is necessary, and Abeka Academy truly taught me to study independently. This does not mean that we are free to study whenever we want; there is discipline in the house."

3 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This from **Sam Edwards**: "Our family has served on the mission field of Brazil for 20 years. We've lived in remote areas where there were no Christian schools or mission compounds. I was glad to learn from a



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Abeka makes
it easy for me
to learn from
my home in
Canada.

Abeka brought
school 'alive' for
us in India and
helped us 'feel
American.'

International
schools in Japan
don't teach
English like
Abeka does.

Christian curriculum like Abeka rather than in the Brazilian schools where the teachers don't know God or have a faulty view of Him."

Travis Rempel echoes the same thought, "I have lived my whole life in Mexico; my dad's a farmer so I grew up on a farm. My parents were looking for good Christian material for schooling, and they came upon Abeka. The best thing is that it's all in a Christian perspective.

4 CULTURAL HELP

Naomi Pratt schools in India with her missionary family. "If homeschooling in the USA is an interesting experience, international homeschooling is definitely more so.

Abeka's method of teaching brought school 'alive' for us and helped us 'feel American.' Homeschooling allowed us to have a semblance of real school while functioning in a different culture."

Sophie Long responds about the homeschool culture in France. "Homeschooling is an unfamiliar concept to the French. The rare family that homeschools independently must be inspected."

5 SUPERB ENGLISH

Shekinah Rose Santiago homeschooled in Japan. "Though there are many international schools in Japan, they do not superbly teach English as Abeka does. With my English-speaking ability,

I got to minister to foreigners at my church, translate Japanese to English, and enjoy watching English movies without waiting for Japanese subtitles."

6 SIMPLE PROGRAM

Dimitri Schiau homeschools in Canada. "Homeschooling has been the best change made to my education. The simplicity of the Abeka program makes it easy to focus and learn."

"Homeschooling is just becoming stronger in my country," says **Isabela Guerrero** from Columbia. "I hope homeschooling blesses many families and reaches every corner of the world."

WOULD YOUR STORY ENCOURAGE OTHERS?

Send your story to amazinghomeschool@abeka.com.
Be sure to attach a high resolution photo (>1.5Mb).

The Gift of a Fresh Start

by Kim Smith

Past regrets either sink us or reshape us. When we determine to make a fresh start (no matter how many times) we must first get to the root of the problem.

Where We've Been

1. Consider the frustrations.

The house is a mess; the children are falling behind; the discipline isn't working, or maybe all of the above! Were these problems caused by inconsistency, lack of time, or by not knowing what to do? Write down your frustrations so you can see what is causing them.

2. Is the cause inaction or something else?

If it's inaction, begin anew with the appropriate action. If it's caused by something else, acknowledge that, and focus on what you want in the future. It's a new day for your children, too. Reminders of the trouble before will only set them up to fail again.

3. Clarify your goals and strategize.

Arrange for some quiet time to organize your thoughts, talk to

the Lord, and get a renewed plan of action. Make sure the goals are attainable for your household. Comparing yourself to others is the number one way to feel like a failure. Every home is different; every situation unique.

4. Your To-Do list is not a taskmaster.

Plans change; things happen. As a homeschool parent, you are teaching your children by example. Teach them to accomplish their goals and to rejoice when they finish. If you grumble about not getting things done, you will see this trait lived out in your children.

5. Retrain, reteach, and break old habits.

It is never too late to begin anew. Discuss with your spouse what needs attention; agree on a plan; write it down. Share the new plan. Expect some balking; the kids will test

to see if you really mean it. Praise the changes. Invite the children to pray specifically about their behavior.

Where We're Going

1. Share your new plan of action.

Accountability is created when you hear yourself say, "I will spend time with the Lord, plan out my day, and praise Him for what is accomplished." This will propel you forward, especially in difficult areas.

2. Determine not to "wing it."

Make a reasonable plan of action. As your children get older they will "catch" you in inconsistencies. If your plan is written down, you will hold yourself accountable. This often reduces discipline situations.

3. Designate device times.

Designate specific times during the day for communication on devices. When you are distracted by your device, the children know it and use it to their advantage. Consider limiting your devices for the same reasons you limit your child's.



Kim Smith is a former teacher and Abeka consultant. She has two children.

Where We've Been

“As a homeschool parent, you are teaching your children by example. Teach them to accomplish their goals and to rejoice when they finish.”

Where We Hope to Be

1. Organize your To-Do's.

Create a 3 column To-Do list: *Today, Maybe Today, Future*. A whiteboard works great; wipe off what's done and what's leftover is already there for the next day.

2. Enlist family help.

Train your family to help. My mother wrote chores on strips of paper and put them in a jar. My mother, sister, and I would draw a job. When it was finished, we ate part of a treat set aside to nibble on and enjoy.

3. Stay on top of the mess.

Designate three 2-minute pick-up times each day. Ours are right before naps, before Daddy comes home, and before bed time. Sing a song; make sure the children are doing most of the pickup.

4. Manage big projects.

Set the timer for 10 minutes and attack the mail pile or the grading that must be done. When the timer goes off, focus on something else.

5. Make memories.

If there is a choice between folding laundry or playing on the floor with your child, play on the floor. You will always have laundry and dishes, but you only have a short time to influence and enjoy your children.

6. Master the homeschooling issues.

Hear the advice of others, but listen to your heart. Don't let anyone make you feel bad about making choices that work for you.

As we look toward a new year, determine to have a new outlook.

Implement personal and household strategies that are more effective; seek the Lord's help. Don't be satisfied with the status quo. Look for at least one way to implement change. Most of all, enjoy the gift of a fresh start! 🌈



Where We're Going

“Accountability is created when you hear yourself say, 'I will spend time with the Lord, plan out my day, and praise Him for what is accomplished.'”

Where We Hope to Be

“As we look toward a new year, determine to have a new outlook. Look for at least one change.”

The Gift of a Godly, Authentic Homeschool Mom



by Melissa J. Troutman



What does a GAHM (godly, authentic homeschool mom) look like?

GAHMs don't feel prepared.

Cathy started homeschooling with only a high school diploma. She admits she didn't feel confident. Now 30 years and 11 children later, Cathy gives credit to God: "In my weakness, God is strong."

Having only a high school diploma became an advantage. It forced her to get out of the way. Cathy remembers, "I realized my dependence upon the Lord; I was totally incapable of doing it myself." One by one, all of Cathy's children began their own spiritual walk and learned to read.

GAHMs are not perfect.

Dawn remembers a turning point the day her lesson plans fell apart and she lost her temper.

"I remember just sitting in the basement and weeping," she says. "I begged God to help me put godliness first for all of us, and when I fail, to make me willing to make it right with my children."

Dawn finished homeschooling all three children. She continues to serve as a pastor's wife, piano teacher, businesswoman, and grandma.

GAHMs are still learning.

Emese and her family were studying Abeka's Character Development series when she was convicted about her own anger.

The day they reviewed self-control, one of her children spilled a cup of juice. The Lord quickly brought to mind self-control. "I took a deep breath," she said, "realized it was an accident, and told the child to help me clean up."

As Emese sat down, another child's drink spilled. By the time it was cleaned up, her third child's drink spilled as well. Emese recalls, "As we were taking dishes to the sink, I knocked over my travel mug. At this point, I laughed out loud and thanked God for the lesson on self-control."

GAHMs make a huge impact.

For every story that demonstrates what the godly, authentic homeschool mom is not, homeschool children have a story that demonstrates what she is.

Luke, a high school senior, remembers his mom suggesting that he and his siblings go outside and practice art. "The best thing about it," Luke shares, "was that my mom joined us instead of just sending us outside. She was painting alongside the rest of us. Even though she wasn't teaching us any curriculum, I think what she did *with us* made a bigger impact."

Now in her first year of law school, Erin looks back at her mom's godly example. "She taught me how to go above and beyond for others," Erin says. "If I questioned why, she would say, 'Because people are worth the investment.' If we had not been homeschooled, I would not have witnessed so many acts of her kindness."

GAHMs teach more than academics.

Erin sums up the godly, authentic, homeschool mom when she says, "By homeschooling, my mom taught me *way more than academics*." From a mom's perspective, Emese confesses the same ideal, "My work as a mother is constantly being refined, tested, and purified."

Perhaps homeschooling is God's gift to refine both children *and* godly, authentic homeschool moms? ■



Melissa Troutman is a former homeschool student with a bachelor's degree in English. She appreciates her own GAHM, mentor, friend, example, and yard sale buddy.



These great ideas showcase the best from godly, authentic homeschool moms.



"The main reason my mom and dad chose to homeschool," writes **Morgan Phillips**, "was because they love God. My siblings and I keenly felt this love and desired to love God, too. We soon realized that it's impossible to love God without loving each other. There are still times when we are disrespectful and argue, but we apologize and strive to restore the relationship."



This was written to us from **Naomi Michaelis**. "I am a military wife and homeschooling mom of three teenagers in Washington, DC. I have been homeschooling for three years. I constantly am not sure if what I am doing is good, right, or helpful. I have learned a ton along with the children. I am certain we should homeschool, but not sure at times how to get through to them."



This GAHM idea comes from **Valan Bauscher** who homeschools in Montana. "My little kids had a hard time distinguishing between little d and little b. We came up with this rhyme to help us remember which letter faces which way!"



Missionary to Belize, **Elizabeth Shertzer**, was raised by a GAHM. "I grew up doing my mom's Heavenly Seven. Mom's premise was that God expects us to take care of both our spiritual and physical body. She made a list of seven things we were required to do before school each day. We didn't have to follow the first six in order, but we were expected to do them before eating breakfast.



- 1. Read your Bible
- 2. Get dressed
- 3. Brush your teeth
- 4. Brush your hair
- 5. Wash your face
- 6. Make your bed
- 7. Eat breakfast

YOUR AMAZING IDEA could be worth \$100. Send it to amazinghomeschool@abeka.com.

Lord, please make me a GAHM—



Godly

Proverbs 31:26 *She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.*

Galatians 5:16 *I say then, Walk in the Spirit...*



Authentic

Proverbs 31:30 *Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.*

Philippians 4:8 *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest... think on these things.*

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Godly, Authentic Homeschool Mom

Homeschool

Proverbs 31:27 *She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.*

Mom

Proverbs 31:28 *Her children arise up, and call her blessed...*

Ephesians 6:2 *Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise.*



Lord, please make me a



And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

2 Corinthians 12:9

3

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