

# HOPE *for the* Overwhelmed Homeschooler

Best tips for **SIMPLIFYING** your homeschool  
and **FOCUSING** on what matters most,  
from today's leading homeschool  
experts and speakers.



*Sarah Mackenzie*

## SARAH MACKENZIE

Dear Friend—If you're anything like me, you need to know where your focus is best spent. Time and energy are at a premium and when your head hits the pillow at night, *you want to know that you spent those hours wisely and well.*

I hope this guide gives you a boost for the hard days. These experts and speakers all have unique paradigms when it comes to education and what matters most in the life of a child. *Read through them and choose one that resonates with you*—that grabs you by the eyeballs and makes you want to read it again.

And if you're curious as to what I do when my day is falling off the rails... if you'd like to where I put my attention and focus when our day spins out of orbit and I need to have *a bare-bones kind of day*... well, I tell you that in a video right [here](#). You may have already seen it before downloading this guide, but if you haven't, you can click [here](#) to watch.

I wish you hope and joy in your homeschooling, friend!

*Sarah Mackenzie*

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Author of *Teaching from Rest: A Homeschooler's Guide to Unshakable Peace*; Creator, [Read-Aloud Revival](#)



## ANDREW KERN

Stop trying to get through so much. Instead, spend time letting more get through you—and through your children. You're too worried about an unknown assessment. *Focus on truth.*

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President, [CiRCE Institute](#)



## LEILA LAWLER

Close your eyes for a moment and think, “Ma and Pa educated their children in a covered wagon. They made it through the Long Winter. The children only went to school when they weren’t needed on the farm. They had a Bible, a fiddle, and Shakespeare.

*I can do this.*



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Mother of 7, author of *The Little Oratory*, writer at [Like Mother, Like Daughter](#)



## JULIE BOGART

Stop talking. Start doing. Instead of assigning pages or problems, begin. Do them yourself, in front of your child, without saying a word. See who joins you. Participate in any new learning experience, first, without lecture or preamble, in front of your children. *Create the conditions of partnership in learning* and watch your children become curious to learn.

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Creator, [Brave Writer](#)



## ANDREW PUDEWA

Prioritize.

1. Read to your children.
2. Write a little bit.
3. Do some math.
4. Go outside.
5. Play or sing some music.

*Everything else is frosting.*

And remember, about 90% of what happens in schools is classroom management and logistics, so if you get one decent hour of home education, you're ahead of the institutions.



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Founder & director, [Institute for Excellence in Writing](#)



## CINDY ROLLINS

Have two school plans always in play. Plan A is for those days when Mom can be fully engaged. It includes Morning Time, the children's own lists, and any teacher-intensive subjects such as Latin. I always tried to have as many Plan A days as possible.

BUT... *Life happens.* Some years have more "life" than others.

So Plan B is for the other days. Plan B is math, narration, reading (at least 2 hours) to be done no matter what!

Younger children can easily afford to only do school on Plan A days. For younger children Plan B is play and Plan A is also a lot of play.

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Mother of 9, host of [The Mason Jar podcast](#)



## SUSAN WISE BAUER

When everything seems to be falling apart, stop doing EVERYTHING except for math and language arts for one week. Do a really good job with math and language arts. Then, add back in one subject per child every three days.

If you hit the point where you're overwhelmed by adding in the next subject, *you may be spreading yourself too thin.* Ask yourself whether everything you're doing is necessary. Remember that the younger your children are, the more important it is to do fewer subjects very thoroughly.



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Author of *The Well-Trained Mind*, owner of [Peace Hill Press](#)



## JANICE CAMPBELL

*Have a simple routine to start your school day.*

School routines differ from year to year, but usually the first goal is to get everyone gathered at a specific time so school can begin. The routine can be simple—the goal is to get everyone gathered with what you need in order to begin.

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Creator, [Everyday Education](#)



## REA BERG

Make sure you always have on hand some really silly joke books, riddles, the poetry of Shel Silverstein (*Where the Sidewalk Ends*, *A Light in the Attic*, etc.), the mind-bending limericks of Edward Lear, or the delightfully silly books of Bill Peet (*Cyrus the Unsinkable Sea Serpent*, *Kermit the Hermit*, *The Caboose Who Got Loose*, and many more).

Dr. Seuss books will do in a pinch, but the main thing is to

stop and take a breath for some light moments when the stress of algebra, English grammar, or Latin conjugations is getting everyone down.



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Founder, Beautiful Feet Books



## SONYA SHAFER

Remember that you don't have to do every school subject every day. Your child will continue to grow in a particular area if you work on it only two or three times a week. In fact, he might make more progress because variety heightens interest and attention.

Don't get caught in the trap of plodding through the same-old, same-old every day of the week . . . and month . . . and year. *Mix things up a bit* and enjoy the refreshment that change can bring!

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Co-founder, Simply Charlotte Mason

