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The IAHE is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1983 for the purpose of serving the Lord Jesus Christ by supporting and encouraging families interested in home education. We define home education as parent-directed, home-based, privately-funded discipleship.

Our primary functions are maintaining visibility as home educators with civil government leaders, influencing the legislative process, sponsoring seminars for parent education, and publishing The IAHE Informer, our quarterly magazine. The IAHE is made up of a volunteer board of directors and sixteen regional representative couples.

Our major source of income is our annual convention. With the growth of the home education movement, both our needs and responsibilities continue to grow, and we welcome your tax deductible contributions.

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“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

—Colossians 3:17, NIV

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IAHE Voices

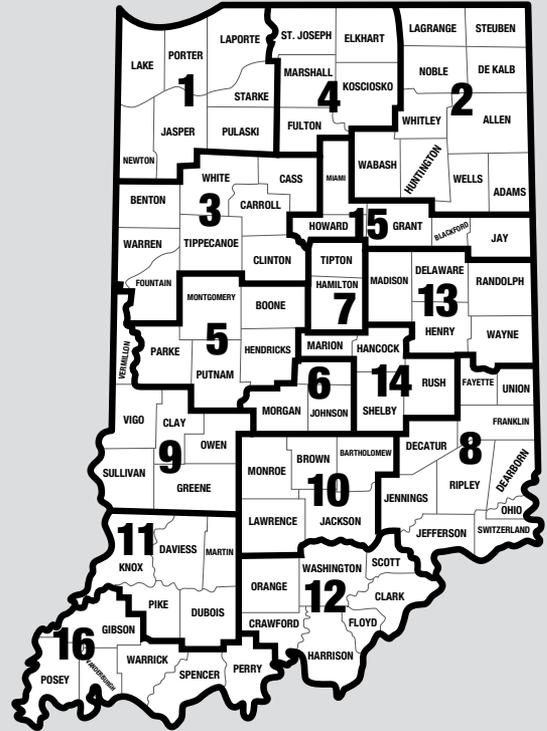
Technology. It's not a new word in the English language, but it certainly has new applications, and brings new challenges for Christians. 'Present but Absent' is the subtitle of this edition, and speaks to the draw of technology that can keep our minds and emotions distracted, rather than focused on the precious gifts—our children—that God has given us and instructed us to teach diligently.

Many of us, as home educators, are inspired to teach our children to know and love God, in addition to teaching academics at home. Doing this takes time – a great deal of time! Some of the authors in this issue challenge us to consider the distractions, especially media and electronic technology, which can keep us from being diligent in teaching our children.

Determine to focus your energy and attention on what is eternal. As God has spoken in Deuteronomy 6:4-7, talk about the principles and precepts of the Word of God throughout the day and encourage others to look for and see Biblical truths played out in the events of daily life.

Steve Taylor
IAHE Board President

Find Your Rep! IAHE Regional Map



Regional Representatives serve the homeschooling community throughout Indiana. Each representative is a veteran homeschooler who can help answer the questions of a family just starting out. They also communicate with the local support groups in the region and keep them up to date on changes in the law and activities throughout the state. You can contact your regional representative for information about spelling bees, sport clubs, book fairs, curriculum advice, workshops, standardized testing and convention information. They can also help you find a support group in your area, or if none is available, they'll help you start one.

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New Reps for Region 1!

Dennis and Tamra Wells live in Portage, Indiana, with their four children, Martin (15), Jonathan (13), Coleman (10), and Grace (8), and have been home educating since their oldest was born. Believing that parents are the best teachers, the Wells have a heart for home discipleship and are excited about the opportunity, as Region Reps, to assist families in their homeschool journey. Through the years, they have met with many people who have expressed interest in homeschooling and have enjoyed numerous opportunities to encourage families to take this important step in family discipleship.

Dennis is an elder in their church, where his duties include preaching, leading worship, and assisting the pastor in shepherding the body. In addition to her home education responsibilities, Tamra has been active in leading Bible studies for moms, doing one-on-one discipleship, and working with a homeschool co-op. She enjoys practicing hospitality both at home and within the church body. As a family, the Wells enjoy hiking, camping, beekeeping, and bicycling together.



New Reps for Region 10!

Greg and Kimberly Laskowski have three children, ranging in age from 4 to nearly 16. They decided to home educate shortly after their first child was born. The Laskowskis believe the most important part of home education is giving their children a love and desire to serve the Lord, know Him, and seek His wisdom each day. Next, they seek to give their children a love for learning. With these tools, the world becomes a classroom in which children can see the Creator's hand in every circumstance and thing that surrounds them.

They have educated in five states: Virginia, Hawaii, California, Michigan and Indiana. Greg is active duty Navy stationed at NSWC Crane and going on 19th year of active duty service. The Laskowskis have served in all the churches where they have lived in various lay & leadership areas. They have also served in several different home education support groups. Greg and Kimberly seek to help men and women in their God-given biblical roles and encourage others in their journey as home educators.



Not Evil, But Powerful

—Phillip Telfer



I had just finished teaching a group of young people about growing in discernment regarding their media choices when a father who was also in attendance approached me with a look of concern. “Phillip, this is a critical message that you are sharing, but you need to give it to the dads.” He went on to explain that he had recently attended a men’s retreat, and that eight guys had brought their Xbox’s with them in order to play their favorite video game together during their free time. I was shocked!

This was about six years ago, and in this quickly changing digital landscape, that is like calculating dog years in comparison. When I was child, the stereotypical dad was the man who got home from work and plopped in his recliner to veg out in front of the TV. Today he’s the dad glued to the laptop, the video game, his smart phone, or the TV.

As a dad myself, I can use all the advice I can get to help my family navigate safely past the many stumbling blocks to spiritual growth and family health. I want to make good use of today’s technology to benefit the kingdom of God and to strengthen my family. Let me share a few things I have learned which may be helpful.

Technology is Powerful

As men, we understand that more power can result in

greater benefits when it comes to power tools, but we also have to be aware of any necessary precautions. This applies to technology, as well. In the words of Neil Postman, “It is a mistake to suppose that any technological innovation has a one-sided effect. Every technology is both a burden and a blessing; not either-or, but this-and-that.”

He goes on to say, “We are currently surrounded by throngs of . . . one-eyed prophets who see only what new technologies can do and [are] incapable of imagining what they will undo. We might call such people Technophiles. They gaze on technology as a lover does on his beloved, seeing it as without blemish and entertaining no apprehension for the future.”

The technologies are not always the problem. The problem is in how we use them. If you were on a construction site, and you saw a man holding a hammer, you would think it appropriate. However, if you were meeting someone to talk, over a cup of coffee, and he continually stared at or fumbled with a hammer, you would think he was crazy. Unfortunately, it has become acceptable to tolerate similar inappropriate behavior, when it comes to Smartphones. We definitely have a problem and need some help.

Model Media Discernment

This first piece of advice might be the hardest hill

photo from sxc.hu by Sveres

to climb when it comes to providing leadership in your home. Before you can effectively mentor your children in wise media choices and use of technology, you must be a living example.

Demonstrate that the technology in your life is under your control, instead of you being under its spell. Show that you have a vision and direction for your elective time other than the common default of zoning out in front of a screen. Be willing to set aside your Smartphone for intentional periods of time in order to give attention to your family. Lead your family in a media fast, eliminating non-critical screen time, for a day, a weekend, a week, or even a month.

Mentor

The late preacher Matthew Henry once wrote, regarding child training, “The branch is easily bent when it is tender.” The younger a child is, the more easily influenced he is, like a flexible young branch of a tree. As children grow older, it is likely that the media appetites they developed in their early years will only grow larger and more rigid. If you have young children, your role of providing guidance in this area is much easier than if you wait until your children are older, when you are left to respond like a firefighter who is always putting out fires, rather than having taught them earlier to have a healthy respect for fire and how to handle it carefully.

The Scripture exhorts men to continually train their children. “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your

house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.” (Deuteronomy 6:6-7, NKJV) Unfortunately, this model of constant training has been replaced with a steady stream of electronic amusements. According to recent studies, the average teen consumes 7.5 hours of media per day.

Beyond Removal to Replacement

Don't just unplug the TV and Nintendo Wii. Instead, fill that time with things you have been neglecting. In addition to spending time in God's word and prayer, as a family, you could play a board game, go to the park, play Frisbee, work on a project together, or read a good book aloud. The possibilities are limitless.

Clean House

During your media fast, ask the Lord to help you to recognize whether or not you or others in the household have become desensitized to things you should be sensitive towards. Have you allowed any toxic media into your home that is poisoning the hearts and minds of your family?

If so, be humble and ready to do some deep cleaning.



Phillip Telfer is founder and director of *Media Talk 101*, a non-profit ministry dedicated to teaching media discernment in the light of following Christ. He also produced the award-winning documentary, *Captivated: Finding Freedom in a Media Captive Culture*.

Phillip and his wife, Mary, have been married for twenty-one years and homeschool their four children.

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Achieving a Technology Balance

Capturing the Benefits and Avoiding the Pitfalls

by Debbie Spence



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The world today is literally at our fingertips. If it exists, we have access to it through our computers, tablets, phones, and e-readers. For the home educator, this can transform lives. Any subject and any information is available anytime. Gone are the days of having to load the children into the van and head to the library to gather information. A trip to the library is not always necessary to obtain books, as many are now easily downloaded to e-readers. School subjects, too, are available for downloading, and entire course loads can be accessed by computer. The new craze, Pinterest, provides limitless ideas in its education category. The days of laborious research and piles of school materials are behind us.

While the homeschooling mom's life is indeed a busy one, the new challenge is not finding resources and information. The challenge is using the available tools wisely and modeling appropriate use to our children. How can we achieve a proper balance?

True, some technology can make life easier and more efficient when used as a tool in the midst of a balanced life. For instance, CD-ROM math programs that teach the subject and check a student's work can be not only time savers but dreams come true. Sometimes a text message can connect moms with each other quickly without them getting

caught in a schedule-derailing conversation. A phone that holds class schedules, reminders, emails, texts, Internet accessibility, and countless apps may help keep a mom on track, on time, and quickly informed.

But there are thorns in this rose garden. Greater technology has given us ease and access beyond what moms could have ever imagined just a few years ago, but there are dangers lurking about. Perhaps the Surgeon General should attach a warning label to all electronic devices stating: Warning – use of this device has been proven to cause “technology-idleness.”

Idleness is time spent doing nothing, yet we are all created for a purpose. If a farmer does nothing in the spring, there will be no crop, no harvest in the fall. The question is, will we be found faithful? When the master returns, as in the parable of the talents found in Matt 25:14-30, will we be found idle and without increase? The Lord expects us to be responsible with what He has entrusted to us. Since our time is one of the greatest gifts He has entrusted to us, we must be careful how we spend it.

If you have ever wondered if you have an addictive tendency, just start a Facebook page, or even take a peek at Pinterest. Facebook has enticed countless people to waste valuable time posting humorous photos, updating

their statuses, and sharing YouTube videos and songs. So much time can be spent adding “friends” that little time is left for developing and investing in true relationships. It’s a mistake to believe that Facebook friends can substitute for face-to-face relationships or fulfill all our needs for fellowship. Future generations could be in danger of isolation or find themselves lacking interpersonal communication skills. Pinterest, an online bulletin board of ideas, can be a Pandora’s Box. Once you open it, you may never close it. Before you know it, hours, even days, may have been wasted.

Texting, like Facebook, can be highly addictive. All of us have seen that person walking through life, transfixed by his phone screen as he texts. Worse yet, many of us have been that person. Not only do we need to disconnect from the phone screen to enjoy the view, but we need to realize that the view includes countless people who need to be noticed, who need to be loved, and who need Jesus.

School courses available on DVD and CD-ROM are incredibly helpful, but still we must guard against depending so heavily on them that we lose the “home” school connection with our children. We must remember why our children are at home. Is it strictly for educational purposes, or is it so that we can spend quality, valuable, irreplaceable time with our children, training them in godliness and righteousness? If we choose to use technology in home education, interspersing it with one-on-one time or family instruction will help preserve our precious relationships.

Our society has reached a new frontier. This generation of young people has not known life without technology. What are the consequences of this? Is this technology helping or harming our families?

It is vital that we learn to use the tools available to us for our benefit without allowing them to control our lives. “Technology-idleness” is a rampant and dangerous threat to our families. The control that technology can have over our lives can blur our focus, deter us from our goals, and

even drown out the voice of God and cripple our ability to fulfill His purposes for our lives.

Start by determining God’s purposes for your family and the reasons you homeschool. When using technology, evaluate how it will help you achieve these purposes and goals. Will it help or hinder what you are trying to achieve? If it will assist you, then set guidelines for its use. Keep track of the daily cumulative time spent using technology. Try using a timer to set limits for yourself and your family, and help each other to be accountable to agreed-upon family rules for electronic device use.

The technology available today can be a great tool; but “technology-idleness” can be its snare. So use technology wisely; do not let it use you.



Texting, like **FACEBOOK,** *can be highly* *addictive.*



Debbie Spence and her husband, Steve, have been married twenty-nine years. The five Spence children range in age from a married son down to their eleven-year-old twin daughters. Debbie has been homeschooling seventeen years. She serves as the director of women’s ministry at Grace Community Church in Kokomo, Indiana, and seeks to encourage busy moms with her blog, “Time Out for Tea and Tidbits.” Visit her blog at www.debbiespence.wordpress.com.

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MAKING WISE TECHNOLOGY CHOICES

—by Greg Fowl

Fundamentally, technology is just a tool to accomplish a task. So the first question to ask when making any decision to purchase technology is, “What is the intended purpose for the purchase?” For example, if I need a laptop for portability, and my intended uses are to take notes in class, surf the Internet, and use email, then the tool I purchase can be a relatively low-end investment. Far too often, people buy \$1,000 laptops to use for tasks that a \$350 laptop could perform just as well. Another consideration when deciding how much to spend is replacement cost. Having a mid-range laptop stolen or broken wouldn’t be as painful a loss as having that \$2,000 MacBook Pro go missing.

Once the decision is made to purchase technology, as with any purchase, the potential for its misuse must be considered also. For example, after purchasing a firearm, a person shouldn’t leave it lying around loaded where any child could pick it up and accidentally discharge it. No, a wise person secures the firearm, sometimes even locking it in a safe, or takes other measures to secure it. Technology is like a firearm; it can be used for many good purposes, but it can also be used for illicit purposes. Safety with technology is as important as safety with firearms. Therefore, prudence dictates that we put safeguards in place

with any technology we use.

If you own any Internet enabled device, it is wise to have accountability with someone, like parents or a spouse, for its use. One way to do this is to install “accountability” software on your computer or Smartphone. Covenant Eyes (www.covenanteyes.com) is one of the best products of this type on the market. Basically, it works by logging all of your Internet browsing activity and sending it to your accountability partner, with questionable content highlighted for particular review. We all need accountability in our lives, and in light of the temptations that can come with the Internet, this is a prudent step to take to bring some discipline to our browsing habits.

One of the ways young people can honor their parents is by voluntarily and proactively making themselves accountable to them. An additional measure for increased accountability is to give all passwords to parents or to a spouse. Many Christians do this to add that extra layer of transparency that is essential in close relationships. Scripture does not speak specifically of using accountability software or giving up “private” access to Facebook and email, but the Apostle Paul’s exhortation to “flee fornication” (I Corinthians 6:18) is an example of one passage, among many, that emphasizes God’s standard

“One of the ways young people can honor their parents is by voluntarily and proactively making themselves accountable to them.”

for purity that transcends both time and culture to apply in our current age of technology.

Now, a person may think, “I’m strong, and I don’t need any accountability.” But this is a sure sign that accountability is exactly what is needed. Consider the following statistics: 67% of children admit to clearing their Internet history to hide their online activity; 56% of divorce cases involve one party having an obsessive interest in online porn; and 29% of working adults accessed explicit websites on work computers. Is there anyone who is so strong that he is not susceptible to temptation? Remember that God tells us that “pride goeth before destruction” (Proverbs 16:18, KJV).

So, as you make your technology decisions, don’t make them in a vacuum. Take time to consider how this powerful

and helpful tool can be misused and can even bring about destruction, just as a firearm can. Remember that the need for accountability extends, beyond the children in a family, to mom and dad, as well. Just as families lock their doors at night to protect from unwanted intruders, every family needs to have a plan in place to protect the family from what comes into the home via technology.



Greg Fowl, husband to Kathleen, father to four, and grandfather to two, is passionate about multigenerational discipleship. Greg and Kathleen have graduated all of their children from homeschooling. They served as IAHE Regional Representatives for 11 years and now serve on the IAHE Board.

Each year between four and five percent of our incoming freshmen come to us from homeschooling. Each student has unique reasons for choosing IWU, but everyone who joins our family learns from a committed Christian faculty, who reinforce the vibrant spiritual atmosphere on campus through daily investing in the academic, faith and social lives of our students.

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—by *Lisa Heady*

A few weeks ago I accompanied my son to an orientation program at his university. The day was arranged to complete the registration process for the fall semester, and as such, one of the tasks was to sign up for classes. The students were given a file containing a list of required courses and electives from which to build his or her fall semester schedule. Then, each student was seated in front of a notebook computer and instructed to log in to the system, to search for the desired courses and sections, and to register for classes. It was interesting to watch the comfort with which most students completed the process. A majority were adept at navigating through the registration website; however, there were some who were clearly unprepared for the experience. A university official patiently guided one young woman near us; yet this kind of guidance was an exception, not the rule. Further, the need for so much assistance was obviously a source of embarrassment and anxiety to the student.

Familiarity with computers, tablets, cell phones, and iPods is the new norm for students today, which presents parents with the conundrum of what, when, and how much technology to introduce to their children. We all know the danger of too much too soon, but when is the right time to introduce technology? And just how much

savvy do our children need?

The answer to when to introduce technology, in my mind, is inexorably tied to two questions. The first is, “Is it necessary?” At age fourteen, our son took a job at a local perennial nursery, riding his bike the four miles of country roads between our home and the nursery. We provided a cell phone for his safety in case of an accident, a flat tire or inclement weather. We wanted our children to view technology as a set of tools meant to accomplish a task, not as toys with which to amuse themselves.

The second question we have asked ourselves is, “Is it helpful?” Technology definitely came into play at our home as our children entered the teen years. Participation in speech and debate necessitated computer usage. Online research was invaluable as our children prepared their debate cases, and familiarity with word processing programs came quickly and easily as they wrote speeches. Additionally, broadband Internet opened the door to the availability of challenging online classes, which have augmented our children’s high school experience as well as provided advanced credits for college.

Technology is here to stay, and parents have the responsibility to introduce their children to it. While we would all wish for a definitive answer to the question of

photos from sxc.hu by Nota, hortongrou, meddliz

how to manage technology in our families, in reality, the answer will vary for each family. Further, it might even vary for each child in the family. However, three guiding principles are valuable to consider when making decisions about the use of technology: presence, participation, and protection.

Children need our presence in their lives as they delve into the world of technology. Electronic communication tends to de-humanize relationships, interfering with the real, significant interaction and exchange of ideas and feelings. Parents need to be available to discuss issues, to teach principles, and to be a source of opportunities for real life interaction. We need to be present in order to monitor our children's social and spiritual state of mind and heart. Is your teen spending too much time on Facebook? Is he withdrawing from people, preferring to spend his time playing a game on his iPod? Do you see her texting her friends continually? It's time to invite a group of friends to your home and plan an interactive activity. Keep your children plugged-in to opportunities to serve, to talk, to listen, to learn, to worship, and to play with real people. Be an ever-present reminder of the importance of connecting and communicating face-to-face with others.

Participate with your children in their technological adventures.

- Buy a Y-adapter and listen together to your teen's iPod.
- Share podcasts/messages. I use OnePlace (www.oneplace.com) and ministry websites to find messages by gifted speakers to share as we travel in the car.
- Try out the apps you purchased for your children. The Apps School (www.apps-school.com), founded by Terri Johnson of Knowledge Quest, can help you sort through the nearly 15,000 educational apps available in the iTunes Store to discover which ones are worthy of your time.
- Discover the amazing functionality of your computer by learning together with your children. Consider computer literacy another area of your core curricula. Help them to learn basic computer commands, how to navigate the Internet, how to find credible articles for research, and how to use common software programs.
- Be a part of your teen's social network.

Protect your children as they venture into the world of technology. Learning to live with and manage technology requires teaching, attention to behavior, admonishing, and commending. There is a dark side to technology that must be acknowledged and avoided, and a system of accountability will help to guard hearts and minds. Set boundaries for when, where, and to what extent technology and media will be present in your children's lives. Investigate Internet filtering programs that serve to limit the available content accessed in your home (e.g., www.covenanteyes.com). Carefully consider these issues and develop a set of clear standards for your family. We found it helpful to set the rules ahead of time by providing a written contract for our children concerning computer/cell phone/iPod usage, which we read and discussed with them before they accepted the responsibility of owning and/or using these items. A careful explanation of limitations and boundaries helped them to understand our motive: to allow them to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by technology without becoming spiritually sidetracked.

Finally, set a good personal example for the use of technology. Show yourself to be self-controlled and accountable. Be present, participate, and protect your children as they use technology. Expect that they will make mistakes and will probably be tempted to overindulge. Lead them to develop a healthy respect for and a balance in the use of technology. Pray, asking the Lord to give each of your children a discerning heart and the wisdom to make the right choices. In these ways your children will learn to master technology, rather than being enslaved by it.

The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

—Galatians 5:22-23, NIV



Lisa Heady began homeschooling her oldest daughter when CD players first hit the market and home movies were recorded with a 10-pound camcorder. Since then, Lisa and her husband, Tom, have added 5 more children to the Heady homeschool and serve as IAHE Regional Representatives for Region 14. She enjoys writing, serving in her church's music ministry, and savoring every moment of life in the Blue River Ridge Homeschool Academy.

TECHNOLOGY: *To Use Or Not To Use*

Guidelines for Integrating Technology into Your School

—by *Shawn Canaday*

Technology is defined as “The application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes.” Technology permeates every aspect of our lives today. As home educators, it is good for us to evaluate how technology can help facilitate what our families are trying to accomplish. We also need to guard against technology taking us away from our goals and ambitions. While the word “technology” refers to many different things, the technologies of the Internet and computers are the focus of this article.

It is important to give our children some fundamental skills before they try to utilize the Internet and computers. First, a biblical foundation will help them to discern the value of what they are learning on the Internet and to wade through unprofitable information. Second, our children should be taught how to learn before we allow them to use the Internet to learn a subject or skill. Third, we need to teach them how to research. While research skills are a challenge to teach, it is imperative that we find ways to teach our children this necessary discipline. With these fundamental skills, they will be able to use the Internet and a computer to learn anything they desire.

If you do a lot of research online, you may find it helpful to learn the search syntax of your favorite search engine.

Each search engine has its own “language.” Knowing how to “speak” to the computer will enable you to obtain your desired results more efficiently. You can learn about the search engine syntax by utilizing “Search Help” or “Advanced Search” on most search engines.

Let’s look at a couple of scenarios to help us discern when it is and isn’t advantageous to use technology. Consider a calculator, for an example. If you give a child a calculator while he is learning basic math facts, he has a good chance of becoming dependent on the calculator to do simple math. On the other hand, if you give him a calculator when he is doing complex algebra formulas after he has already memorized the math facts, then you introduce efficiencies with the technology. This lets him focus on the skills that algebra teaches and speeds up the simple math, while usually not negatively affecting basic math skills.

A computer is a great tool for studying, but we must take the principle of the calculator into consideration when using the computer for learning. We must understand the concepts and processes of a topic without relying on the computer’s automation of a concept. It is all too easy to count on the computer to do all of the work. I recently heard a story of a college student who used a computer to

“As home educators, we are striving to raise well-educated children...”

do some scientific exercises. When it came time to take the test, which required him to show his understanding of the information, he realized he didn't really understand the concepts because the computer did all of the work during his studies. In my work, I commonly see business professionals who know how to use the software that runs their businesses, but they don't know how to run their businesses without the software.

Computers can certainly enhance our lives by helping us efficiently categorize information; manage our finances; communicate with friends over long distances via email, voice, and video; and leverage the knowledge of others to solve problems. However, all of these tasks are only made possible by the previous input of someone else's knowledge to the computer. If we forget how to do something because we rely on a computer to do it for us, at some point we will neither be able to tell the computer what to do nor be able to do it for ourselves.

As we try to discern when to use technology, we must also understand the dangers associated with the tool. Like many tools, when respected and handled with care, technology can yield great results. However,

if handled poorly, it can place a large burden on the user and potentially cause great harm. As parents, we need to exercise extreme caution and know where our children are in their understanding and maturity as we introduce them to computers and the Internet.

As home educators, we are striving to raise well-educated children, who, as adults, will be able to be good stewards in God's Kingdom. This will require our children to be knowledgeable regarding the work that God has called them to accomplish. Part of their necessary preparation includes learning when and how to wisely use technology in the fulfillment of God's plan for them. As parents, it is our job to pave the way for them to be able to do their best for God's glory.



Shawn Canaday has been in the software industry for seventeen years. He and his devoted wife, Amy, have been homeschooling their four children for six years. Shawn is passionate about technology, woodworking, firearms, and understanding the Constitution.

He strives to develop a multi-generational vision and help fathers lead their families in the way of the Lord. Shawn can be reached at homeschool@canadaycrew.net.



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How to Miss a CHILDHOOD

—by Rachel Macy Stafford

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By sharing my own painful truths when it comes to the distractions of the modern age, I have gained an unexpected insight. In the 18 months this blog has existed, I have been privy to a new distraction confession every single day.

Up until now, I never knew what to do with this unusual collection of painful admissions from an overly connected society. But today, in a moment of clarity, I knew. And a woman with 35 years experience as a day care provider held the key.

It came as a message in my inbox after the woman read my post “The Children Have Spoken” which included heart-breaking observations from children themselves about their parents’ excessive phone use.

As soon as I read the first sentence of the caregiver’s email, I knew this message was different than any I had ever received. The hairs on my arms stood up as I absorbed each word that came uncomfortably close to home.

It was a voice of heartache, wisdom, and urgency, speaking directly the parents of the 21st century:

“I can recall a time when you were out with your children [that] you were really with them. You engaged in a back and forth dialog even if they were pre-verbal. You said, ‘Look at the bus, see the doggie, etc.’ Now I see

you on the phone, pushing your kids on the swings while distracted by your devices. You think you are spending time with them, but you are not present really. When I see you pick up your kids at day care while you’re on the phone, it breaks my heart. They hear your adult conversations. What do they overhear? What is the message they receive? ‘I am not important; I am not important.’”

In a 100-word paragraph this concerned woman who has cared for babies since 1977 revealed a disturbing recipe...How to Miss a Childhood.

And because I possess hundreds of distraction confessions, including stories from my own former, highly distracted life, I have all the damaging ingredients.

All it takes is one child and one phone, and this tragic recipe can be yours.

How to Miss a Childhood

- Keep your phone turned on at all times of the day. Allow the rings, beeps, and buzzes to interrupt your child mid-sentence; always let the caller take priority.
- Carry your phone around so much that when you happen to leave it in one room your child will come running with it proudly in hand—treating it more like a much needed breathing apparatus than a communication device.
- Decide the app you’re playing is more important than

photo by Kim Earl

throwing the ball in the yard with your kids. Even better, yell at them to leave you alone while you play your game.

- Take your children to the zoo and spend so much time on your phone that your child looks longingly at the mother who is engaged with her children and wishes she was with her instead.

- While you wait for the server to bring your food or the movie to start, get out your phone and stare at it despite the fact your child sits inches away, longing for you talk to him.

- Go to your child's sporting event and look up periodically from your phone, thinking she won't notice that you are not fully focused on her game.

- Check your phone first thing in the morning...even before you kiss, hug, or greet the people in your family.

- Neglect daily rituals like tucking your child into bed or nightly dinner conversation because you are too busy with your online activity.

- Don't look up from your phone when your child speaks to you, or just reply with an "uh-huh" so she thinks you were listening.

- Lose your temper with your child when he "bothers" you while you are interacting with your hand-held electronic device.

- Give an exasperated sigh when your child asks you to push her on the swing. Can't she see you're busy?

- Use drive time to call other people regardless of the fact you could be talking to your kids about their day—or about their worries, their fears, or their dreams.

- Read email and text messages at stoplights. Then tell yourself that when your kids are old enough to drive they won't remember you did this all the time.

- Have the phone to your ear when she gets in or out of the car. Convince yourself a loving hello or goodbye is highly overrated.

Follow this recipe and you will have:

- Missed opportunities for human connection
- Fewer chances to create beautiful memories
- Lack of connection to the people most precious to you
- Inability to really know your children and them unable to know you

— Overwhelming regret

If you find this recipe difficult to read—if you find that you have tears in your eyes, I thank you, and your child thanks you.

It is not easy to consider the possibility that the distractions of the modern age have taken an undeserved priority over the people who matter in your life. In fact, when I admitted this difficult truth to myself almost two years ago, I experienced an emotional breakdown. However, that breakdown became a breakthrough that propelled me to begin my life-changing "Hands Free" journey.

Here's the thing: You don't have to follow the above recipe. Yes, it is the 21st century. Yes, the whole world is online. Yes, the communications for your job are important. Yes, at times you must be readily available. But despite all those factors, you do not have to sacrifice your child's childhood; nor do you have to sacrifice your life.

May I recommend this recipe instead?

How to Grasp a Childhood

- Look into her eyes when she speaks to you. Your uninterrupted gaze is love to your child.

- Take time to be with him—really be with him by giving your full attention. The gift of your total presence is love to your child.

- Hold his hand, rub her back, and smooth his hair. Your gentle touch is love to your child.

- Greet her like you missed her when she was not in your presence. Seeing your face light up when you see her is love to your child.

- Play with him. Your involvement in his activities is love to your child.

- Set an example of being distraction-free while driving. Positive role modeling behind the wheel is love (and safety) to your child.

- Create a distraction-free daily ritual. Consistently making him a priority each day is love to your child.

- Talk to him. Ask him about his day. Listening to what he has to say is love to your child.

- Focus and smile at her from the stands or the audience. Seeing the joy on your face as you watch is love to your child.

(continued on page 19)



Families & Churches

—by Aaron Scheffler
Executive Director of Mark 2 Ministries

God loves people with disabilities! When they are fully accepted and integrated into the Christian community, everyone involved is blessed in one way or another. Just what does it look like to integrate people with disabilities into our churches? Where do we begin to reach out to them with the Lord's love?

Ministry Basics

The place to start in the process of creating a ministry for people affected by disability is always prayer. Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit for direction in the scope of the ministry and for those who will be involved. There are various paths that a disability ministry can take. Led by the Holy Spirit, the inclusion of people with disabilities may look different in each local church, depending on each congregation's specific needs and opportunities.

All of their lives (or for as long as they have had a disability), people who have a disability have been told what's wrong with them, what they can't do, and how they need to change to fit into "our" world. This is a myth that society places on the entire disability community, and it needs to be dispelled. People with disabilities need to know

that the Lord doesn't label people as "disabled" or "normal." And they need to know that the Lord loves them as they are, disability and all. People with disabilities have gifts and talents that should be discovered, nurtured and used for the Kingdom. Families affected by disability don't always need to be served; they should also be given the opportunity to serve.

Types of Ministry

As I mentioned, there are several different paths that a disability ministry can take. Two of the more common paths that disability ministry leadership teams have followed are Sunday Morning Inclusion and Respite Care.

The Sunday Morning Inclusion model describes a paradigm of ministry. This model incorporates a person with a disability at his or her optimal level of integration within

the everyday life and service of the church. If a child or adult grows and develops well on his or her own in a Sunday School room with his or her peers, then that's where he or she should be. If the person has difficulty in this setting, then a helper or "Buddy" should be placed with him in the typical Sunday School room to help with things like

People with disabilities need to know that the Lord doesn't label people as "disabled" or "normal."

The last choice would be what is called a Self-Contained Classroom – where friends with disabilities are assigned to a classroom of their own.

The impact of this ministry is **PROFOUND.**

redirection and curriculum modification. The last choice would be what is called a Self-Contained Classroom – where friends with disabilities are assigned to a classroom of their own.

The impact of this ministry is profound. Parents and caregivers are warmly received and given the opportunity to worship in the corporate body. The friend with a disability experiences the same, as well as being given the opportunity to learn about Christ and to serve others. The heart of the church grows as each member learns to love and care for these precious families. And the world sees the hands and feet of Christ changing lives.

Respite Care is a ministry designed to offer support and rest for parents and caregivers. As one can imagine, parents of children with disabilities cannot simply hire the average teenager to babysit their children – the needs are far too great. Parents typically get no break to recharge and rejuvenate. This is where Respite Care comes in. Parents are invited to bring their children to the church where specially trained volunteers love on and care for their children while the parents get that much-needed break. This is one of the best parts of my job – playing with children, teaching them about Jesus, and blessing the parents in the process! I love hearing stories from parents when they return. Respite Care can give parents a chance to reconnect as husband and wife. It also offers them a chance to take a nap, go to the grocery, or simply read a book – things we often take for granted. It's a true blessing!

Main Focus

The goal of any ministry is to open people's eyes to God. God loves people with disabilities. They were created in His image and for His glory – just like people without a disability. All of God's creatures should be treated with kindness and respect. Sharing the same love and mercy

that God shows to us with people with disabilities will immeasurably bless you, the families you serve, and your church. Glory to God!



Aaron Scheffler works as the Executive Director for Mark 2 Ministries, an organization that works with churches around the globe to equip them to be able to show Jesus' love to people with disabilities and to integrate these same people into their congregations. He is a lifelong learner in the areas of Scripture, business, leadership, disability, and education. Aaron is a native of the north side of Indianapolis. Having grown up in Fishers, he now lives in Carmel with his wife, Debra, where he enjoys cycling and reading in his spare time.



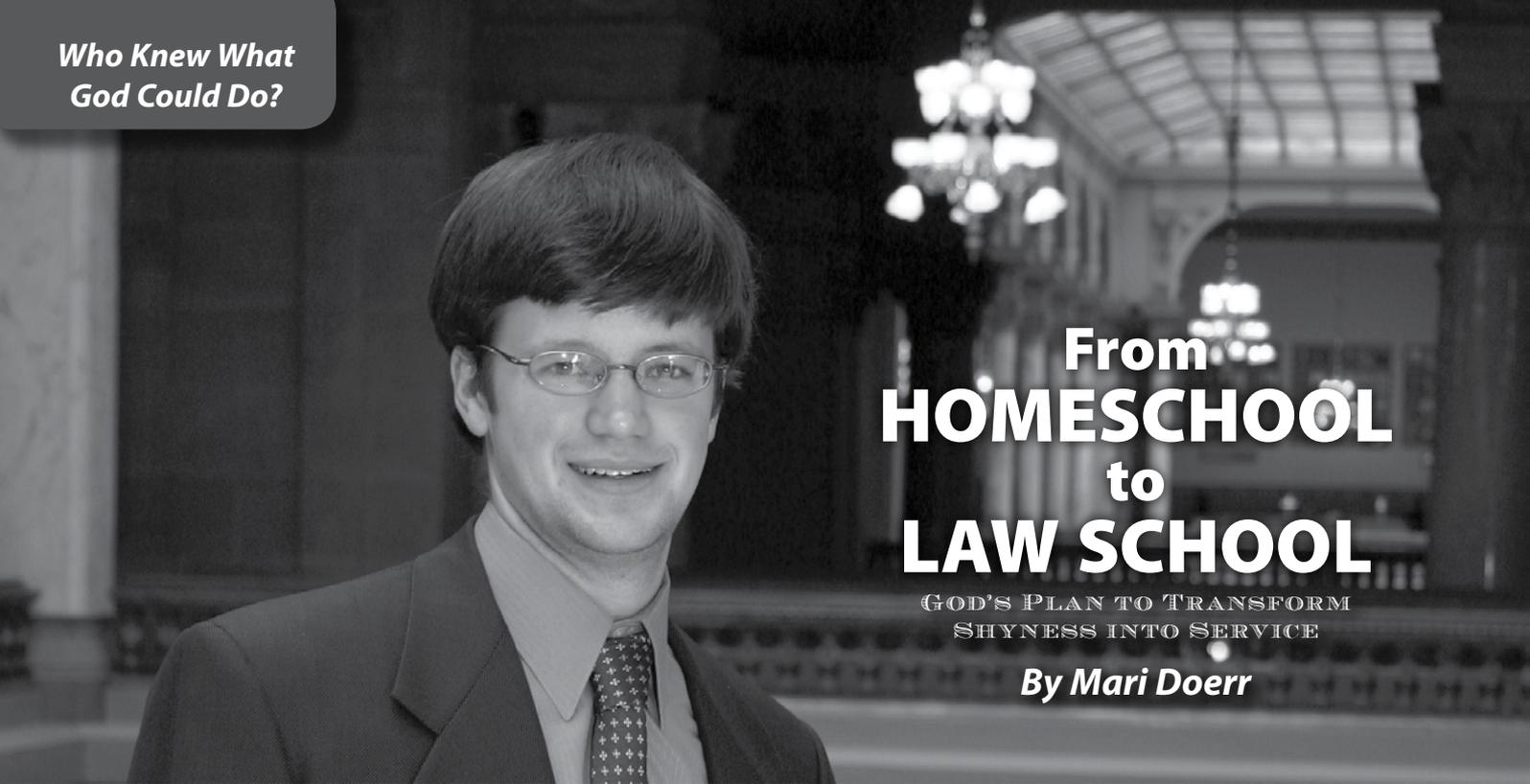
(continued from page 17, How to Miss a Childhood)

The recipe for “How to Grasp a Childhood” requires only one thing: You must put down your phone. Whether it is for ten minutes, two hours, or an entire Saturday, beautiful human connection, memory making, and parent-child bonding can occur every single time you let go of distraction to grasp what really matters.

The beautiful, life-changing results of your “Hands Free” action can start today...right now...the moment you put down the phone.

You can follow this Hands Free Mama and her revolutionary approach to letting go and living life by joining “The Hands Free Revolution” on Facebook or through her blog at www.handsfreemama.com. This article was originally published on her blog in May 2012 and in Homeschool Iowa's publication, Summer 2012.





From HOMESCHOOL to LAW SCHOOL

GOD'S PLAN TO TRANSFORM
SHYNESS INTO SERVICE

By Mari Doerr

This is the tale of a very shy boy who busted the myth of socialization by God's transforming power in his life. As a mother, I often was concerned about our son Adam's fear of meeting people, and wondered if and when he would overcome this. My husband and I hope that by sharing the story of how God worked in Adam's life, we can encourage parents of shy children to trust the Lord and patiently guide these children to the future of service the Lord has in store for them.

At church one Sunday morning, when Adam was under the age of five, one of the deacons, Mr. Smith, greeted him with a "Hi, Adam." Adam promptly turned his back and hid behind Mom. This scene repeated itself many times during those early years. As parents, we would coach him, role-play with him, and encourage him to respond positively to people who greeted him, especially adults. He made steady progress, but didn't convey a sense of being comfortable in social situations until many years later. At the time he turned five he went through a period where he often would come to tears at the prospect of being away from Mom.

As a result of praying and researching, we made the decision to home educate him and realized that choice put us in the best position to, with the Lord's help, help him

overcome his shyness and reluctance to be away from Mom. During the years from age five until eighteen, Adam grew slowly in social skills and reached the point where he was somewhat comfortable around people.

The Lord opened Adam's heart to the gospel at a young age, and he responded by trusting Christ as his Savior. During his school years, Adam continued to grow spiritually, academically, and socially. We joined a homeschool support group to meet fellow homeschool families, and join them for field trips and special projects. Adam also participated in 4-H, and in high school he competed in Speech and Debate and played on the local homeschool basketball team. Adam served faithfully at church and attended retreats with other youth. He remembers his first high school winter youth conference as a very awkward time because he didn't know the other attendees who came from other churches around the state. With the help of another more outgoing young person from our own church, however, Adam made some acquaintances and his friend-making skills began to develop.

As Adam matured, he learned leadership skills by serving as an officer in his local 4-H club. He also became interested in politics and served as a page at the Legislature where he learned about the internship program for college

“O, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together.”

-Psalm 34:3, KJV

students. He told me “Mom, I want to serve as an intern when I go to college!” After completing an intense high school curriculum, he graduated in the spring of 2005.

During the college search process, we looked at several schools which had strong Christian liberal Arts programs. Although, Adam received excellent grades and had a strong score on his SAT, and applied for many scholarships, the private college option proved financially elusive. Another option on the list was the Big 10 University in our own backyard. While going to Purdue University to get a degree in engineering made sense, we had questions about the idea of going to Purdue for a liberal arts degree.

However, we also realized that attending Purdue offered the advantage of making it possible for Adam to live at home and continue to be very actively involved in his home church.

As the deadline approached for Adam to make his college choice, we decided to meet personally with a Purdue faculty member in the department Adam was most interested in: History. In the process of setting-up that meeting, Adam had the opportunity to attend a department seminar that week featuring Purdue history graduate and Indiana Supreme Court Justice Brent Dickson. He met Justice Dickson personally, talked with the history department head, and also got an exciting new perspective from the meeting with the faculty member about the quality of the history department and the benefits of studying history at a major research institution where faculty are expected to be actively researching in their field.

Adam opted for Purdue and prepared to start classes in the fall of 2005. During the summer he embarked on his first trip away from home to attend an intensive training program called Theological Foundations for Youth in Pittsburgh, Pa. This three-week program with other high school students from around the country gave Adam another opportunity to work on making friends. Again, he was out

of his comfort zone with people he didn't know. But with the Lord's help, he began to open up.

At the end of that summer, he headed off on the two-mile trek from our home to campus for the first day of classes. As the days and weeks ensued, I often wondered how he would do. I thought about how large Purdue is, how easy it is for kids to feel lost and like they are just a “number” to the faculty. I realized later, that my worries were needless. Adam grew and thrived at Purdue, the secular school that I really had not wanted him to attend.

Adam had wonderful opportunities to honor God as he completed assignments and participated in class. During his freshman year, he took a history course that included a spring break trip to Germany and Greece. His project was a paper on the historic cathedrals in Germany and Greece. Between his freshman and sophomore years, he applied for a scholarship where he answered the question, “Write a press release about something you accomplish in your career, as if it is 25 years from now.” Adam wrote about how he “argued successfully before the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn Roe v. Wade.”



A dream for Adam was to participate in a study abroad program, and that dream came true during his junior year when he headed to Sweden for the spring semester. Adam was excited but also trepidatious. He wondered how he would do trying to make friends on an extended stay in another country overseas. He had never been away from home for more than

(continued on page 24)

Where I Am Now: Thankful for Time Spent in My Parents Armor-Building Shop

— by *Levi Messer*



A About two and a half years ago I traveled over 700 miles from my home in Francesville, Indiana, to Kansas State University, beginning my official preparation toward joining the professional workforce. Of course, relocating to a college town of over 50,000 people located 12 hours away from your own hometown (population 1,000) can be a challenge for any 18 year-old. And to be honest, it was a challenge for me. I found myself face-to-face with new challenges that tested how well I was prepared academically, socially, and spiritually. For the first time in my life I was truly independent of my parents' physical presence and guidance. Yet, I quickly discovered that their words, prayers, and teaching were alive in my heart, and they continued to guide me even though we were apart. Further, I realized that their guidance had so much power because it pointed me to Jesus.

The first challenge I faced at Kansas State University was an academic one. I found myself in classrooms with professors who lectured on course material, assigned reading and projects, and expected that I would do the work to learn the material. The ownership of how much I learned was on my shoulders – as well as the responsibility to seek help if I needed it. Many in my classes struggled with this because they had been used to being spoon-fed by

their high school teachers. One advantage that being home educated has given me over the customary college student is that I learned how to study independently before going to college. I was able to teach myself how to study on my own through the challenging style my parents employed to teach me and my sister.

Yet, even the ability to study independently did not keep me from having to work hard to learn to manage my time effectively. College life demands hard work, but it also comes with the opportunity to participate in a large variety of non-academic pursuits. I had to determine that the reason I was at school was to obtain the unique skills necessary to become a professional in today's marketplace. With that end in mind, the majority of my time at college has been focused on schoolwork. Hanging out with friends, physical exercise, and even video games are activities that I have learned to delegate to the "when I have time" area of my schedule. Often homework and assignments pile up on the same day or week, and the free time I thought I had fades in the supersonic pace I have to go to complete all the assigned class work. Sometimes the evil of procrastination has raised its head and charmed me until the night before assignments are due. Then, I have found myself scrambling to complete three projects that could have been done weeks

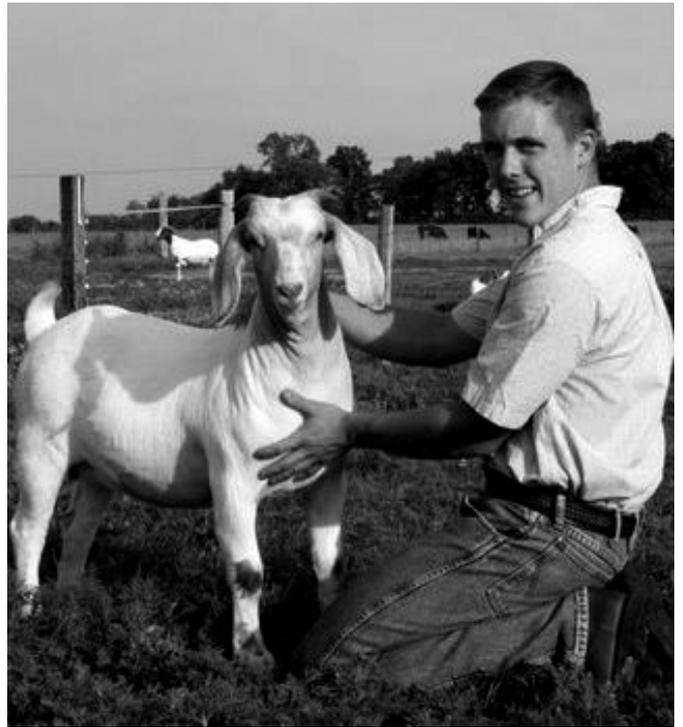
photos by Levi Messer

ago. I quickly learned that one of the best tactics a college student could employ was to use any available spare time to work ahead, because spare time is rarely there at the last minute.

Life at college has provided some social challenges as well. While spending time with a group of friends this semester, I casually mentioned that I was homeschooled. The room echoed as four of them repeated in disbelief, “You were homeschooled?” I often encounter fellow students and professors who expect homeschooled students to fit the stereotype of being backward and socially inadequate. I guess that’s why I confuse people. I do not fit their preconceived notions about home education, and I hope that I always confound them.

Perhaps the most important challenge of college life has been a spiritual one. Being 700 miles away from my parents, I could have done almost anything I wanted without them knowing about it. The fact is that I actually did do the things I wanted. The things I wanted to do were only those things that I knew were right because of the solid foundation my parents have given me in my Christian beliefs. But it is not only my parents teaching that keeps my heart and life in check. Rather, the only force that has a real effect on my behavior is my personal relationship with Jesus Christ Himself. Without that relationship, little of the training I received from my parents would have been remembered. Reading the Bible, going to a Bible-believing, Bible-teaching church every Sunday, finding Christian friends who encourage my walk with God, and maintaining a steady realization that my job is to reach those around me for God have kept my faith grounded while living away from my family in a new and challenging environment.

The challenges of living on a secular campus sometimes pave the way for incredible spiritual opportunities. In particular, the vocal and hardcore evolution-spewing assault on true science espoused by a particular professor led several students in one of my classes to form what we call The Creation Club. The purpose of the club is to encourage and



support students, particularly freshmen, who are enduring a frontal attack on their views about creation. We maintain a free-flowing conversation with anyone who is interested in the subject of the creation vs. evolution debate. A typical meeting includes watching a film in support of either creation or evolution and occasionally a film debating the two views. A discussion follows based on the material in the film and the ideas the viewer had about

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

—Ephesians 6:10-11, KJV

it. Last year our club was able to do even more. We sought and obtained permission from university officials to invite a creationist to campus for a speaking engagement. Georgia Purdom, a speaker from Answers in Genesis, came and delivered a free presentation that was advertised campus wide.

The primary reason I am attending college is to prepare myself for my future professional career. While following God's will does not mean that every student should pursue university studies, it is a necessary step in my career preparation. My career choice demands that I become an adept communicator in all forms of media. Photography training, countless writing assignments, and computer programming classes will help make that plan a reality. Also, a university degree in my field of study is a career advancer and salary builder. This is a key component to my plan to provide well for my future family as a responsible man should.

Given these reasons, I am attending college on professional business. I am not here to get drunk on the weekends or to forsake my beliefs. I suppose I have my parents to thank for that attitude because they treated my homeschooling experience as an armor-building shop rather than as a greenhouse. Because of that I was able to withstand the initial shock of being away from home – and the more subtle temptations later – while continuing to focus on my original intent of attending college to develop professional skills.



(continued from page 23, From Homeschool to Law School)

three weeks previously. All his friends were Christians. Now, he was headed to a different continent where he knew nobody, and had no idea where he would even go to church.

But, he trusted the Lord for help, and made a purpose to be friendly. He did succeed at making friends and got engaged in the Christian community in Sweden. His friendships were with people from around the world, and he took advantage of the opportunity to travel all around Europe. He returned home with a lot more confidence in his ability to adapt to brand new environments and develop lasting friendships. As he puts it, "I finally thought to myself, 'I can do this!'"

As the capstone of his college career, he spent his last semester serving as a legislative intern in Indianapolis at the Indiana House of Representatives. That experience led to an opportunity to apply for an opening for a legislative assistant. He was hired and made a commitment to stay in Indianapolis for two more years. He served up to four different State Representatives at a time, and had to work with a variety of people on a daily basis to get things done. He was responsible for taking phone calls from constituents, communicating with the representatives, and interacting with people in various agencies.

He also used his spare time to serve the Lord at a local church, and to prepare to pursue a longstanding dream of attending law school. He made many friends at the church, and joined the leadership team for the church's college/career young people. He also helped lead the singing during worship. To prepare for law school, he studied for the LSAT, visited a number of law schools, and completed his law school application. After receiving acceptance letters from several schools, Adam chose to attend Indiana University School of Law in Bloomington, a top 25 law school that also offered a generous scholarship.

Adam had another dream he wanted to accomplish before heading off to law school, and that was to serve the Lord on a short-term missions trip. He arranged for a six-week break between his last day at the Statehouse and the start of law school, and flew to Uganda, where he completed a short term mission assignment in the Karamoja region. He reached out to the villagers, shared the gospel, helped at times in the medical clinic, and taught Bible lessons to young children in the school. He learned that he loves teaching and really liked the people of Uganda. Someday, he would love to go back and help again.

After returning to the states, he moved into an apartment in Bloomington, and transitioned back to the life of a student. Again, he found himself in a situation in which he didn't know anybody else in the entering class. But, utilizing lessons learned from the previous experiences God had provided for him, Adam made a point of reaching



out to everyone he met in the first couple of weeks. He enjoys his classes, and is getting involved in a local church in Bloomington. He says he now realizes he has reached the point where he really enjoys meeting new people. As his parents, we are grateful every day for how the Lord has brought about such growth in Adam's life, directing his steps, and bestowing His grace on all aspects of Adam's life.

God has shown us His faithfulness over and over again in the life of our son, Adam. He has taken a typical shy boy and transformed him into a courageous young man who actively reaches out to people and works hard to get to know them, and to serve them. Adam told me that he no longer considers himself an introvert, but rather an extrovert, as now he loves to be with people.

So what brings about such change? Ultimately, nothing but the grace and power of the living God working through His Spirit and His Word. Our role? Ultimately, nothing more than exercising the faith God gives us to believe and follow His Word, realizing, as expressed by Adam's first pastor, the late William Goode of Lafayette, "God can still put His product on the market!"

Since the story was written, Adam is now in his second year of law school. Over the summer, he completed an internship, the Blackstone Fellowship, with the Alliance Defense Fund (now called Always Defending Freedom) where he worked in the Attorney General's Office in Indianapolis.



Sons of the American Revolution State Wide Contests

The Indiana Society of the Sons of the American Revolution conducts several contests each year.

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<http://www.sar.org/Youth>.

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Questions? Contact Wayne Eells

317-727-8651, WJEells@aol.com

Poster Contest

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Topic: "The Declaration of Independence"

Questions? Contact Richard Smurdon

219-869-0156

Oration Contest

Grades 9-12

Deadline 3/1/13

Questions? Contact Dr. T. Rex LeglerII

765-342-6654, t.leglerii@comcast.net

National Education Plan May Impact Homeschool Families

—by *Micah Clark*
IAHE Legislative Liaison



I first realized big things were afoot for Indiana, in terms of educational change, during a conversation this spring with the Indiana House Education Chairman. He made a passing comment that the ISTEP statewide assessment test was “going away in a couple of years in favor of common core assessments.”

I didn’t re-engage in the conversation mentally until several sentences later. How could the ISTEP, in which Indiana had invested so much over the last two decades, simply disappear in 2104 without the public knowing about it even now?

It is not that I am a big fan of ISTEP. Our family uses the Stanford assessment for our two home educated children. Yet I knew that ISTEP had been forced upon private schools as the main string tied to participation in the school voucher program. Change that, and you change a lot in terms of controlling educational content.

The Common Core

The change that our House Education Chairman referred to comes from a national program of math and language content standards for K-12, called Common Core. Both supporters and opponents agree that these standards will drive curriculum and testing changes, and it will occur

from a national level, which raises concerns of its own. Where leaders disagree is over whether these changes are good or bad.

If a state has low expectations, Common Core Standards could be helpful. However, even supporters of Common Core have praised Indiana’s state curriculum standards. The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, an advocate of Common Core, has praised Indiana’s standards for mathematics and stated that our language arts expectations are “clearly superior” to those of the Common Core.

This has caused some in Indiana, who worry about the idea of national control of education, to ask why Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tony Bennett, has been one of Common Core’s most vocal supporters from any state in America. Why should Indiana participate in a national move that lowers our own standards?

To date, 46 states have signed on for these Common Core Standards, which supporters are quick to note are “voluntary.” However, the Obama Administration has tied receipt of federal “Race to the Top” state funds and waivers from No Child Left Behind regulations to participation in Common Core. Stimulus funds were also tied to state participation in Common Core.

A few states have backed away from the Common Core out of fear of federal control, including Alaska, during Governor Sarah Palin's administration, and Texas under Governor Rick Perry. One of the reasons for this is that participating states are required to implement 100% of the Common Core Standards and cannot deviate from them. Common Core has also gained the attention of many of Indiana's TEA Party leaders. The issue is on the radar of HSLDA, and the respected Heritage Foundation has cautioned states not to cede their educational authority over to national groups, foundations, or the government through participation in Common Core Standards.

What Could This Mean for Hoosier Home Educators?

The replacement of ISTEP with a test called the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Career (PARCC) may not immediately impact many homeschool families, since many choose to take other national tests like the Iowa, Stanford, or California. However, there have been some advocates of Common Core who appear to want to tie the PARCC test and Common Core national standards to college admissions. Such a move could significantly impact homeschool families if national standards dictate politically correct content and tie PARCC scores to college admission. Another problem arises if the SAT entrance exam is changed to align to Common Core Standards.

It is not completely clear what Common Core Standards mean in terms of specific curriculum changes, content, and requirements for college admissions. It seems clear that such changes will impact public education. The IAHE Board is watching this issue, talking to experts and elected officials, and monitoring what it may mean for homeschool families.



Micah Clark and his wife, Cherie, have two home-educated children, nine-year-old Ben and ten-year-old Olivia. Micah is the Executive Director for the American Family Association of Indiana and the legislative liaison for the Indiana Association of Home Educators. Micah works with various issues before the Indiana General Assembly and in the culture, which impact Hoosier families. You can learn more about AFA at www.afain.net.

How Best To Contact LEGISLATORS

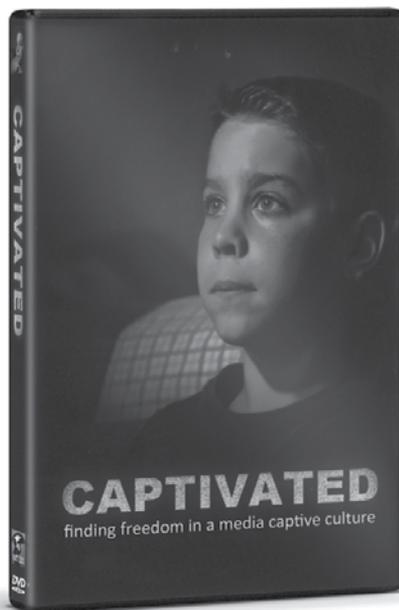
One question I am often asked when I discuss legislative concerns is, "What is the best way to contact my legislator?" Though there are many options available, the tried and true method is still surprisingly the most effective. Because of the Internet, public officials receive far fewer handwritten letters than they did a decade ago. For this reason, a personal letter through the US Mail gets a lot of attention.

Yet, a letter is often not possible when votes on an issue are immediate, or when you do not have the time to write a letter but want your voice to be heard. In such cases, email, online petitions and phone calls are effective. In fact, a phone call is as effective as a letter, and those two contacts are the most influential.

Search the Internet for the contact sites for your local city and county government leaders in advance of an issue. Do the same for state and federal officials; so that when issues arise, you can quickly get to those contact pages you have "bookmarked" or written down. Two good starting points are www.in.gov and www.Congress.org. These can take you to contact info for your leaders in Indianapolis and Washington, DC.

Knowing how to contact your leaders, having done a few minutes of research ahead of time, can help make you an effective voice in doing your civic duty and protecting our homeschool freedoms.

Follow the IAHE on Facebook to receive legislative updates.



Are You Captivated?

—by Rebecca Franks

“Everywhere we go, we are surrounded by screens, surrounded by people whose attention is fixed on screens. They are everywhere. Have we entered a techno utopia or a virtual prison? Should we be celebrating unreservedly, or should we be cautious and skeptical? Is it the greatest leap in productivity or the biggest setback from the things most meaningful in life? Has today’s connectivity drawn us closer to one another, or are we strangely more disjointed? Is our social experience richer and deeper, or more shallow and artificial? Has it brought us nearer to God, or are we building a tower of Babel? Is it all of these things, or none of them?”

“Whatever it is, it has certainly captivated us.”

With these probing questions Phillip Telfer, founder of Media Talk 101, begins his revolutionary documentary, *Captivated*.

Featuring an engaging mix of expert interviews and bringing thought provoking issues to light, *Captivated*

presents compelling evidence of the dangers associated with an increasing dependence on electronic media. George Barna explains in the film, “Media exposure has become America’s most widespread and serious addiction.” Viewers would find his statement hard to dispute when they consider, as *Captivated* reveals, that an average child spends 53 hours per week in front of a screen, more hours than most high school students spend studying.

This challenging film spotlights many credible sources, from varying perspectives, who explain—in layman’s terms—the brain-damaging effects caused by a fast-paced, electronic media dependent lifestyle. Leading researchers recommend that children under age three have no exposure to any electronic media of any sort, so that their brains have a chance to develop properly. Experts liken the effect of electronic media on the brain to that produced by narcotics. This subtle yet dangerous addiction is made even more dangerous by the fact that it may go unrecognized.

“If I could control the medium of the American motion picture, I would need nothing else to convert the entire world to communism.” — Joseph Stalin

Games, especially, produce a deceptive effect because they induce a pleasure “high,” making a person feel that he has accomplished something of importance, when, in fact, he has accomplished nothing.

In addition to shedding light on the damaging effects on the brain, *Captivated* points out that the potential for physical impact is also great. Excess screen time has been connected to eyestrain, headphone use to hearing loss, and texting to carpal tunnel syndrome and car accidents. Meanwhile, the debate over a link between cell phones and brain cancer continues.

Going beyond the physical and mental considerations, *Captivated* further challenges viewers to face the reality of the negative impact that a heavily media-dependent lifestyle makes on our emotional, spiritual, and relational lives, as well. For even if one were to ignore the physical and mental consequences, there would be enough cause for concern in these other areas alone.

The film focuses not only on the views of earthly authorities, but also appeals to God’s Word as the highest authority and issues a hard-hitting challenge: if our media and technology are taking us away from a deeper relationship with God, our family, or our friends, then it has no place in our lives.

Phillip Telfer concludes *Captivated* with a call to take a sober assessment of the way we use technology. “There is a battle that everyone is facing today regarding all media and entertainment... It is a spiritual battle being waged for our hearts and minds.”

What are you going to do about it? Why not take the first step toward freedom for your family by watching *Captivated*? You can find it at CaptivatedTheMovie.com.



Rebecca Franks, a graduate of home education, loves learning alongside her parents and two brothers at home. She enjoys playing piano and singing, helping her father with his business, cooking and baking, crafting, writing and researching history, and spending time with her family and friends. She begins her B.A. in English from Thomas Edison this fall.

Bits & Pieces

Don't miss a deadline! The IAHE website (www.iahe.net) provides up to date information on many statewide and region-specific happenings. Interested families can sign up on the website to receive daily or weekly updates by email. Anyone with a free account can post announcements on the IAHE website forums; contact your Regional Representative if you would like something posted on the website calendar.

STATEWIDE

Indiana Homeschool Soccer Association

Competitive fall soccer for homeschooled students
Eleven clubs statewide, many offer JV teams
and all girl or coed teams, in addition to boys' varsity teams.
All skill and ability levels welcome.

Details at www.inhomesoccer.com

REGION 4

Charlotte Mason Support Group

Meets every Tuesday evening in Winona Lake, Indiana.

If interested, contact Kathy Balke: (574) 594-3815.

REGION 7

REJOICE Speech and Debate Club

Meets on the north side of Indianapolis.

Bridget Rogers, Coordinator
(317) 578-8833

seekthetruth4@att.net

Noblesville Lions Homeschool Football

Christian Homeschool Sports Organization

For homeschoolers, grades 6-12

Contact Mike:
mike@lionsfootballclub.com
www.lionsfootballclub.com

Volleyball

Contact Stephanie Reasen: (317) 513-1086, sreasen@gmail.com

REGION 9

Wabash Valley Lady Warriors

Homeschool Volleyball

Girls, ages 11-18

Practices began in July at Maryland Community Church.

Competitive play season runs from early September to late October.
\$70.00 per player, plus \$12.00 for insurance.

Tournament fees may necessitate additional fundraising.

For more information, even regarding a future season,
contact Coach Scully: (812) 841-4756, corinnescully06@yahoo.com

**Wabash Valley Warriors
Competitive Homeschool Basketball**

Coed 4th-6th grade teams.
Separate boys and girls teams for Jr. High, JV, and Varsity.
For more information, call Kendall Rea: (812) 894-3360
sonrea@frontier.com

REGION 12

Heart'n'Home School Group

Non-denominational Christian support group
for homeschooling families
Meets the third Thursday of each month, August-May
Graceland Baptist Church Apex Building
3600 Kamer Miller Rd., New Albany, IN 47150
For more information, contact Meredith Paden:
hnhevents@gmail.com

Special event with Steve & Teri Maxwell:

"Encouragement for the Homeschool Family Conference"
Thursday, Oct. 18, 6:45-9:15 p.m.
Hosted by Heart'n'Home School Group, New Albany
More details, registration information, and printable fliers at: <http://www.titus2.com/conferences/locations/new-albany-in-12.html>

REGION 14

Hancock County Children's Choir

Accepting new members, grades 3-12.
Details, including audition information, at:
www.hancockcountychildrenschoir.org
Or on the choir's Facebook page.

Indy Proclaim! Speech and Debate Club

Meets on the east/southeast side of Indy.
Contact Tom Heady, Administrator:
(765) 763-8405, ourpilgrimroad@gmail.com

Did You Know...?

Did you know you can sign up for a FREE account on the IAHE website? You will find a calendar to post events, a classified section to buy and sell curriculum, forums to share information, and a business directory where you can list your home business.

Check it out at www.iahe.net!

**CLASSIFIEDS & HOMESCHOOL
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Ortman NATURAL Beef

Certified Natural NO Hormones or Antibiotics;
Freezer beef available in 1/4, 1/2 or whole.
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References available. Benji & Darla Ortman
(812) 614-0345 or ortmanbeef@yahoo.com
Visit our new website: www.ortmanbeef.com

Lions Homeschool Sports Club

The Lions Sports Club is recruiting homeschooled boys,
ages 11-18 for the 2012-13 basketball season.
Members reside throughout Hamilton and surrounding counties.
For more information, contact Jim Schwartz at (317) 440-0640

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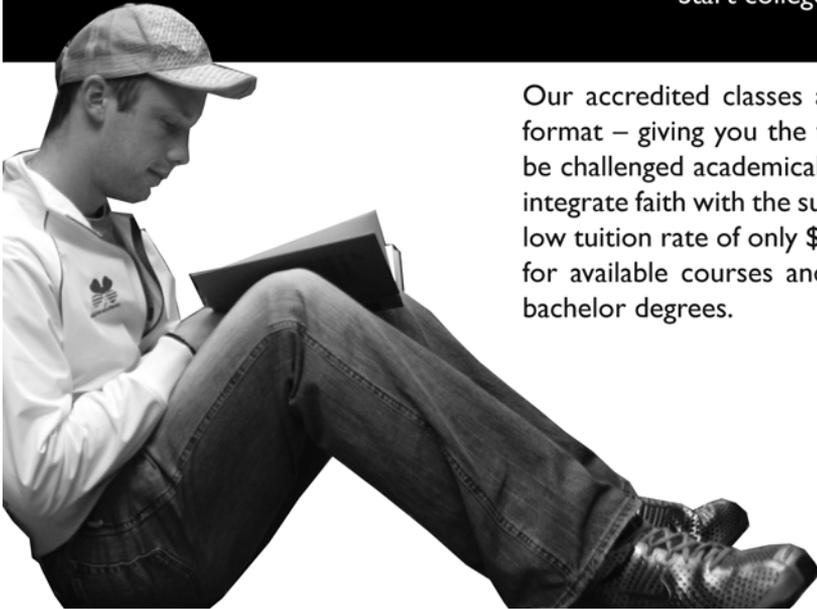
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www.iahe.net**

- post events
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- business directory

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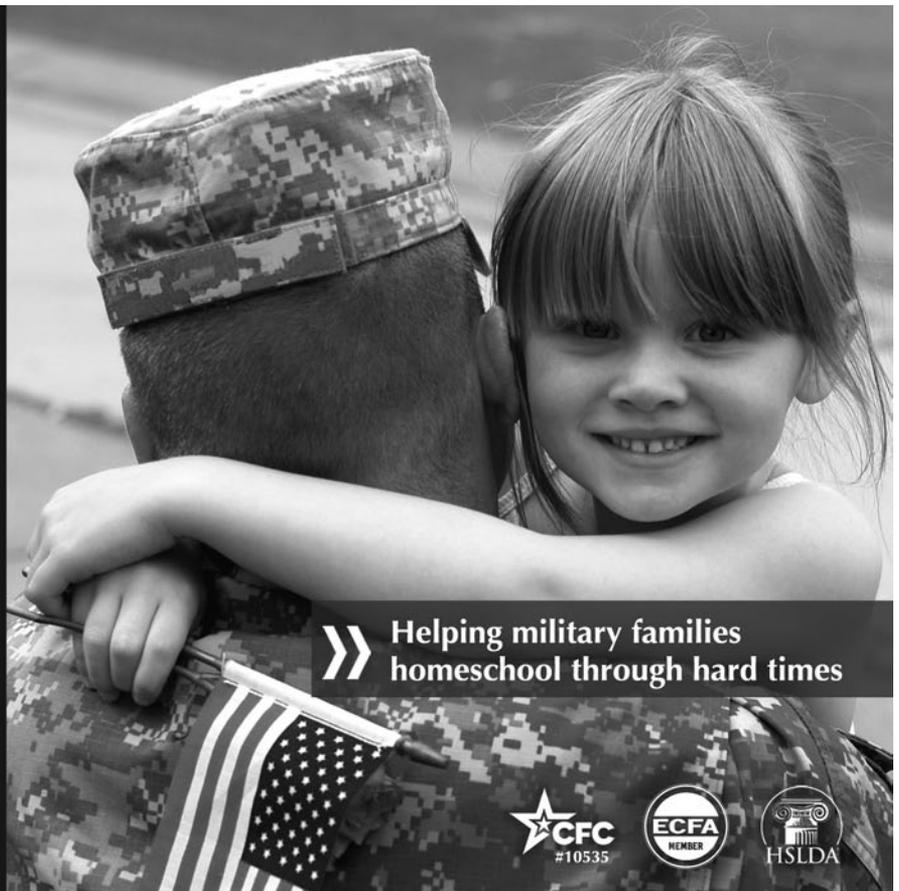


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They are there for us;
now we want to be
here for them.



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