

## Ask an Expert: Monthly Q&A with Homeschool Coaches – Transcript

Good morning and welcome! We're so glad you're here. We're placing a quick question in the chat—let us know where you're watching from, where you homeschool, and how long you've been doing it. Let's start with some quick introductions.

My name is Heather Young. I'm the Customer Relations Member Support Manager and one of our coaches. With me are Vicky, Jessica, and Lindsay. I've been homeschooling for about eleven years, mostly in the high school and junior high years.

Hi, I'm Vicki Garcia, the Customer Relations and Spanish Member Support Specialist at THSC. I live in Hempstead, Texas, and have been homeschooling for over twelve years. My kids are going into 12th, 11th, and 7th grade. I love encouraging families on their homeschool journeys!

I'm Jessica McGurra, the Member Support Volunteer Specialist. I also do some coaching. All four of my kids have graduated from homeschooling. Two are in college, and two have families of their own.

I'm Lindsay Hoyle, Special Needs Specialist and newer staff member at THSC. I've homeschooled for about 15 years and previously worked as a special education teacher for three and a half years. I have four children—one has graduated and joined the army, one is in public school, and two are homeschooling in 10th and 7th grade.

Let's dive into the questions. We received several about curriculum for special needs children. First, let's start with a quick review of Texas homeschool law. There are three legal requirements: (1) instruction must be bona fide, meaning real and not a sham; (2) curriculum must be in visual form (books, videos, manipulatives); (3) five basic subjects must be covered: good citizenship, math, reading, spelling, and grammar.

Important note for families transitioning out of public school: you do not need an ARD meeting to withdraw a special needs student. If your child is receiving services in public school, you may still be eligible to receive district support after withdrawing. Please reach out to us at [thsc.org/contact](https://thsc.org/contact) or through your member portal for help.

Back to curriculum: There isn't typically one curriculum per diagnosis, but many can be adapted. Choose based on your child's learning style—hands-on, auditory, visual, etc. Kathy Duffy Reviews is a great resource for evaluating curriculum. Some that we've personally used include Math-U-See (great manipulatives), All About Reading and All About Spelling (excellent for visual/kinesthetic learners), and Bob Jones University materials (easily modifiable).

Don't feel tied to using every subject from a single provider. Mix and match. Modify assignments. Use manipulatives. Reduce the workload if needed. Talk through lessons instead of writing everything down—especially for children with dysgraphia or visual processing issues.

Interest-led learning can also make a big difference, especially for children with ADHD. For example, my son taught himself stop-motion animation because it fascinated him. Learning happens all day in various forms. As he once told me, “Mom, I don’t like school—but I love learning.” That changed everything for us.

Give your kids breaks. Set a timer for work sessions, then allow them to run, play, or get a snack. A sticker chart or token system can help reinforce positive behavior. Make learning fun and flexible. Be firm but kind with routines and expectations. Use tools like exercise balls, standing desks, or stretchy bands for kids who need sensory input.

If you're juggling multiple children, structure your time. Assign time blocks for each child and stick to them. Print schedules for each one and explain that you'll help them during their designated slot.

Limit distractions like screens during school hours. This applies to parents too—set the tone for focused learning. For older students struggling with ELA, look into programs like IEW, WriteShop, Campfire Curriculums, or Simply Charlotte Mason. Break the writing process into smaller parts: brainstorming, organizing, writing, and revising.

Social skills came up as a question too. Easy Peasy All-in-One Homeschool has a free curriculum for younger children. Use that as a framework and build in age-appropriate lessons. Practice social interactions at home first, then gradually move into more public settings—playdates, co-ops, family gatherings. Social stories are great for prepping kids ahead of time.

Physical education doesn't have to be structured. Walks, trampoline time, dance breaks, YMCA visits, youth sports, or just nature hikes all count. Popsicle sticks with exercises and dice rolls make great quick activities. Add classical music or quiet time afterward to transition back to schoolwork. Some online programs like Easy Peasy even offer PE courses. Think outside the box and remember: homeschooling is flexible.

Finally, encouragement: Start slow. Make your first day fun—play games, cook, dream about the year ahead. Begin with just two subjects. Take pictures. Make memories. It goes by fast. And if a curriculum doesn't work, it's okay to switch—even mid-year.

Thank you all for joining us. Our next Monthly Q&A is August 27 (register through your member portal). We're also launching a Back-to-Homeschool Webinar Series starting August 7. The first topic is Homeschooling 101. We're here to walk alongside you—use your member benefits! Premium members get one-on-one coaching calls. Advanced members can upgrade anytime. Reach out if you need help, missed any links, or want the recording—it'll be posted in your member portal soon.

Blessings on your school year!