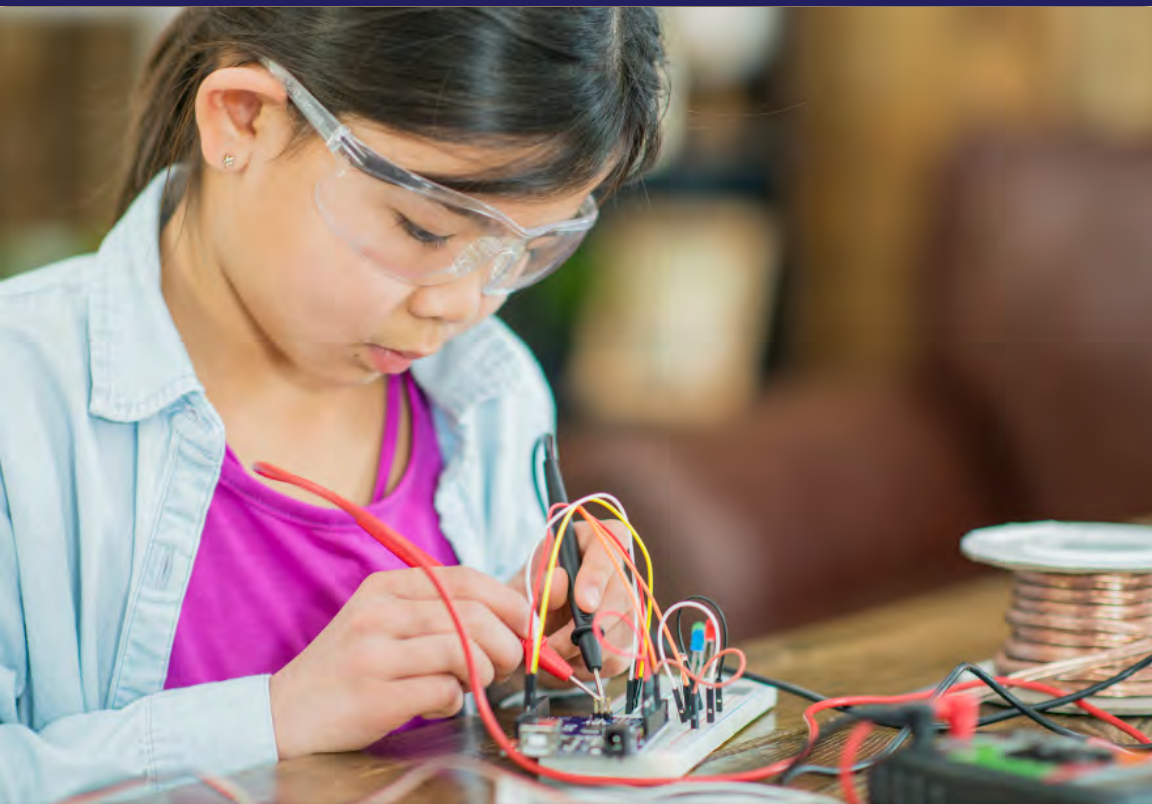




California Homeschool Network

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In This Issue

August 2021

The CHN Board of Trustees wishes our families health and safety. We are here for homeschooling support. Visit our website at www.californiahomeschool.net



- 3 Legislative Update - SB130
- 5 Homeschooling: It's a Family Affair
- 11 Advice for New Homeschool Families
- 15 The Importance of Community
- 18 CHN Homeschool Talk Tuesdays
- 19 Homeschooling & Thriving with an IEP
- 25 Mi Experiencia con la Educación en el Hogar
- 32 Educación bilingüe en el hogar: compartiendo mi mundo en español
- 40 Una Razón de Peso para Educarlos en Casa
- 43 Thinking About Homeschooling?
- 46 Local Contacts
- 48 CHN Board Members

For our non-Spanish readers, we invite you to download our newsletter as a PDF. Then copy/paste the articles you want to read into Google Translate.

Legislative Update

THE RECENT PASSAGE OF SB130 BY THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

For the 2021-22 school year only, in addition to in-person learning, all school districts are required to offer students a distance learning option for the school year through independent study.

This is an additional option for schooling at home.

In addition to the options of filing a PSA, enrolling in an independent study charter school, enrolling in a PSP or hiring a tutor, you can now also contact your local school district to learn about their distance learning options for this year.

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Homeschooling: It's a Family Affair

By: Matthew Blackwood



My journey with homeschooling began in 1981 when my mother saw John Holt of “Growing Without Schooling” fame on The Phil Donahue Show. A scant few months later I was pulled from public school and began homeschooling to finish out the 4th grade, continuing on through high school. It was an experience that I’m grateful for, giving me the opportunity to delve deeper into subjects that interested me and move through material at a faster pace than in public school. My thirst for learning was given the space and resources to grow and thrive.

Fast forward 20 years (almost exactly) and on one of our first dates I learned that my future wife Alesia had been homeschooled herself for grades 4-8. She had gone back to public high school to make it easier to enter University and pursue her goal of becoming a math teacher. Back then homeschooling was not nearly as widespread as today and in Ontario, Canada, where she is from, it was much more difficult at the time to gain acceptance to university being homeschooled. On that date we decided together that we would homeschool our eventual children. Less than 4 years later our first child, Gabriel, who will be turning 16 this month was born. His younger brother Taiven will be 14 in November and they have been joined by Samaya, age 9, and Zalen, age 5. 3 months ago, our 5th child, Zyanna, was born, so we’ll be homeschooling for years to come. 😊



In 2013 we made a decision that would change our lives and how we would homeschool forever. Looking for curriculum, for Gabriel & Taiven, Alesia looked over at me pointing to an online option and asked "Why couldn't we do something like this?". A light bulb went off in my head as I exclaimed, "We could!". Alesia is a phenomenal high school math teacher with an exceptional ability to explain concepts in a way that student just "get" leading to dramatically improved confidence and ability. I had worked as a producer and morning show anchor at a local television station and knew that we could combine our skills and create something that would bring value to the homeschool community. We had dreamed of working together for years and jumped into building our eLearning business with both feet.



This led to my "taking over" homeschooling our two boys while Alesia began creating the course content, initially at the library and then moving to a technology startup incubator. She would be gone for 6-10 hours a day, eventually with a team of 3 to assist her, while keeping up with meals, homeschooling, and all the rest fell to me. It was NOT an easy transition! I was used to cooking some of the meals because I enjoy that but keeping house was not my forte. Taiven was very energetic and couldn't sit to do bookwork so I had to give him math problems while he walked around the



room, he literally would draw a blank if he had to sit. It took some growing pains on both our parts before I realized this. It was frustrating to me that I had things I needed to do for my part of our curriculum company while taking them to swimming lessons, homeschool park days, the library, homeschooling, laundry, you get the idea. Being Mr. Mom had NEVER been my goal but here I was and some days I was drowning. But slowly something began to emerge amongst the chaos. It was definitely "out of the box" but it was working. It was not tidy blocks of scheduled time but rather a lot of multitasking and working together.

All the while, I was also researching and deciding on the technology we would use to deliver the courses that Alesia and her team were developing, sketching out what our course would look like, along with how we could finance our dream! It's taken every bit of our life saving, loans, grants, and a healthy amount of resourcefulness, sacrifice, and flexibility on the part of our whole family.

Being home fulltime with our growing family, involved in their learning, taking them to homeschool meetups, while juggling starting and growing a business is not for the faint of heart but the rewards are with me every day. Beyond regular school work I taught them wilderness skills, we gardened, fished, went on field trips, and I encouraged them to explore new things and develop new found talents that emerged. Every day still brings new challenges and chances to learn and grow, keeping life exciting and fulfilling.



Not every father has the opportunities that I've been fortunate to have but I encourage every father reading this to become more involved in the homeschool portion of your family. Just involving yourself in the decision making of choosing curriculum will take loads of pressure off your wife. Trust me, choosing curriculum is a never-ending cycle of second guessing yourself as to whether you have made the right decision. You can take some of that pressure away as you share the load. You may also have to let go of the idea of school at home and focus on how each individual child learns best and figure out how to facilitate that for them. If you and your wife learn differently that can be a blessing as you discuss how to create an



environment that serves the unique needs of each of your children. One of the rewarding parts of being more involved is seeing the growth and thirst for learning in your children in the thriving environment that homeschooling can create. The fulfillment of taking a leadership role with your wife in teaching them and helping them to achieve their amazing potential is indescribable.

During these past 8 years Alesia and I have handed the main load of homeschooling our children back and forth as the demands of our family business have changed. We have filmed lesson videos together with a 6 month old, helping our older children with school work in between. Our children have been able to pursue their interests. Gabriel is a budding knifemaker, his specialty being folding knives. Taiven makes incredible stop motion



videos with Lego. Samaya is into anything pertaining to animals, currently obsessed with veterinarian 🐾ows. Zalen, he keeps our life interesting and is convinced he's a genius. Zyanna, the skies the limit, she is showered with love by her older siblings and you can tell she is just itching to get going!

Our days now are a constant juggle, homeschooling between zoom meeting, online conventions, online product demos, emails, phone calls, customer support, student extra help sessions, and all



the rest. I see questions all the time asking if you can work full-time AND homeschool. It's not easy, it requires sacrifice, and you have to give up ANY idea of a perfect life. Zoom meetings do not go without interruption, we usually have an assistant or two climb onto our laps. The children help

with meal preparation, Taiven is able to handle complete meals by himself. The chaos and frenzy is often overwhelming. We experience the meltdowns when one of the kids is just not “getting” something and we encourage them to take a break and come back to it fresh. They don’t always get along and so much time can be spent refereeing. Working from home AND homeschooling can be mind numbing at times. It can take you soooo much longer to tackle a work task when you’re constantly interrupted. But it can be done and for our family it is more than worth it. We’ll be homeschooling for a few years yet and hope that you will be too, giving the next generation the best possible start in life and instilling in them a love for learning so that they will view learning not as a chore or task but as an opportunity and be lifelong learners!



Matthew Blackwood, CEO of UnLock Math, Inc. has been involved with homeschooling for 40 years, first as a student and now as a father and homeschool encourager. He, with wife Alesia, homeschool their 5 children in Ontario, Canada or wherever their travels take them. When he’s not speaking at homeschooling events or managing the day to day of UnLock Math you can find him with his family sharing his lifelong passion for learning. Want to learn more about UnLock Math? Visit www.unlockmath.com and try the 14 day free trial of the only self-paced A-G approved online math curriculum with access to LIVE teachers M-F that will dramatically improve the confidence your child has to succeed in math.

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Advice for New Homeschool Families

By: Katherine White



The best advice for new - to - homeschooling parents: Slow DOWN.

You don't have to have everything figured out on day one. Or week one. Or month one. In fact, I wish you wouldn't even try. I mean, yes, apply for your charters, and buy your calendar to keep your attendance record for the PSA, but then, seriously....slow down. Listen more, worry less.

If you think you're behind because you haven't picked a curriculum yet, take heart. You're ahead of the game, because half the folks who did will not want to keep using the curriculum they bought 3 weeks into the school year and you'll still have the pocket change.

I know, I know, you still want to put them back in "regular" school one day. Here's what you need to know: If your kid was doing well in regular school, learning and keeping up, they certainly will do fine with one on one attention. If you try just a little, they'll be fine. "But what about my kid? He's already 'behind' in reading" (whatever that means). OK, so your kid wasn't "getting it" in a classroom full of kids with a professional teacher...so...was another year of that same system going to miraculously catch them up?



Here's what your first weeks with your kids are for: Get to know them, and the way they like to learn. Yes, of course, you "know" them. But does your

son do better with books and your daughter with videos? Do your kids need to have their hands on a project to understand? Will your daughter listen better if she's allowed to color while she hears a story? Does your child do better if they are allowed to choose what to work on next, or do they LIKE having you direct the day and "play school"? Will letting your kid play in the stream for a couple hours start to lead to questions about where water comes from and how the frogs sleep, and why the moss grows on the trees?



Your curriculum should not feel like a burden. People of all ages learn better when they are happy and rested. There is no magic time for school. If your kid will happily do a worksheet in the evening, but whines and cries in the morning, guess which is the better time to do worksheets? (If they serve you at all) There's nothing "better" about 8 am. or 9. Or 10. Or Mondays instead of Saturdays.

Once you do start to have some ideas, if you have wandered across a charter that made room for you, your Educational Specialist. (or whatever your school calls your credentialed teacher person) may have some ideas for you. And even more exciting, may have access to full boxed curricula, musical instruments, games, supplies, workbooks and all manner of other items the school can loan out to you at no cost.

SUPPORT GROUPS

they tell you that your child's mental health is more important than their math grade, and that there's nothing so precious in 3rd grade curriculum that it's worth missing the truly amazing world that we live in here in California. We have the very best year-round classroom outdoors. Spend

Please do listen to the old-timers in the homeschool world. I mean the ones who have graduated kids or even grandkids. I've got a 7th grader and I swear I learn something new every single day from them. They are right when

some time in it. It's ok to have a day spent at the beach, even if it's a Tuesday. Math workbooks will survive a day alone. So build your relationships FIRST and enjoy this experience for as long as you decide to make it last.

That being said, don't fill up your schedule and cram them full of "busy-ness". I mean, I suppose if seeing things on the page reminds you that you are doing amazing things, sure... but leave room for rest and leave it clear in your mind that social activities (when and where they are safe) are IMPORTANT.

Now, on the other side of things: I'll share with you the most challenging thing I have found about homeschooling. We, as homeschoolers, are bound together loosely, and creating a real community for your kids can be a little more difficult in this world. There are lots of chances for get-togethers, but it's harder to build long-term relationships. In "regular" school, if your kid has a conflict with another child, they will have years together to figure out how to tolerate each other. In regular school, if you decide you can't stand another kid's parent, you still probably have to see them at PTA, or school functions. For better and for worse, homeschooling allows us the freedom to walk away from people when they rub us the wrong way. I strongly encourage you to fight that instinct. Make your circles a little bigger, and leave a little more room for grace. (NOTE: I am not talking about allowing you or your children to be abused. I'm talking about personality clashes and what in normal times would be more minor irritations. Especially right now. EVERYone is pretty edgy these days. Not everyone is meant to be your Facebook friend...but you should be able to be kind to anyone for a few hours a week so kids can hang out.)



But in line with that, do pick a social club or two for your kids to be part of (with your family if desired). Scouting, 4H, Toastmasters, youth groups, boys and girls clubs, Music groups....really anything as long as it's SOMETHING that pushes for a little bit of commitment to each other.

And someday, when the park days are fully opened up again, try to find a great park-day group. There's really something very special when you find a group of folks whose company you enjoy. It's 100% worth dedicating the time to it when you find it.



Katherine is a mom to two, and has homeschooled her 8th grade daughter since KG. She's a Scoutmaster and Cubmaster for a homeschooling Scout BSA Troop and Cubscout Pack (formerly known as Boy Scouts), is a Realtor and spends all of her "extra" time as the Operations Director for WoundWalk.org - a homeless advocacy and woundcare program based in OC. She's also one of the fearless admins for the Homeschooling in Southern California FB Page.

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Homeschooling: The Importance of Community

By: Heidi Christianson



Homeschooling is amazing! I love it! I couldn't have done it for 20 years if I didn't. But I didn't do it all by myself.

When I first started, it was just my four boys and me. We were having fun, but it grew increasingly stressful. I started questioning myself and needed others to talk to. I needed a community.

I had to look around a bit to find one that fit for our family. I tried one that seemed good. The people had similar values and goals, but it didn't work. We didn't feel welcomed. I had my sons in a PE class, and I found some networking and support opportunities there, but I wanted a more organized activity. I kept looking. I finally found a woman who had been homeschooling her daughter for several years and was getting together a group. She was a mentor to me, even if she didn't



realize it. I could see in her what I wanted to be. She organized our group and opened up her home to meet when the weather didn't allow us to meet outside. I think we all thought we were joining this group for our kids. We had classes and even brought in and paid teachers in some cases. But the real power was in the support we gave each other.

Twenty years ago, the Internet wasn't as big a thing. We didn't have Facebook and all the other places online to get support and have questions answered today. And while these resources are fantastic, it isn't the same as an in-person community. In a community, you get to know other people, and they can get to know you on a much deeper level than you can ever get to know someone online.

My family belonged to this first group for a couple of years, and then we moved from Arizona to California. I decided to join a homeschool charter school right away. I was hoping that it would provide the community we were leaving behind. It didn't really, but it allowed me to meet others, and eventually, I was able to find another woman that was willing to lead. That was fifteen years ago. Her kids have all graduated, but the group she started is still going.



My homeschool community is made up of families that support each other. We see our differences and challenges but also our strengths. They know my family and my youngest son has grown up in this group. We have classes, and my friends teach

my son. And I teach their kids. By joining together, we create a synergy that benefits everyone.

My homeschooling community is where I share my fears and concerns. I find a shoulder to cry on when things aren't going well and the encouragement to go on. It is also where I can share my victories and have others celebrate with me. I find support, and I give support.



AND it is an excellent place for my son. My four older sons have graduated and moved on, but they loved their time in our community, and when they have the opportunity to help in it, they still do.

As a homeschooling parent, I've realized that while I've always started in a community for my kids, one of the reasons I'm still homeschooling is the support I've received from my peers.

If you are starting out, find that support system for yourself. You don't need to do it alone. If the only support you can find at first is online, great! But don't stop looking for that perfect in-person community to get to know you and your kids.

Heidi Christianson



The Genius  *Paradigm*

Heidi Christianson is the mom to 5 sons and has been homeschooling for 20 years. She supports homeschoolers through her educational philosophy website geniusparadigm.com and through services like homeschool conferences, workshops and classes through her business website realizinggenius.com.



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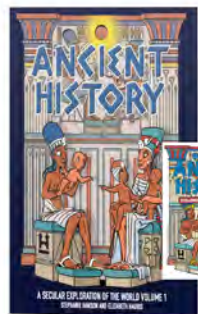
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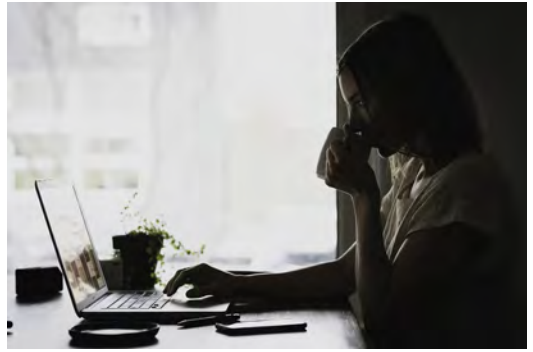
Once upon a time I was a Clinical Nurse Specialist for the neonatal intensive care unit. I oversaw nursing care in the NICU, including education for the nurses, policies and procedures, researched evidenced based practice, looked into new equipment for the unit, performance improvement and case management. None of this prepared me for the life turning events of my daughter being diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Suddenly my world changed completely and I found myself slowly turning into a researcher and advocate for my daughter in this new world. I had to let go of my career in order to prioritize what she now needed.



I remember walking into the potential kindergarten class for my autistic daughter, and looking around the room to all of the children. They began the class singing songs together in a large group, and then I watched as they shifted by color group to rotate around the room in small groups to sit down for their academic tasks. Then, repeat.

Everyone thought this class was wonderful! From the parents visiting, to our fabulous teacher, to the many therapists and specialists we consulted... but in my head, I kept thinking to myself, "I can't do this to her. I can't".

I threw myself into researching the options we had for her for the upcoming year. All of the private schools we looked into were either not the right fit or they wouldn't take her. What would we do if she didn't fit at a school? Years ago with my now college graduate daughter, I had considered homeschooling. Maybe I could look into that option again? Back in the year 2000 it was such a small movement, but I had met so many incredible parents at the park days we had visited back then. So I decided to head to Facebook and see what there might be out there now. It was time for more research as to what the options were. My nursing research background went into full gear and I found local park day playgroups and a homeschooling IEP group. It was in that group online that I was told, hey, why don't you try it? The public school will always take you back with open arms. They will always be there.



It was at that moment that I decided we would attempt to homeschool. After all, we could just try it. Just one year I told myself, and see if she is less anxious, has less panic attacks, maybe she will stop hitting me and hurting herself. Maybe it will help? Maybe it's just a matter of time?



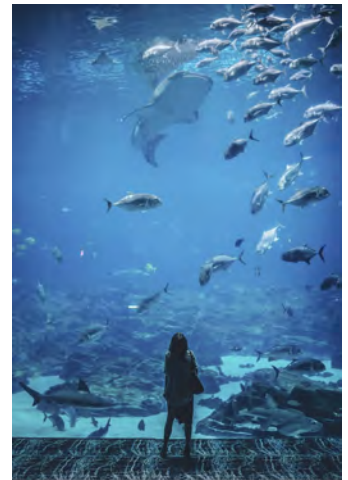
Here we are now, starting our fifth year homeschooling. We have a myriad of experiences at this point. We started off in our homeschool journey joining a charter and they took over the IEP. I found that we had more services and support than we ever had before, it was absolutely amazing, and far beyond anything we could have imagined.



As a homeschooler, I was able to cater her learning experiences according to her needs rather than try to get her to fit a mold. Over time I have learned to let go of what the school systems say my child should learn at certain ages and foster so many amazing educational experiences. It opened up a world of social

groups and park days with so many other children, that I didn't even realize homeschooled! Our days were filled with visits to the museums, beach trips, and amazing experiences. Our homeschool groups had so many other neurodivergent children, so many other cultures and ethnicities, kids of all ages, it was amazing! When people ask about socializing it makes me smile every time. If they only knew!

Soon after that I started to homeschool her younger sister. Now, years later, I always encounter people who are concerned about the world of homeschooling. Common questions asked are regarding their academics, what are they learning? We have taken a more child led approach where they are exposed to the world and learn as we live life. They go to the beach and learn about the ocean, the tides, the clams, the birds. We go to the natural history museum and learn about dinosaurs. We go to the science museum and learn about the human body. We write stories, we cook and do math, we play games. They learn at their own pace and what interests them. The concern about having to keep up with the standards is no longer something we worry about. And what about socializing, how do they meet friends?



If they only knew! We had multiple homeschool park days and meetups. Park days of over 100 people. Meetups with children who also have disabilities. Craft park days. Beach park days. Sometimes I feel exhausted from all of socializing! One of the first things I tell parents is to attend one of these park days because it is eye opening as to what the world of homeschooling could be.



After the experience of my younger two, I asked my high school daughter who was diagnosed with ADHD what she wanted to do. She has struggled in the world of schooling, and we had tried quite a few schools over the years. She loved her specialized private school and

friends but felt academically stagnant and wanted to try homeschooling her last two years of high school. She spent her last two years of high school homeschooling and dabbled in many things. She observed homeschool classes, tried self directed learning, tried a charter. Each time she learned more and more about the way she learns best and what worked for her. She found that she loved the accelerated pace and intense learning at the community college, and knocking out classes in one semester rather than a year was very appealing. She decided to take classes there along with some tutoring to catch up with certain subjects she felt she wanted more help with. She had free reign as to what to take at the community college, and her first class ended up being Logic. She loved it! After that she dove into various calculus courses, psychology, geology, chemistry, Spanish, Mexican history, and even baking pastries! She learned how to maneuver the campus, made an appointment and met with the disability office for accommodations. Each time she walked into or started a class virtually, she created study groups in each of her



classes. She made new friends. At the local homeschool park day meetups she also met teens who became truly wonderful friends. At these park days they would spend hours hanging out. They had countless meetups: hiking, field trips, museums, and game nights. She started a DnD and

gaming group. She helped with teen drops where the teens would convene and hang out at a variety of locations. There were so many amazing experiences for her, so many different friends, and she had finally felt like she found a group where she was accepted for who she is. Last year she applied to small liberal arts colleges and had to do so without SAT and ACT scores. Every university that had scholarships available offered her one. So she is off to Oregon in the fall!

It has been an amazing journey, and homeschooling has opened up a door to a world of experiences for us all. Ours is just one of the many stories of those who have found homeschooling to be a life changing possibility.

As I always tell a new parent: Just remember, you can always try it. The public schools will always be there.

Facebook Groups that Helped with our Journey

[California Homeschooling with an IEP](#)

[California Homeschool Network](#)

[CA Homeschool College Seekers](#)

(for families with homeschooled middle & high schoolers only)

Gabriela is a proud Latina descendant living in California and the mom of four wonderful children. She is an advocate for special education and a very helpful and dedicated member of the homeschooling community.

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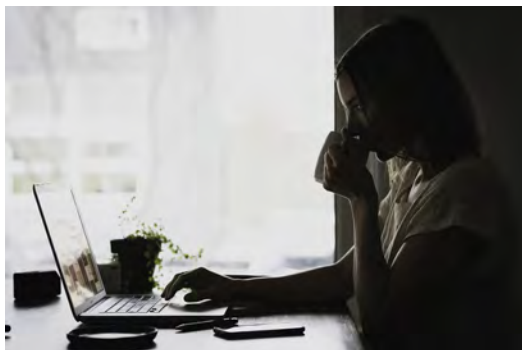
Gabriela

Luego de terminar mi Maestría en Enfermería, empecé a trabajar como especialista en la Unidad de Terapia Intensiva Neonatal. Allí supervisé la atención médica provista por las enfermeras, la capacitación del personal y el cumplimiento de políticas y procedimientos. A su vez, investigué sobre la aplicación de la medicina basada en evidencia científica y me preocupé en buscar nuevos equipamientos para brindar un mejor servicio en la Unidad y técnicas para mejorar el desempeño del área. Sin embargo, y a pesar de toda mi experiencia, nada me preparó para el cambio tan grande que me tocó vivir cuando mi hija fue diagnosticada con el trastorno del espectro autista. De repente mi mundo giró por completo dejando atrás mi carrera para dedicarme a mi niña al ciento por ciento. Pasé mis días investigando sobre el autismo durante mucho tiempo, y de a poco me fui convirtiendo en una fiel defensora de los derechos de los niños, ayudando y comunicando sobre este nuevo mundo que me tocó vivir.



Recuerdo haber entrado junto a otros padres a una clase de jardín de infantes para evaluar el sistema de enseñanza de ese lugar, y en mi caso, pensando si podría funcionar para mi hija autista. Cuando ingreso a la sala veo que era un grupo grande de niños que cantaban dando inicio a la clase. Luego los separaban por colores en grupos

pequeños y los iban rotando para que pudieran realizar sus tareas con distintos compañeros a lo largo de la jornada. Todos los padres pensaron que la clase había sido maravillosa, incluso los terapeutas y especialistas que consulté... pero en mi cabeza, yo seguía pensando: "No le puedo hacer esto a ella. No puedo".



Investigué las otras opciones que ya teníamos vistas para ella el año siguiente y lamentablemente las escuelas privadas que visitamos no eran adecuadas por su condición o no la aceptaban. ¿Qué íbamos a hacer si ella no encajaba en ninguna escuela?

Y entonces recordé que hace muchos años, con mi hija ahora graduada de la Universidad, había pensado sobre la educación en el hogar. Quizás podría volver a considerar esa opción. En aquel entonces, año 2000, era un movimiento muy pequeño pero cuando llevaba a mis hijas al parque tuve la oportunidad de conocer a muchos padres que aplicaban esa metodología con resultados increíbles.



Es por ello que recurrí a Facebook para buscar más información. Mi costado de enfermera investigadora se potenció cuando encontré varios grupos de padres y niños que se juntaban a jugar en el parque cerca de mi casa (y un grupo de IEP de educación en el hogar) y era mi oportunidad para tener acceso a más información y conocer a fondo sobre

otras opciones. Así fue como en el IEP grupo una vez me dijeron: "oye, ¿por qué no lo intentas? La escuela pública siempre te aceptará con los brazos abiertos, siempre estará disponible para tí".



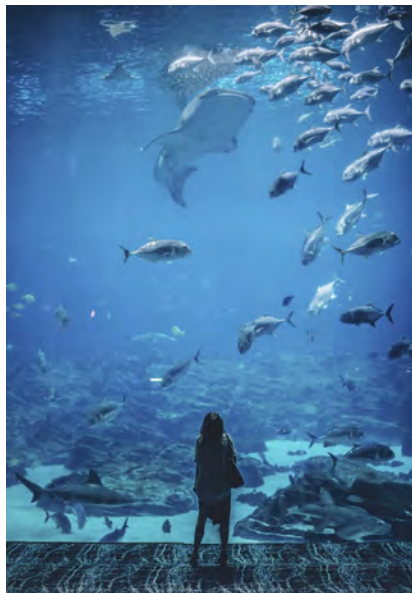
Fue en ese momento que decidí intentar la educación en el hogar. “Después de todo, podíamos probar sólo un año” me dije a mí misma, y probar si mi hija está menos ansiosa, tiene menos ataques de pánico y tal vez deja de golpearme a mí y lastimarse a sí misma. “Quizás funcione o quizás es sólo cuestión de tiempo”, reflexioné.

Y aquí me encuentro a punto de comenzar nuestro quinto año de educación en el hogar, con valiosas y enriquecedoras experiencias en el camino. Comenzamos esta aventura de educación en el hogar a través de una escuela autónoma, quién se encargó del IEP. Descubrí que teníamos más servicios y apoyo que nunca antes, fue absolutamente asombroso y mucho más allá de lo que podría haber imaginado.

Como educadora en el hogar me siento feliz de ser capaz de darle a mi hija todo el aprendizaje que ella necesita de acuerdo a sus necesidades, en vez de hacerla encajar en un molde al que no pertenece. Con el tiempo, he aprendido a dejar de lado lo que dicen los clásicos sistemas escolares sobre lo que mi hija debería aprender a cierta edad y enfocarme en fomentar experiencias educativas significativas para ella.

Descubrí un nuevo mundo lleno de grupos sociales con los que compartimos las mismas necesidades, y a su vez, nuestros niños disfrutaban de hermosos días en el parque. Es todo tan asombroso que ¡ni siquiera me doy cuenta de la educación en casa!. Nuestros días estuvieron llenos de visitas a museos, viajes a la playa y experiencias increíbles. Es muy enriquecedor el hecho de que los grupos de educación en el hogar tengan niños de todas las edades, razas y culturas y a su vez, incluyan a niños en espectro. Cuando la gente pregunta sobre socializar, me hace sonreír todo el tiempo. ¡Si supieran!

Poco después, comencé a educar en casa a su hermana menor. Ahora, años después, siempre me encuentro con personas que se preocupan por el mundo de la educación en el hogar. Las preguntas más frecuentes suelen estar relacionadas con la parte académica, ¿qué están aprendiendo?. En nuestra familia hemos adoptado un enfoque más bien vivencial en el que los niños aprenden estando en contacto con el mundo real y resolviendo situaciones diarias y acontecimientos propios la vida.



De esta manera, cuando vamos a la playa aprenden sobre el océano, las mareas, las almejas, los pájaros; cuando recorremos el museo de historia natural, aprenden sobre los dinosaurios; cuando visitamos el museo de ciencias, aprenden sobre el cuerpo humano; etc. Escribimos cuentos, cocinamos, resolvemos problemas de matemáticas y jugamos. Mis hijas aprenden a su propio ritmo y sobre lo que les interesa. La preocupación por tener que cumplir con los estándares ya no es algo que nos preocupe. Y si hablamos sobre socializar y cómo hacer amigos... ¡Si supieran! Tuvimos numerosas reuniones compartiendo con otros niños que reciben educación en la casa, algunos de ellos también tienen discapacidades, entonces es una oportunidad para que compartan juntos. Disfrutamos de días de parque con más de 100 personas, a veces haciendo manualidades, otras veces vamos a la playa. ¡Tengo días en los que me siento agotada de tanto socializar! Una de las primeras cosas que les digo a los padres es que asistan a uno de estos días de parque porque les abre los ojos en cuanto a lo que podría ser el mundo de la educación en el hogar. Es muy importante.

Después de la experiencia con mis dos hijas menores, le pregunté a mi hija que va a la secundaria, diagnosticada con ADHD, qué le gustaría hacer. Ella ha tenido problemas en el mundo de la educación

Community college

y hemos probado distintas escuelas a lo largo de los años. Si bien le encantaba su colegio, sentía que académicamente estaba estancada y quería probar la educación en el hogar. Pasó los dos últimos años de la secundaria con esta

metodología y el resultado fue sorprendente. Observó clases de educación en casa y probó el aprendizaje autodirigido, entre otras técnicas de estudio. Fue capaz de evaluar y elegir cuál método funcionaba mejor con ella, descubriendo que lo que le gustaba era el ritmo acelerado y el aprendizaje intenso que ofrecía la Universidad. Así es como fue capaz de terminar en un semestre las clases previstas para un año. Decidió tomar clases allí para ponerse al día con ciertas materias en las que sentía que necesitaba más ayuda. Ella tenía libertad para elegir a qué asignatura se quería anotar, y es así como su primera clase terminó siendo Lógica. ¡Ella lo amaba! Después decidió tomar cursos de cálculo, psicología, geología, química, español, historia de México, ¡e incluso repostería!. Aprendió a manejarse sola en la Universidad y llegó a reunirse con miembros de la oficina de discapacidades para solicitar adaptaciones. Cada vez que entraba a una clase virtual, creaba grupos de estudio pudiendo hacer nuevos amigos. También tenía su grupo de amigos de educación en el hogar con el que se juntaba en el parque. Ha participado de innumerables juntadas, caminatas, excursiones, idas a los museos y noches de juegos. Comenzó un grupo de juegos y DnD, como así también, ayudó a muchas adolescentes que abandonaron sus estudios. Tuvo tantas buenas experiencias e hizo tantos amigos diferentes que sintió que finalmente había encontrado un grupo que la aceptaba tal y como era. El año pasado decidió postularse en distintas Universidades de Artes (de pequeño tamaño) y obtuvo becas en todas las que ofrecían este programa. ¡Ahora ella se va a la Universidad en Oregon el próximo otoño!



Ha sido una experiencia maravillosa, y la educación en el hogar fue la puerta hacia un mundo lleno de nuevas realidades y vivencias para toda la familia. Nosotros somos sólo una de las muchas historias de aquellos que han descubierto que la educación en el hogar les cambia la vida.

Como siempre le digo a un nuevo padre: Ten presente que puedes probarlo. Las escuelas públicas siempre estarán ahí disponibles para ti.

Gabriela es una descendiente latina orgullosa que vive en California y es madre de cuatro hijos maravillosos. Ella es una defensora de la educación especial y una miembro muy dedicada en la comunidad de educación en el hogar.



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John Holt

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Educación bilingüe en el hogar: compartiendo mi mundo en español

By: Carlos Collins

Mi familia ha estado educando en el hogar durante los últimos 7 años y hemos aprendido mucho unxs a otrxs y de las otras familias increíbles que educan en el hogar en nuestra comunidad. Educar de manera bilingüe no siempre ha sido fácil. Nací y crecí en Ensenada, Baja California, México, por lo que el español es mi primer idioma y



siempre supe que sería una prioridad para mi que mis hijos hablaran el español con fluidez. Me mudé al sur de California para estudiar cuando tenía 20 años. Conocí a mi maravillosa pareja en Long Beach, donde todavía vivimos ahora, 20 años después, con nuestros 2 hijos (14 y 10).

Antes de tener hijos, mi pareja y yo sabíamos que queríamos que nuestra familia hablara español. Siendo el español mi primer idioma siempre pensé que mis hijos lo hablarían sin ningún problema (pero no es así). Cuando nuestros niños eran pequeños entendían muy bien el español. Al principio cuando empezaron a hablar, hablaban casi puro español, pero cuando crecían, empezaron a responder en inglés. Se sentía como cuando salíamos de casa, todo el mundo hablaba inglés. El solo escuchar a mamá y papá en español no era suficiente. Necesitaban la motivación de tener un grupo de amigos que hablaban español con quien jugar. Las cosas mejoraron un poco cuando iniciamos un grupo cooperativo pre-escolar juntas con otras familias que tenían la misma

meta de mantener el idioma español en sus casas. En aquel entonces yo trabajaba muchas horas fuera de casa sin pasar suficiente tiempo con mis hijos y me hacía sentir muy triste. Quería tomar una parte más grande en la educación de mis hijos. Este deseo solo se hizo más fuerte cuando se empezó a notar que nuestros dos hijos, al igual que su mamá y yo, eran neuro-diversos. Las escuelas típicas no iban a funcionar para ellos. Yo tenía experiencia con escuelas que no funcionaban para mí, entonces sabía que quería algo diferente para mis hijos.

Fui a la escuela en México y viví la experiencia de tener maestros que tenían muy distintas maneras de educar. La disciplina era muy antigua y no eficaz. Usaron métodos de corrección poco éticos donde los maestros nos golpeaban y nos avergonzaban por no entender o por hacer algo que no debíamos hacer. Me sentía como principito (los adultos no entendían el mundo de los niños). Fui un niño con dificultades, de lento aprendizaje y odiaba las largas tareas de mi maestra y sus castigos tan humillantes para mi y mis compañeros. Yo sabía muy bien que no quería esto para mis hijos. Lo que quería era algo más como me educaban en casa fuera de las horas de la escuela. Algo con mas respeto, mas amor, mas conexión, más contexto, más sentido, mas historia, mas crecimiento, mas confianza, mas exito.

No me gustaba estudiar mis tareas para la escuela pero si me gustaba pasar horas en un pequeño taller que mi abuelo y mi padre tenían junto a nuestra casa. Mi papá me dejaba aparatos para desarmar y volverlo a armar de nuevo. Aunque eché a perder aparatos que yo mismo tomaba la decisión de experimentar sin permiso y el techo de la mesa de trabajo lo convertí en papalotes cuadrados, mi padre siempre me apoyaba en mis experimentos y mis proyectos del taller.



Creo que hoy en día muchxs niñxs no tienen la oportunidad de experimentar y aprender como en generaciones pasadas. Muchxs pasan tanto tiempo “aprendiendo en la escuela” que no tienen tiempo de aprender las cosas que eran tan especiales para nosotros. Mi madre nos enseñaba a mis hermanas y a mí las tradiciones y tareas de nuestra familia y casa y comunidad. Recuerdo que con mucho cariño y dedicación sembramos una pequeña milpa, y me enseñó a cuidar de los árboles frutales como higos, durazno, cereza, y granada. Cuando llegaba la temporada y la fruta se maduraba trabajamos para hacer dulces y mermeladas, ate o empanadas. Con las ganancias que yo obtenía de las frutas y dulces de fruta que vendía logré comprar mi primera bicicleta. Estas eran las lecciones que valían más para mi que las que nos trataban de enseñar en la escuela.

Quizás es por mis experiencias tempranas que una de mis formas favoritas de enseñar el español, historia y cultura mexicana, es a través de la comida. Cuando era niño, me encantaba ver a mi madre preparar deliciosas comidas caseras todos los días y aprendí mucho sobre la rica cocina de México y los secretos de la preparación de todos mis platos favoritos. Ahora, me encanta cocinar con mi pareja y mis hijos para nuestra familia y amigos. Cocinar y aprender sobre los alimentos que comemos es una gran parte de nuestro plan de estudios de educación en el hogar. Estudiamos la historia y origen de los ingredientes y platos, así como el valor nutricional de lo que comemos. Estoy enfocado en desarrollar hábitos alimenticios saludables y ambientalmente sostenibles con mis hijos, por lo que me encanta adaptar recetas tradicionales a versiones vegetarianas con productos locales.





Al vivir en el sur de California, tenemos la suerte de tener acceso a hermosas frutas y verduras frescas durante todo el año e incluso podemos cultivar una amplia variedad de alimentos en el hogar. La cultivación de plantas y comida es otro tema en curso en nuestro viaje de educación en el hogar. Una gran razón porque me gusta educar fuera de la escuela es porque me da la oportunidad de compartir mi cultura con mis hijos.

A través de la comida, podemos transmitir nuestra experiencia y el conocimiento de nuestros antepasados. El continuar preparando las recetas de la familia nos hacía recordar a nuestros familiares ya fallecidos. Recuerdo que parte de las recetas siempre era el escuchar como un tío preparaba un caldo de pescado de cierta manera o como mi abuela decía que hay que aprovechar todo y no desperdiciar nada, lo contaban como si aún ellos vivieran.

También aprendí de plantas de mi mamá y otras vecinas que intercambiaban plantas que se utilizan en la cocina o como medicamentos caseros. Levántate Don Juan (tree tobacco), la hierba del manso, buganvilla y epazote eran unas de las más comunes en los patios de Ensenada que utilizamos para remedios caseros. Cuando mis abuelos se casaron en Los Cabos, todavía no existían las farmacias. Por lo tanto las plantas medicinales de la región eran una muy buena opción curativa para la mayoría de las familias. Los abuelos conocían mucho de plantas y hasta recuerdo nuestro libro de primeros auxilios que se llama Donde no hay doctor. Me da mucha tranquilidad que debido al conocimiento que mis abuelos y bisabuelos compartieron conmigo, mis hijos, generaciones después, cuentan con información que nos ha curado en esta región por cientos de años.

Hoy me doy cuenta que el continuar nuestras tradiciones nos permite que nuestros antepasados vivan dentro de nosotros. Como padres que educan en casa, nosotros somos quienes decidimos qué queremos que nuestros hijos aprendan. También tenemos que tomarnos en cuenta cómo



aprende cada uno. Yo aprendía haciendo las cosas, no leyendo o escuchando, como hacíamos en la escuela. Yo prefiero estar afuera en la naturaleza y creo que es así para muchas personas. Estar al aire libre, en el bosque o especialmente cerca del mar siempre ha sido relajante y emocionante para mí. Siempre me ha motivado a ser curioso y aprender más.

Gracias a que nací en un puerto tuve la dicha de disfrutar las bondades de la mar. Desde muy chico me llamo la mar y a escondidas de mis padres (por el temor a que me ahogara) me reunía con mis amigos para surfear. Hoy en día mis hijos tienen más libertad para ir a surfear o ir a pescar porque a muy temprana edad mis dos pequeños aprendieron a nadar y pescar. Habiendo crecido en Ensenada, era importante para mí que mis hijos aprendieran a pescar y preparar mariscos como lo ha hecho mi familia por generaciones. Cuando usamos pescado en nuestra cocina, lo capturamos nosotros mismos con caña y carrete o en apnea y pesca submarina y siempre tenemos cuidado de observar todas las pautas para la recolección ética



y sostenible de mariscos. Aprendemos mucho sobre nuestros ecosistemas marinos locales como parte de nuestra pesca para alimentar a nuestra familia y amigos. Para mi es muy importante que mis hijos respeten el mar como un ser viviente con gran generosidad pero con límites que tenemos que respetar. En casa la norma para comer pescado es no apoyar la pesca comercial que hace mucho daño a los ecosistemas frágiles. Estudiamos los peces de nuestros ecosistemas locales para no ser sorprendidos con una especie desconocida para nosotros, no tomar algo que no debamos de tomar y siempre respetar especies en peligro o amenazados de extinción, incluyendo todo tipo de animal que utilizamos como carnada.

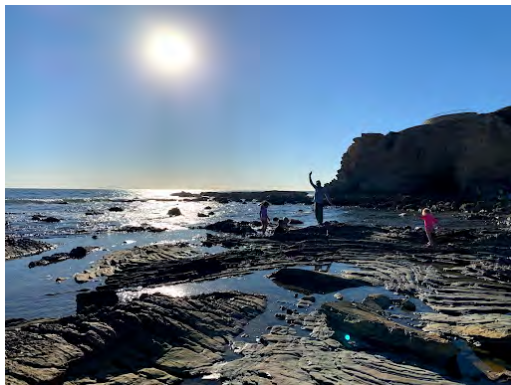


Realmente me encanta aprender y enseñar sobre los ecosistemas oceánicos y sus increíbles habitantes. Tengo la suerte de poder hacer las dos cosas como voluntario de educación en el Acuario del Pacífico junto con mi pareja y mis hijos. Buscar expertos locales, crear relaciones con organizaciones y encontrar fuentes de información en nuestra comunidad ha sido una parte importante de nuestro aprendizaje.



Me encanta acampar, caminar y disfrutar de la naturaleza con mi familia y amigos y me apasiona la conservación. Estoy muy agradecido de que la educación en el hogar nos brinde la oportunidad de pasar tiempo aprendiendo juntos en la naturaleza, y de que podamos buscar en la madre naturaleza otra gran parte de nuestro plan de estudios.

Mucha gente me pregunta cómo terminamos educando en el hogar de esta manera. Eso es difícil de responder porque realmente fue una progresión que fue enraizada en las experiencias de nuestra niñez. No nos habíamos imaginado haciéndolo de esta manera, pero ahora no puedo imaginarme haciéndolo de otra manera. Una de mis cosas favoritas de la educación en el hogar es aprender junto a mis hijos. Tanto es así que hace unos años cambié por completo mi carrera. Dejé mi negocio como contratista de plomería y me convertí en un naturalista certificado en California, educador al aire libre y un maestro de pesca, cocina y cultura mexicana, ¡todo en español! Es como un sueño poder aprender y compartir más acerca de nuestro mundo, ahora no solamente con mis propios hijos, sino también con mis estudiantes.



Carlos is a homeschooling dad of 2 kids, ages 14 and 10. He grew up in Ensenada, Baja California, México and now lives with his partner and kids in Long Beach, California. Carlos and his family love the ocean and enjoy spending time in nature as a main part of their homeschool journey. He recently became a California certified naturalist and teaches nature and cooking classes in Spanish for Spanish speakers

through his group “Mi mundo en español”. Carlos loves learning alongside his kids and students and is grateful to have the opportunity to do so within a vibrant community of bilingual homeschooling families.



August 2021

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Bugs 101

Design an
Insect!

Nature
Color
Scavenger
Hunt

Wild
Poppies &
Vervain

Seasonal poems,
activities,
nature journal
pages and more

In this month's issue, kids can learn all about insects and design their own. There's also a nature color scavenger hunt, an August phenology calendar and weather tree, info and botanical coloring pages for blue vervain and wild poppies, plus all the usual seasonal poetry, nature study pages, foraging records and more.

Una Razón de Peso para Educarlos en Casa

By: Mónica Carmona



Mi nombre es Mónica Carmona, soy pintora y tengo tres hijos que educo en casa, vivimos lejos de nuestro país de origen, sin embargo tengo claro que eso no significa perder nuestra identidad como mexicanos. Creo que es parte importante de la vida de un individuo y por supuesto en la formación de un niño. Es esencial que tenga raíces fuertes que mantengan su autoestima y que pueda sentirse parte de un grupo que comparte la misma historia, la misma sangre y la cultura.

Estando en un país que no es el de origen, es fácil sentirse fuera de sitio, y si sumamos aspectos como el racismo resulta que muchas veces terminamos despreciando nuestro pasado y por lo tanto despreciandonos a nosotros mismos sin siquiera notarlo.

Me he preguntado muchas veces cómo lograr que mis hijos no pierdan su identidad y no carguen con ese estigma de inferioridad racial en el que muchos latinoamericanos se sienten frente a quienes un día llegaron a colonizar estas tierras.

La respuesta la he encontrado en el estudio de la Historia y especialmente en la Historia de nuestro país, en mi caso, de México. Conociendo nuestro origen, toda esa riqueza cultural prehispánica y todo ese pasado. Un origen que fue tan glorioso





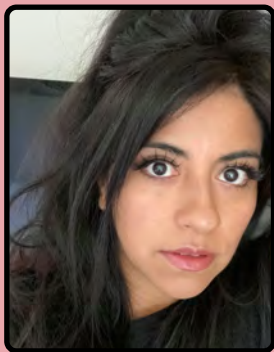
como el egipcio o el griego y que tristemente ha sido ignorado por quienes publican libros de historia para niños en inglés y español. Recordemos que la historia milenaria de nuestras culturas apenas llega a cubrir unas cuantas páginas en los libros de texto. Desde pequeños pasamos años escuchando las maravillas del antiguo continente, las grandezas y proezas europeas. Creemos creyendo que los grandes son ellos, que los artistas son ellos, que la música vino de ellos, la arquitectura, la ciencia, la medicina y todo... nos lo trajeron ellos. Por supuesto nos han educado para creerlo así.

Por esta razón me he dedicado a enseñar Historia de México a mis hijos y cada vez estamos más maravillados de las grandezas que esconde nuestro pasado como nación y mis hijos están orgullosos de su origen, de su piel morena, de sus antepasados y de quienes son. Si esto logra que nunca menosprecien su origen entonces habré logrado que nunca se menosprecien a sí mismos ni a otros.



Sin dejar atrás la Historia General, intento mantener nuestras clases de historia de México junto con actividades que la mayoría de veces son sencillas. Por ejemplo colorear entidades prehispánicas, recortar muñecas de papel con trajes típicos, hacer pequeñas réplicas de algunas esculturas antiguas, visitar museos virtualmente, pero sobre todo les platico en cualquier momento sobre lo que yo misma sigo aprendiendo sobre la historia de mi país.

Finalmente debo señalar que ésta era la razón principal por la que decidí educarlos en casa, para que el aprendizaje sobre el mundo fuera algo más justo con todas nuestras culturas americanas, con nuestro origen y con nosotros mismos. Por supuesto, para que aprendiéramos juntos esas maravillas que guarda la historia de nuestro país, que por cierto no aprendí en mi niñez.



Monica Carmona, a Mexican painter born in 1982 in Mexico City, graduated in 2004 from the Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico (Bachelor of Fine Arts). Diversely Monica Carmona had always shown her interest in teaching painting, theory and Art history as she did at the University Museum of Arts and Sciences, UNAM (Mexico City) to architecture students from the university within the museum workshops. In 2008 she moved to the USA and currently lives in San Jose, California working by herself at her studio, offering lessons and homeschooling her kids.

Introducción a la Educación sin Escuela

¿Tiene preguntas sobre la educación sin escuela/ homeschooling?

¿Necesita mas información sobre los pasos para comenzar a hacer homeschooling?

¿Homeschooling... y ahora que?

Voluntarias de California Homeschool Network
contestaran a sus preguntas y dudas sobre como educar
sin escuela tradicional en California, sus opciones y sus derechos.

Jueves Agosto 12 y 26 a las 6:00pm por ZOOM

Este evento es gratis y usted no necesita ser miembro de CHN para participar en esta sesion.
Por favor regístrese con anticipación.



Thinking About Homeschooling?



Many families who have recently been forced to try school at home are thinking about switching permanently to the homeschool option. Thankfully, California is a great state for homeschooling and provides several options for families to choose from.

In California, children who turn six by September 1 must be enrolled in a legal school. There are three primary options available to parents who want to homeschool.

- ▶ File a Private School Affidavit (PSA), effectively creating your own private school.
- ▶ Enroll in a Private Satellite Program (PSP).
- ▶ Enroll in a public ISP or Charter school with either a virtual or homeschool option.

To learn the details about these options, visit our "How to Homeschool" page on our website, download "Just the Facts" below, and watch the video on the next page.

JUST THE FACTS

New to homeschooling? Start by
downloading our step-by-step guide to
starting your homeschool!

DOWNLOAD JUST THE FACTS

How to Homeschool in California

By Laura Kazan Founder: CA Homeschool College Seekers



How to Homeschool in California



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Alternatives to Public School

Children between the ages of 6 and 18 must be enrolled in a public school or a specified alternative, and that is your decision to make! Kindergarten is not mandatory, but children who turn 6 by September 1st must enroll that school year (*California Education Code §48222, 48224*). Each family has unique needs and circumstances, so choosing an alternative will require considering your individual family situation and the needs of each child.

Your Options:

- **Private School** There are two home-based private school options:
 - Establish a Home-Based Private School by filing a [Private School Affidavit \(PSA\)](#) You may establish a private school in your home and enroll your child as an alternative to public school. This will give you the ultimate in control over your schedule and curriculum. If you establish a home-based private school, you will be the administrator responsible for record keeping, curriculum and all aspects of your child's education.
 - Enroll in a [Private School Satellite Program \(PSP\)](#) PSPs (formerly known as umbrella schools) file a California private school affidavit every year as part of their legal obligation to be in compliance with California Education Code. They can enroll families who want to homeschool. Some PSPs offer classes, both site based and online, curriculum packages and/or activities for their members. Others offer guidance and record keeping, but leave the day-to-day details to the parents. Fees, guidance and requirements vary widely with each school.
- **Public ISP/Charter School** Some public schools and charter schools offer independent study. These public programs are funded by tax dollars, so there is no fee to attend. Some offer a set curriculum you do at home or online. Others allow parents to select some materials. The curriculum will be aligned with Common Core and testing is required. If you enroll in one of these programs, you will need to keep the records required by your program and regularly meet with a credentialed teacher to turn in required paperwork. The amount of freedom you have in choosing what to study depends on the program's policies and your assigned teacher.
- **Credentialed tutor** A parent with an appropriate current California teacher's credential may teach his/her child under the private tutorial exemption. Parents may also hire a credentialed tutor for their child. Tutors are required to teach for a minimum of 3 hours each day, 175 days per school year, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:00 am and 4:00 pm. (*California Education Code §48224*)

CHN Local Contacts

CHN Local Contacts are homeschooling families who serve as ambassadors to their local communities for California Homeschool Network. We will be happy to answer your questions about homeschooling, refer you to local support groups or private/public ISPs, and keep you abreast of the local legal climate in your county. We also organize homeschool information events and are available to provide you with information on local resources. If your county is not listed below, or if you are unable to reach your local contact, call the Homeschool Hotline toll free at *1(800)327-5339 for answers to your homeschooling questions.

COUNTY	NAME	CONTACT INFO
Alameda	Michai Freeman	510-326-8718 Email
Contra Costa	Michelle Tryner	Email
Humboldt	Brenda Lory	707-617-2538 Email
Imperial	Stephanie Laurean	760-693-7951 Email
Indio	Lynette Ridgel	Email
Kern	Terri Larner	Email
Kern	Laura Deatherage	Email
Los Angeles (Culver/Westchester)	Tina Janzen	310-902-7034 Email
Los Angeles (Culver/Inglewood)	Adrienne Quinn Washington	323-369-7669 Email
Los Angeles (San Gabriel Valley)	Vicki Giansante	Email
Los Angeles (Long Beach)	Siri Hirth	Email
Los Angeles (Lancaster)	Patricia Urrutia-Hemker	213-447-8727 Email
Marin	Julie Schiffman	415-446-8844 Email
Orange	Liss Aldana	Email
	Laurel Ward	714-649-0657 Email
	Teresa Fitzpatrick	Email
Placer	Ariana Flamik	Email

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COUNTY	NAME	CONTACT INFO
Riverside	Heidi Christianson	951-375-8576 Email
Riverside	Lynette Ridgel	Email
San Bernardino (High Desert)	Erika Schron	Email
San Bernardino (Yucaipa)	Heather Martinson	909-446-5962 Email
San Bernardino & High Desert	Lynette Ridgel	Email
Santa Clara	Stephanie Hood	408-460-8462 Email
Shasta	Trina Reuber	Email
Tehama	Trina Rueber	Email
Ventura	Christy Bruner	Email
Unique Situations (Bilingual: Spanish)	Patricia Urrutia-Hemker	213-447-8727 Email
	Liss Aldana	Email
	Gabriela	Email
Unique Situations (Gifted)	Becca Orlowski	858-576-1239 Email
Unique Situations (Learning Challenges)	Erika Schron	Email
Unique Situations (Special Needs)	Gabriela	Email



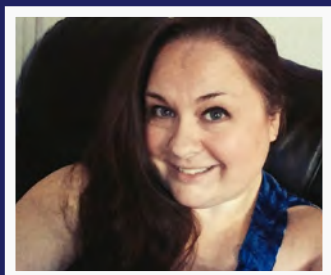
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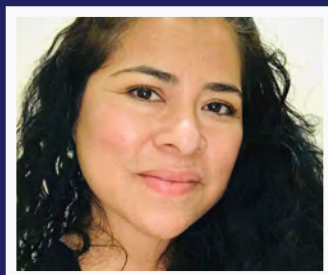
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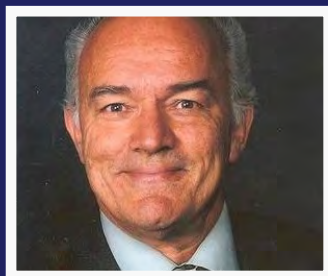
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Pam Dowling



Emeritus Trustee
Martin Forte

CHNews

August 2021

We hope you found our newsletter helpful and that it provided information and activities that are useful on your homeschooling journey, whether you are brand new or a seasoned pro.

California Homeschool Network is an all-volunteer organization of energetic and dedicated homeschooling families working to preserve educational freedom. CHN monitors and responds to legislation which may pose a threat to homeschooling. We also inform and empower homeschooling families, educate the public and foster community among home educators in the state of California.

Thank you,

California Homeschool Network

JOIN TODAY!



California Homeschool Network was founded in 1994 by a statewide group of homeschooling families. We are an inclusive group, which means we serve families from all religious and ethnic affiliations that practice all homeschooling styles.

Submissions & Advertising

To submit articles, curriculum reviews, homeschool information or for questions about content or advertising in upcoming issues of California Homeschool Network's quarterly newsletter, please contact our editor at editor@californiahomeschool.net

California Homeschool Network

Strengthening the Voice of California Homeschoolers™