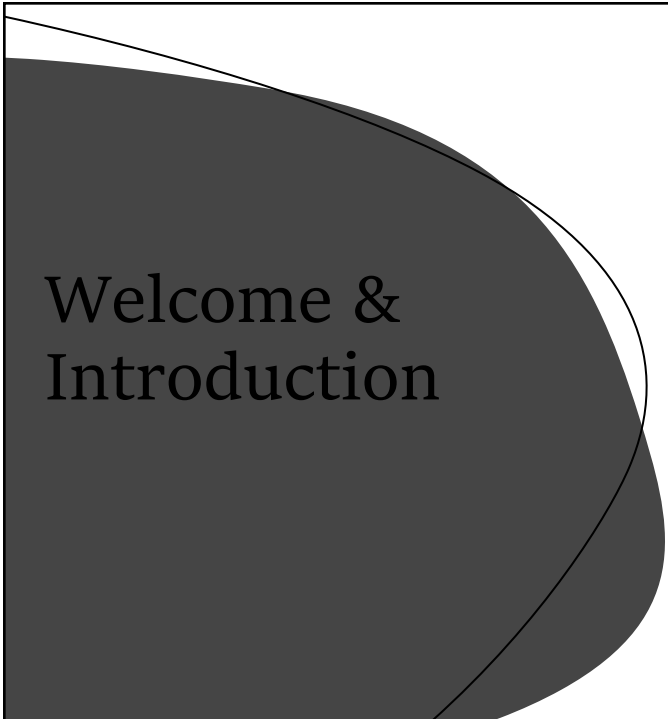




Homeschooling with Special Needs

Planning
Curriculum
Encouragement

1




Welcome & Introduction

Topics this Evening:

- Questions
- Benefits
- Essentials
 - Laws
 - Organization & Paperwork
 - Curriculum & Therapies
- Encouragement
- Resources

2



CATHY LAFROMBOIS

- Bachelors of Music Ed./Perf, DePaul University, Chicago
- Former Public/Private school teacher (MS/HS Band & Choir)
- Homeschooling Family for 16 years
- 4 children: 21 & 19 (in college) 14 & 12 (at home)
- Special Needs Homeschooler
- Classical Educator (Classical Conversations Director 13 yrs.)
- Director: Valley Troubadours Homeschool Music Program/Badger Meeting House

3



Zoe:

- 14 years old
- Loves Music
- Plays Percussion in Band
- Uses iPad communication device

- Brewers Fan
- Amazing Memory
- Knows hundreds of signs (ASL)
- Loves to travel
- Reads 2nd-3rd grade level





- Tetrasomy 18p
- OCD
- Intellectual Disability
- Hyper/Hypotonia
- Level 3 Autism
- ADHD
- Apraxia of Speech

4

Homeschooling:

Making the Right Choice for this Moment in Time

Homeschooling Today

The "What if" questions

Reasons to Homeschool

5

Homeschooling Right Now

20% of Public-School parents say that they are strongly considering, or are committed to homeschooling in the coming school year

More parents consider homeschooling as pandemic continues

 KRQE | 6 days ago

More parents consider homeschooling as permanent option during coronavirus pandemic

 FOX News on MSN.com | 4 days ago

Parents turning to babysitters and homeschool options for back-to-school plans

Triangle parents turn to homeschooling amid COVID-19 safety concerns

 WTVD | 6 days ago

North Texas Mom Launches Homeschool 'Boot Camp' to Prepare Parents for Coming School Year

 NBC DFW | 3 days ago


Stateline parents turn to homeschooling as the pandemic continues into the school year

 WIFR on MSN.com | 2 days ago

Stateline parents turn to homeschooling as the pandemic continues into the school year

 WIFR on MSN.com | 2 days ago

As COVID-19 continues to surge, more parents plan to home school their kids

 YAHOO! | 6 days ago

Parents turning to babysitters and homeschool options for back-to-school plans

 KMOV | 16 hours ago

More parents considering homeschooling this fall

 Action News 5 | 6 days ago

Some West Michigan parents choose to homeschool kids for 20-21 school year

 WZZM | 20 hours ago

Homeschooling becoming popular during COVID-19 as parents worry about return to campus

 ABC7 on MSN.com | 5 days ago

6

There's never been a better time to homeschool than right now.

7

The "What If?" Questions:

- 1) What if I am not the best teacher for my child's needs?
- 2) What if this doesn't work in the long-haul?
- 3) What if I fail my child (or my other children) because I'm inadequate?
- 4) What if we try this and it goes terribly wrong?
- 5) What if people disagree with our decision to homeschool?
- 6) What if my child loses good friends and positive socialization opportunities?
- 7) What if my child won't listen to me?

Each and every one of these questions can be asked of any educational circumstance.

8

Reasons Why We Homeschool Our Daughter with Special Needs


We are the experts on our child
No one will advocate for or love her as we do
She will get 1:1 personalized attention
We won't be pressured to medicate for the benefit of other students
We can shape a positive self-esteem (less peer pressure/bullying)
We can meet her where she is, and work at her level
If something isn't working, we can change
If she is having a bad day/difficult time or is frustrated, we can redirect, adapt, or stop
We can change the schedule, or make the schedule more consistent
We can stop and work on a skill for mastery before moving on
We can find the therapies that are most effective and incorporate them into her day
We don't have to be concerned with grades

9

Essentials

- Laws
- Organization & Paperwork
- Curriculum & Therapies

10



Know Your State's Laws

In the United States, each state sets its own educational laws relating to home education.

11

Where to Find State Homeschooling Laws

"Most states with homeschooling regulations require nothing additional of parents who choose to home educate their special needs students...except Iowa, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, and Vermont." - HSLDA

HSLDA (Homeschool Legal Defense Association): <https://hsllda.org>

SPED Homeschool: <http://spedhomeschool.com/homeschooling-laws/>

Wisconsin DPI: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sms/home-based>

12

Join an Organization

Joining HSLDA provides legal assistance as it pertains to homeschool laws and regulations.

In Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Parents Association (WPA) provides the most current information on state homeschooling laws

*Note: Over 50% of legal cases against homeschool families involve students with special education considerations.

Why? Students with special needs are frequently in contact with outside providers (doctors, therapists, psychologists) who may not understand/agree with homeschooling or homeschool laws.

13

Paperwork Considerations

Request and keep copies of all records (either physical copies or scans - or both!) from schools, doctors, therapists, etc.

- Tests
- Diagnoses
- IEPs
- Curriculum Choices
- Therapy Notes/Person-Centered Plans

14

I.E.P. (Individualized Education Plan)

- Can your child get services from your local school? It depends
- Federal law, all states (and local school districts) are required to find and evaluate homeschooled kids who may need special education.
- A few states offer traditional IEPs to homeschooled kids
- Some states treat homeschooled kids the same as a private school. Offer service plan (like an IEP but provides less). Under a service plan, your child might attend public school twice a week for special instruction, but services like OT might not be available.
- Finally, some state laws don't require school districts to provide special education to homeschooled kids at all. In these states, if parents want services they have to enroll kids in public school.

15

You Can Make an IEP for Your Child

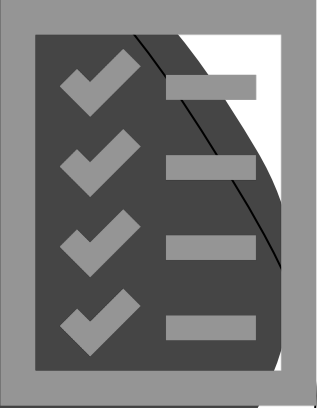
Many parents choose to make an IEP for their child. Since you are the administrator of your school, yes, you do have that authority.

Why would we wish to do so? Provide a documented history for integration with therapists, programs, educational institutions, and for accommodations on tests such as the PSAT, SAT, and AP

Where to find templates and more: SPED Homeschool


<https://spedhomeschool.com/iep-information/>

16



Questions About Organization or Paperwork?

17



Curriculum (Finally!)

- It's not just about the diagnosis
- How does your child learn best?
- How do you teach best?
- It is important for your curriculum to be FLEXIBLE
- Most curriculum is written to cover a year. It might take 2-3
- Does the curriculum offer multiple activities for a variety of learning styles? Hands-on? Visual? Auditory? Online?

18

Presume Competence

Toward the beginning of his guide to “successful, evidence-based principles for supporting and engaging individuals with autism,” Dr. John P. Hussman of the Hussman Institute for Autism encourages readers to complete this exercise:

“Without using speech or accurately moving your body, answer the following question: What’s your favorite color?”

19

Curriculum That Gives Your Child a Chance

Before that, however, let me assure you what presuming competence is *not*.

It is *not* wishful thinking. It is *not* idealism. It is *not* about ignoring or overlooking the challenges a person faces.

Presuming competence is about giving your child a chance—and helping your child take that chance in any way you can.

20

As inclusive education consultant Cheryl Jorgensen wrote, "Our judgments about students' intellectual capacities affect every decision we make about their educational programs, their communication systems and supports, the social activities we support them to participate in, and the futures we imagine."

Let's put it this way: you can always go back and simplify things if need be, but it's much harder to go back and help your child reclaim lost opportunities.

Aim low, and you can only expect low results. But aim high, and your child will be more likely to rise to meet those expectations.

21

Curriculum: All-in-One

Konos (K-8)

Time4Learning (K-12)

Heart of Dakota (K-12)

Easy Peasy All In One (K-12)

Discovery K12 (Not the public-school option, K-12)

Simply Classical

22

**Popular Curricula
for Special
Needs: Math**

- Math-U-See
- Touch Math
- RightStart Math
- Right Brain Math
- Life of Fred
- Math Seeds
- Numicon
- Teaching Textbooks
- Mr. D. Math
- Shiller Math
- Remedia Publications
- Key to Math

23

**Popular
Curricula
for Special
Needs:
Language
Arts**

- All About Learning Press
- Child 1st Publications
- WriteShop
- The Struggling Reader
- Watch My Words
- Read Naturally
- Remedia Publications
- Reading Eggs
- Barton Reading
- Reading Horizons

24

Handwriting Without Tears
 A Reason for Handwriting
 No Frills Handwriting
 Sing, Spell, Read, and Write
 Write Shop
 Editor in Chief
 Read and Write Gold

**Popular
 Curricula
 for Special
 Needs:
 Writing**

25

**Popular
 Curricula for
 Special Needs:
 Social Studies**

Tell	Tell the stories
Display	Display a timeline
Study	Study the calendar
Explore	Explore space in terms of your child's street, neighborhood, and city
Spend	Spend time with the elderly

26

Social Studies

- Story of the World
- Mystery of History
- BiblioPlan
- Heart of Dakota
- Sonlight

27

Observe: Observe and talk about everything in your child's world.

Collect: Start a collection with your child. Display them in a prominent place in the home so that others can ask him about it.

Experiment: Cooking, water-play, sand, art projects...

Record: keep track of things with graphs and charts using real objects or drawings.

Popular Curricula for Special Needs: Science


- Apologia student notebooks
- National Geographic
- Ranger Rick
- Real Science for Kids
- Super Charged Science

28

Therapies

- For some children, therapy IS their homeschooling
- IDEA law = 10% of allocated funds are to private schools. May be able to request some to be allocated
- Private Insurance MAY cover some, but many insurance companies have a blackout for ages K-12 (depend on schools)
- Look into your state Katie Beckett laws, if applicable

29



Questions About
Curriculum or
Therapies?

30

4 Lies We Tend to Believe

1) I Am Alone in My Struggles:

- Feeling Isolated? Seek out Support (Spiritual, Books, Podcasts, Online)
- Overcome the fear that others would think poorly of you for sharing your struggles. SO many deal with the same issues
- In person or online: I would love to share and talk with you!

31

4 Lies We Tend to Believe

2) I Can't Do This

- Every parent has doubts and fears
- Accept that this will be difficult
- You don't have to do this in your own strength
- Learn to Lean

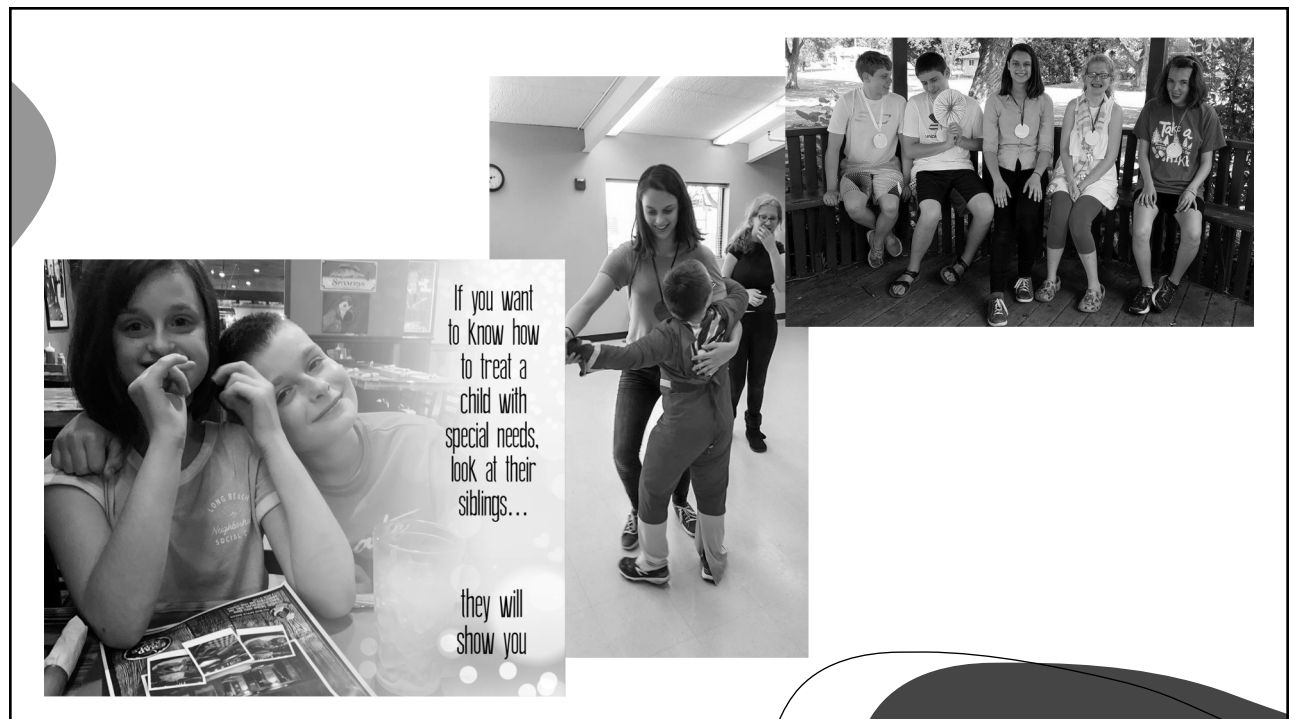
32

4 Lies We Tend to Believe

3) I Am Ruining My Other Children

- Special Needs are time consuming
- Siblings feel they need to fend for themselves more often
- They feel the stress and struggles, too
- Guilt can get in the way
- Yes, we can be intentional with all our children, but we need grace, too
- Our other children can learn: Attentiveness, Encouragement, Discernment, Flexibility, Helpfulness, and Empathy
- You may be surprised by the result of your family's circumstances

33



34

4 Lies We Tend to Believe

4) I Can't Homeschool My Special Needs Child

- We can. We do. We adapt, we adjust, we encourage, we support, we provide opportunities, we love
- Lay down your expectations. This is the hardest part, but it is the most important part for our children. We don't realize how much our expectations play into our emotions.

Remember to presume competence. Even in yourself.

35

Socialization: *quality over quantity*

- First, there aren't as many bullying issues in homeschool
- Second, you are there to provide support and guidance as needed
- Third: Children need to practice in real world environments
- Fourth, pleasurable experiences are super motivating.

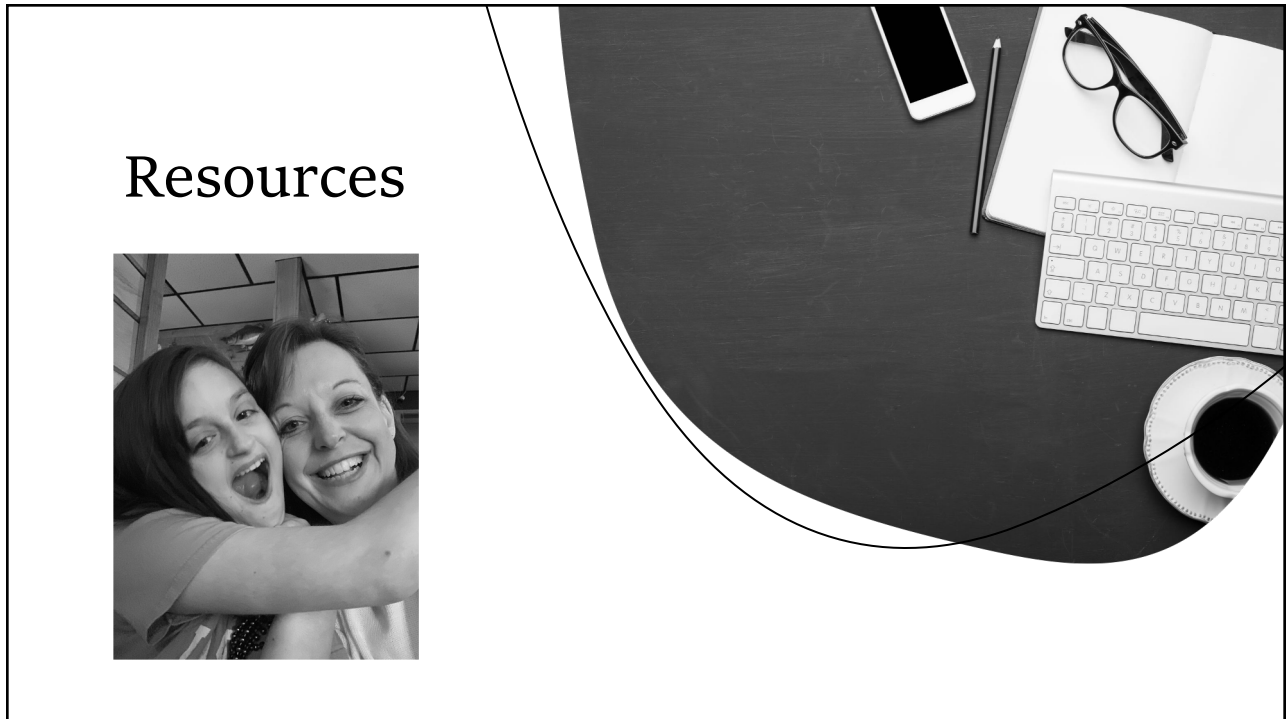
4-H, playgrounds, church, play dates, libraries, book clubs, sports, youth group, you name it. These are all fun experiences, and center around shared passions. Also, they only last so long, and only for so many days a week. So, less burnout. If they're having a bad day, you can just pull back and take the day off. No pressure for attendance.

- Finally, be intentional, and seek opportunities for your homeschool experience

36



37



38

