

THSC Back-to-School Webinar Week One

Session: Homeschool 101 with Heather Young & Anita Scott

Host: Susan M. – Director of Events, Texas Home School Coalition

Welcome & Introductions

Susan:

Welcome to our first "Back to School, Back to Homeschool" webinar in our series! We're letting people join the room, then we'll get started. We are so glad y'all are here—this is very exciting.

Please drop in the chat where you're joining from. We've had attendees from all over Texas, across the U.S., and even as far away as Australia.

I'm Susan, Director of Events at Texas Home School Coalition (THSC) and a retired homeschool mom. Our mission at THSC is to encourage, equip, and advocate for homeschooling across the state. We love planning these value-packed webinars to help you start your school year strong.

Before we begin, keep your chat open. We have live help available, and links will be shared for resources mentioned today. If you have a question for Heather or Anita, drop it in the chat—we'll answer as many as we can. Even if we don't get to your question, it helps us plan future webinars.

Sponsor Spotlight – Trail Life USA

Our sponsor today is Trail Life USA—an amazing, Christ-centered, church-based, boy-focused mentoring and discipleship program. It helps boys grow spiritually, physically, and mentally, learn manly skills, and develop leadership. As a mom of three sons, I love what they do.

[Video plays featuring testimonies from Trail Life boys, leaders, and parents.]

Thank you to Trail Life for supporting this webinar.

Speaker Introductions

Heather Young

- Joined THSC in 2021 as a Special Needs Specialist; now Customer Relations Manager.
- Nearly 10 years in public school special education before homeschooling her own children since 2013.
- Married 18 years with two high schoolers.
- Holds a B.A. in Psychology, M.A. in Marriage & Family, and M.A. in School Counseling.
- Loves camping, reading, Aggie football, and serving in dance ministry.

Anita Scott

- Joined THSC in 2022 after decades as a teacher and administrator.
- Homeschooled with her seven siblings in a three-bedroom home before her father founded a homeschool Christian school.
- Works in THSC's legal process to protect homeschool freedoms.
- Foster mom to teens, with a mantra: "God sets the lonely in families."
- Adventurous—has bungee jumped, skydived, and still wants to paraglide and (someday) ride a giraffe.

Texas Homeschool Freedom – Anita Scott

- **Texas is one of the freest states to homeschool.**
Homeschooling became explicitly legal in 1994 after a unanimous Texas Supreme Court decision.
- **Only three requirements for homeschooling in Texas:**
 1. Instruction must be **bona fide** (you must actually homeschool if you say you are).
 2. Curriculum must be in a **visual form** (textbooks, workbooks, printouts, or video).
 3. Curriculum must cover **five basic subjects**: reading, spelling, grammar, mathematics, and good citizenship.

- **Good citizenship** = teaching your child to follow laws and honor authority inside and outside the home.
 - No school district, state agency, or official can dictate your hours, location, or curriculum.
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Withdrawing from a School

- If your child has **never** attended public, charter, or private school—you just start homeschooling. No notification required.
 - If your child **has attended**, submit a withdrawal form. THSC has an online form that sends directly to the school—no in-person visit required.
 - If your child was in special education (public or private), notify the ARD committee when withdrawing.
 - THSC coaches can help with a “Letter of Assurance” if a school challenges your withdrawal.
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Choosing Curriculum – Heather Young

- **Curriculum is a tool and a guide.**
It’s not a master you must obey—it serves you and your child.
- Many styles exist: traditional, online, Charlotte Mason, unschooling, eclectic.
Choose based on your child’s learning style, strengths, and weaknesses.
- **No diagnosis-specific curriculum.** Match the method to the learner.
- Consider:
 - Learning style and interests
 - Your schedule and budget
 - Level of independence your child has
- Helpful sites:

- understood.org – accommodations list
 - kathyduffyreviews.com – curriculum reviews
 - Document accommodations—they can help with college or testing later.
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Scheduling & Routines

- **Schedules** = timed plans.
Routines = flexible sequences.
 - Don't be afraid to use evenings, weekends, or "car-schooling" if you have appointments.
 - Start with a "soft start" to the year—add subjects gradually.
 - Remember: cooking, errands, and field trips can all be learning experiences.
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Homeschooling Multiple Ages

- Involve younger kids with educational toys or activities while teaching older kids.
 - Let older kids help teach younger siblings—this builds leadership.
 - Use unit studies, nature walks, and games to teach multiple ages together.
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Record Keeping

- No required reporting in Texas, but keeping records helps with:
 - Placement decisions
 - Graduation readiness
 - College applications

- Options:
 - **Portfolio** with samples, photos, and project records
 - THSC member tools: transcript templates, report card generator, ILP (Individualized Learning Plan) generator
 - Simple spiral notebook or planners for accountability and independence training
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Encouragement for Parents

- Your plan will change—and that’s okay.
 - Building relationships and fostering a love for learning is as important as academics.
 - Proverbs 3:5–6 has been a guiding scripture: *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding...”*
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Q&A Highlights

Q: How do I teach my little ones to read and foster a love for reading?

- Read aloud daily.
- Make reading part of family life—tea time, themed events, “book tastings.”
- Let kids see you reading and enjoying it.

Q: How do I know my child is ready to graduate?

- You determine graduation requirements.
- Check TEA guidelines for reference if planning for college/trade school admission.

Q: How do I create a homeschool transcript?

- Keep it simple—list courses and credits, not curriculum names.
- THSC offers transcript templates for members.
- Use “Homeschool” as the school name to avoid verification confusion.

Q: How do I homeschool while working full-time?

- Use evenings, weekends, and independent work blocks.
- Meal plan to free up time.
- Use online programs or recorded lessons.
- Check in during lunch breaks.

Closing Announcements

- **Special Offer:** THSC membership for \$109 (regular \$149) + free convention recordings (\$99 value).
- Upcoming webinars in the series:
 1. **Aug 14:** Raising Readers – Whitney Newby
 2. **Aug 21:** Helping Your Kids Keep Their Faith – Emily Steel
 3. **Aug 24:** Getting Back on Track After Setbacks – Susan M.

Thank you to Trail Life USA and Horace Mann for sponsoring.

Thank you to Heather Young and Anita Scott for sharing their wisdom.

And thank you to everyone for joining—THSC is here to support and encourage you throughout your homeschool journey.