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7 Ways to Keep Homeschooling from Becoming Overwhelming



Twenty years of homeschooling taught me a few things. Here are seven worth remembering.

1. Choose your curriculum. Then give yourself permission to change it.

Researching curriculum is a great idea. But if something isn't working for your child or your family, get curious! Sometimes a small tweak is enough. Sometimes it's time to try something else.

2. Consistency matters, even early on.

Consistency builds foundational skills and habits. When children develop a predictable routine that includes reading, writing, and mathematics every day, they're practicing habits that will serve them in future studies and work. Small, consistent efforts build academic skills and character over time.

3. Remember to ask, “WHY do we do what we do?”

Children need strong foundations. As they grow, help them connect what they learn with why they're learning it. Introduce big ideas: the Constitution, the slope of a line, a well-supported thesis. Ask why, invite questions, and help them explain their reasoning. Understanding the purpose behind learning can build motivation and critical thinking.

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4. Remember to encourage AND challenge.

Reading carefully, writing clearly, thinking critically, and completing complicated tasks independently are skills your children will need long after graduation. But these skills take practice. Challenge children to think for themselves, and encourage each next step. In a world where AI can produce answers in seconds, independent thinking will help them contribute something valuable to their generation.



5. Ask lots of different and creative questions.

Curiosity is a wonderful teacher. Take a field trip and ask your children what happened first, next, and last. Read another chapter and ask for one word that captures how it feels, or which character they loved most—and why. Make a game of asking each other questions about history, science, or vocabulary. Sometimes the best lessons begin with, “Mom! Dad! Why does that happen?”

6. Model and teach—because that's how we all learn.

Be deliberate about teaching patience, generosity, forgiveness, responsibility, and restoring relationships. And when you're the one who gets it wrong (it happens!), ask forgiveness. Show your children what the standard looks like, including how to respond when you fall short of it.

We used to say, "If you can get along with your irritating sibling, you can get along with anyone!"

7. Celebrate!

Celebrate the paragraph that finally makes sense, the math problem solved independently, or the child who persevered through something difficult. Celebrate five minutes of sitting in a chair when that's an accomplishment, or the student who sticks with a least-favorite subject.

Some days won't go as planned. That's all right. Learning happens one step at a time.

A little reminder:

Celebrate positive steps toward learning, improving, and growing as a family. Make dinner a time to remember what everyone did well. Try encouraging three times for every correction. And enjoy today—because the days are slow, but the years are fast!

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