



Juggling Toddlers, Teens, and In Betweens

By: Janet Cox



Meet My Family:

10 kids at home, ages 1 to 16

12 kids in all, 3 adopted, 9 biological

(One is married with 5 kids, and one is an angel in heaven.)

We have homeschooled since the beginning.



More Different Than Alike

Different ages

Gifted learners

Different interests

Struggling Learners

Different talents

Dyslexia

Different learning styles

ADHD and Sensory Issues

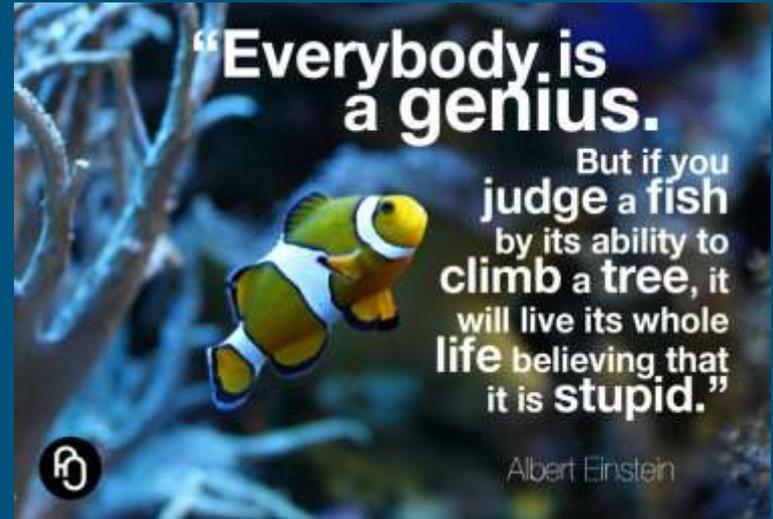
Different personalities

Perfectionist

Different quirks

OCD

Different people!



Homeschooling allows you to find and encourage each child's gifts!

Find the Beauty in the Differences



Make a plan, but be flexible

Pray about your homeschool, your plan, and your focus for each child.

Heavenly Father knows and loves your children.

Counsel WITH them. Set challenges together.

Give them ownership of goals. They will often set goals much harder than you will!

Five point reviews: Spiritual, Physical, Emotional, Mental, Social, (Financial)



Prioritize

Consider the quadrants where you spend the most time.

Think outside the box for things you can cut out or change.

Does laundry REALLY need to be folded?



Good



Better

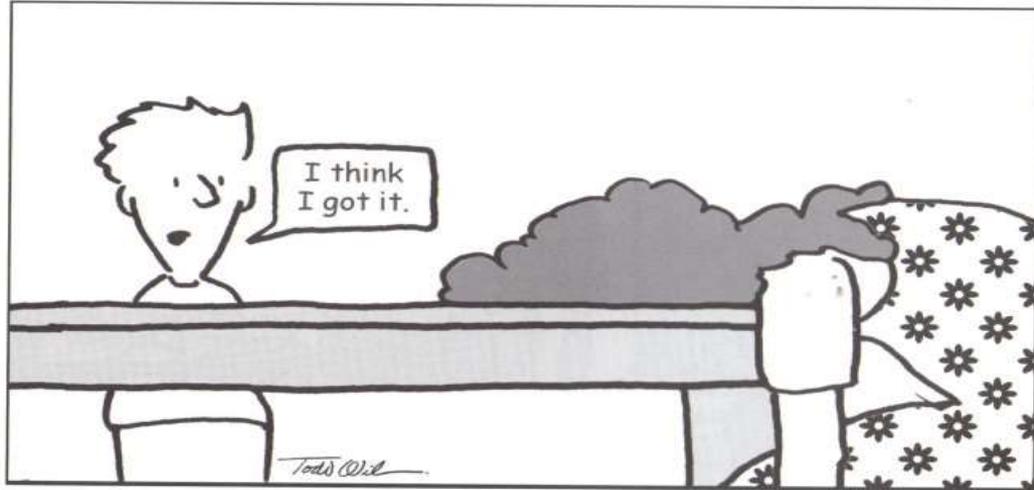


Best



Dallin H. Oaks

Relationships and Family First, School Second



The idea for this cartoon was submitted by Dave Jorgensen.

5 minutes after Mindy died trying,
Brice finally understood fractions.

Perfect Plan meets Real Life: Roll with the punches

Husband Ruptures Appendix

Insane weather with lots of snow

Grandmother passes away

Mom gets mastitis

Trip to Disneyland

Married Daughter has baby

Child throws fit or refuses to do assigned work

Kids (or mom) get sick

Friend needs help

“Perfect” curriculum isn’t so perfect

Kid gets “stuck” on a concept

Remember: You are preparing your kids for real life, not a fairy tale world where everything goes as planned.

Family MANAGEMENT



Buddy System

Each older kid, after age 8, is paired with a younger sibling, at age 1.

Big Buddy: finds and ties shoes, buckles carseat, pushes stroller, holds little buddy's hand and just in general watches out for their "buddy."

Big Buddy gets to eat any treats or leftovers little buddy leaves behind.



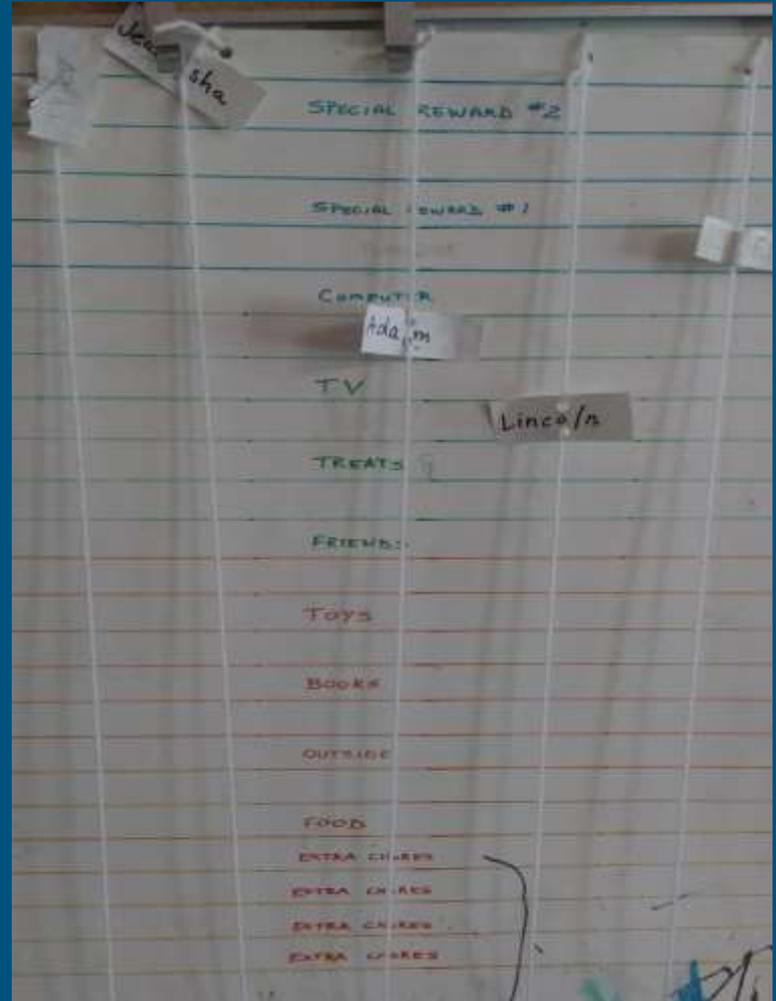
You love those you serve. Each buddy pair have extra special relationships with each other.

Discipline Ladder

Kids move up and down the ladder based on choices they make. If they are at or above a privilege, they get to participate. If they are below, they miss out.

Moving up one step takes an extra job or school work.

Helps me not punish everyone after a rough day or bad attitude from one kid.



Scheduling

We take lots of time off and do lighter days when the weather is nice, in spring and fall, and do school when it's too hot or too cold to be outside.

We take Tuesday off for co-op and game day.

We take vacations when everyone else is in school.

Other options: 6 weeks on, 1 week off

Evening school instead of mornings



Use your “servants”

Servants are any tool or curriculum I can put to work teaching, grading, or cleaning something.

Online math program/games (Khan Academy, Sumdog, Prodigy)

Documentaries or Brainpop videos

Online classes (Udacity, Coursera, or virtual schools)

Independent curriculum: Teaching Textbooks, Life of Fred, upper level LA

Evaluate where YOUR time is best spent.

Curriculum are tools to serve and help you.

They are not the master!!!

Zones: Mom is the Manager, not the Maid

The house is divided into zones that individual kids are responsible for. They make suggestions for improving their zone or making it easier.

As they master a zone, they can add an apprentice (younger sibling helper to train)

Train and delegate to the youngest possible helper.

If I work on something in their zone, I am helping them. It is their work, not mine.

Current Zones: Hand Dishes; Dishes, Table, and Counters; Bathrooms; Laundry; Family Room; Basement (Toy room); Wood Floor



A large, dense pile of various metal nuts and bolts surrounds a central text area. The hardware includes hex nuts, flange nuts, lock washers, and bolts of different sizes and finishes, all scattered on a dark, textured surface. The text is centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Nuts and Bolts: Day-to-Day Ideas

First Things First

Scriptures, Prayers, and Devotional set the tone of the day.

I use carpet sample rugs, and give a skittle to whoever sits on their prayer rug for all of devotional.



Our devotional consists of an opening prayer, primary songs, video clips on topics through LDS Scripture Stories iPad app, stories from the Friend, testimonies, Faith in God discussions, talk practice, etc

Anyone who has not done personal prayers and scriptures does that right after devotional time before other school work.

Start with the littles-- Some “mom time” in the morning goes a long way

Get essential reading/phonics lessons done while older kids work independently or do chores.

Then provide independent “school” activities, busy bags, or partner an older sibling while you work with the older kids.



Busy Bags

Busy Bags: Anything you can put together in a ziploc bag that can be easily used independently and is easily cleaned up.

Examples: pipecleaners, cotton balls and tweezers or tongs, water painting, stickers, egg cartons and beans, coloring books, think of dollar store items or household items you can repurpose. Google search of “busy bags” brings up hundreds of ideas.

In general, the less work I put into making them, the more the kids like them.



Busy Projects

Busy projects: Things preschoolers can do that take little or no prep

Make confetti, cut lines on notebook paper, string cereal, play with food (form pictures with and cut cooked spaghetti, make faces with snack items, place raisins on each letter or dot or shape,) dot art with q tips or stickers, “painting” with water

“Fun” Chore type activities also work great: washing dishes in warm water and bubbles, sweeping, washing walls or windows, scrubbing the floor, folding washclothes, matching socks



Media

Media (internet, audio books, movies, tablets) can be a great tool if used wisely. Can be almost addicting for some kids.



We love Audible for audiobooks

Magic School Bus, Wild Kratts, and Liberty's Kids DVD's

Documentaries-- have them engage by drawing a picture or reporting back on what they watched.

Reading Eggs, Headsprout, Dreambox, Sumdog, Prodigy Math

Using older kids

Let big kids “teach” preschool

Alternate who has a break, so they can play with younger siblings while you help another child.

Recognize the skills and relationships they gain from teaching.

Practice editing by helping a sibling with writing, review math facts by checking a sibling’s work



Encourage Independence

There is only one you, so choose and use programs that are directed to the student.

Mom's role is mentor, not primary teacher for some areas.

Online classes can teach skills that have more value than the content of the class.

Remember: Your goal is to create lifetime learners and work yourself out of a job!



Use “Dead” time

Consolidate activities to reduce running around.

Use the time in the car with audiobooks, games, or activities.

Use waiting time.

Animal game, Up and Down, Memory games, ABC games,



You're not alone!

Let others share their passions with your kids!

Use other homeschool moms-- you will need support on hard days!

Every kid needs someone besides parents who think they are great!

Use ward members, neighbors, anyone with a hobby or passion can be a resource.

Service is a great way to initiate connections.



God gives us seasons for a reason

[Mosiah 4:27](#) And see that all these things are done in wisdom and order; for it is not requisite that a man should run faster than he has strength. And again, it is expedient that he should be diligent, that thereby he might win the prize; therefore, all things must be done in order.

It's okay to give ourselves, or our kids, permission to take a breather.



Mom Care

Don't forget that your needs are important too!

You are teaching your daughters to take care of themselves and teaching your sons to take care of their wives!

The five point review (Spiritual, Emotional, Social, Mental, Physical (Financial)) works for mom too!





THE DAYS MAY BE LONG, BUT THE
YEARS ARE SHORT!

ENJOY THE JOURNEY!