

Nazarene Educators Worldwide

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THE NEW

Hands-On Homeschool - Let's Get Messy! By Jan Wilton, Homeschool Representative

Hands-on Homeschool is a "new" concept in homeschooling. Or is it? We have known for years children best learn through a variety of methods. It is the oldest of all teaching methods, but often looked upon with disdain because it can be messy and time-consuming and takes creativity.

Hands-on learning may be a reason some parents decided to homeschool in the first place. It was exciting to think about teaching your child using this method. You read about children learning math and science while learning to cook. A child could handle rocks to learn geology. A child who creates and uses simple machines learns more by doing than by reading about them. It is experiencing cause/effect and sometimes failure on the road to success.

Allison Baker, a homeschool mom from Duncanville, Texas, shared, "So we are studying ancient Egypt and making a burial mask. It appears to be a little more messy than I remembered, but Aubree got a ton of mileage out of the tactile stimulation. It was all worth it. I also didn't remember it smelling - uh-not so good!"

Hands-on means more than just "touching" things. It is getting messy and creating to connect an abstract idea to real life. For a young child, it could be in making "moon sand," play dough, or using beans, blocks, or rice to experience math.

When we make our own bread and butter, we enhance a lesson about Colonial America. Actively involved in the... (Continued on page 7.)



NAZARENE EDUCATORS WORLDWIDE
17001 PRAIRIE STAR PARKWAY
LENEXA, KS 66220

The Very Real Challenge of Managing Behavior in the Classroom

By Marilyn J. Dominick, Co-Chair of Nazarene Educators Worldwide

Here in New York, we are six weeks into the new school year. This is the time of year when we have settled into the routines of school, and the newness has worn off. This can be the most challenging time of year for us and for our students. There is almost a full school year ahead of us; and, if we struggle with classroom management, it will seem to be even longer. I want to share a few ideas to help you enjoy the career you have chosen!

How can we meet the challenges that our students present to us on a daily basis? Our pupils come from many different backgrounds, and they have learned many things already. Some of those things are positive and some are negative. Perhaps some of the students come to school having learned that they cannot trust adults. Some come from nurturing homes where respect is taught and practiced. Some have no structure outside of school. Some have difficulty surviving and may fight for even the most basic necessities of life. We want the students to walk into school every day ready to learn and even to be excited by the potential each day holds.

I am a retired public school administrator and now work as a mentor and instructional coach for new teachers in a charter school setting. In my work with teachers over the years, I've learned a few things that may help us with the issue of classroom management. I hope you find these recommendations helpful, and I would love to know about your proven practices as well. I can be reached by email at mjdominick77@gmail.com. Perhaps we can publish your ideas in a future article. We are so much stronger when we share our ideas than when we work to solve issues individually. Thank you in advance for your input!

So, here are my recommendations:

- **Do not underestimate the power of structure and routines.**

- Establish your expectations of how students will enter the room. Tell them to go back out and practice until they meet your expectation. You may have to repeat this several days in a row, several times each day. It is worth the investment of time.

- Start your class with something fun and engaging. One teacher I observed established a "Give Me 5" activity that took less than five minutes each day. She called on five students to tell something interesting and positive that was going on in their lives. She used this opportunity to get to know her students and often used it as a transition to the lesson.

- Establish firm, non-negotiable routines for bathroom use, borrowing materials, distribution of materials, homework collection, etc. You will know you are successful when these things happen automatically and are not disruptive to instruction.

- Always have a wrap-up activity that will help you assess student understanding of what you taught them. Use a Post-It system where students write something they learned today, or something they didn't understand, etc. They can hand the notes to you or stick them on your door as they leave. Standardizing the wrap-up ties the package up in a bow for them, giving them closure.

- How will you dismiss the class? Set the expectation that everyone will be in their seats and quiet. Don't let them go until everyone has complied. You dismiss the class, not the bell or the clock. Talk to other teachers about what you are doing, so they understand that the students may be tardy for their next class until their compliance is set.

- **What will instruction look like?**

- In order for students to learn effectively, material must be interesting to them. Choose activities to which the students can relate. When possible, make them fun and interactive.

- Ask high-level questions that encourage students to defend their own thinking. Don't be too quick to help them, but encourage them to think out loud. Wait time is important.

- Structure every minute of class time by posting a schedule on the board or screen, with time allotments for each section. You can also use a timer and keep moving. (Continued on page 4.)

Reasons Today's Kids Are Bored at School, Feel Entitled, Have Little Patience & Few Real Friends

Written by Victoria Prooday - Submitted by Mark Taylor, College/University Representative

Victoria Prooday, occupational therapist, finds that today's kids come to school emotionally unavailable for learning. There are many factors in our modern lifestyle that contribute to this.

She writes: I am an occupational therapist with years of experience working with children, parents, and teachers. Our children are getting worse and worse in many aspects. I hear the same consistent message from every teacher I meet. Clearly, throughout my time as an occupational therapist, I have seen and continue to see a decline in kids' social, emotional, and academic functioning, as well as a sharp increase in learning disabilities and other diagnoses.

As we know, the brain is malleable. Through environment, we can make the brain "stronger" or make it "weaker." I truly believe that, despite all of our greatest intentions, we unfortunately remold our children's brains in the wrong direction. Here is why:

1. TECHNOLOGY

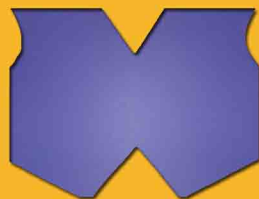
Using technology as a "Free babysitting service" is, in fact, not free at all. The payment is waiting for you just around the corner. We pay with our kids' nervous systems, their attention, and their ability for delayed gratification. Compared to virtual reality, everyday life is boring. When kids come to the classroom, they are exposed to human voices and adequate visual stimulation as opposed to being bombarded with the graphic explosions and special effects that they are accustomed to seeing on the screens. After hours of virtual reality, processing information in a classroom becomes increasingly challenging for our kids, because their brains are trained to the high levels of stimulation that video games provide. The inability to process lower levels of stimulation leaves kids vulnerable to academic challenges. Technology also disconnects us emotionally from our children and our families. Parental emotional availability is the main nutrient for a child's brain. Unfortunately, we are gradually depriving our children of that nutrient. (Continued on page 5.)

Learning with Letter Vests

By Midge Simpson, Preschool/Early Childhood Learning Center Representative

Supplies:

- Paper (cardstock works well)
- Markers or cut-out letters
- Sheet protectors or Contact paper
- Hole punch
- Heavy string or sturdy ribbon



Process:

1. Use 52 pieces of paper or cardstock, two for each of the letters of the alphabet. Make a pattern for a vest using the diagram above. Print the capital letter on the right side of the front of the vest (or attach cut-out letters). Print the lower-case letter on the left side of the front of the vest (or use cut-out letters). Do the same on the back side of the second vest.

2. Place each piece of paper in a sheet protector or laminate with Contact paper.

3. If laminating, punch two holes at the top of each page. (The sheet protectors already have holes punched in them. Preschool children require holes closer to the center of the sheet protector.)

4. Using two heavy pieces of string or sturdy ribbon, attach the sheets with the matching upper- and lower-case letters. This leaves an opening so the paper will go over the child's head like a vest. (Continued on page 6.)



The Very Real Challenge of Managing Behavior in the Classroom

By Marilyn J. Dominick, Co-Chair of Nazarene Educators Worldwide

(Continued from page 2.)

- Develop a set of non-verbal cues to allow students to agree, disagree, show their attention, etc. I use things like, "Put your pointer finger on your forehead to let me know you are with me." Thumbs up, thumbs down, flat hand also work for agreement, disagreement, or I have a question.
- Consider posting a rubric so students can assess their own work against the same standard. In New York, I recommend using the rubrics that are part of the State Assessment.
- Remember that a student's attention span is about the same number of minutes as his/her age. No section of the lesson should be longer than that.
- **Are disruptive students just a part of this profession? How can we manage those behaviors?**
- Consider having students develop a set of classroom expectations and consequences. Do not make this a futile exercise, but actually hold students accountable for complying with the standards they established.
- Do not allow students to break school rules. If your school has a discipline system that has warnings, demerits, and referrals, treat misbehavior immediately with no second chances. Get the documentation in the system and deal with it, or it will plague you all year.
- Do not make idle threats or plead with students. Desperation on your part will only make you appear ineffective to the students and behavior will not improve.
- Call parents and communicate with them consistently with both good and bad news.
- Reward compliance. Depending on the age of your students, find something they care about and use it to reward them.
- Do not talk over the students. Wait for them to be silent.
- NEVER argue with students.
- If a student breaks a rule, put the child's name on the board and go on. Don't take away instructional time to deal with individuals. When students are practicing or doing independent work, then go to the offender and talk to the student privately.
- Speak with great authority. You should be a strong presence in your classroom. If you appear unsure of yourself, students will take advantage of that. Practice your strong, authoritative voice.
- Identify the teachers in your building who are really strong at classroom management, and visit their classrooms. Talk with them and solicit their help. If possible, have them come to your room and observe/make recommendations.
- Talk to other teachers at your grade level or in your subject area about strategies they use that work well with students you share. Develop a consistent team approach for students you have in common who act out.

I hope you find these ideas helpful. Let me know if you try any of them and the results. And once again, let's add to the list! Email me your thoughts!

May God bless you as you teach for His Glory!!!

Marilyn Dominick retired as the Superintendent of Schools for the Jordan-Elbridge School District in 2010 after 34 years in public schools. She currently serves as Administrative Consultant for Public Charter Schools in the Syracuse area. She served two terms as the public school representative for NEW. She currently is a Co-Chair for NEW. You may contact Marilyn at mjdominick77@gmail.com.

Reasons Today's Kids Are Bored at School, Feel Entitled, Have Little Patience & Few Real Friends

Written by Victoria Prooday - Submitted by Mark Taylor, College/University Representative

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2. KIDS GET EVERYTHING THE MOMENT THEY WANT IT

"I am hungry!" "In a sec, I will stop at the drive thru." "I am thirsty!" "Here is a vending machine." "I am bored!" "Use my phone!" The ability to delay gratification is one of the key factors for future success. We have the best intentions--to make our children happy. However, we make them happy at the moment but miserable in the long term. To be able to delay gratification means to be able to function under stress. Our children are gradually becoming less-equipped to deal with even minor stressors, which eventually become huge obstacles to their success in life.

The inability to delay gratification is often seen in classrooms, malls, restaurants, and toy stores the moment the child hears "No," because parents have taught their child's brain to get what it wants right away.

3. KIDS RULE THE WORLD

"My son doesn't like vegetables." "She doesn't like going to bed early." "He doesn't like to eat breakfast." "She doesn't like toys, but she is very good at her iPad." "He doesn't want to get dressed on his own." "She is too lazy to eat on her own." This is what I hear from parents all the time. Since when do children dictate to us how to parent them? If we leave it all up to them, all they are going to do is eat macaroni and cheese and bagels with cream cheese, watch TV, play on their tablets, and never go to bed. What good are we doing them by giving them what they WANT when we know that it is not GOOD for them? Without proper nutrition and a good night's sleep, our kids come to school irritable, anxious, and inattentive. In addition, we send them the wrong message. They learn they can do what they want and not do what they don't want. The concept of "need to do" is absent. Unfortunately, in order to achieve our goals in our lives, we have to do what's necessary, which may not always be what we want to do. For example, if a child wants to be an A student, he needs to study hard. If he wants to be a successful soccer player, he needs to practice every day. Our children know very well what they want, but they have a very hard time doing what is necessary to achieve that goal. This results in unattainable goals and leaves the kids disappointed.

4. ENDLESS FUN

We have created an artificial fun world for our children. There are no dull moments. The moment it becomes quiet, we run to entertain them again, because we feel that we are not doing our parenting duty. We live in two separate worlds. They have their "fun" world, and we have our "work" world. Why aren't children helping us in the kitchen or with laundry? Why don't they tidy up their toys? This is basic monotonous work that trains the brain to be workable and to function under "boredom," which is the same "muscle" that is required to be teachable at school. When it is time for handwriting, their answer is "I can't. It is too hard. It's too boring." Why? The workable "muscle" is not getting trained because of endless fun. This muscle gets trained through work.

5. LIMITED SOCIAL INTERACTION

We are all busy, so we give our kids digital gadgets and make them "busy" too. In the past, kids played outside, where, in unstructured natural environments, they learned and practiced their social skills. Unfortunately, technology replaced the outdoor time. Also, technology made the parents less available to socially interact with their kids. Obviously, our kids fall behind . . . the babysitting gadget is not equipped to help kids develop social skills. Most successful people have great social skills. This is the priority!

The brain is just like a muscle that is trainable and re-trainable. If you want your child to be able to ride a bike, you teach him biking skills. If you want your child to be able to wait, you need to teach him patience. If you want your child to be able to socialize, you need to teach him social skills. The same applies to all the other skills. There is no difference! (Continued on page 6.)

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Learning with Letter Vests

By Midge Simpson, Preschool/Early Childhood Learning Center Representative

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5. Let the children take turns wearing the vests to spell out words. (You may want to make extra vests for vowels or letters used more often.)
6. Heavy string will help these stylish vests to last longer.
7. Have fun with the letters and words!

Midge Simpson is from Simpsonville, SC. In 1992, she founded and directed the Sunshine Learning Center. She retired last year but continues to counsel with preschool/early childhood learning centers. You may contact Midge at mustangmidge@gmail.com.



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(Continued from page 5.)

TRAIN THE BRAIN

You can make a difference in your child's life by training your child's brain so that your child will successfully function on social, emotional, and academic levels. Here is how:

1. Limit technology, and re-connect with your kids emotionally.
 - Surprise them with flowers, share a smile, tickle them, put a love note in their backpack or under their pillow, surprise them by taking them out for lunch on a school day, dance together, crawl together, and have pillow fights.
 - Have family dinners, board game nights, go biking, or go on outdoor walks with a flashlight in the evening.
2. Train delayed gratification.
 - Make them wait!!!! It is OK to have "I am bored" time--this is the first step to creativity.
 - Gradually increase the waiting time between "I want" and "I get."
 - Avoid technology use in cars and restaurants; teach them waiting while talking and playing games.
 - Limit constant snacking.
3. Don't be afraid to set the limits. Kids need limits to grow happy and healthy!
 - Make a schedule for meal times, sleep times, and technology time.
 - Think of what is GOOD for them-- not what they WANT/DON'T WANT. They are going to thank you for that later in life. Parenting is a hard job. You need to be creative to make them do what is good for them. Most of the time, that is the exact opposite of what they want.
 - Kids need breakfast and nutritious food. They need to spend time outdoors and go to bed at a consistent time in order to come to school available for learning the next day!
 - Convert the things they don't like doing or trying into fun, emotionally stimulating games.
4. Teach your child to do monotonous work from early years as it is the foundation for future "workability."
 - Teach children to fold laundry, tidy up toys, hang clothes, unpack groceries, set the table, make lunch, unpack their lunch boxes, and make their bed.
 - Be creative. Initially, make the activity stimulating and fun, so the child's brain associates it with something positive. (Continued on page 7.)

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(Continued from page 6.)

5. Teach social skills

- Teach children to take turns, to share, to lose/win, to compromise, to compliment others, and to use “please and thank you.”

From my experience as an occupational therapist, children change the moment parents change their perspective on parenting. Help your kids succeed in life by training and strengthening their brain sooner rather than later!

Victoria holds a Master of Science in Occupational Therapy from the Medical School at University of Toronto and a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and Health Science from York University. She is founder and director of a multidisciplinary clinic in Toronto, Canada, for children with behavioral, social, emotional and academic challenges. Victoria, along with her team, has helped hundreds of families across Canada and around the world and is a frequent guest speaker to teachers, parents and professionals.

This article was shared with Victoria's written permission. <http://deeproootsathome.com/kids-bored-entitled>

Mark Taylor is from Ferguson, MO. He has worked in education for 39 years. He is a Professor of Education and serves as the Department Chair of the Social and Behavioral Sciences/Teacher Education at St. Louis, MO. You may contact Mark at mltaylor@stlcc.edu.

Hands-On Homeschool - Let's Get Messy!

By Jan Wilton, Homeschool Representative

(Continued from page 1.)

...learning process with hands-on learning, children become engaged in problem-solving or critical thinking. When you plan a week of lessons, include activities which require your child to “do” something, learning by doing.

Why should you use hands-on homeschool?

- It encourages real life understanding.
- It meets the needs of children through visual and large/small motor skills activities.
- It helps a child to understand abstract concepts.
- It develops cognitive and critical thinking skills.
- It keeps a child interested in learning.

Is Hands-on Homeschool Messy?

It can be messy—depending on the activities you choose. Outdoor studies about nature are not always messy. On the other hand, a science experiment or a kitchen cooking project can be messy. Art projects may to be messier.

Jess Moniz, a homeschool mom of three from Gladewater, Texas, recently shared this about her two year old: “Bonnie really likes to be fully submerged in her artwork. She calls this one ‘Sunshine.’”

Messy? YES! The goal wasn't to make a mess. The goal was about color and texture.

You may say, “It takes a lot more time.” Yes and no, but children and parents will all agree it is worth the time and effort. Jess Moniz and Allison Baker will both tell you it was worth the effort to see what the children learn.

The value is great when learning changed a child who cannot seem to understand a concept. The value is great when it frees your child from boredom to a new or renewed interest in a subject. You will discover that making the time for hands-on learning will be invaluable in the end as both you and your family engage in active learning.

Jan Wiltton homeschooled her daughter. Jan is currently a coach for her daughter who homeschools her autistic 5-year-old son. Jan has served on the NEW Council in several capacities for the past 8 years. You may contact Jan at joyunlimitedcm@msn.com.

