

Transcript: Raising Calm Kids in an Overstimulating World

Anna Grace Ball (00:06.18)

Good afternoon. Welcome to our monthly webinar series. We are so excited to have you all join us this month as we hear some encouragement and practical advice from Angela O'Dell on raising our wonderful children. If you want to drop in the chat where you're joining us from, we are so excited to see how Angela is going to be able to be an encouragement to people all over the state of Texas. So we would love to know where you're joining us from.

My name is Anna Grace. I am the events project manager at THSC. I'm a homeschool graduate and a proud auntie to my six so far nieces and nephews. And so I love, love them and that is my life. So at THSC our mission is to encourage, equip and advocate for homeschool families in their home education journey, which is why we have these incredible

value packed webinars. And so we love to just kind of provide value in every single way we can, because we know, especially as homeschool moms and dads, that this is what you need. We're coming off of spring break and y'all are ready to jump right back into all of the crazy, crazy schoolwork. And you just kind of need a little boost. And so we love to be able to do everything because y'all are doing everything. And so we like to do everything we can to support.

So what you can expect for this webinar, if you have been with us before, you kind of know the drill and we are glad to have you back. For anyone joining us for the first time, welcome. We will have a live chat support. So if you have any questions, our amazing customer relations team is standing by to help answer them. And this is our team that our members can contact for any questions, coaching and encouragement all year long. So we love having them on. We also have our events team on. So if you need any information about all events I'm going to talk about later,

please reach out and they can help you with all of that. A copy of this webinar will be emailed to you immediately following the presentation and you will have access to it for a week and then members can enjoy access to it all year long in their portals. After the presentation is over, we will have a Q &A with Angela. So thank you to everyone who submitted questions with the registration, but you can also drop your questions in the chat box and we will get to as many as we possibly can.

Anna Grace Ball (02:17.24)

So we're going to have a message from MasterBooks. So MasterBooks is our wonderful sponsor for today. We cannot do what we do without them. And so MasterBooks is built on a different foundation, the gentle approach, thoughtfully designed around how God wired children to learn. Short lessons, clear instruction, strong academics, and Christ-centered truth.

MasterBooks has a giveaway for us today too. They are offering a chance to win any level of their curriculum, The American Story, which is super exciting.

Angela is actually the author of that, so you kind of get to hear from her and then also get a chance to win any level of that curriculum. So the link is being dropped in the chat, so you can fill that out and we will do that giveaway later too. So we are so excited and thankful for the way that they are adding that to us. So now we are going to have a quick video from Masterbooks and so they can tell us about themselves more.

Anna Grace Ball (04:29.454)

Yeah, so we are super excited to have them. Definitely do not miss out on your opportunity to fill out that form to win that free curriculum because that's always, we always love that. So now we're going to go and we have lots of upcoming events. And so we are very excited to kind of let y'all know all of everything we have going on. So we are hosting eight graduations this year. So we have drastically increased from last year and we're super excited. So if you have any seniors graduating or know of

any families with seniors, make sure you check out the dates of each of our eight locations and get your tickets before they fill up. They're going to put the link in the chat so that way you can see when all of those are. And then we also have our Leader Summit. Last year, THSC hosted two Leader Summits in DFW in Houston, Texas for homeschool leaders in Texas, and we are excited to have those events back to encourage, equip, and connect leaders.

This is a great opportunity for the leaders who are always pouring so much into their families and communities to get poured into. So we are grateful to be able to do that. And then for those events, we are super excited to do a giveaway for the leader summit. are going to, all you have to do is type leader into the chat and then stick around until the end of the webinar and we will announce that winner. So make sure to do that and get that ticket for the leader summit.

And then we also have our state convention coming up. So join us in the woodlands, May 28th to 30th for our state convention, whether you are starting homeschooling or have been doing it for 20 years, there is something for you. We are excited to host an amazing group of speakers and exhibitors and to give you that end of year reset. need to get excited for the next year of homeschooling. We will also have a convention ticket giveaway because we can't just give tickets away to one event without giving it to another.

Obviously, and so we're gonna do the same thing. So if you would just type convention into the chat stick around till the end and we will draw for the winner of the free convention ticket as well. We are also this week. We are celebrating Texas Co-op appreciation week with daily giveaways that you do not want to miss So right now you have a chance to fill out a form to win tickets to THSC events daily and an opportunity to win our Friday grand prizes of two

Anna Grace Ball (06:46.564)

thousand dollar homeschool family scholarships to support your homeschool journey and an exclusive co-op leader experience at our THSC leader summit. It's super simple to enter. Just nominate a leader or member of your co-op and share why they're making a difference. So don't wait. The giveaway is closed tomorrow and hit the link in the chat to fill out that form.

And now why we're all here. It is my privilege to introduce Angela Odell. Angela is a veteran homeschooler who loves to invest in the lives of homeschool families. She is the author of the America story, the world's story, and the math lessons for a living education series, all published through master books and the creator producer of the popular podcast show, real cool history for kids, as well as the author and publisher of courageous identity, teen edition, and a variety of other family resources.

She holds various coaching certifications in mental health, child development, and family biblical life with a special focus on adolescents through the teen years and a master level certification in leadership coaching. Angela's ultimate passion is teaching and training hearts and minds to find the answers for our generation and the never changing truth of God's word. So if we are ready for Angela, welcome, welcome.

Angela O'Dell (08:00.121)

Thank you, Anna Grace. Thank you all for allowing me to speak just very briefly about this really important topic that affects many of us so, so deeply. I am very, very honored to be speaking at the Texas Conference in the Woodlands also and be doing a full length session about this topic. So over the...

several years, actually more like five to eight years now, both as a mom and as a certified mental health coach. I've watched something shift in this generation. I think we all are very much aware of it, thus this session. And the questions the parents are asking me now are, they're very different than they were eight to 10 years ago. And

Those questions sound something like this.

Angela O'Dell (09:06.543)

How can we raise calm kids? What does calm even mean? Why aren't we calm now? And how can we raise calm kids when we ourselves feel so not calm?

Angela O'Dell (09:29.429)

It's something that has been causing much, much hardship in a lot of people's lives. And it kind of makes us feel like we're trying to study a boat in some really, really wild waves. So today I want to simplify what feels complicated.

And I've boiled this down to three major roadblocks standing between our kids and True Calm, and to be honest, us and True Calm. And those three roadblocks are, number one, the physical effects of digital tech on the brain. Number two, the spiritual messages that are flooding our minds and our kids' minds.

And number three, the adult misunderstanding of the battle that we're in. And we're gonna touch really briefly on all three of these. But first, we have to start where the problem starts, and that is the brain.

So over the last decade, rates of depression, anxiety, and self-harm in adolescents have risen drastically alongside the advance of digital technology. And I don't think this surprises any of us. But to see the charts is absolutely chilling. I saw a chart one time and this was pre-COVID.

that I looked at this chart and it was up through, I think it was the eight years between 2010 and 2018. And the chart showed the trajectory of tech use and mental health issues. And this particular chart was speaking directly, specifically about adolescent girls between the ages of 10

Angela O'Dell (11:42.347)

and 14. And as that tech use rose, so did those mental health issues right along with it. And it was chilling to study this and to see that 600 % rise. And this was pre-COVID. So I can't even imagine what those charts look like now.

Brain scans are now showing measurable shrinkage in the prefrontal cortex, which is the part of the brain responsible for impulse control and reasoning and emotional regulation. And at the same time, digital technology creates powerful dopamine spikes, the more chemical, and it creates repeated cortisol dumps, which is the stress chemical.

So dopamine flooding leads to emotional numbness and cortisol overload leads to chronic stress. And when those two things are happening repeatedly, calm becomes neurologically difficult or impossible really. So when a teen says that they're feeling anxious or they're feeling numb or they're feeling overwhelmed,

or if you're feeling that, take it seriously. It is a serious matter. The brain is exhausted and a fatigued brain is a stressed brain and a stressed brain cannot, just physically cannot be calm.

Angela O'Dell (13:29.369)

So our brain is a physical organ, right? It's like our stomach, our heart, our intestine. It's a physical thing. It's a part of our body created by God. And our mind is eternal. They were designed by God to work together. But when the brain, the physical brain is overstressed, overstimulated, and just plain

worn out, the mind becomes more vulnerable to lies. And this generation is being disciplined digitally. The messages coming through those screens are shaping identity.

They're shaping truth and worldview at a pace we've never seen before. And some of those messages are terrifying, you guys. You know that as well as I do. It's terrifying. And what fear does to the brain is that it triggers it. It shifts it. It shifts it from a sound cognitive ability to it triggers the fight or flight.

It basically creates a situation where the reasoning center just basically goes offline, which makes wise, grounded, truth-based decisions harder to access. So as homeschoolers, as Christian parents, we go through so much to teach our kids the truth.

But let's be honest, how much of the messages that they're getting.

Angela O'Dell (15:22.543)

How many messages argue with what we tell them?

Angela O'Dell (15:30.553)

So when you combine an underdeveloped regulation center with a nervous system that's constantly on high alert and a culture filled with confusion and contradictory messages, your equation adds up to one thing, instability. And a lot of those messages that have been thrown at our children are satanic.

No other word for it.

It attacks their identity.

Angela O'Dell (16:09.591)

and our teens are feeling that instability really, really deeply.

So what do we do?

We have to start, we have to start somewhere and it's an easy step. I shouldn't say it's easy. It's a simple step, but it may not be easy. I'm gonna warn you, it may not be easy because what's going on in the brain is actually, it's been compared as the addiction part of it. It's been compared to cocaine and it's very, very strong.

It's a strong, strong addiction.

Where do we start with this? We start by taking stock of where we are.

Angela O'Dell (17:04.739)

What is going on in our unique home? Most of us have Wi-Fi with, I don't know a single person who doesn't have Wi-Fi now, but we have streaming devices, have phones, have handheld, we have handheld devices, phones, iPads, tablets, we have games, we have virtual reality now. We have all of these things that are,

completely run on imagination and I don't want to get going in that direction too much because I could use up the rest of time. So, but we'll just say this, we all use tech and it has been a huge blessing in our world. I mean, look at us right now, we're all over the place and we're all in the same place. So there's a very powerful way to use it, a very good way.

but there are also some very destructive ways. So my number one thing that I tell parents when they're feeling just like I don't know where to even start, I say just take stock where you are, log it. Start keeping track of every single person in your home, including yourself, that uses tech on a regular basis. Write down how many hours you are really scrolling?

doom scrolling, scrolling. How many hours? How many hours are your kids on some type of tech?

Angela O'Dell (18:47.897)

So do this for a week and don't be surprised if you get a negative reaction when you say to your kids that you're doing this. But lead from the front, do it for yourself too. And then at the end, after you've gathered that data, have a calm, honest conversation. Explain the dopamine, explain the cortisol, and teach your kids what's happening in their own brain. And honestly,

You're right there with them, probably. Talk about your own brain too. You're in it together. Don't treat the tech like it's evil, but do treat it like it's something powerful that requires wisdom. And again, model what you expect. Lead from the front and be honest with your own struggles with it.

Angela O'Dell (19:41.903)

Step number two is we need to understand that this takes a proactive plan, that we need to calm our brains on a daily basis. So how do we do this? Well, a stressed brain needs regulation and physical movement lowers cortisol.

That's pretty self-explanatory. Get out and move. Go play basketball. If it's snowy outside like it is here, go do something for 10 minutes so you don't freeze to death. But get outside, do something, okay? Silence resets dopamine levels. Now this is a major, major, major thing that I speak about in the session, the full-length session.

So I'm just going to barely touch on it here. But silence is something that is terrifying to many people nowadays. They're so used to having so much going on, so much going into their brains all the time that the silence is really terrifying.

Angela O'Dell (21:02.851)

but it is absolutely crucial to reset those dopamine levels. And the last thing, quite honestly, I didn't feel like putting it on here, because it took a little bit of, yeah, this is my thing, the single task focus. This again is something that I talk about more in depth in the longer session, but we're just gonna say this, God didn't design our brains.

If I say this out loud, then I have to really like hold myself accountable to this. But I'm to. God did not make our brains too multitask. We may think that we are so good at spinning 10 plates and I really, I'm serious when I say this, I'm like the queen of spinning plates.

But I know what it does to my brain and to my body and my nervous system when I try to do it. So the fact of the matter is that we think that we have four things going on at one time. We think that we can shift our brain from one thing to the next. But the reality of it is that our subconscious brain is still back there at that first one, still trying to figure out, trying to process it, trying to organize it for us. That's why sometimes our brains keep us awake at night.

because it's still stuck on that. And so each time you move to another focus, we think we're focusing. We're not really, we've taken just a fraction of our brain to move it along. And pretty soon our brain is so spread out. It's just ridiculous. I'm not gonna keep talking about that. So, if we want calm kids, we have to protect their brains from overload and we have to do the same thing for ourselves. So.

Moving on, that one is a hard one for me. I'm going to just say that. Step three, we have to have three necessary conversations. Number one, with God. That's pretty self-explanatory, right?

Angela O'Dell (23:15.171)

but really in all honesty. Conversations with God.

We all live someplace where we can see some sort of nature. Some of us live someplace where we can actually get out and see the stars. Others can't see the stars because of the lights in the air, but we can still see the grass. We can still see the trees. We can still see the flowers and the birds and all the things that God created. It is so important for us as humans to be reminded that we are not God. And I cannot tell you how powerful

just being presented with the fact that we are not God. How much that does for us physically. It's an amazing thing. And again, I can't really go into it here, but just take my word for it. The studies are in. The studies are back. They show that when people take the time to focus on God and the greatness of God, they see themselves for who they really are.

and it takes the burden off of them to be God. We were not created to be God. He was. I mean, he wasn't created, but he is God and he created us to need him. There, that makes sense. So get outside and pray and read the scripture. And the second one is the conversation with ourselves. This is back to that silence thing.

You know, when I was preparing for this little webinar, I was thinking about this and the words to that hymn, that old hymn came to mind. come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses and the voice I hear falling on my ear. The son of God discloses. And I thought, how many times have we woken up in the morning, reached over, grabbed our phone.

Angela O'Dell (25:12.899)

to scroll, to see who messaged us, who liked the post.

What if instead we actually took ourselves into the presence of God for the very first thing in the morning and just was quiet before Him? How about just singing a hymn or remembering a verse

that we've learned, the meditation on the Word, just the reflection. And then of course the last one is conversation with others.

We are living in a society that tech has pretty much replaced in-person conversations, or at least has replaced a large fraction of them. Case in point, 24, 23, 23 years ago, I moved to this area that we're in now and I discovered.

that we had a massive homeschool group out here and I was so excited. And there were

educated guests, probably at least 50 homeschool families in this area that I live in that got together once a week. And the kids would get together throughout the week to play and do things. But the moms would get together at least once a week to support each other and to do things together. And do you know, now it's a Facebook group. So how many things that

Angela O'Dell (26:58.029)

we have replaced for convenience that are stealing from us. We were created for relationship. We were created to look across the table at someone in the eyes, to learn how to empathize with them, to learn how to respectfully agree to disagree. Instead, we sit behind our screens and take offense.

when someone doesn't agree with us. So these are the things that we're dealing with. We were created for real voices and real expression and real investment in relationships. And all of these things add into the whole sad depletion of our souls. But we are not without hope because we have

hope that God is the healer, that He gives us wisdom when we ask, and we're not helpless in this. We're not powerless.

God has not assigned our kids and ourselves to this generation on accident. He didn't go, oops, man, that whole crowd, that one landed in the wrong century. He actually put us here on purpose. So we have to understand the battle if we want to raise our kids to be strong.

in that battle. And if we want to be strong ourselves, we have to understand the battle that we're in.

Angela O'Dell (28:51.745)

So this conversation is so much deeper than this, but that my last slide is about Joshua 1.9, and this has been my kind of my battle cry that I have been reaching into this younger generation with that this is the same God that rescued and led

the Israelites out of Egypt is the same God who is standing right here, who is ready and willing and has everything we need to be conquerors in every area of our lives, including tech. He will give the wisdom.

So like I said, this conversation is so much deeper than what we've had time for today. But I'm hoping that what I've said today has given some clarity and some hope that things do not have to continue in a cycle downward. So if you are able to come to the conference at the end of May, I would love to see you. I would love to continue this conversation.

and actually get into the nitty gritty of what we can actually do to really help our kids be more than conquerors in the tech world.

Anna Grace Ball (30:26.874)

Thank you so much for sharing, Angela. I definitely felt convicted, especially when you were talking about tracking how much time you're spending on things and the fact that we cannot multitask. I definitely am equally as guilty of all of that. So thank you so much for sharing. We have a few questions that we would love to get your wisdom on and that people put in.

Angela O'Dell (30:41.839)

That's a hard one.

Anna Grace Ball (30:54.06)

the chat and in the registration when they signed up for this just already knowing you and knowing things that you would be able to speak on. So our first question is, how do you communicate when one of your children sees your reaction as unfair, but you are being graceful to an overstimulated sibling?

Angela O'Dell (31:16.495)

That is a hard one because kids see everything has to be, you know, it's black and white. Honestly, I really think that this is very much like any other area of struggle. Some people struggle with it more than others. One of the most important things to remember though is that it is not punishment to regulate the brain.

And I would highly encourage people not to use, I'm gonna take your tech away if you don't start behaving kind of thing, because then it villainizes that taking away of the tech. And I would just encourage parents to think about it this way. What other areas in our lives do we use as punishment by taking something away?

Find something else that you can take away. And I know that it's very often, I always said when my kids were younger, you have to find their currency. What's most important to them? Well, honestly, tech use, games, all those things really become the top currency in children's lives. But I would say if you can not use it as punishment,

but as a, are going together to be healthy and strong. We are going to work together as a family. I would honestly, I would say to this parent, if you're going to have a child who obviously is dealing with issues because of too much tech use, I would say address it as a family, circle around them and say, listen,

You're struggling with this. You obviously are struggling with this. Your symptoms are obvious to everybody. But the reality of it is, is that we're all struggling with it. So let's just join around together and let's all do this as a support to this one member of the family. Not only does that create teamwork, it also causes that sibling rivalry thing to not become an issue over tech.

Angela O'Dell (33:41.869)

You can't stop it from happening, obviously, but it doesn't have to be involving tech. I would definitely take tech off the table as a punishment or the taking away of tech off the table.

Anna Grace Ball (33:57.839)

Yeah. So with that, just kind of a followup on that when you are having some kind of punishment or showing grace to one child and another child sees you as, well, I didn't get grace when I did that yesterday. like, does, why is mom saying that they're going to be forgiven and they're okay then how do you communicate well to the child who is not receiving the punishment or the grace, but they're watching you interact with their sibling and being like,

Why, why mom, why didn't you treat me the same way? So how do you react? How do you interact with that child who's you're not actively punishing or giving grace, forgiveness to?

Angela O'Dell (34:38.403)

Right. I definitely, I really encourage parents to tell kids that they are unique individuals. And what is important that they learn may or may not be as important to another child. We all have our issues. We all have our sin nature. We all have areas that need to be refined. So,

your areas of needing to be refined are not going to be the same probably as my areas that need to be refined. And that's really important for children to understand that we are all absolutely unique and we all require unique training. And God doesn't treat us all the same. He treats us individually and gives grace where grace is.

you know, needed because he's absolutely just and he's also absolutely merciful and gracious. So it really is. It's very much a very it's a human thing. I was going to say it's a child thing, but honestly, it's a human thing that we all want everything to be equal. It's not that's not the way it is. It's absolutely not the way it is. My kids used to say, but that's not fair. And I'd say, you really want fair.

Because if you really wanted fair, there would be absolutely no way for us to ever go to heaven or to have eternal life. Because it's not fair what Jesus did on the cross.

Anna Grace Ball (36:18.212)

Yeah. Yeah. So we had a question from someone in the chat. They asked, what is the best way to detox our children from overstimulation? My son has such difficulty just being mentally still, and he's always thinking sensory input. what are some practical steps that you can just additional? I know you've already shared on some of them, but what are some ways that you can do to additional ways to help that?

Angela O'Dell (36:44.089)

Well, many, many children and especially boys have way too much energy. I have three grandsons, six year old and two four year olds. And they have so much energy. I'm just like, it's exhausting just watching them. they have, they get to the point where they just literally can't control themselves anymore. They have so much energy. so honestly, I would say number one,

If you can get outside and run off that energy, if you can't get outside, figure out some cool ways that you can inside to run off that energy. And then if you just have one that's just over tired and just overstimulated and all of the things, I have found that simply placing them on the couch or a chair without anything that they can fidget or fiddle around with and just simply crossing their hands, their

doing this, this doing this centers when you do this, it centers your brain. And so just doing that can help kind of pull in and help gain control. But really the biggest thing is just letting them run off that energy. It's really big thing.

Anna Grace Ball (38:04.174)

Yeah. Yeah. Our next question is, more so for our parents, how do I keep myself calm when I'm feeling overwhelmed?

Angela O'Dell (38:14.265)

Yeah. wow. That's it's such a huge topic. We live in such an overstimulating world and we have so much sensory input going on into our lives all the time, all the time. And there it's it's not just one thing. It's not just one area. It's everything all the time. And so I say

Anna Grace Ball (38:23.152)

Mm-hmm.

Angela O'Dell (38:43.887)

to the parent, to the adult. And this is something, a skill that it would be helpful for kids to learn by the time they're out of the house, they need to have some type of self-awareness to understand what is it that gets them going, that gets them so overstimulated, overwhelmed over everything. And how does it look to their unique body?

to be in that situation. So, I mean, some of us have very highly sensitive nervous systems that are much more easily overwhelmed than others. So being aware of how God has created you and being aware of those symptoms is so important. so important. It has everything to do with your diet, has your exercise, your sleep, your...

your downtime, your quiet time, your reflection, your time with God and His Word. It is all of it. It's the whole picture that is so, so important. And we live at such a breakneck speed that we don't take time to take care of ourselves until we're broken down on the side of the road. We

treat our cars better than we treat our bodies and our minds. that's, and I am preaching to myself. I am not joking.

I just recently went through a time where I literally felt like my body was completely rebelling against me because I had completely ignored it for so long. So it takes just being aware. And also, here's another thought. God allows us to feel those overwhelms because we need to be reminded that we need Him. We need the quietness of His presence.

There's a verse in the Bible that says, God said to his people, come to me for rest. And they said, no. Yeah. I'm like, okay, that's not gonna be me. And then I turn around and do what I did to myself, you know? So yeah, grace. Grace.

Anna Grace Ball (41:00.72)

Yeah, I feel like sometimes when I'm, when we're in those situations, we're like, okay, okay. We hit that point where we're broken down on the side of the road. And then we're like, okay, we take a nap and we're like, okay, that's supposed to fix it. Right. And then you just kind of, then you just go right back and you're like, okay, I'm gonna, I'm feeling, I'm feeling overwhelmed. I'm going to eat my protein bar and I'm going to drink my coffee. That's, that's supposed to keep me going. And it, it's not, it is really going back to the Lord and being reminded that that is our source of sustainment.

Angela O'Dell (41:29.657)

Mm-hmm. Yep.

Anna Grace Ball (41:30.932)

And so thank you. there have been a lot of comments just about screen time. So can you discuss and compare non-smartphone options such as Light Phone, New Apple Watch SE and Gabe phone, Gabe phone, and just kind of talk about, some of those things. And even, one thing that I know about is my nieces and nephews will use the, goodness, I just lost my term. Those cards.

Angela O'Dell (41:58.638)

haha

Anna Grace Ball (42:00.141)

It's a little bit, they listened to audio books on it and I just lost it, but they listened to a lot of audio books and Yoto. Yes. Thank you. Just completely lost it. But talk about those non-screen time options and what you think is better and has kind of works more.

Angela O'Dell (42:02.339)

Yoda.

Yeah, yeah, yodo, I think is probably what you think.

Angela O'Dell (42:19.501)

Yeah, definitely have to get creative because there's so many things that are app based and all these, you know, everything. I also have nieces, nieces and nephews that are a screen free family. And it's like, wow, it's really impressive, but they have to be so really intentional about it.

But I'm not super familiar with some of those things that you mentioned. I think some of them are kind of newer. I need to catch up on the newest things. But there are things like just good old fashioned toys that are not even battery operated. Like they're literally kid run. things that really develop.

the creativity and every child has, some more than others, every child has the ability to be an artist. I don't know if you've ever noticed that, like all children under the age of 10 or so, they can just do like uninhibited art. And I think that we need to get back to the thing of just turning on an audio book and you can,

The mom can run it from audible through a speaker or you could even get it, they even have them still on CD if you really want to do that or like Yodo, you said. But having just something to listen to that doesn't have the screens, doing puzzles, doing art projects. I know this is like the favorite of every mother.

But finger painting, you've got that sensory thing going on. It helps that child's brain develop so much better than sitting going this on a screen. There are just so many things. I bet you if you just even Googled screen free entertainment for kids, you would come up with this huge thing because people are realizing that it is so important that these kids have this good old fashioned

Angela O'Dell (44:32.446)

sensory input type play and that's how their brains develop. So yes, I don't know how helpful that was, but yes, I know it's available. It's out there. You mentioned, and a lot of it is, a lot of it's free or cheap. You know, my podcast, which has gone completely crazy, it is completely free. It's non-monetized. Nobody has to pay for anything. I'm no,

Nobody pays for it on the other side. I mean, I pay for it plenty, but they don't. And it's meant to be a gift to families so that they can just find whatever they want. Fun stories about horses that served in the war, know, this kind of thing. just kind of things that make kids go, huh? You know, so those kinds of things, there are lots of them out there. I don't know how free they are, but I know mine is.

There's so many things that they can do. Good old fashioned construction paper. How about your boxes from Amazon? Let them make a castle out of it.

Anna Grace Ball (45:36.1)

Mm-hmm.

Anna Grace Ball (45:44.58)

Yeah. One year I gave mine for my nephew's ninth birthday. I gave him a roll of multiple colors of duct tape and said all of the boxes for all your presents. You have those, you have your duct tape. And he was thrilled.

Angela O'Dell (45:52.249)

Mm-hmm.

Angela O'Dell (46:00.141)

yes, yes. So it's those fun little things, because kids love to be able to create something from their own brain.

Anna Grace Ball (46:07.404)

yeah. Yeah. Okay. So for our last question, do you have any free materials on YouTube or I know your podcast is the for cool kids. But do you have any material that we can, that people can send to friends who aren't going to be able to make the conference, but they have friends who would love to kind of hear this explanation from you and not just secondhand as they can do it.

Angela O'Dell (46:33.561)

I don't right now, but it's kind of interesting that they would bring that up because I was actually thinking about creating just a kind of a landing page on my website, which is just angeloadele.com, super simple, of doing something that has some like tips for different tech detox type things. Maybe even setting up a challenge or something, giving the information as,

Anna Grace Ball (46:44.752)

Mm-hmm. Okay.

Angela O'Dell (47:01.729)

And I know that one time after a conference, I had like a QR code that people could scan and they could just go and look at all of the slides again. So that was a while ago and I don't remember what happened to that, but I could probably bring it back, you know? So yeah, definitely, most definitely.

Anna Grace Ball (47:20.452)

Yeah. Well, we know whatever you have that we will love to see it. Do you have any just kind of last final thoughts, comments that you would love to share with us? last words of wisdom?

Angela O'Dell (47:24.879)

Thank

Angela O'Dell (47:33.687)

I don't know how wise they are, I remember I was just sitting here and looking at that picture behind me over my shoulder right there. That's funny when everything is switched. That's my dad. And he was a very wise man and he's been gone for 17 years. Can't believe that, but 17

years. And he used to tell me when I'd get myself all in a tizzy and run around with my hair on fire, he'd just look at me and go,

What? Why? And I'm like, huh, you know, and he's like, Ang, follow the peace. And I'm like, he's like, here, what do I do now? What do I do? Just follow the peace. And that's what I would like to leave people with, is follow the peace. I...

I know that there are so many things in this world that can scare, that just scare us to death. And like I said in the session, we can't think clearly when we're scared. So number one, learn what God says about the fear.

And

And remember what it says, you know, my peace I give to you, my peace I leave with you. You know, don't let your hearts be troubled. Choose not to be troubled. Don't think like this world, but be renewed in your mind. And...

Angela O'Dell (49:18.489)

Just remember that God knows you and He sees you and He loves you and He will give you the wisdom you need.

Anna Grace Ball (49:30.197)

Thank you so much for sharing and it was so nice to have you on and we can't wait to have you at convention and get to hear even more of this. So, for all of y'all who are listening, Angela will be at the state convention in Houston at the end of May. And so definitely, if you can make it, you should definitely come because she's going to be giving the full version of this talk, with all of the, every time she said,

Angela O'Dell (49:31.759)

You're welcome.

Anna Grace Ball (49:57.521)

I talk about this more, but we're shortening it for this. Well, don't worry. She will be giving the full version of this talk at convention. And then she's also going to be giving her workshop, Courageous Identity for the Moms Edition. So if you have found this helpful, then definitely please join us. We would love to have you. And I know like Angela said, she'd love to be able to talk to you and just be able to.

Angela O'Dell (49:59.769)

Mm-hmm.

Angela O'Dell (50:21.901)

Yes.

Anna Grace Ball (50:25.198)

be able to talk about everything that this life is throwing at us in this world. And so we are so thankful to have had her on. We do have a thank you to our advertiser from the safehomeschool.org. They are a community of technologists, cybersecurity professionals and homeschool partners who've experienced firsthand how safe and unmonitored internet access can be. So just kind of like what we've been talking about monitoring screen time. Their mission is to educate, equip,

homeschool families with cybersecurity knowledge, tools, and habits needed to create a safe and healthy home learning environment. They provide free resources that help families take control of their digital world and protect what matters most. So there is the QR code and then also there's a link in the chat to get for a code to give their special discount, get their discount. So we're going to watch a quick message from them.

Anna Grace Ball (52:35.874)

So definitely check that out. Their link to their website should be in the chat as well.

So we're going to just talk through, I know y'all are all waiting for the giveaways at the end. Give me just a couple of minutes and we will get into those giveaways. But first, we wanted to talk real quick about THSC membership. So did you know that we have a membership? One. But we have it to help support you and advocate for you on your homeschool journey. We have so many questions tonight on, "am I doing it right?"

How do you navigate the scenario? So that's exactly what the THSC membership is designed for. With your membership, you have immediate access to legal advice and support for any issues you may run into, homeschool coaches that are available to answer any questions you have, discounts to tons of major curriculums and or resources for this school year. So there is a discount that's going to be that is on the screen hosting that webinar. Sorry.

We're hosting the webinar sale now. So it's only that discount is only available for those who are registered for the webinar. It's going to be \$119. So watch your email for a link to take advantage of this webinar only special discounts. And if you have any more questions, feel free to reach out to our team to answer all your questions on how THSC can serve your family. And then after you purchase your membership, you'll receive a link to complete to a complete set of convention recordings from last year. So we love to be able to.

Equip you to do what you do best. Next month, we are going to have our last webinar of our spring webinar series. So we are gearing up for convention and we are super excited. So do you ever wonder if the THSC convention is for you and does the exhibit hall just completely overwhelm you? I know the first few years that I went, I had no idea what to do when I walked in those doors. are you worried that you won't be able to choose which workshops to attend? mean, obviously now you all know you need to attend Angela's, but.

Anna Grace Ball (54:38.35)

What other workshops do you need to attend? So get ready for our exclusive sneak peek and insider information about the 2026 Texas Home School State Convention. Whether you're already planning to attend or still deciding, this webinar will give you the insider scoop on how to make the most of your convention experience. So the THSC events team is going to be sharing all of our hacks and insight tips and exciting announcements and a sneak peek.

of all of our exciting new speakers, our camp miss sessions, special events, and exhibit hall surprises waiting for you. So join this fun webinar to ask any questions you have and to get a taste of the community encouragement and inspiration that makes the THSC convention such a highlight of the year. Trust us, you will not want to miss this preview. So that's going to be on April 16th. It's a Thursday and it will also be at one o'clock just like this one. So make sure to join us for that. Okay. It's time to do our giveaways. So

For our Leadership Summit giveaway, our winner is Tabitha McNeeley. So congratulations Tabitha. If you want to drop your email in the chat, we will collect that and then we will send that information to you so you can redeem that free leadership ticket. So congratulations and we will look forward to seeing you at Leaders Summit.

And then we're going to do our convention ticket giveaway. So our giveaway winner for the free state convention ticket is Christine Quintana. So welcome, welcome. We are so excited. going to have, it will be great to see you at convention. Same, same thing as Tabitha. If you want to drop your email in the chat, we will collect it and then give you that code so you can get your convention ticket for free.

So we will be so excited to have y'all. Okay, and do not forget, so for CAH, our Co-op Appreciation Week, sorry, we have a, we're working on the name. So don't forget that our giveaways were closed tomorrow, so make sure you follow the link to that form that they're dropping in the chat and nominate your leaders before it is too late so that they can take advantage of all of the great prizes we're giving out there.

Anna Grace Ball (56:59.886)

Thank you all so much for coming today. We have been so excited to hear from Angela and we can't wait to see you next month.

Anna Grace Ball (57:15.12)

I'm so glad Christine. So glad you were able to join us and happy to see you at convention.

Anna Grace Ball (57:39.744)

Thank you.

Angela O'Dell (57:41.305)

Yeah, you're welcome. It's always a hard topic to condense.

Angela O'Dell (57:52.131)

us.

Angela O'Dell (58:19.085)

Yeah, I'm looking forward to it. I haven't given it in a couple of years, so I really need to refresh it and get some new stats in there because it's like...

I mean, everybody knows that there's something going on, but the reality of it is that it's so much deeper. It's so much deeper. Such an attack on identity.

Anna Grace Ball (59:05.478)

Yes.