

A Day in the Life of Three Homeschooling Families

Sarah Gray

Rhythms

Rather than establishing a complex schedule, determine the simple rhythms that are most important to your family. Being aware of each rhythm will keep your family on a good schedule without being overly concerned with time.

“Rhythms establish trust. They offer children a sense of order... the joy of anticipation and the security of things to be counted on, every day. Busyness, change, and improvisation will still have keys to your house, but they won't entirely rule the day. Not when rhythms are honored. Consistency will gain a foothold. And as you consider adding new rhythms to your family life, remember: in addition to consistency, the best daily rhythms offer connection.”

- Kim John Payne, *Simplicity Parenting*

“New leaders need to order, not control, chaos.”

- Margaret Wheatley, *Leadership and the New Science*

Rhythms I Use in My Family

Calm - Morning Chores/Individual Devotional

Together - Breakfast

Inspiring - Mom School

Energetic - Music

Absorbing - Basic School

Sharing - Lunch

Alone - Nap Time

Creative - Own School

Together - Play Time

Calm - Bed Time

Take time each week to inventory your rhythms and evaluate which are the most important to continue, to improve, or to stop doing for a time. Doing this will help you have a sense of peace and stability in knowing you are doing the most important things, and doing them well, even when life gets crazy.

“Not all rhythms, done regularly, constitute a sense of rhythm.... A rhythm's value comes from the intentions behind it. As you consider increasing the rhythms in your family life, ask yourself: Would this make life easier, more balanced? Will this help with what we need to do? More importantly, will this contribute to the way we want to live?”

- Payne, *Simplicity Parenting*

It is good to have a mentor or support group who you can discuss with, so that you can be sure the activities are actually fulfilling their purpose, and not just steps that are taking you nowhere, or the wrong direction.

“In accounting for stress, difficult behavior, or missed opportunities, look to organizing the rhythm a bit more. Think about, what are your children’s ‘flashpoints’ or difficult periods. [Think about] transitions, [such as] getting out the door in the morning [and] coming to dinner. The flow of the day will be improved when rhythm can be brought to those points. However, start small. Choose basic activities that need to be made more consistent, and work up from there.”

- Payne, *Simplicity Parenting*

Establish what you want the rhythm to do, what is missing that you want to improve, then find an activity that fits that purpose and tweak the activity or switch it out, until it is fulfilling the purpose for the rhythm.

I know from experience that can take confidence in this:

“We are connected by the things we do together. There is a regularity, a consistency to what we do as a family.”

- Payne, *Simplicity Parenting*

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Mary Catherine York

The House of York Homeschool Schedule 2015 - 2016

5:45am	Drive Katherine to Seminary	12:00pm	Molly receives tutoring and instruction from me as needed while she completes work from homeschool co-op and online classes.
6:00am	Exercise and/or read scriptures		
6:50am	Pick up Katherine from Seminary. Get Olivia ready for school	2:00pm	Take Katherine and Molly to tutors. Monday & Tuesday is the reading and writing tutor. Tuesday & Thursday is the math tutor.
7:30am	Family scripture study		
8:00am	Molly in Personal Leadership class with Williamsburg Academy. Finish getting Olivia ready for school.	3:30pm	Pick up Olivia from school
8:20am	Take Olivia to Broomfield Academy	4:00pm	Snacks/ Tapas
9:00am	Katherine in online classes and receiving tutoring and instruction from me. Molly takes band and an elective at Aspen Creek.	5:00pm	Dinner, evening activities, and left over schoolwork.
		9:00pm	Bedtime
11:30am	Lunch		To keep the middle school and high school aged children on track I have weekly mentor meetings with them. My husband meets with them in a less formal manner once a week as well. My husband and I counsel together sometime on the weekends regarding their schooling and other family matters.

The House of York Homeschooling Schedule from Years Past, a Sample.

6:20am	Teach Seminary	12:00pm	I do bills, desk chores and am clean-up helper. The girls clean up lunch.
7:20am	Wake children and they do their morning chores. Katherine helps Olivia.	12:30pm	Prepare Olivia for nap. Read aloud to her. Older girls' personal scripture study.
7:30am	I exercise	1:00pm	Nap for me and Olivia. The older girls do personal reading of their choice or other quiet activities.
8:00am	Family devotional and scripture study	2:00pm	Afternoon free choice activities and afternoon snack.
9:00am	Preschool with Olivia. K & M typing and piano practice	3:30pm	Monthly Clean/ Declutter chores. (There is a schedule for that.)
9:30am	Math	4:00pm	Evening activities and I prepare seminary.
10:00am	Science and Social Studies on alternating days	6:00pm	Dinner and family time
10:30am	Language Arts	9:00pm	Bedtime
11:30am	Lunch		

Most of the early years looked like this. As the kids were older and I relaxed into the rhythm of homeschooling, I adopted a more relaxed and child centered learning approach. We had one year when nothing was structured by me but the time was set aside and they chose all of their learning for that year. And we had a year when we were homeschooling out of a box due to being displaced by a flood. Each year is a beautiful new adventure.