

Heather Young: Good morning. We are so glad to be here with everybody today. We are going to be talking about real-world learning that matters. So this will cover different things like good citizenship and service projects and electives, those kinds of things.

Heather Young: But first off, we want to invite everybody to let us know where you're joining us from, how long you've been homeschooling, anything like that that you want to add in there. My name is Heather Young, I am the Customer Relations Member Support Manager, and we have been homeschooling for...

Heather Young: I do this every week, and I keep forgetting how long we've been homeschooling.

Heather Young: But we,

Heather Young: 13 years? Somewhere around there. My oldest is a senior, and my youngest is a freshman, so we are right there, in those high school years. So, and I'm gonna let the rest of our coaches also introduce themselves a little bit. So, Lindsey, why don't you go?

Lindsey Hoyle: Sure, so I'm Lindsey Hoyle. I'm the outreach manager for THSC, and I also get to do some coaching, as well. So, I've been homeschooling for over 15 years. I have two kids in college.

Lindsey Hoyle: Another one that is a junior in high school and then an eighth grader. So we're still in all the different levels and enjoying that, loving it. And so yeah, excited to get to talk to y'all today.

Heather Young: Awesome. Jessica.

Jessica Migura: Okay, well, my name is Jessica Migura. My husband and I homeschooled for about 25 years.

Jessica Migura: And all of our kids are all graduated. The oldest two have families of their own. The younger two are in college. So empty nesters here, but here for THSC member support and volunteer specialist and also a homeschool coach.

Jessica Migura: For getting started, or middle school, high school, college prep. So, glad y'all are here! We look forward to our Q&A today.

Vicky Garcia: Yes.

Heather Young: All right, and Vicky.

02:08 Vicky Garcia: Yes, and so my name is Vicky Garcia, and I'm, the Spanish and member support specialist here at THSC. I'm a coach as well. I have 3 kids, and we have homeschooled for

Vicky Garcia: over 12 years, graduated my oldest, and now I'm joining you from Mexico. I'm in Monterrey, and so I'm excited to be here with you for this topic.

Vicky Garcia: I'm just looking forward to share this... all this stuff that we have with you. So, thank you for being here.

Heather Young: Awesome.

Heather Young: And we also have our intern, Noelle, who will be in the background feeding different links and information into the chat. So watch for that coming soon.

Heather Young: All right, we're just gonna jump in here with, a few

Heather Young: slides, and then we'll get to our questions that have been submitted. But we wanted to talk about good citizenship. So, it is one of the five things that, within our Texas homeschool laws, that we're required to teach.

Heather Young: But good citizenship is kind of more than just a subject, you know, in a way, it's kind of our... it's life. And so, we wanted to touch on that and how that, could be...

Heather Young: applied into your day-to-day homeschooling. So good citizenship is really just learning about how to live in one's community, and understanding the principles of order, duty, and respect.

Heather Young: And so why is it important? You know, that's something that we discuss with our kids. You know. Why? Why is it important for us to be a good citizen? You know I love the quote.

Heather Young: That Ronald Reagan said, freedom is a fragile thing and is never more than one generation away from extinction. Extinction.

Heather Young: It is not ours by inheritance, it must be fought for and defended constantly by each generation. And so, that right there, passing down, good citizenship from generation to generation really is a way to help us just, you know.

Heather Young: You know, pass our freedom on from generation to generation.

Heather Young: So, our characteristics of good citizenship, that would look like, you know, truthfulness, justice, equality, respect for one another, and ourselves, responsibility in our daily life, both at home and just within our community.

04:37 Heather Young: And participating in government, however that might be, there's multiple ways to do that.

Heather Young: holding office, understanding the voting process, you know, there's all kinds of ways that we can, participate. So, girls, is there anything else that y'all want to add into what good citizenship is, and what that might look like?

Jessica Migura: Well, I guess I just during this culture in this day and time, I think it is really important.

Jessica Migura: for us as homeschool families to focus, you know, good portion on good citizenship, really, because a lot of that is maybe.

Jessica Migura: I guess in my mind I'm thinking right now, like a dying art of telling the history, good and bad, you know, of our nation. And it needs to, you know, be continued to be told. And you, you know, filtering it through God's word is important in how to be actively involved in your your community.

Jessica Migura: So I think it's a great topic to go over today.

Heather Young: Absolutely.

Vicky Garcia: May I add, I'm sorry about my cough, but I'm gonna try to say this

Vicky Garcia: As fast as I can. Just thinking about the, the...

Vicky Garcia: The first sentence there, learning about how to live in one's community.

Vicky Garcia: Understanding the principles of order, duty, and respect. That reminded me of.

Vicky Garcia: This, in July, I was teaching a class, my Sunday school class, we, we.

Vicky Garcia: I I taught the the story of Mary Slessor that was a missionary to Africa in Nigeria in the 18 in the mid

Vicky Garcia: 1800s, and she was inspired to go to Africa after the death of the missionary, David Livingston.

Vicky Garcia: And...

Vicky Garcia: Throughout her life, she went into these tribes, with people that were living, without order, killing each other, a lot of...

Vicky Garcia: Not... not having any rules, just killing

06:55 Vicky Garcia: Tribes with tribes for, all kinds of, Superstitious things.

Vicky Garcia: But when she went there, and God started using her to, begin teaching them certain things that were bringing order to the community.

Vicky Garcia: The, officers from England

Vicky Garcia: Saw that, potential on her, and they invited her to be, like, a representative or a counselor, someone from higher, you know, authorities from the government.

Vicky Garcia: So that she could be an asset and bring order to these tribes.

Vicky Garcia: And to me, when I think about citizenship is How,

Vicky Garcia: Amazing it is to have someone with this, vision that

Vicky Garcia: Yes, she went into these countries to bring the gospel, to share Jesus, but this affected the way, of course, which it does so much when we bring

Vicky Garcia: Jesus into our lives, and he brings order to our lives. But God used her with,

Vicky Garcia: connecting the government

Vicky Garcia: And bringing things into having respect for each other, bringing roads to these little villages there to stop killing each other. People would come to her for advice in different things about, you know.

Vicky Garcia: They had a lot of fights and arguments and would bring war. So just think about what it could be.

Vicky Garcia: our country, how would it look like without all these rules and duties and respect for each other? I just can just... I can just imagine, and I don't want to go into, you know, that. So that's why I see the worth of teaching

Vicky Garcia: good citizenship to our families and continue culture, having a culture of good citizenship.

Vicky Garcia: throughout our days in our generation. So just wanted to share Mary Slessor and her story.

Heather Young: No, thank you, thank you for that. It is, I mean, and a lot of times, it's... we think of good citizenship as being, like, government and economics when kids are older, you know? But we really can start when they're younger by feeding into them with character traits.

09:42 Heather Young: And, you know, just looking at the people in our community and what makes up our community. So there's so many ways to begin at such a young age.

Heather Young: Teaching them the... just what good citizenship is.

Heather Young: And so... This,

Heather Young: slide has tons of different resources that we, wanted to share. Some are obviously more geared towards elementary, some are geared towards middle or high school, and the ones that are middle, high school, some of those can be

Heather Young: Depending on your kiddo and depending on their maturity and those kinds of things, it could kind of,

Heather Young: You know, it could...

Heather Young: you know, you could use it for middle school, depending on the maturity of your kiddo. So, and I will apologize... I don't know what's going on, my internet is a little bit laggy, so I apologize for that. Hopefully, it'll... everything will get out there. So, but...

Heather Young: We... I do want to let y'all know that we have our Lone Star study, at THSC,

Heather Young: developed, and it goes through the Texas government. And so, you'll...

Heather Young: By going through this, you know, you can use it with kids of various ages, from around

Heather Young: I want to say third grade, but it could be a little bit younger than that, too. But, it builds. So, as they get older, you can revisit and do more, and so you could, you know, they would learn Texas government as well as our federal government. So...

Heather Young: But...

Heather Young: Like I said, some of these are, you know, you'll just have to look and see if it fits for your family. Anybody else have other...

Heather Young: At.

Heather Young: Resources that they want to highlight, I couldn't get my thoughts out.

Lindsey Hoyle: Yeah, I was gonna just share too that World Watch over here on the middle and high school resource is definitely one that could go elementary as well. I think they, that's such a

great tool to have, and actually we start our day with World Watch every day. So it's about a 20 minute, news.

11:52 Lindsey Hoyle: and it's really fun, because it's young kids, or, you know, high school, college-age kids that help with the production of that, and so it's really fun to watch for the kids. It's a very relatable topic that the kids enjoy, keeps them kind of up-to-date with politics that are going on, and then we just...

Lindsey Hoyle: Honestly, what works really good for my kids right now as a middle schooler in high school is I tell them jump on your email and email me a quick summary of your favorite story, why it stood out to you, what do you like about it, what'd you learn? And so that's just been kind of a fun way to incorporate technology with just a quick response that I can read quickly through my email.

Lindsey Hoyle: And so, we've used a lot of these resources, but

Lindsey Hoyle: I just wanted to point that one out, that Worldwatch is a good one. It does cost money to be a member, but it's very...

Lindsey Hoyle: is pretty cheap, and so I would say it's a great investment.

Heather Young: Yeah, and drive-through history is another one that

Heather Young: we've also used World Watch, but we're also using DriveThru History this year, and it goes through ancient history, through, American history, but they also have these, like, specialty, episodes, or...

Heather Young: shows where it talks about different things, like the history of Labor Day, the history of Mother's Day, and various different.

Heather Young: You know, holidays, so to speak, and that's another way that I taught my kids when we were younger.

Heather Young: We looked at the calendar, and whenever something came up, we, you know, celebrated that.

Heather Young: made cookies and took them to the fire station, or we wrote letters to, those that served. And so, there's all... there's different ways, but I will tell you, drive-through history, it's probably for

Heather Young: mature middle school into high school, just because of some of the topics that they cover in history. So, just wanted to... but some of those, you can find

13:48 Heather Young: for free on Amazon Prime, or TBN, or there's another one that I just learned about, it's called GLU, G-L-U, and it stands for God Loves You, it's a streaming service, and so they're on there, but

Heather Young: The... if you want to stream all of them and have the curriculum that comes with it, it does, you know, you do have to purchase that through the website, but that's also another good one that we have used, too, so...

Jessica Migura: Heather, we also have a, for a member benefit for a discount to the Epic Times.

Jessica Migura: This may be something that's more for like current events. But my husband had had that coming to him, you know, all the time. And he reads that, you know, every day. But that might be a good maybe resource for the more mature students, high school.

Heather Young: school.

Jessica Migura: You know, just for current events. But members do have a discount for that, just because I don't think it's on that list here that I can see, but...

Heather Young: Yeah, I don't think it is.

Jessica Migura: Times, yeah.

Heather Young: Yeah, no, that's good. Thank you for bringing that up, because there's so many resources, it's hard to get them all in. There's a lot. Yeah, but I think current events is another good way to look at good citizenship, because we need to know where we, you know, the history, but also current, so that we can... and a lot of times, you know, logical... logic and reasoning.

Heather Young: Plays into this, because we have to be able to, you know.

Heather Young: see different fallacies, or be able to, you know, critical thinking is very important. And so, one thing that we did in our co-op is we.

Heather Young: We gave our kids a list of questions during the last presidential election, and we had a presidential election, and the kids had to create their own platform, and then we would ask them questions.

Heather Young: And we encouraged them to, you know, that, you know, to... it's okay if we have different views, because we also need to learn how to, you know, be respectful of others, and we would talk through those. So it was kind of a fun thing. And another one, if you want to do something similar.

Heather Young: But when your kiddos are younger, my two kiddos debated

16:00 Heather Young: Crunchy Cheetos versus Puffy Cheetos, and they had to make their statement on which was better, and then we had our friends on Facebook vote.

Heather Young: Crunchy versus Puffy, and we looked at the, you know, the electoral vote versus the popular vote. It was just a real fun way to kind of, you know, do that when they were little, so...

Heather Young: Anything else anybody wants to add in there before I move on?

Vicky Garcia: I just wanted to mention, for the Patriot Academy, something that I found very helpful.

Vicky Garcia: We... we have the... the videos, I... I don't know what they're called. They... they have a video, Rick Green with his family, and they walk you through the different, sites, historical sites, and...

Vicky Garcia: for the making of the Constitution. And I remember watching these, all these videos with my kids.

Vicky Garcia: When they were, probably, in the,

Vicky Garcia: 5th grade, 6th grade, and it was very.

Vicky Garcia: inspiring, I guess, for... for... for them seeing, Rick Green's children quoting or having... mentioning or... or reciting big portions of the Constitution. So I... I just remember my... my son just...

Vicky Garcia: you know, getting his eyes big on me, and I'm, you know, giving him a look like, you see, you can do it if you would like to, you know? And it was very inspiring for him.

Vicky Garcia: And for them to see all those kids, that they're young, and they're very into history and facts and memorizing it. So if you have a kid that is, you know, that type of kid that likes challenge.

Vicky Garcia: I think watching these Patriot Academy videos would help.

Vicky Garcia: So, yeah, that's good.

Heather Young: That's good. That made me think of Liberty Kids, because Liberty Kids is, you know, for younger kiddos, it's kind of cartoonish, but it does take you through American history, and so...

18:20 Heather Young: We watched that, and my kids enjoyed watching that as we, as they grew up, so...

Heather Young: Okay, so some hands-on activities, which we've kind of talked about a few of them. You know, you can print out the map of the U.S. and color, you know.

Heather Young: during, like, say, an election time, and you can color the states red or blue to kind of see how that plays out. Our family would have election parties where we would have, like, themed food and stuff like that, just for the fun of it.

Heather Young: you know, I've already talked about holding your own debate, just simply talking about what the importance of voting is. I would take my kids with me when they were younger to vote, so that they would be aware of what it looked like when you were voting.

Heather Young: you know, same with the Texas flag. You can do with, you know, both the Texas and the United States flag.

Heather Young: Studying the history of our state, of other states.

Heather Young: Singing songs, learning the pledge, you know, those are just some other hands-on activities.

Heather Young: And.

Lindsey Hoyle: I was going to add to that. Just thinking about some activities that would go along with that is I know one year we wrote letters to the president. We've done that several different times over the years and the kids receive something back in the mail, so that's always really exciting, I think.

Heather Young: is.

Lindsey Hoyle: One of my kids, it was like almost a year later that they received something.

Heather Young: you.

Lindsey Hoyle: It was such a good thing, and it really helped them feel connected to that whole process.

Lindsey Hoyle: And then also, I think down here at the bottom of this page, actually, you mentioned Veterans Day. If your family is comfortable going to the nursing home and visiting different ones, not just family members, there are so many

20:04 Lindsey Hoyle: older adults that would probably love to talk about their experience with, you know, fighting for our country, or their service to the country in some way, so I would just encourage people, you know, not to neglect that population and go and spend time with them.

Heather Young: Absolutely.

Heather Young: You know, another thing that our family did that you just reminded me of is we always included just the whole family of somebody who served, because

Heather Young: The family also, it, there's a huge sacrifice on the part of the family and so just making sure that our, our kids understood the sacrifice that

Heather Young: The mom, the kids, they all made for our freedom, you know, so, that, and then also.

Heather Young: I forgot, but my son, during a research project one time, also wrote to our state representative, and he received something back, too. So... so yeah, it's really kind of fun, because then it feels tangible. It makes this huge, abstract

Heather Young: concept of history and good citizenship, and really makes it tangible when we do these hands-on type of activities. So

Lindsey Hoyle: Yeah. And Heather, just to add to that one thing, so I live, really close to an Air Force base here in Texas. And so, we, I think just, I would like to just express that from THSC, we are so grateful for those who are serving and our homeschool families, like you said, the spouse, the mother, or the father that's, that's at home. Maybe somebody gets deployed.

Lindsey Hoyle: Man, we are here to support families and parents. So if anybody ever had, you know, a need or needed to call in and talk to one of us coaches just for encouragement that you can do this.

Heather Young: talk.

Lindsey Hoyle: We want to support our homeschool community, so very thankful for those families who are giving. Absolutely.

Heather Young: Absolutely.

Heather Young: Absolutely.

Heather Young: You know, you can also identify historical figures, and just kind of like Vicky was talking about earlier, and it, you know, who have these character traits of, you know, truth and justice and equality, respect for, you know, oneself.

22:16 Heather Young: Responsibility and just the things that they, you know, these different character traits, read about them and then, you know, discuss that just, you know, how we can apply that to our own lives.

Heather Young: You know, and with us, with our family, we... our good citizenship characteristics also went with our biblical foundation, and so that's where we started everything. And so, and really.

Heather Young: Something that my kids are starting to realize is that that's our core foundation. Academics are amazing, and they're great, but we need these core foundational character traits, biblical traits.

Heather Young: to really... move us forward just in life. You know, we can learn all the time.

Heather Young: But this is a great foundation. We would do Christmas around the world, and we would learn about different cultures, food.

Heather Young: we would make different crafts from, you know, different cult... you know, and it just kind of helped us have, like, these different conversations, and it was... it was great.

Heather Young: Anybody else want to throw anything out there?

Heather Young: I actually remembered something, another one, that I've mentioned before in another webinar, but we... I asked, the people that I knew on Facebook, my family and friends.

Heather Young: This was years ago.

Heather Young: to also ask their family and friends to send my kids postcards from the different states, from around the world, and then we would learn about, when we received those.

Heather Young: That's when we would learn about that state or that country and the culture, and so it kind of helped make those different aspects of.

Heather Young: Learning come alive a little bit more, so...

Heather Young: Just a little bit of additional stuff there.

Heather Young: Some good citizenship field trips. You know, there's obviously the Alamo, which is a great one to go to. But you can also visit a courthouse, police department, fire department, your city hall. Now, of course.

Heather Young: You also want to make sure that it's appropriate for your kiddo's age and maturity. You know, this is just a, you know, a whole group of different field trips. But museums are great, presidential libraries are great.

24:46 Heather Young: I will tell you there's a the Lincoln Museum in Springfield, Illinois, is an amazing one to go to if you're ever up in that area. But the George Bush Library and College Station is also a really good one, too.

Heather Young: And then, you know, you can visit landmarks, battlefields, you know, there's a cotton gin that is outside of,

Heather Young: Brenham, that you can walk through the whole cotton gin and cotton gin, and it's amazing. I didn't even know it was there.

Heather Young: And then the George Ranch.

Heather Young: And Washington on the Brazos. Those are just...

Heather Young: I'm sure there's a whole lot more, but those are just ones that

Heather Young: We threw out there. So, anybody else want to add some?

Jessica Migura: Yeah, I don't know if this is necessarily a field trip, but every couple of years during legislative session, we do have capital days. I know we'll probably talk about that in a little bit about is it on here? And I just didn't see it anyway, but that's a great up. Oh, no, right up there at the top. Oh, Texas homeschool coalition capital days. Look at that.

Jessica Migura: Brilliant.

Heather Young: Yep.

Jessica Migura: Well, that's a great opportunity for a family or if you have a co-op or whatever to go.

Heather Young: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Lindsey Hoyle: have discounts even for groups that want to go to that. Yeah, that's good.

Heather Young: And the Lone Star study, and especially if you're, working, like, with a senior through government, that would be a great field trip, because you're seeing what you're learning in action. And so...

Heather Young: That would be awesome.

Heather Young: Okay.

26:22 Heather Young: So, service projects can also be a way that you can get in good citizenship in your day-to-day. Service was a huge foundation for our homeschool family, and just our journey. And so, within your church, you can, you know, have

Heather Young: help with campus cleanup days, childcare, decorating, VBS, you know, cooking meals for a family,

Heather Young: You know, there's all kinds of different things that you can do, but you can serve within your church, and you can serve outside of the church with your church, you know, in your community.

Heather Young: You know, co-ops can host food drives, animal supply drives.

Heather Young: Write thank you notes, you know, bake treats,

Heather Young: And also, just, you know, if any... if you have a team, like, if your kiddos on... in extracurricular activities, you know.

Heather Young: you could post it and say, hey, let's... let's try and start something, you know, a service project with our group. There's so many out there, there's too many to list on a slide, but, you know, there's...

Heather Young: Like, for example.

Heather Young: An extracurricular activity that, our kiddos have been on dance teams for several years, and a big portion of their, team is specifically serving, and so we would host

Heather Young: Dance, like, camps for kiddos and adults with special needs, and so our kids learn

Heather Young: Just as much as those that are being served, you know, when you serve.

Heather Young: It really feeds us too, you know, and so it's just, it's a full circle kind of a thing and,

Heather Young: I don't know. Service projects have always been my favorite. I love them. So.

Heather Young: Anybody else have... Thoughts on service projects?

Lindsey Hoyle: I don't know if it really fits in with Service Project, but I think maybe it's kind of just throughout this whole topic. I just want to kind of say and just be real that we are all...

28:27 Lindsey Hoyle: dealing with kids who are sinful, and so walking through all of these things, all of these ideas, even service projects... I mean, I have 3 boys, and then a little girl, or, you know, a girl is our youngest, and so we would stumble and fall, and my kids would just...

Lindsey Hoyle: do some of, you know, obviously some things that I would not want them to do at times, and that's part of citizenship, I think, is learning that even within the family, discipline is important. You know, there's a consequence when we don't do things

Lindsey Hoyle: that honor God or honor the family and things. So even doing service projects or stepping out and trying to teach them different things, your kids are going to make mistakes. And so I think just walking through, it's okay to have an issue or to make a mistake.

Lindsey Hoyle: you know, that's a lot of how our country deals with things, too. There's consequences if we don't follow the laws, and so.

Lindsey Hoyle: You know, I...

Lindsey Hoyle: I'm sure we're all thinking, oh gosh, we've been through some moments at field trips or you know different places where our kids have just embarrassed us and honestly, that's part of life, that's part of teaching them. So I just want to encourage y'all if your kids don't do things the way you hope they will just keep going, keep trying.

Heather Young: Yeah, you know, and that's funny that you bring that up, because I had just thought of the same thing as I had stopped talking, and one thing that I used to have, because I use a spiral notebook, and I would, you know, when the kids were younger, I would write down their stuff that they needed to do, but at the bottom, I would always ask.

Heather Young: Who can you serve today and how can you serve them? And to encourage serving even within the family.

Heather Young: And, you know, so when somebody's going through, like, we've had times where a kid's had a, you know, a sprained ankle or something like that, and

Heather Young: we serve each other by, you know, picking up where somebody, you know, can't at the moment, just because they're injured, or whatever the case is, or they're sick. And so, modeling that just within the home, you know, and like Lindsey said, I mean, it is

Heather Young: for real, I mean, we, we live, you know, we all, we're human, we make mistakes, and just learning from those, because that, learning from mistakes is huge, in and of itself, so.

Heather Young: Yep.

Heather Young: Okay.

30:41 Heather Young: Lastly, before we get to questions that were submitted, I just wanted to discuss electives. So what is an elective?

Heather Young: An elective is any course outside of your core required courses. So, these allow our students to explore different interests, gain knowledge in areas that they might be interested in, or related to, you know, future goals.

Heather Young: It allows them to be creative and have fun learning, you know, so there's all kinds of different, you know, electives are great to kind of round out those core subjects.

Heather Young: But when it comes to putting it on your transcript, it is important to just keep the name simple. You don't have to put

Heather Young: the curriculum you used, or the style of homeschooling, because, for example, the Stop Motion 101, that's specifically for my... my oldest. He taught himself.

Heather Young: Basics of stop motion, he created all these different videos and he, and I could see him learning and growing. He would talk to me about, you know.

Heather Young: What he learned... we didn't have a set curriculum.

Heather Young: So, it was, you know, I guess you could call that unschooling, but he was really schooling. He was learning, but it was self-directed. That's a better, I think, a better description of it. And so, Stop Motion 101. That's it. So, that's all I have to put on there. So, anybody else want to add anything about electives?

Vicky Garcia: I just want to mention here, I think Noel just placed a link to the DEA website, and when you go there, it gives you a list of different.

Vicky Garcia: electives that they offer in high school. Sometimes, if you're like me, you're like, I can't think of anything. But, when I went into the...

Vicky Garcia: The list of different things that they offer in some public schools, it gave me an idea of, and I would talk to my kids about it. Look, look at all these different things that you can learn. And we would talk about it and see what things would interest them.

Vicky Garcia: And we could go from there. I would not necessarily use the

Vicky Garcia: the specific, skills and learning and everything that is there in the... in the TEA website, but just having the topic would help me build into that specific, elective. So, that's just.

Heather Young: Awesome.

Heather Young: Yeah.

33:29 Lindsey Hoyle: I was gonna add to that, too. So, we have, we have some members that are part of THSC who do give a discount for their aptitude testing that they offer. So, that could be a discount for a group setting, or an individual that wants to take a test. Like, typically, I would say it's going to be that junior, senior, high school age kid.

Lindsey Hoyle: But if anybody's interested in that, they could reach out and we could share that information with them. I don't think it's on our website yet, but we could definitely share that.

Heather Young: Awesome.

Heather Young: Yeah, the electives are a great way for kids to really kind of dig into what they might be interested in, you know, what their gifts are, and just kind of going, you know, from there, so...

Heather Young: I mean, electives are really the more fun classes, really, right? So, okay, so, question and answers. So, let's look at some of these questions that we've

Heather Young: gotten, or that were submitted. Sorry, I'm having some Okay.

Heather Young: So, one of our questions was basically centered around getting started, curriculum, and accreditation.

Heather Young: So really, when you're getting started, the first thing that you want to make sure that you're understanding is the Texas homeschool laws. And so.

Heather Young: to just go over those so that we can, you know, make sure that that's covered. First is that you want to make sure that your instruction is bona fide. You're meeting the child where they're at, you're providing them instruction to meet their educational needs.

Heather Young: And that... the second one is that your curriculum is some kind of visual format. So.

Heather Young: it's kind of hard not to be in visual format, because you have manipulatives, videos, workbooks, books, like, you know, it's a... there's all kinds of options there, right? But the last one is that you cover good citizenship, math. reading, grammar, and spelling. That's your core foundation.

Heather Young: So, good citizenship, reading, Math.

Heather Young: Grammar.

Heather Young: And I just like went totally blank.

35:45 Jessica Migura: Spelling.

Heather Young: Spelling, thank you. I don't know why I just went blank, I was like, I say this all the time. Thanks. So...

Heather Young: Yes, those are your five cores. So within that, it does not specify how you have to keep records or that you even have to keep records, although we say it is good to keep records because

Heather Young: Then you know where your kiddos are at, and where they need to go. You know, as far as, you know, from year to year, and even from lesson to lesson.

Heather Young: So that's that core foundation of Texas homeschool laws.

Heather Young: Ladies, do y'all want to add in to any of that aspect of getting started curriculum and accreditation?

Jessica Migura: Well, I mean, I I think a good part of getting started is, like you said, knowing the laws, but also just being informed on who THSC is and letting us come alongside you and, you know, encourage you and support you. So being a member of THSC, yeah, finding that curriculum that's a good fit, you know, for you as a parent.

Jessica Migura: And you know the learning style of your student.

Jessica Migura: And then, you know, just kind of getting started, maybe also even getting connected to a group. And Lindsey's our outreach manager, so she'd be a good resource for, you know, things of that nature. But yeah, getting connected to groups, getting your kids involved into things like what we've talked about, you know?

Jessica Migura: Extracurricular, getting involved in service project. These are all really great things to kind of bring that unity for your family as you're getting started and give you all direction.

Lindsey Hoyle: Yeah, I love that. I was gonna say, too, just thank you for mentioning that, because groups, if you're leading a group and you want to, be a part of THSC, we have a leader membership that's just \$99 a year, so that's a discounted rate for leaders, and I would love to be able to share that link with anybody that needs it.

Lindsey Hoyle: And I'll try to drop it down in the chat here in a second.

Lindsey Hoyle: And then, yeah, I was just going to add to the curriculum and accreditation. You know you're not necessarily looking for accredited curriculum. That doesn't really exist. So homeschooling is not accredited.

37:59 Lindsey Hoyle: We would love to help walk people through that, getting started, and just what that means, and even for the group leader who's trying to

Lindsey Hoyle: Work with their group that sometimes is overwhelming, so we would love for you to send your families to THSC where we can help come alongside the group leader and, and help meet the needs of your families that are within that group. It's, it's a pretty big job at times for one group leader.

Heather Young: Absolutely. And, you know.

Heather Young: like Lindsey said, accreditation, there is no accredited curriculum. Programs are what are accredited, and so it's important to understand that, especially when you're looking for groups, because, you want to

Heather Young: Make sure that the group is understanding their part in, you know, helping you homeschool, because we can outsource.

Heather Young: as homeschooling families, my kids take courses at different, at different places, but I, you know, my husband and I are still the teacher, the principal, the administrator, all those things, and we are the ones that put it on the transcript.

Heather Young: The... the micro school and the,

Heather Young: The a la carte classes that our kids have taken courses from.

Heather Young: They just... they're our outsource. We get the information, we put it on their transcript, so it's important to understand the difference, you know, that

Heather Young: that is there between so-called a private school or a home school and what is accredited and what is not. So if you are really wanting more information about accreditation too.

Heather Young: Please reach out to us, we can send you even more information.

Heather Young: You can reach out, either through your member portal, you can schedule a coaching call with us, or you can send us, you know, an email, through our contact page. That's THSC.org backslash contact. So...

Heather Young: Just wanted to throw that out there.

Heather Young: Anything else before we move on to...

Heather Young: another question. Our questions all kind of do, land within the same, category today, so we're just gonna kind of

40:13 Heather Young: Just answer more about it, so...

Heather Young: Another one is about how to help our students stay on task and complete their work.

Heather Young: You know, a lot of that can go back to kind of what we started talking about with character traits, looking at character traits, looking at the age of the child and maybe the length of the lesson, maybe the lessons need to be shorter.

Heather Young: You know, so it's... A lot... it's... that's a wide variety of a... of

Heather Young: question, you know, it's a pretty broad question, to be able to give one specific answer, but, you know, I would maybe look at, okay.

Heather Young: How long are lessons taking?

Heather Young: What's the age of the child?

Heather Young: How do they learn best? Are they a kiddo that needs to be moving? Are they a kiddo that likes to sit in their desk and kind of, you know, work on worksheets? But then looking at those foundational

Heather Young: Aspects of character development. There was one on the website. It's focused on the family Canada.

Heather Young: I think it was on one of the screens, but that...

Heather Young: website, it's free, and you get character development lessons that are just fully, full-out, developed lessons. And they're... they are for younger kids, but, that's something that you could utilize as well.

Heather Young: you could even...

Heather Young: use a timer to kind of help them focus so that they know, because sometimes when you're working on something, kids may not understand, okay, I've started this, now where does it end? You know, like, giving them a goal, that once we get to this point, then that's done, and I can take a break, or whatever the case is, kind of having

Heather Young: A schedule for them.

Heather Young: To understand, first we do this, then we do this.

Heather Young: those are some ways that you can kind of help Work on that aspect.

42:22 Heather Young: Does anybody else want to throw anything in there? I just kind of threw a lot out.

Jessica Migura: Well, I was actually just thinking of the continuing education that we in our department have been doing with that Thrive, because there's a lot of different aspects in that that we've learned about.

Jessica Migura: After a certain period of time, like you said, using that timer, there can be a reward where they can go and have some just time to play or do a puzzle or something they enjoy, you know, for a short period of time and then put that up and then come back to doing work again.

Jessica Migura: And so I think it's probably imperative if you have a kid that is not being able to stay on a task for very long, give them those breaks. They don't have to sit in their desk Right. For thirty minutes.

Jessica Migura: and do one subject, then switch to another subject for... and still staying in their desk. They can take time in between to go do something fun that really kind of engages them and their imagination, maybe gets the wiggles out or whatever, and then they can go back into, you know... I mean, I can't even sit at my desk

Jessica Migura: Working for THSC.

Jessica Migura: for long stints of time before I've got to get up and walk around. So I mean, and I'm old. So it's not just little guys that have to have that.

Heather Young: That's true.

Jessica Migura: I I think it's important to kind of just maybe pay attention to your kiddo and.

Jessica Migura: Give them those opportunities to get up and

Jessica Migura: Move around, get a snack, go to the bathroom, go outside for a minute, you know, whatever you need. And, you know, maybe like you said earlier with the timer, set that timer and say, okay, just work at this task for ten minutes.

Jessica Migura: And then, you know, we're going to take a break and then get back at it later.

Lindsey Hoyle: Yes, and honestly, like that's just real life. I mean mom.

Heather Young: is.

44:04 Lindsey Hoyle: Same thing, you know. Hopefully you've learned how to structure your day where you're doing laundry, you're doing cleaning, you're doing all the things, you're getting supper prepared. As you start to, you know, really organize your day, your kids fit into that and we give them breaks that they need and we walk out of the room when we need to, because we're not.

Lindsey Hoyle: I think we all know we've laughed about it recently. Teaching math is one of the hardest things to do as a homeschool parent.

Lindsey Hoyle: If you feel like you need to walk out of the room, just say, everybody take a break. We've gotta get a 10 minute breather and

Lindsey Hoyle: Re... you know, get your mind back into the game, so just know...

Lindsey Hoyle: That's very typical for every home, every family.

Heather Young: Oh yeah, oh yeah. And you know, and it's a part of growing, you know, because their brain development is still, you know, it's still developing. And, you know, honestly, it teaches them how to, you know.

Heather Young: Those executive functioning skills for planning and emotional regulation and those kinds of things, it really helps teach them that.

Heather Young: you know, okay, I can't... this is my...

Heather Young: my time of focus, now this is my time to break. And it really gives them some core foundational character development, habits, you know, those kinds of things. And, you know, as far as rewards, you know.

Heather Young: Because, I mean, we all get, right, a paycheck is a reward, right? I mean, we work for that. So...

Heather Young: Also, our breaks can be a reward. They don't have to be like, oh, great, you get a sticker every single time, or here's a cookie, or whatever the case is, right? They can work for a variety of different things.

Heather Young: think... when you're thinking rewards, kind of try to think outside the box, too, because when you... when they're having to earn rewards, or earn a break, they're learning a key skill, a work habit skill. And so, think of things, you know, rewards and stuff in a different way. Also, it's good

Heather Young: And that we teach intrinsic rewards, not just extrinsic rewards, because we want kids to be, to be able to do it because it's the right thing to do, but also, you know, we also have to learn to

46:21 Heather Young: Wait on rewards sometimes, right? So there's, you know, so yeah, I mean, all of that is great. So.

Heather Young: Sure.

Heather Young: Anything else?

Jessica Migura: Well, I was just gonna add, actually, the reward could even just be finishing that project within itself is a reward.

Jessica Migura: Of job well done, job accomplished.

Jessica Migura: And when you start something, you finish it. So, I mean...

Heather Young: Yep, absolutely. That intrinsic reward. So awesome.

Heather Young: Okay, so... Another one was on high school transcripts, testing, and assessments.

Heather Young: So, Jessica, do you want to...

Heather Young: Kind of talk about our transcripts that we have in the member portal?

Jessica Migura: Yeah, well, we do have two. One's by grade, and one is by subject.

Jessica Migura: So you can definitely choose, you know, whichever one's gonna fit your homeschool situation. A lot of times, though, that I recommend the one by subject, I don't know if you do, ladies, but... because homeschool students don't always take classes on grade level.

Jessica Migura: I mean, you had that flexibility to take high school level classes.

Jessica Migura: Younger.

Jessica Migura: Then, you know, that 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th grade. Or, you may be choosing the dual credit route.

Jessica Migura: Or, you know, things of that nature. So that way, if you choose the one that's by subject, you can just put in there the classes that they took, but you're not having to establish what grade level, like 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th, that they took it.

Jessica Migura: So sometimes I just recommend that one by subject because it gives you more flexibility.

47:58 Jessica Migura: Now, testing, of course, in the State of Texas.

Jessica Migura: You know, we have a lot of freedoms here. You're not legally required to do any type of testing, you know, standardized testing. But I mean, I had my kids do them and it wasn't necessarily for the.

Jessica Migura: fact that I wanted to.

Jessica Migura: see where they were according to everyone else. I just wanted to see how well they were doing, if there were any learning gaps, or if they were really ahead at something, so that I could give them, some supplemental work, or maybe move them ahead in something, give them something more challenging. So it was really more of a self-evaluation.

Jessica Migura: But again, you're not required legally to do, you know, assessments or standardized testing. But they're but they're good because not only that, what I just said, but also if your kiddo is going to go to college, it may be good for them to be able to take that time test.

Jessica Migura: Because they may feel uncomfortable, have some anxiety, so they can maybe work that out.

Jessica Migura: You know, while they're at home with you in your environment.

Jessica Migura: you know, not be spontaneously put in a situation like that. So those are good for that too.

Heather Young: I forgot I put myself on mute.

Heather Young: Something that I was going to say, and forgive me if Jessica said this, my internet kind of went wonky for a second, but, as homeschooling families, we don't have to follow TEA guidelines, because we are a form of private schooling. But.

Heather Young: If your kiddo is going to college, then it is good to look at those credits so that you can identify what they are going to need for their transcript for admission into college. If they're going a different route, then.

Heather Young: Contact, say, a trade school or whatever to find out what they're looking for on a transcript, so that you can gear it towards that.

Heather Young: So I just wanted to...

Jessica Migura: Yeah, that's good. And we can, we can send out, I mean, if you reach out, we can give you like a link to that TEA chart that'll kind of give you that side by side. So if you want to use that as your guidelines to pick out subjects, you can do that. And it's really good, you

know, with trade schools too, Heather, because they may want, they're gonna want a transcript, so.

50:18 Heather Young: Right, yeah.

Jessica Migura: Or military or any of those things, you know, it's always good to have a transcript prepared.

Heather Young: it.

Jessica Migura: So, you know, whatever avenue your kiddo goes on, they can have that.

Heather Young: And we just...

Lindsey Hoyle: Another really good.

Lindsey Hoyle: Oh.

Lindsey Hoyle: Another really great resource is Smarter by One Degree.

Lindsey Hoyle: I know we've mentioned that over the course of our webinars, but they do allow students, high school students, to participate in their program and they don't require the TSI testing or any kind of college entrance exam to start their program. So it's also very.

Lindsey Hoyle: affordable. I think if you...

Heather Young: you.

Lindsey Hoyle: See it all the way through, you can get a bachelor's degree by the time you graduate high school. So it's a great opportunity for your students who can handle that, but it's also a great program because it's video based and it has a lot of quick.

Lindsey Hoyle: like, quizzes that go along with those video sections, and then it's... I think you get to use your notes on the test, so it's great for students who may be special needs, as well.

Lindsey Hoyle: But who want to pursue that higher education. So, I'll put that in the link to Smarter by One Degree.

Heather Young: Yeah. No, and that's awesome, because I was also going to mention that if you do have a kiddo that is, that does have a special need, and you are wanting to, you know, you...

Heather Young: questions about, transcripts with that, or just anything in general, you know, please reach out to us. Lindsey and myself, are able to answer, a lot of those questions. So

please, please reach out to us. We want to be able to help, All of our families that are homeschooling, for sure.

52:04 Heather Young: So, okay, we are going to... those were our questions. We are going to switch to, just some final slides here, as we are closing out. Just some updates on different events coming up.

Jessica Migura: Okay, yeah, so we have lots of great upcoming events. So first of all, on the side, it's our upcoming monthly Q&As. These are the dates, the 28th.

Jessica Migura: of October, the 18th of November, and the 9th of December. Lots of different topics. You can look at these, see which one might be a great one that you want to be a part of. You can go to, the website at THSC.org to sign up and register for these, monthly Q&As. And then we have some other

Jessica Migura: webinars as well. So on top of the Q&As, we have webinars. So the topics are transcripts, and then the Thanksgiving Cook-Along, so for October 8th and November 12th. I don't know about you ladies, but that one on November the 12th sounds fun.

Jessica Migura: Absolutely. Does this mean we're going to eat something?

Jessica Migura: Afterwards.

Heather Young: I mean, if it does, I'm okay with that.

Jessica Migura: Yeah, so that sounds like something that everybody should come to, really.

Jessica Migura: Okay, so the next slide on.

Jessica Migura: So capital days, yeah, we talked about this a little bit earlier, didn't we? This kind of goes along with what we've talked about today. That would be a good field trip for your family or you know your group.

Jessica Migura: If you're a part of a co-op, tell your group leaders to maybe get connected to, you know, having the whole whole team come to this.

Heather Young: I'm excited because we're we're hopefully going to get to one of these this year because we have our oldest in government. And so I want him to go. And I was thinking about the Thanksgiving meal to back to.

Jessica Migura: it.

Heather Young: to that because now I'm thinking about food.

53:54 Heather Young: It could also become a service project. If it if we end up with a meal, then it could be a service project, so.

Jessica Migura: Very cool. Now, actually, Heather, you said your family's gone or gonna go to Capitol days. We did do that when my kids were younger. Of course, like I said, they're all out of they're all graduated, but those were very good times to spend there at the Capitol.

Jessica Migura: You know, kids are in awe. I mean, I was actually in awe myself, but just to go amongst, you know, where the capital and look around. So I definitely encourage all to go to that.

Heather Young: Absolutely.

Jessica Migura: And, of course, convention. This is our team's favorite time of the year to really kinda get to meet everybody that maybe we've helped.

Jessica Migura: You know, via a phone call with coaching or you know, things like that. But also the convention hall is filled with hundreds of exhibitors.

Jessica Migura: These are curriculum providers. These are college representation, different career fields that are there, you know, recruiting. So definitely if you.

Jessica Migura: I've never gone to convention. I definitely encourage you to go to convention. And so definitely go to your member portal and even look at the top, you know, for at your banner when time comes for for discounts and things of that nature. So it's always great.

Heather Young: And come by our booth because we like to meet people.

Jessica Migura: Yes, absolutely.

Heather Young: Yes.

Heather Young: Okay.

Jessica Migura: Okay? And then this last one, here is our graduations. We started out from what I remember, like 2, and last year we had 8. And so the homeschool community is growing in Texas. So we are trying to

Jessica Migura: match that really. And to have this option for families to participate in a, a ceremony that has all that pomp and circumstance, you know, that some kids may be

Jessica Migura: used to seeing and familiar with, so definitely, even if... Members, just like convention, look at the top of your member portal, click that, you'll have some discounts, if

you're a member. But definitely, if you have a graduate, we'd love for you to participate, you know, in one of these.

55:54 Jessica Migura: graduations.

Heather Young: We will be this year.

Jessica Migura: true.

Heather Young: Crying the entire time.

Jessica Migura: And just like our our Vicky on our team, she had a graduate last year, so it's a sweet time.

Jessica Migura: And, yeah, we'll look forward to yours graduating, Heather, too.

Heather Young: It'll be exciting.

Jessica Migura: you.

Heather Young: All right.

Jessica Migura: Oh, and if y'all have any feedback, we love your feedback. It helps us, you know, maybe come up with ideas for future Q and A's or just to get your feedback on how we can serve you.

Jessica Migura: And serve, others in the homeschool community, so click that link and give us your feedback.

Heather Young: Awesome.

Heather Young: Well, we hope that today was helpful. We hope that, questions were answered. If you want more information, please feel free to reach out to us, because we want to get that information to you, and we want to encourage you and let you know that you can do this. You know, days can be

Heather Young: You know, not how we want them to go sometimes, but they are definitely.

Heather Young: What's that saying? The...

Heather Young: the days are long, but the years are short, or something like that. And it's so true, because you blink, and then you're graduating somebody. And so, we want to help you make those memories and enjoy your, homeschooling journey. So, please reach out to us. We want to be able to do that. So...

57:21 Jessica Migura: then.

Heather Young: But I hope you all have a wonderful and blessed rest of your day.

Jessica Migura: Thanks for coming.

Vicky Garcia: Hi.

Heather Young: Bye, everybody.