

NATHHAN NEWS

CHASK - Christian Homes And Special Kids
NATHHAN - National Challenged Homeschoolers Associated Network

**Equipping Christians to raise
their children with special needs, confidently.**

Fall / Winter 2005 - 06

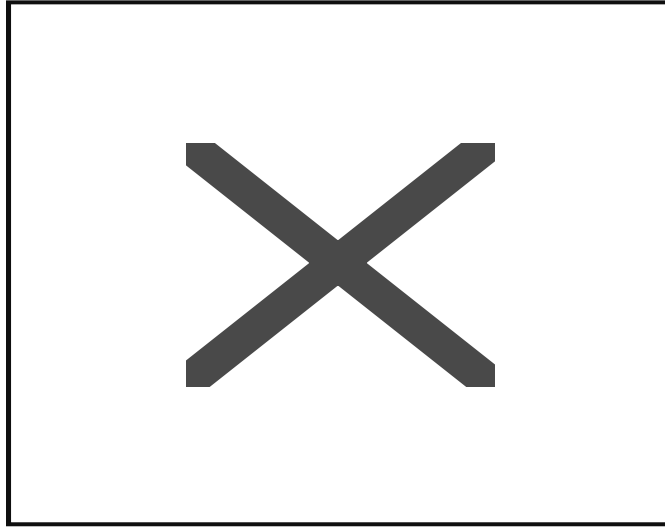
Volume 13 No. 2



- **Maid or Mother?**
- **Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Nutrition**
- **CHASK's stories of babies finding loving homes**
- **Tera's Story... Samuel Has Down Syndrome**
- **It's A Boy! The Testimony of a Family's Experience with Gender Ambiguity**

Articles, letters, and reviews printed in the NATHHAN NEWS are not to be taken as legal or medical advice. Please seek the services of a qualified source.

Also please note: What you read and the resources you find through NATHHAN may not line up with your Christian convictions. Some of the resources we share with you may not be necessarily from a home-schooling perspective. We simply point you, with your shovel, and hope you will dig! Please pick and choose carefully.



Goal and Purpose of NATHHAN

To encourage homeschooling families with special needs children in ways that glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. To find Christian homes for children with special needs.

NATHHAN / CHASK

National Challenged Homeschoolers
Christian Homes And Special Kids

P.O. Box 39
Porthill, ID 83853
(208) 267- 6246
NATHANEWS@aol.com
www.NATHHAN.org
www.chask.org

Front Cover

Summer Joy, born 8/23/05. 4lbs, 9 oz. 18 inches long. Summer has arthrogryposis of both the hands and feet. She was adopted by Sally Kinkade, WY in August.

The winds of change are upon us!

We know that the Lord has His hand in your life, protecting you and guarding your hearts and minds. Many NATHHAN / CHASK families have been negatively impacted by the hurricanes this fall. We ask you to remember them in your prayers.

Growing Pains for NATHHAN and CHASK

The winds of change are blowing here in Idaho, too. The Lord has made it apparent that we need to move the office and our home closer to Bonner's Ferry, Idaho. We have purchased a home that will suit our needs about 3 miles from town. It has 8 acres and we will be re-locating the NATHHAN / CHASK mobile office there also.

Because of the fast rate of growth of the CHASK part of NATHHAN, plus the ever increasing need to be keeping up on both web pages, the NATHHAN / CHASK NEWS, the NATHHAN family directory, the NATHHAN lending library, finding homes for babies and organizing families willing to adopt, fundraising, publishing and resources, plus lots of other details that make us work, we need more help!

Our problem has been in getting help to come to us. We live in Porthill, ID... 30 minutes from town, in the middle of nowhere. We have quite a few folks who can help out on a regular basis if we are not so far away.

Another reason we are relocating, is our need for high speed internet. Jacob, our computer programmer, is writing a special system that will integrate all the parts of NATHHAN and CHASK, making processing information and orders easier. That

means, instead of entering folks numerous times, we only have to enter their name once. In fact, you will be able to update your own membership renewal or directory entry, and order resources all in one entry over the internet if you wish. This will also enable our office to handle over 500 responses a day.

NATHHAN and CHASK are moving the office site.

We'd appreciate your prayers and patience during the months of Oct. - Nov. - Dec. while we move. We are making every effort not to lose a single phone call. This is important to us. The NATHHAN Lending Library will be on hold for the holiday months of Nov. and Dec. Not many families have time to read during this season anyway. If you are in a rush or need something in an emergency, we'd be happy to pull it off the shelf and get it in the mail to you.

Our address

will not change for now. We will be sharing the new address in future mailings. Our present address will be forwarded for a long time to come. Our phone numbers will remain the same.

This summer went by really fast. We purposed to spend time this summer as a family. Last summer we didn't and really regretted that. As the children get older, we can see that our days are not going to get any slower paced....(at least for the next 20 years). So we MADE time to be a family.

We traveled over to the Puget Sound area in Washington state to visit Great Grandma, and to relax. We stayed at a state park and introduced the children to crabs. Here is a great picture of Sheela "seeing" a crab for the first time. Mercy Grace is watching.

With another family, we took a trip about 200 miles south to a state park with a lake. This lake has extraordinarily good trout fishing. The

children had a wonderful time sharing the canoe and the fishing tackle. I think we ate more trout that weekend than we ever have in our lifetime! They also took their bikes and spent a lot of time riding around the paved and graveled roads that meandered through the park.

In August, we also took a trip to the Washington state coastal, town of Westport. There we traveled with a couple of other families from our church. The men had one purpose...to catch salmon. The women had another...to pick blackberries. We all came

home with lots of both, thanks to some blessed fisherman and some quick pickers.

Jake, now 22, has been busy working on creating a program that keeps track of legislation statistics for NCHE (National Center for Home

Education). He has finished that project and is eager to get started on the new NATHHAN / CHASK system.

On July 17th, we almost lost Jacob in a plane crash. He was flying with a friend too low over a mountainous area. They found themselves caught in a down draft. This forced them close to the ground. Their plane clipped a tree top, cart wheeled and then slid, spiraling down another tree, landing between two trees. We were very worried, as he was 3 hours late. Jake woke up after being unconscious for over an hour. His friend sustained a head injury and was unconscious. They were both helicopter airlifted, after an incredible rescue effort by Jake himself, Search and Rescue, men from our church, and the U.S. Border Patrol. Jake was able to walk away from the crash, with a slight head injury. We are praising God for



Sheela touches a little crab. "It tickles!"

sparing our son and his friend.

One of the most difficult aspects of the situation for all of us was that Jake's friend was injured more severely. In the hospital, after having a blood clot removed from the right side of his brain, he woke up about a week later. His left side was very weak but after quite a few more weeks, and some physical therapy, was able to walk, talk and even play the guitar. We are VERY thankful that Jake's friend has made a good (although not yet total) recovery.

Josh, now 20, is working in town building portable barns with a friend from church. Josh will be attending Bible school in February while it is too cold and miserable to work outside.

Zack, 14, is working to finish up 7th grade. He is coming along nicely, learning to use the GL2 camera to film, edit and create DVDs. We appreciate his stepping up to help out more in the office.

Zeph is 12 in November. He is showing a lot of interest in computers and is asking to do some work in the office. We know that there will be data entry soon enough and that there will be lots of computer work for him to do. Zeph is in 5th grade in Christian Light. He prefers to be hunting, snowboarding or otherwise outside, or on the computer.

Liza is 20. Her mild, mental delays have faded more and more as she is maturing into a young adult. She has made lots of progress in learning not to stare or get angry when crossed. She can be a real help with the household and little ones. She loves to crochet and is ever in the process of a new project such as making a blanket, a basket, wreath or book marker.

Sheela is 16. Even though she is blind, she says that she does not long for sight until she can see Jesus face to face. She is a steady blessing to us all by doing laundry for 14 people (no easy task), and helping with the care and bathing of Lynny (also no easy task).

Jordan is 17. The Down syndrome part of him we don't notice. He is just Jordan. Making sure that the goats are milked, watered and fed, he is an important part of providing the huge amount of milk our family drinks and uses. He is

amiable and tries hard to work right along with the guys in what they are doing.

Sheraya is 10. She has become more of a real help in the office. She can enter inquiries and change of address. This alone is a wonderful help. She cares for ShaHannah and keeps tabs on the kitchen when Mom is not there.

Mercy Grace is 8. She is still bubbly and full of generous giving. She loves to work along side mom or grandma in the kitchen or office, doing what she can to help. Most often it is the dishes or counting out CHASK brochures. She is in 2nd grade and is really making lots of progress thus far.

Jayben is now 4. He has grown into a little carbon copy of Daddy. His personality is rough and tumble, aggressive, ready for action. Keeping up with his older brothers is no problem from his standpoint. He feels that he is ready to drive the tractor, hunt, fish, wrestle and use the computers. Thankfully he has acquired some common sense along with his enthusiasm and isn't prone to "get in over his head" so to speak.

ShaHannah Faith is our little one-year-old dolly. She is carefully mothered by her older sisters and brothers. Perhaps a little too mothered at times, as learning the word "no" has been a sad disappointment to her. She is a quick learner and has a soft heart that loves to please. She still spends a lot of time in the back pack on Daddy or Mommy's back.

We are really content to be in the center of God's will, wherever that may take us. We love our home here in Porthill, but are trusting that as His will for our lives is unfolding daily, we will still feel that peace and joy no matter what.

Love in Christ,

**Tom, Sherry, Jake, Josh, Jordan, Sheela,
Lynny, Liza, Zack, Zeph, Sheraya,
Mercy Grace, Jayben and ShaHannah
Bushnell**

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History and Information About NATHHAN

NATHHAN began with a telephone call from one mother of a child with Down syndrome to another mother homeschooling her son with Down syndrome in the early spring of 1990. Acting on the Lord's prompting to begin a network of parents helping one another, Diane Macbeth in PA wrote Kathy Salars in Texas on March 17th, 1990, thus announcing the birth of NATHHAN.

In the fall of 1992, due to the exponential growth experienced by NATHHAN from 2 to over 600 families, it became impossible for these moms to keep up. Tom and Sherry Bushnell offered their assistance and NATHHAN's main office was moved to Olalla, WA.

In the Spring of 1999, the Bushnells moved to Porthill, Idaho at the end of the panhandle, one mile from the Canadian border. A board meets periodically to make decisions. Its officers are Jim and Jerri Unruh in Copeland, ID; Ralph and Debbie Poole in Cheney, WA; John and Diane Ryckman, Creston, B.C., and Tom and Sherry Bushnell. Financial Advisory board: Andy and Linda Dillon, Camano Island, WA; Dennis and Linda Lamphere in Porthill, ID, William Byler and Dayton Skrivseth in Bonners Ferry, ID; James and Dana McKenzie in Battleground, WA. In the Fall of 2002, as an outgrowth of NATHHAN, CHASK was born. CHASK is Christian Homes And Special Kids. CHASK matches special kids with families for free, no agency fees or referral costs.

NATHHAN / CHASK's web page and magazine strive to equip and encourage parents with special needs children, assisting them in finding the will of God for their lives.

NATHHAN 's Ministry

National Challenged Homeschoolers

NATHHAN NEWS - This magazine printed twice a year, includes resources, articles from parents and professionals, and lots of letters from families, plus much more.

NATHHAN WEB PAGE www.nathhan.org

Updated quarterly. A full service web page with all the features of the print style NATHHAN NEWS plus a discussion board and on-line applications for the lending library and family directory. Password is needed to access the NATHHAN membership portion. Hundreds of articles from the last 12 years of NATHHAN included.

FAMILY DIRECTORY - Although some of us will never meet this side of heaven, we can still encourage and share a bit of our lives with each other. The directory is on-line, password protected, updated once a year and is available to members willing to be in the directory.

LENDING LIBRARY - The library is operated through the mail for NATHHAN members. Members donate postage to and from library when they use it. The NATHHAN Lending Library Catalog can be reviewed on the web site www.nathhan.org
Book donations are gladly accepted.

All this for only \$25.00 / year.
Unbelievable!

CHASK's Ministry

Christian Homes And Special Kids

Parents can raise their disabled child with joy and competence. Christ is the answer to making it through any crisis.

Our goal is to *match* every special needs child that God brings to us who needs a home, before-born or already born, with a Christian family. No agency fees.

www.chask.org
chaskinfo@aol.com

Gift Memberships

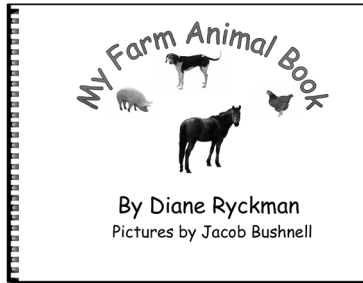
Gift memberships are available for folks facing financial difficulty. A NATHHAN/ CHASK gift membership entitles the family to NATHHAN/ CHASK's internet services. NATHHAN/CHASK's gift program is funded solely by other homes sharing out of their concern and abundance, giving so other Christian brothers and sisters can receive the encouragement they need. We want you to get the support you need. If your home cannot afford the \$25.00, don't hesitate to send us what you can afford and request a gift membership.

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If phonics doesn't click, try **Farm Animal Words Reading Kit**

Designed to assist you in teaching sight reading skills, **Farm Animal Words Reading Kit** consists of a book called **My Farm Animal Book**, a double set of flashcards, and an instruction booklet on how to teach sight reading.



My Farm Animal Book Features

- ⇒ 10 well known farm animals.
- ⇒ Large (8 ½" by 11"), uncluttered pages.
- ⇒ One simple animal photograph per page with large, easy to read print.
- ⇒ Total reading vocabulary of 57 words. 4 new words per page.
- ⇒ Repetition and review of words incorporated into text.

Farm Animal Words Reading Kit has been developed by Diane Ryckman, and has been thoroughly tested on her son Andrew, who just happens to have Down syndrome.


For more information visit www.kootenay.com/~ryckman/DownHomeLearning.html

E-mail: ryckman@kootenay.com

Phone: (250) 428-7798

John and Diane Ryckman
1453 Evans Rd. RR7
Creston, B.C.
V0B-1G7

\$18.50 US / \$23.00 Canadian



*She has the freedom to follow
her own path for learning.*

We're making sure she keeps it.

Her family's membership in Home School Legal Defense Association provides personal legal counsel—and the confidence of legal representation should their rights be challenged.

That's a lot of protection for just 27 cents a day.

Call 866-338-8603 (toll-free) or visit www.hslda.org.

**HOME SCHOOL
LEGAL DEFENSE
ASSOCIATION**
Advocates for Family & Freedom

**Want to homeschool tomorrow?
You need HSLDA today.**

Special Needs Support Groups

Deaf Ministries List

Earl and Shirley Wilbers
221 W. Gay St.
Harrisonburg, VA 22802
E-mail: EEARL2@aol.com
Website: Deaf Ministries List
<http://members.aol.com/deaflist/web.html>

Especially Yours - a support group for families homeschooling children with special needs. All are welcome.
Call Patricia Rendoff.
(303) 937-3428 or at prdiggie@juno.com

Shepherd Boy - Strategies for Autism

4241 Faye Drive
Olive Branch, MS 38654
www.shepherdboy.org
Hands-on, practical ideas for working with individuals with autism and related disabilities.

HOPES - Homeschooling Our Precious Exceptional

Students. We meet on the first Thursday night of each month.
For more information contact Jim and Mary Rees, Traveler's Rest,
SC Phone: (864) 834-0264

Bethel Baptist Academy

P.O. Box 10035
Fullerton, CA 92838
Norm and Sharon Wallace (714) 527-5807 or Matthew and Julia Hoch (714) 990-0199. We help Moms write their IEPs through our workshops. Our resource specialist is Marian Soderholm. She can be found at (562) 425-7886 or e-mail at mercedchristian@yahoo.com

AVCS Books

Sharon Hensley, MA
6291 Vegas Drive
San Jose, CA 9512
408-997-0290
www.almadenvalleychristianschool.com

H.A.N.D.S. ON!

Support group for special needs homeschoolers in PA
Web Page: <http://geocities.com/kellilynette/handsonhomeschool>
Newsletter: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/handson_westempa/
Online forum: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpahandson/>
Database form: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wpahandson/files/>

S.N.A.C.K.S. of Delaware

(Special Needs and Christian Kids)
Helping families and churches to minister to their special needs children. Serving the greater Delaware Valley and Tri-State region.
Contact: Tita Wyatt
Email: tewjtr@flash.net

Christian Cottage School

(303) 688-6626 Sedalia, Colorado
Mike and Terry Spray founded CCS for diagnostic testing and prescribing curriculum.

Special Children Special Blessings

Jim and Debbie Mills
8266 Leucadia Ave. San Diego, CA 92114
(619) 469-5822

Specially Gifted c/o the Pegrams

7217 South Drive Richmond, VA 23225-1622
(804) 323-1786
Strengthuntostrength@juno.com A support group for families homeschooling special needs children. Part of a Christian family-based ministry operated by Dave and Deb Pegram. Also operate a private Christian "umbrella" school that provides transcripts, IEP's, testing and evaluative services.

PRAISE

Parents Reaching Academically in Special Education
A homeschool support group for parents homeschooling special needs children.
947 Park SW Grand Rapids, MI 49504
(616) 451-3620
Contact Shannon Bloemendaal Email: sbloemen@aol.com

Parents Instructing Challenged Children (PICC)

Allen and Barb Mulvey
615 Utica St. Fulton, NY 13069 (315) 592-7257
PICC has a lending library and publishes an annual directory of families homeschooling special needs children.

O.U.C.H. Ohio's Uniquely Challenged Homeschoolers

(formerly C.H.O.S.E.N. Christian Homeschool Special Educational Needs)
Renee Silvaroli—Support Group Coordinator & Workshop Speaker. Meets at Silvaroli's home.
Phone: (440) 944-4782
Email: RCHOSEN@visn.net
Please RSVP.
"Ohio Special Needs Resource Packet" available (at cost of \$10.00 plus \$2.50 postage /handling); State Newsletter \$5.00 (5 issues); workshops and special needs consultation available (\$1.00 for sample newsletter).

Braille Sharing Library/ Lydia Schuck

1981 Eden Rd.
Mason, MI 48854 (517) 676-4621
laschuck@juno.com
We have a list of braille to share. Braille can be sent to me. Please label what is in the box and contact me by phone or e-mail before it is sent.

Down Home Learning

Does your child have Down Syndrome? Need someone to talk to? Have some ideas to share? Contact: Diane Ryckman 1453 Evans Rd. RR 7
Creston, B.C. V0B 1G7 CANADA (250)-428-7798
Email: ryckman@kootenay.com



1st Straight Talk

A Parents Guide for Correcting

Childhood Mispronunciations

Written by
Marisa J. Lapish, M.A. in Speech Pathology

- Charts explain normal sound development
- The *Consonant Cookbook*, suggestions to help with each consonant's correct sound.
- Test forms and score sheets
- Word training lists

An excellent resource for parents wishing to implement a quality speech therapy program without spending lots of money or going to the public school. We've used it successfully for over 10 years.

—Tom Bushnell



\$45.00

Free Shipping!

1st Straight Talk's DVD

Watch Marisa demonstrate the sound "r" using the manual.

30 min. video supplements the manual.

Video is \$20.00 separate from the manual.

Combination Straight Talk 1 + DVD = **\$55.00**

Order online at www.nathhan.org or use the order form on page 30!

2nd Straight Talk

A Parent's Guide to



Language Development A Christian Perspective

Written by
Marisa J. Lapish, M.A. in Speech Pathology
and Tom and Sherry Bushnell, Directors of NATHHAN

- Exercises in Learning to Listen
- Nuts and Bolts of Language Training
- Increasing Auditory and Visual Comprehension
- Language Development Activities for the Christian Home
- Tests to Determine Exactly Where Your Child Needs Help
- Suggestions for Working with Children Ranging from Non-verbal to More Advanced in Language.



\$45.00

112 page manual, free shipping!

An excellent resource for parents helping their children overcome language delays.

Order online at www.nathhan.org or use the order form on page 30!

CHASK—Christian Homes And Special Kids

CHASK has been growing really fast. We now have over 350 families signed up, ready and willing to adopt children with special needs.

Not only are these families wanting to adopt children with disabilities, but they are also ready to share the gospel with birth parents in crisis. This unique opportunity to speak into lives has yielded some terrific stories that we would like to share with you. Here is one:

“I found out that my unborn baby girl has Down syndrome while in drug rehab trying to wean myself off cocaine. Then I was told that she would need heart surgery and that the state would promptly take her away from me at birth. I couldn't find an agency to take my baby. I was heartbroken. Then someone gave me the number for CHASK. I just want to say thank you for being there for me in my time of need.”

The scenario above is true and ended in a wonderful way. I want to thank you for being a very important part of this birth mom's decision to choose life for her baby. Because you have supported CHASK, a family came forward willing to be the mommy and daddy. I thought you might like to read the letter I received a few days ago from the adoptive family.

“Just thought you might be wondering whatever happened in our situation. Things have been good! The baby was born on July 28th, 2005. Ken and I got legal custody about 3 days later. Khloe Jaedyn is the SWEETEST baby ever! She has lots and lots of dark long hair and is cute as a button. Jane & John (birth parents) and Ken & I have all become very close and are like family. The meetings with them went great and we all love each other very much. They are so pleased to have an open adoption when they first thought they would like no contact at all! They are also continuing to do well and after

some sadness the first few days they told us that the sadness was taken away and replaced with love! We couldn't be happier! We gained a daughter and them!”

Today CHASK needs your help. Thousands of babies are not getting the opportunity to feel the love of a mommy and daddy that Khloe has. Maybe this is due to a misunderstanding about disability. Children with challenges can have a wonderful life and be a blessing to their parents.

We'd like to share with you a terrific resource for birth parents facing a difficult pregnancy. Are you looking for a OBGYN or gynecologist who will support pro life issues and not push abortion?

We would like to introduce you to AAPLOG— American Association of Pro Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists. www.aaplog.org

They are recognized by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) as a special interest group within the College.

Their main purpose is “to reaffirm the unique value and dignity of individual human life in all stages of growth and development from conception onward.”

Strong voices within ACOG espouse elective abortion on demand as the standard care for unwanted pregnancies. Often perinatologists are quick to recommend abortion as a “final solution” for “defective” *in utero* babies.

AAPLOG wants to encourage you. There are many OBGYNs and Gynecologists

who hold to the belief that all human life is sacred. They also strongly believe that the physician's role is caregiver for both the mother and her unborn child, rather than the potential terminator of that child.

Some of the resources available on the AAPLOG web site are

1) Position statements:

Long-Term Health Effects After Abortion:
What every woman needs to know

- Perinatal Hospice
- Induced Abortion and the Risk of Breast Cancer
- Human Cloning
- AAPLOG Statement on FDA Approval of Mifeprex (RU 486)
- Partial Birth Abortion
- AAPLOG Opposes ACGME Mandatory Abortion Training

2) List of physicians by state on AAPLOG website

Pro Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists and Pro Life Maternal-Fetal Medicine (MFM) specialists in your areas. Listed by state.

These physicians do not perform or refer for abortions. The MFM specialists are able to assist in pregnancies affected by an adverse diagnosis to provide proper medical care with referrals for the affected baby, as well as provide “*Perinatal Hospice*” care when appropriate.

Here are some abortion facts that you can refer to and count for accuracy.

The American College of Obstetricians has steadfastly refused to acknowledge any complications from abortions.

However, AAPLOG recognizes the following areas as complications well documented in the medical literature as a result of abortion.

For this reason, AAPLOG heartily endorses NATHHAN/CHASK as an alternative to pregnancies with an adverse diagnosis to prevent the complications listed below.

1) Increased Risk of Dying

- All causes death rates 200% HIGHER within one year of an abortion compared to delivering women.
- Death rates 4 TIMES higher in aborting women compared to non-pregnant women.
- 80% HIGHER RISK of dying in an “accident”

2) Increased Risk of Preterm Birth

- 200% INCREASE in preterm birth rate (< 32 weeks) with 1 abortion.

(Compilation of 49 studies)

3) Increased Risk of Depression

- 63% MORE mental health visits 90 days after pregnancy in abortion patients compared to delivery
- 21% MORE mental health visits over 4 years after abortion compared to delivery.
- 2 ½ TIMES INCREASED RISK for suicide compared to delivery.
- 460% INCREASE in illicit drug and 122% increase in alcohol use in subsequent pregnancies with abortion.
- 65% MORE likely to have “high risk” for clinical depression with abortion compared to delivery.

4) Increased Risk Breast Cancer

- 2 ½ TIMES INCREASE in breast cancer

In addition, AAPLOG would like to share with you some great resources for those suffering from previous abortion. AAPLOG recognizes the devastation of abortion and has collected a list of post-abortion counseling services. They are of all types including on line chat groups and healing support groups. They encourage any woman or man affected by post abortion to seek out these groups for forgiveness and healing.

Heart Beat International/CareNet

1-800-395-4357. Toll-free 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. in the spinal cord link up and reach the thalamus (the brain's reception center): at 7-20 weeks."

Rachel's Vineyard Retreats
1-877-HOPE-4-ME (1-877-467-3463)
www.RachelsVineyard.org

Healing Hearts Ministries (on-line counseling)
www.HealingHearts.org
1-888-792-8282

Safe Haven Ministries (on-line counseling)
www.SafeHavenMinistries.com

National Office of Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing
1-800-5WE-CARE (1-800-593-2273)

American Victims of Abortion
1-202-626-8800 ext 132

Ramah International
www.RamahInternational.org

Save One, www.SaveOne.org
1-866-329-3571

For further information or questions for AAPLOG:

(most inquiries are answered within 24-72 hours unless there are mitigating circumstances)

AAPLOG National Office Contact Info:
Phone: (616) 546-2639.
Email: info@aaplog.org
Website: www.aaplog.org

With new data coming in every year about the wonders of what exactly happens in the womb, a deep dark secret for many hundreds of years. Get a read of this latest data... <http://www.texlife.org/docs/fetalpain.html> which points out the findings of neurologist Dr. Paul Ranalli that even the 20-30 week child in the womb may even feel more pain than an adult. Even more remarkable, Biblical Family Advocates said, is that the "pain impulse connections

Every week at the office here, we handle many different scenarios. All of them deal with children, born or unborn, facing a medical challenge in some way. Each birth family (or sometimes adoptive family) is facing a major crisis in their lives.

Here is an example of an e-mail we received in Sept.

"Hi, My name is Julia Smith - I have a Down syndrome nephew. He is adorable, loveable and has taught all of us in this family many necessary things. I have a friend - since we have recently moved to Florida - away from my nephew ☹️. This friend is a new believer and is considering terminating her pregnancy if her amino shows on Tuesday that her child is Downs. She is unmarried and living with her "fiancé". They are both believers, but go to a very "emotional" church and have not sought Godly counseling from anyone but myself and my husband regarding this. I just found all of this out today... that her baby may be Downs. We are having them over for dinner tonight. Please email me back with the specific information about adoptions with Downs Children. She had plans with the Catholic Adoption agency in town to give it up with them, but now, of course, this is a different matter since he or she may have Down syndrome. Please pray with me that she will see what love this child will give. If no home can be found and she will still have the child, we will take him/her - but I know that there may be families waiting for children as loving as these."

It is families such as yours that are able to meet birth parents in crisis such as the one above. These are your friends, neighbors and relatives that are hurting and needing to see the love of Jesus, through hospitality and assurance of His love for them and their baby.

Here is a short list of the babies now alive because of your support these last few weeks:

- Baby girl—unborn, Lobster Claw syndrome, PA
- Baby boy—unborn, 15 yr old mother, IN
- Baby boy, Down Syndrome, unborn, Hispanic, FL
- Unborn baby boy, single mom with disabilities, SC
- Newborn baby boy, Down Syndrome, DC
- Baby Girl, Down Syndrome, heart issues, FL,
- Baby unborn girl, Down Syndrome heart issues

- Baby girl, Down Syndrome, heart issues, WA
- 9 week baby boy, birth defects, NJ
- Baby girl, newborn, arthrogypsis of both hands and feet, CO
- Unborn baby, agenesis of the corpus callosum, OH
- Unborn baby, Down Syndrome girl, unknown location.

Also, we have been able to re-home a number of older children from adoption disruptions. These are private adoptions, between parents. CHASK simply plays a role of alerting families interested in adopting older children via the web site.

Please join us in ministering to birth parents.

NATHHAN /CHASK P.O. Box 39 Porthill, ID 83853
www.chask.org

Name _____

Address _____

Phone: (____) _____ E-mail _____

I am interested in sharing with birth parents in crisis. **Please send me _____ CHASK brochures.**

They can contact me via e-mail telephone letter

Disabilities I can share about with birth parents:

I am interested in adopting a child with special needs. We are interested in getting more information about how CHASK's matching service works. Please refer to www.chask.org for more information also.

We'd love to help. Included is our donation of \$ _____

I want to help share Christ with birth parents in crisis and support CHASK's unique ministry to the unborn with special needs.

NATHHAN /CHASK is a 501 c 3 not-for-profit ministry. All donations are tax deductible and are used to directly assist in saving the lives of babies with special needs and ministering to parents with special needs children. Credit cards accepted. Please make your checks out to NATHHAN / CHASK . (208) 267-6246

Here are some more situations that you have been a part of through your support of CHASK.

A low income, single birth mother in SC is also the mother of a severely disabled little boy, with a degenerative nerve disease. Pregnant by rape, a crisis pregnancy center convinced her to not abort her baby. This birth mom was homeless, dealing with a sick son and sick herself from the pregnancy. CHASK flew her out to Idaho (we were not able to find anyone immediately to help in her area). The Unruh family cared for her until she was on her feet. CHASK families, and an organization called Pennies From Heaven, bought her a reasonable car so that she could get to the multitude of Dr.'s appointments for her son and herself.

She then was able to find long-term help in her hometown in Indiana.

Birth mom in Florida is 32 weeks along. Doctors are advising an early birth abortion. Her baby girl has Down Syndrome, heart problems, and possible hepatitis C. A CHASK birth mom is matched quickly that day, so that the birth mother realizes the baby kicking and so alive within her is already loved, if she cannot parent.

A son with Down Syndrome and seizures is born to a professional couple in MD. They are seriously considering matching a child with a CHASK family and receive several family bios to consider. The father is very torn, emotionally. Through the wonderful counsel of the CHASK families sent to them, the birth family decides to parent their son.

We hope that you will continue to pray for CHASK as the months go on. Babies, families and professionals are touched by the example of Christ's love that you are showing to the world. Whether you are supporting CHASK financially, counseling, adopting or handing out CHASK's Adverse Prenatal Diagnosis brochures, you are touching lives in a real way.

How does CHASK work?

- Adoptive family fills out a CHASK application (page 17 or www.chask.org)

- A birth mom in crisis contacts us. Are there any NATHHAN families willing to take her pre-born baby or child with special needs?

- We contact adoptive families, getting permission to send the birth mom their information.

- We send birth mom 3 families to choose from, including their Dear Birth-Mom letters. After choice is made....

- Potential adoptive family and birth mom handle details such as communication, transportation, lawyer fees.

- Some financial help for adoptive costs may be available by private gifts from NATHHAN families.

Adoptive family should:

- Look into having a homestudy.

- Adoptive family should locate an adoption lawyer and be aware of their state's laws. (In some states, in order to avoid the appearance of impropriety, the adoption should be handled through an adoption lawyer. We can help you find a pro-life lawyer.)

- Adoptive family should be willing to pray and receive God's will for the birth mom's, baby's, and their lives, no matter what the decision reached by the birth mom.

Dear birth mom letters are VERY important. Your personal experience about why you chose to give life, instead of abortion, to your special needs baby can be instrumental in saving the life of *this* baby.

Please send us a letter as a ministry to encourage moms to choose life, even if you do not plan to adopt.

CHASK Application

Christian Homes And Special Kids

1. Last Name _____ 2. First Names _____

3. Address _____ State _____ Zip _____

4. Phone (_____) _____ 5. E-mail _____

7. Number of children in your family living in your home. _____

8. Describe your family. (Use a separate sheet if you need to. Pictures are nice). _____

9. What age of child are you considering? _____

10. Are you open to adopting a child of mixed race or color? _____

11. What disabilities would you feel comfortable with at this time? (For a more complete list to consider, see CHASK application on the internet www.chask.org)

12. Name of Church _____

13. Describe your faith in Jesus Christ: (You may want to use a separate sheet of paper.)

14. Name and phone of pastorName _____ Phone # (_____) _____

15. Please give us a 2nd reference ..Name _____ Phone # (_____) _____

16. What are your reasons for adopting? (Use your sheet of paper.)

17. Dear Birth Mom Letter. (Please carefully write a letter sharing your heart about adoption, special needs, and your vision for your family. For an example letter see www.chask.org under "Waiting Families".) We also need 1 family picture that we can scan into the computer with your entry.

CHASK/NATHHAN
P.O. Box 39 Porthill, ID 83853
(208) 267-6246
www.chask.org

Unruh Update



Editor's note: Jim and Jerri Unruh live in Copeland, ID about 9 minutes from the NATHHAN office. We are very grateful for their help in the office, which the Unruh family has provided as a generous love offering to you.

A Vision of Motherhood – For God's Purpose and Glory

I WILL NOT FORGET YOU

What is so great about all this motherhood stuff, any way? I must have changed 8000 diapers by now. I have produced as much milk as any good Jersey cow. I have tied countless numbers of shoes, tried, without success, to match even more socks. Taken apart stuck legos, fixed train tracks, caught crickets for various amphibians, even played with some dolls! I have read thousands of books, over and over again! Learned to look at a toilet seat before I sit, stopped plenty of fights, spanked a few bottoms, and bandaged many cut knees. My laundry has never been completely done and all my clothes are stained on the shoulders or as high up as dirty little hands can reach! The same little hands that

reach up and gently touch my face while their eyes look at me with pure love. The same eyes that trust me while I pray for them and thank me for putting food in their mouth. The same mouth that calls "Momma" trusting I will come.

"Momma" (my favorite word) with arms reaching out to be held. The same arms that now are so big they hold me, still calling out Momma and still looking at me with thanks and love. The same arms that now reach out to minister to others, mouths that speak out truth, eyes filled with compassion, hands to serve.

Isaiah 49:15 says "Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb. Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands." Inscribed by nails! God has given us as mothers a calling that is so close to His own heart. He shows us in this scripture the type of love He has for us. I know how strong my feelings are for my children. Is it possible for anyone to feel a greater love for them? God does!

He has allowed us the privilege of caring for His own creation. Over and over we are told how God has formed us in the womb, how He knew us before we were formed. (Is. 43:7, 44:2, 49:1,5, Ps. 139) Life begins long before we take our first breath. God has a plan and a purpose for each life and you are a part of it! Isaiah 43:7 tells us that God created man to bring Him glory. He has entrusted into our care a life, a part of His plan, a chance to influence the world for good.

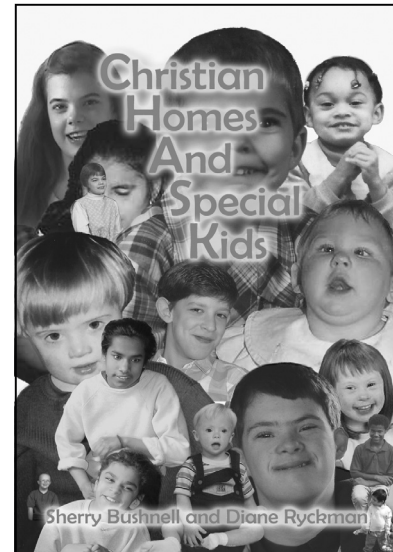
Our children are the future. We are a part of the solution or a part of the problems that face our world today. There are many other good things mothers can do and be, but I believe God asks us to answer the call to be what no one else can be and do what no one else can do for our children, His children, His reward! What can be more valuable! We have the ability to bring glory to God through the eternal salvation of our children, who then can influence their world for Christ.

Continued on page 63.

A book written by NATHHAN families

Christian Homes And Special Kids

CHASK



Warmly penned, practical resource written by homeschooling parents.

Here are moms and dads, just like you, living Christian lives and raising their special needs child for the Lord!

CHASK is packed full of tips, stories and advice from families that have been there. We know you will love reading it again and again.

Over 270 pages, 6" by 9"
Compiled and edited by
Sherry Bushnell
and Diane Ryckman

Chapter 1 - You Can Do It!

Chapter 2 - How To Begin

Chapter 3 - Pre-School Years

Chapter 4 - Elementary Years

Chapter 5 - Teens/ Adult Vocational Training

Chapter 6 - Therapy / Adaptive Technology

Chapter 7 - Character Development

Chapter 8 - Individual Education Plans

Chapter 9 - What's it Like Raising A Child With...?

Chapter 10 - The Ministry Of CHASK
Christian Homes And Special Kids

PLUS a large topical subject
and resource index.

See order form on page 30

Has it been a long time since your family
enjoyed a restful week together?



Join us for a week of family camp.

Meaningful family life does not come easy. From out of nowhere come stress and pressures that cause strain on your family's relationships. In a family affected by disability, sometimes it doesn't take much to push it over the top. Since 1991 families from around the country have attended

Joni and Friends Family Retreats seeking a time of rest and recreation, Christ-centered encouragement, and the tools to build a stronger family. Held at accessible camp and conference centers across the United States during the summer, Family Retreats provide dynamic five-day programs that refresh and strengthen your whole family. Joni and Friends Family Retreats provide a lifeline to families – families just like yours – who want hope and encouragement that will last. You and your family will be blessed, inspired, and make new friendships that will last a lifetime. Join us this summer at a retreat near you.

www.joniandfriends.org/retreat

or call 800-523-5777 and ask for the family information packet

It's A Boy!...



By Angela Chetta
BIO 779, Clinical Issues in Bioethics

April Howington shifted uncomfortably in the seat of her car on the way to the local obstetrician's office for a prenatal checkup. April, a 38-year-old woman, and her husband Keith had longed for a baby. Now that she had finally conceived, worries filled her mind. "I just don't feel well", she thought, "Something is wrong". Although 19 weeks pregnant, April had still not felt the little baby move.

In the office, an accompanying friend asked if it was a boy or a girl. "That's the least of my worries", April thought as she watched a disturbed look pass over the sonographer's face. "The baby is too small, Mrs. Howington", she said. "He is 3.5 weeks smaller than what he should be at this gestation age."

The doctor immediately made April an appointment with a maternal fetal specialist in Atlanta. Fighting back tears, April went home to fix supper for company. Keith would be home soon. Feeling very sad, April phoned their pastor, and asked him to pray. He then phoned several others who also joined in prayer.

Two days later, Keith drove April to see the specialist. "The baby will probably die within the month", she said. *This has got to be the*

hardest day of my life, April grieved.

However, after 5 weeks, the baby was still alive. By this time, approximately 9 churches and many individual people were praying for the Howington family. Attending physicians suggested that April have an abortion to save herself the emotional stress. Shocked, Keith and April refused to even consider such an option.

On the second trip to the specialist, April had an amniocentesis to check the baby's development. The test came back: 46XY (boy), no chromosomal or genetic problems. But the baby's fetal distress worsened and April was hospitalized on November 20, 1996. She had pregnancy induced hypertension and the amniotic fluid was critically low. The blood flow through the umbilical cord was inconsistent. According to measurements taken by sonogram the baby weighed about 398 grams (less than one pound).

Keith and April decided to name the baby Jonathan because it means "whom Jehovah gave" in Hebrew. The couple felt strongly that God had given them a child and decided to do their best to raise him. They continued to pray for God's protection.

After 4 days in the hospital, an immediate cesarean section was recommended by the doctor who believed that little Jonathan would otherwise not make it through the night because of the distressing womb conditions, and if delivery was successful there would only be about a 10% chance that the baby would live outside the womb. After prayer Keith said, "OK, doctor, we believe God has led us to go ahead with the C-section, because there is a 100% chance that this baby will live if it is God's will, and if it is God's will that this baby die then he has 0% chance. Either way we will accept what God has for us". April was awake and talking with the hospital staff during the operation. Keith was taking pic-

tures and snapped a shot just as tiny Jonathan, weighing 507 grams (17.5 oz) was lifted out of the womb. Not knowing the results of the amniocentesis, the neonatologist exclaimed, “It’s a girl!”. Groggy from the pain medication, April said, “That can’t be right, Keith, it can’t be a girl.... Did he say it was a girl?”

Keith and April did not know what to think. In truth, the tiny baby had what is known as ambiguous genitalia, with a phallus only 1-2 mm long. *That is the smallest human I have ever seen*, April thought.

Priority number one, however, was keeping this child alive and breathing. With an APGAR of zero, there were many complications. The baby’s extreme prematurity from being born at the age of 29 gestational weeks, resulted in multiple health prob-

lems, including respiratory failure, a grade III interventricular brain hemorrhage, congestive heart failure, hypothyroidism, gastro esophageal reflux which led to failure to

thrive issues, possible blindness, cerebral palsy and mental retardation, and many, many other issues that eventually added up to a five-page hospital discharge summary. It would be months before the baby was stable enough to declare with any certainty that it would live to see a world outside the NICU (neonatal ICU).

Added to the daily stress of the question “will my baby live through today?” the couple also struggled over the gender assignment question that the doctors plagued them with. They felt an immense amount of pressure from the doctors to assign this child the female gender.

The medical staff was unanimous: female gender assignment should be made. The traditional and case evidence seemed to support this conclusion. Traditionally, ambiguous genitalia in infants phenotypically suggest a female sex assign-

ment.

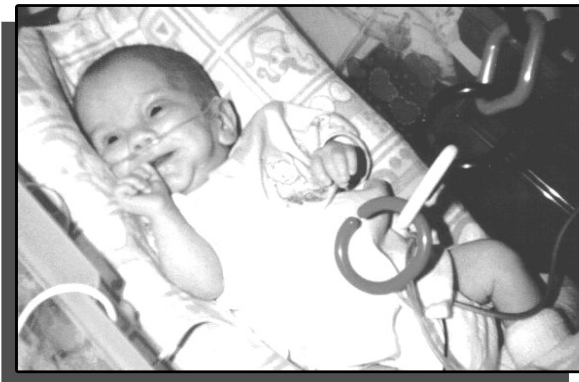
Keith and April did not agree so quickly. They had never heard of these terms before and decided to do a little research on their own. They spent hours in the medical library researching the terms used by the doctors. Their pastor was adamantly opposed to the doctor’s advice, saying that God had made this baby a boy and he should stay that way. They also looked into the Bible to find out more about eunuchs. They found that there are eunuchs from birth mentioned in the Old Testament that received double honor. They settled in their hearts that this may very well be what Jonathan was.

How distressing for parents expecting a boy, with blue ribbons on the door and all, to suddenly be faced with a very different kind of confusion.

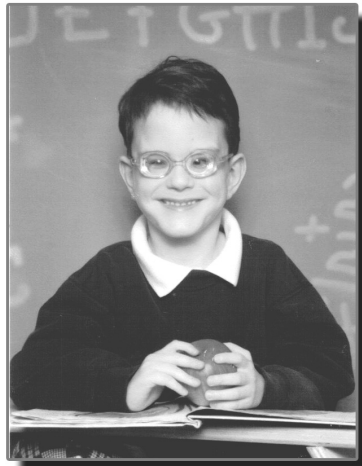
Intersex, genetic abnormalities that cause a person’s sex to be obscured both phenotypically and genotypically, is an issue for many people in North America today, especially in the Christian community. It is a topic that needs to be investigated, addressed and resolved Scripturally. The problem of intersex in patients is more common even than many other commonly discussed genetic disorders.

Christians need to dig deeply within the Bible to find the answers to troubling ethical issues, and deeply within their own souls for the love necessary to give hope and proper care to struggling individuals. The Bible is clear that God determines our gender from the foundation of the earth and who are we to change what God has made.

Keith and April decided that Jonathan would stay a little boy. They also had good evidence that a female gender assignment would be devastating. For one thing, the little boy had no female organs, no uterus or vagina and no amount of surgery can produce this. Of the wide spectrum of cases of intersex, this little baby’s case was mild in comparison to many other fully AIS patients who have no testosterone sensitivity at all. Little Jonathan did have partial sensitivity and later responded well to the male hormones with phenomenal



growth of the penis. Hypospadias is also a rather common abnormality that is repairable by surgery. Some day little Jonathan will need this surgery for functional and possible cosmetic purposes. Testes were located in the baby's abdominal cavity that someday can be surgically relocated in the scrotum. Another question to be answered is whether or not the person is in fact a hermaphrodite in which case the body may appear female in one area and male in another, and the chromosomes of these individuals are not easy to read.



The doctors continued the pressure, however, with their own interests in mind. This was very untraditional to not make a gender reassignment. After agonizing for months and watching the tiny infant gain one painstaking ounce at a time, and weighing only 6 pounds at the time of discharge at 6 months of age, Keith and April gained more and more peace with God in completely acting in opposition to all medical advice that was being given them. Through all of the difficulties, God marvelously supplied all of their needs both spiritually and financially. Many, many days of work were lost but there was always a check in the mail or a check would be given them from the church.

That was six years ago. Today the medical community is bringing new evidence to bear. Little Jonathan is a miracle baby, but all babies are. However, new evidence suggests that traditional thinking on intersex needs to be re-evaluated. These intersex cases range from mild to severe, but all need to be handled in light of Scripture, not simply phenotypically as in the past. Dr. Dan Beals, a pediatric surgeon, claims that something called A testosterone imprinting is much more powerful than what many in the medical community today think. This is because testosterone affects much more than just the genitalia, and it is not simply a matter that, if they do

not look like a boy, then they must be a girl. This default clause is not holding up anymore.

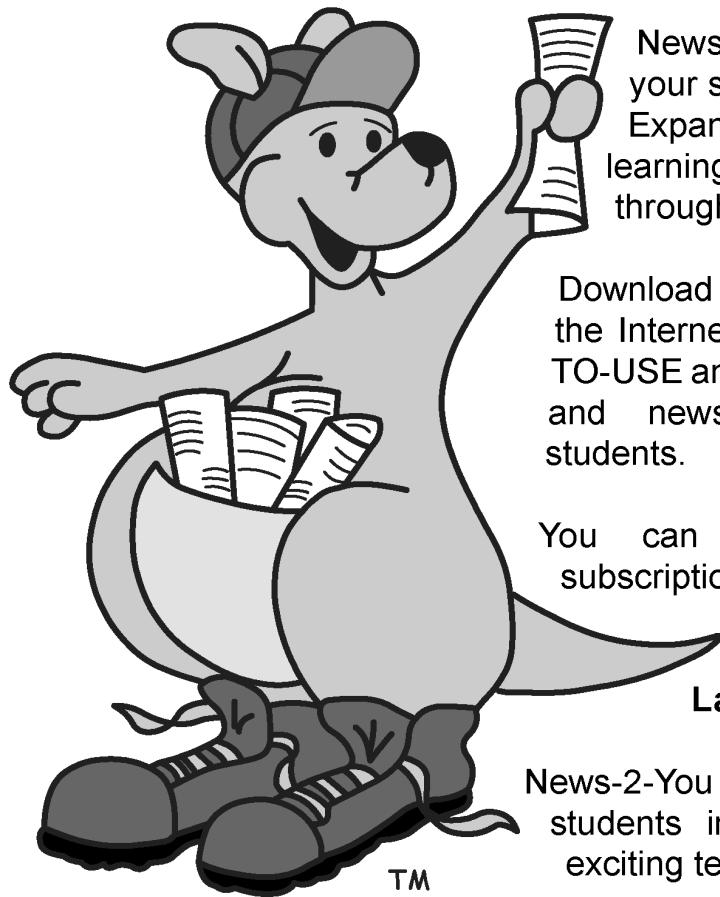
Psychologically, gender assignments can be devastating for a patient. The issue of intersex is clouded by bitterness and anger in people who in the past have been misinformed and mistreated. Although the Intersex Society of North America would advocate a spectrum of genders, that is simply not consistent with a Biblical worldview. Because of the Fall of Man, human bodies suffer abnormalities. There are people who have success stories in this area and are very happy. Others must live with a difficult situation much the same as those with other deformities and handicaps.

A message of love needs to be introduced to these patients, their families, and society in general. One bitter woman asked, "Who can accept damaged goods?" The answer is, God can and does accept the damaged goods of every person who has ever received the free gift of salvation. While there still remain unanswered questions, and different situations require different approaches and solutions, God has not forgotten His groaning creation. He has a special purpose for every person that surpasses their physical limitations, including gender maladies.

April's note: Jonathan is now 8 years old and a happy little boy who loves his life, his family and his church. He is learning about Jesus and what it means to be saved. He has the mental capability of a 4 year old and has CP, he is legally blind but sees well enough to operate a computer and get around his world. He is fed through a feeding tube because of his reflux issues. He's had 5 major surgeries to correct various problems. He is still not toilet trained but we are working on it. He can read on a first grade level and can count to about 50. He is a typical boy in every way. He loves playing trucks with Daddy and doing the guy thing. We are so thankful to have him a part of our lives and so thankful to our Lord and Savior for helping us through a very difficult time.

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A weekly online newspaper for beginning readers
and individuals with special needs



News-2-You brings current events to your students for them to “talk” about. Expand vocabulary and increase learning and communication skills through this reader-friendly paper.

Download a new edition each week from the Internet. The newspaper is **READY-TO-USE** and is an excellent source of news and news-related activities for your students.

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News-2-You uses today’s headlines to turn students into readers! Check out this exciting teaching tool and see for yourself.

A screenshot of a newspaper page titled "NEWS-2-YOU" with the date "March 21, 2005". The main headline is "MARCH MADNESS". Below the headline, there are several paragraphs of text with small icons: "Basketball fans love 'March Madness'." "Basketball is everywhere you look on TV." "Sixty-four men's teams play in a tournament." "Only one team will be the champion." At the bottom, there is a URL "http://www.ncaa.com".

A screenshot of a newspaper page titled "NEWS-2-YOU IN REVIEW" with the date "March 21, 2005". It contains six numbered questions with multiple-choice options and small icons. 1. WHAT is the paper about? (Best Buddies, Crossword Time, March Madness) 2. WHAT game is played? (basketball, football, chess) 3. WHERE is Gateway Arch? (Cincinnati, St. Louis, Jackson Hole) 4. WHEN does the tournament start? (June, March, May) 5. WHO is Dickie V.? (Dick Cheney, Dick Gephardt, Dick Vitale) 6. WHERE is Indianapolis? (Indiana, Oregon, Arkansas) At the bottom right, it says "page 15".

A screenshot of a newspaper page titled "THE GAME PAGE" with the date "March 21, 2005". It contains a section titled "Circle the pictures about MARCH MADNESS." with a grid of 12 small illustrations. The illustrations include: team, crossword, college, dribble, basketball, play, player, teenagers, pass, fans, win, St. Louis, tournament, tennis, champion, shoot. At the bottom right, it says "page 14".

Tera's Story...

Written by Tera Meyers, mother of Samuel

My name is Tera and I am 35 years old. I would like to share my story with you. When I was 23 years old, I got married and started my career. I planned on having children some day, but wanted to wait until my husband and I were established in our careers and had saved some money. Only four short months after our wedding, I found that I was expecting and at the time I was devastated. I had just landed a job at a children's facility as their director and had only been working for 6 months. My husband was thrilled, we knew we would start a family one day and God decided that this would be the time. I was excited after a while because I always wanted to be a mother, but for me the timing was all wrong. I always said that I would be a stay at home mother and currently I was the provider, as my husband was only a PGA apprentice at the time. How would we ever afford a child and me staying home on his stipend?

Three other wives of the apprentices were expecting and we were all seeing the same Dr/Midwife group in central Florida. We would compare visit notes and talk about how exciting being pregnant was. On our third visit for prenatal check ups they offered each of us the triple screen test and each of us agreed to have it done. I really had no idea what it was about, but figured "Why Not"? The other expecting mothers got their results first and all of them were in the "normal" range, but when mine came back it was at a risk of having a child with Down Syndrome. The midwife told me not to be concerned because the results said that I had a 1 in 16 chance. I knew she was wrong. You see, when I was reading the book What to Expect



When You are Expecting there was a chapter about birth defects (as they put it) and I remember sitting down with my husband and talking to him about the possibility of a complication in the pregnancy. I wanted to know if we could keep the baby and if he would have a problem with that. I remember him saying that no matter what God had planned for us, we would keep the baby. So I told the midwife that I really felt like this baby was that 1 in 16. After much debate, the doctor encouraged us to have an amino test performed to be sure. I had no idea that abortion was on their minds, so I reluctantly agreed. They told me that if I didn't hear from them in 10 days that everything was fine.

I went home and marked my calendar for 10 days. I called all my family and friends and told them not to call the house before 5 o'clock each day. I had a routine to check my answering machine every 3 hours to make sure that there would be no surprises

for me when I got home. Every day before leaving work I would call the house to make sure my midwife hadn't called. But on the 9th day I wasn't feeling well and left work an hour early. I stopped off at the gym to workout and calm my nerves but after only a few minutes I had to leave. I headed home and walked in the door at 4:35 and saw the machine blinking. As I headed to the machine I stopped at the dining table to pray and beg the Lord to let it be my imagination or my mother, maybe she forgot and called me early. I prayed until 5 minutes to 5PM. When I answered the machine it was the nurse telling me to call my midwife by 5, she needed to talk to me right away. I waited another few minutes and then finally called.

My midwife asked if my husband and I

could come in for an after hours appointment and I said “No, just tell me now”, she said the words “Tera, I regret to inform you that the child you are carrying has Down Syndrome”. My immediate response was “Is it a boy or a girl?” and before answering me she said “First I need to know, do you plan on keeping the baby?” and I said “Yes, is it a boy or a girl?” Her reply was “God has blessed you with the boy you wanted”. We talked about making a few appointments for genetic counseling and hung up the phone. I began to cry harder than I had ever cried in my whole life. I was so sad and I wasn’t even sure why. I hadn’t heard that the baby had passed away, why was I crying? Then I cried out to God to please not hear my cries as I prayed, but to know that I was scared and that I needed Him. I suddenly realized that I would have to be the one to tell my husband. What if he changed his mind, what if he didn’t want to continue with the pregnancy? What would I do? I called my mother; I cried to her and asked her for wisdom and prayer. She then had my pastor call me from Ohio. He explained to me that God did not believe in abortion and that he and my family did not believe in abortion and that my decision had to be between me and God and if that were true, then I would know what to do. He prayed with me and then encouraged me to have faith in my husband and call him right away.

I went to pick up my husband from work and we spent the rest of the evening trying to make sense of all that we had been told. The next few days were filled with visits to counselor and doctors. We went to the library and checked out books and tried to come to terms with everything that we had just learned. We had to tell our family and friends and wait for their reactions, some positive and some certain that we would just “quietly dismiss” this pregnancy and start again. We were both so sad and confused. Thru it all we found comfort in the knowledge of the Lord. I began to meditate on scripture and found peace in knowing that God planned this pregnancy. I wrote verses from the Bible (like Psalm 143:8 and Jeremiah 29:11-13) on index cards and posted them where I could see them daily.

When I went to work I found that 6 of the

families that came to my center had children with Down syndrome. I called and asked them to bring their children to play and talk to me so I could see what a child like this was like. I remember the parents being so thankful and excited that I had “chosen” to keep my baby. This all took me by surprise, something that I would later find out why.

One month later; after prayerfully doing everything we could to prepare for this adventure, we met our doctor. I was only being seen by the midwife and this meeting was in case there was a need for a c-section or some other complication, the doctor would be called in. I was so excited! My husband couldn’t be there but he and I felt very proud of all the knowledge we had obtained on this new subject. When the doctor walked in he never even looked up from his notes. He just asked me one question: “Why have you not chosen to terminate this pregnancy?” I was shocked and felt as though someone had just hit me in the head with a 2x4. So I asked him to repeat himself, to which he replied “Didn’t anyone give you your options? Why are you still pregnant?” “Do you not realize that you can terminate up until the fetus is born and start over and have a normal, healthy pregnancy?” I was completely lost as to what to say. This dialog went on for over an hour and finally I told him that I was not terminating my pregnancy and that even as we sat there and spoke the baby was kicking me and reminding me that he was there. I left there exhausted and sad. I reminded myself to turn to God daily and focus on HIM to provide me with the strength to make it through this time.

Four months later our son Samuel was born. I had a natural delivery and it truly was the happiest day of my life. He was beautiful and healthy. He did have Down syndrome but I didn’t care. He never cried, just a little squeaky sound, and he was the most cuddly baby I had ever held. There were so many nurses and visitors those first two days, just checking on the baby that the doctor said shouldn’t have been born.

That was almost 11 years ago. Today, Sam is still the healthiest of my three children. He has attended regular school for the past four years and can read and write at first grade level. This year we are going to home educate him. He is very popular in our community, playing soccer, t-ball and swimming, and is the nicest boy I think I have ever met. He loves the Lord and sings and praises Him daily. I know I will never be lonely as long as both of us live because Sam reminds me daily how much he loves me. People often ask me if I was given the chance to take the Down syndrome away would I. I wouldn't. I love this boy, and who knows what boy I would get instead!

Every day hasn't been a picnic. There have been times of frustration and tears. There have been some hearing problems and medical concerns, but we just weather that like we would if it were with our girls. Education has been the biggest challenge, but we are learning to take it one day at a time. There is no guarantee of perfection with any child or with anyone. I am so glad God chose me to be Sam's mom, and I am so glad that I trusted HIM enough to give Sam life. I hope this letter offers you some hope. There are so many reasons to consider life and there are so many that are able to handle having a child like this. Take me for example; I have found a way to stop and smell the roses, and they are so sweet!

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CHASK Book—Christian Homes And Special Kids _____
\$17.00. Price includes shipping.

Yes, I want to help save the life of babies with special needs, that are not yet born. I am including a CHASK donation. (Tax deductible) _____

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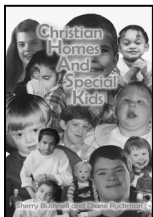
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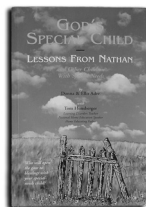
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NATHHAN Resource Room



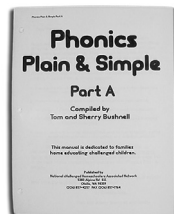
Christian Homes And Special Kids - Warmly penned, written for parents by parents, with a goal in mind...to raise children with disabilities, who love the Lord. This is a great book to share with new moms, or parents who are facing giving birth to a child with special needs. It is realistic, encouraging and full of a feeling of "Welcome to the world of disability, it's not so bad!"

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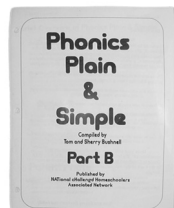
God's Special Child - This is the story of a family, working with their son who had Prader Willie syndrome. They candidly share their success and failures. The results are an encouraging book that shows God's faithfulness and the wisdom of following His ways. Written

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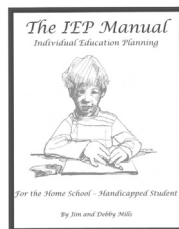
Phonics Plain & Simple Part A - includes colors, shapes, left/right and up/down etc.. abc's, early phonics and the vowels.

No speech or handwriting required, although activities do require pointing or "x's". Comes shrink wrapped in plastic and drilled for three ring binder. See ad on page 37. Printed on one side only for ease of copying. No tabs or binder included. **147 pages.....\$20.00**



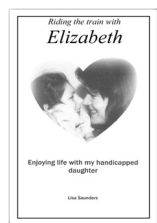
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Riding the Train with Elizabeth - Riding the train with Elizabeth charts the depression and the joy, the support and the solitude, the doubt and the faith of one woman's emotional roller-coaster ride toward learning to accept, love, and care for a very special child. Saunders' story unfolds like pages from a private diary. Poignant memories, as well as humorous anecdotes, highlight a series of yearly Christmas letters, which simultaneously masked Saunders' pain while conveying her hope for the future. Her desire to share her message of hope, as well as her love for Elizabeth, shine through on every page.

By Lisa Saunders.....\$20.00

NATHHAN Resource Room Order Form

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	1st Straight Talk (See page 9)	\$45.00	
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Rachel, A CHASK Story



By Linda Dillon

Alissa was 22 years old and lived with her best girlfriend in a small town in Alabama. The girls were a little wild and they liked to go to parties with their friends. One dark night in the fall of 1998, the partying led to disaster. Alissa was raped.

Alissa was very traumatized by this event, but she tried to forget about it by immersing herself in an endless round of parties and crack cocaine. After several weeks the truth suddenly dawned on her: She was pregnant.

Now Alissa was faced with a choice; a terrible, heart-wrenching choice. She thought perhaps it would be better if she went to the abortion clinic, and got rid of a baby that was fathered by a rapist. As she struggled with this decision, she felt the first little movements of the baby in her womb. And then she knew: It was a living baby. It was HER baby. This brave young woman decided to give her baby the wonderful gift of life.

Once this decision was made she stopped taking drugs and started eating healthy foods. She looked

in the yellow pages and called an adoption agency. Her parents and her best friend also supported her in the decision to place her child for adoption.

One hot day in July of 1999, Alissa went into labor. She went to the hospital to have her baby. While she gave birth the nurse asked her if she wanted the baby placed on her abdomen as they usually did for mother and child bonding. Alissa suddenly saw the rapist's face in her mind, and she said NO, she did not wish to see the baby. But the nurse laid the baby on her abdomen anyway, and said, "It's a girl." Alissa looked down at the wet, wiggly, little baby and was amazed. She thought, "Why, it's a baby! It's just an innocent little baby!" The memory of her rapist's face was gone, and only the face of her precious baby girl filled her heart.

The adoptive parents arrived at the hospital to visit the baby, and Alissa signed her parental relinquishment papers.

However, while the baby was still in the hospital the doctor expressed some concern that there was something wrong and he wanted to run some tests. When the baby was 3 days old the doctors performed an ultrasound of the baby's brain, and then an MRI scan. They found that she had a large hole in the right side of her brain, and a small hole in the left side. The condition is called schizencephaly. The neurologist told the adoptive parents that the baby might be retarded, have seizures, might never walk, and might not be able to speak. The adoptive parents felt that they could not handle the baby's special needs, and they backed out. Under Alabama law a birth mother has 5 days to revoke her relinquishment of parental rights. Alissa did not want her baby to go into the foster care system. So she revoked her relinquishment papers, and Alissa and her parents, dazed and confused, took the baby

home.

When the baby was 5 days old someone called CHASK which stands for Christian Homes And Special Kids. CHASK matches up families who want to adopt with special needs babies and children who need a home. They offer this service free of charge since they operate on a donation basis only.

We had our homestudy ready for an adoption, and we had been in prayer asking God to match us up with the right child. So when the call came from CHASK, we felt that maybe God was talking. My husband and I prayed. We talked to the neurologist on the phone, and we prayed again. We both felt the quiet voice of God saying to us, "Go get the baby. Don't be afraid. Everything will be fine."

Our family photos and information were sent to Alissa. She liked us and agreed to the adoption. I flew to Alabama and had a wonderful and emotional meeting with Alissa. She told me some of her story. I told her how glad we were that she had not gone to an abortionist when she was pregnant. I told her that we were going to name the baby Rachel, and that we would take very good care of her. We agreed to send Alissa photos of Rachel regularly and reports of her progress. With tears in her eyes she placed her baby into my arms.

Our neurologist examined Rachel and told us that the large hole in the right side of her brain had caused her to have mild cerebral palsy on the left side of her body. She began physical and speech therapy. She was very delayed. At 2 years old Rachel could not get up off her back. She would just lay there and cry until someone came to get her. She did not talk, and did not put any toys or food into her mouth. We started teaching her sign language and I began to wonder if she would need a wheelchair.

Then the miracle happened. Rachel began to make noticeable progress. I believe that God was helping different parts of her brain take over the tasks of the parts that were missing. We got a brace for her left foot and ankle, and the child that was not supposed to be able to walk, learned to walk! The child that was not supposed to talk, began to speak! The child that was supposed to be retarded began singing the ABC song, counting to

10, and naming all the colors! The child who was supposed to have seizures, never had one! Rachel began to clap and sing along with children's Bible songs, and play preschool computer games. Our family went camping when Rachel was four years old, and the biggest problem we had was that Rachel kept running off to see things and we had to chase after her!

At five years old Rachel is Mommy's little helper. She loves to stand on a stool and help me cook. She stirs while I put in the ingredients. She likes to help set the table and unload the dishwasher. She recognizes all the capital and small letters, and is ready to start reading! She still wears diapers and has some speech difficulties, but she is catching up with other children and is making incredible progress. Rachel has a really sweet spirit, and she loves to hug and cuddle. We are so blessed to have her in our family.



Our beautiful daughter Rachel

Classified Ads

You can place your ad in the NATHHAN NEWS for just \$5.00 for 20 words and .25 for each extra word.

Please TYPE your ad and send with your check. Ads must be received by the deadline date below, to be printed in upcoming issues. Please phone first, as we fill up very fast.

We hope you understand... we reserve the right to refuse ads we feel are inappropriate. (No multi-level style products or companies.) \$300/ full page, \$150 / half page, \$75/quarter.

Deadline dates: Sept 15th, January 15th

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Part B - includes review of vowels, consonants, consonant blends, and early words. \$30.00 Postage included in price. (No tabs, or binder, it is 204 pages)

—This is not a complete phonics program, but created for children with delays that need to move V..E..R...Y slowly. Some of our special children CAN learn to read via the phonics method. This is an excellent and (cheap) way to practice. Find out if phonics is possible for your child.

— A great program for children needing lots of repetition. No hand printing required. Photo copying encouraged for your own use!

See order form pg. 30
More info at www.nathhan.org

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Younger and older children who are struggling with learning to read will find this program easy to use. Mnemonics helps them remember letters and spelling rules.

—We've used Stevenson Learning Skills this year. This method of helping children remember letters and spelling rules really works. We especially like its usefulness in teaching older children who learn differently. - Sherry Bushnell - NATHHAN

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Classified Ads

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Kingdom Kids We have developed a program to help prospective adoptive families raise funds for their adoption. Families apply to Kingdom Kids for a grant and help raise funds for their grant by notifying friends and family of their adoption plans.

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Wood pieces for Handwriting Without Tears program by Jan Olsen. I have been making and selling these for over six years. I sell them for \$15.95 plus \$5.00 shipping. Bill Drucke bdrucke@tds.net
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ICAN-DO

It's a great program! National website is www.icando.org national phone number is (253) 588-5177

This is information for ICAN--International Christian Association of Neurodevelopmentalists
Email: Wash_ican@hotmail.com

My personal info is:
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Kingdom Kids Adoption Ministries of Spokane, Washington exists to encourage, educate and equip believers in their pre-and post-adoptive and foster parenting needs! Kingdom Kids provides a grant/fundraising program, Christian Adoption Resources and Adoption Conferences around the country. To contact us call 1-509-465-3520 (1-877-465-3520) or check us out on the web at: www.kingdomkidsadoption.org.

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Fast Track Action Reading (complete and excellent shape) for sale, \$55ppd. It is the "fast and fun method... mastering reading skills. Art, games, body movements and music are all used to create a fun and active learning experience. The reading program

.....
teaches the sounds and patterns of our language with six audio cassettes, visual aid flashcards, and a 100 page workbook. The Fast Track learning method works for everyone...preschoolers, students of all ages, even persons with symptoms of dyslexia and other learning disabilities...even those raised in homes where "English is not." Please e-mail Linda at mr.au@centurytel.net, if interested.

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Samona Sound Therapy CDs (excellent shape) for sale, \$25 each: (Used with NACD) Samonas I Classic, KT101cd , Samonas I Romantic, KT102cd, Samonas I Carulli, KT103cd, Samonas I Tchaikowsky, KT104cd, Samonas II Harmonie in Reiner Stimmung, KT109cd, Samonas II W.A Mozart,, KT207cd, Concept of Syn-energy, CS 911cd. Please e-mail mr.au@centurytel.net if interested. Thanks, Linda.

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Brighter Starts is an educational toy company providing toys and products for every stage of development. Many products are helpful in educating children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Please visit us at www.brighterstarts.com

Letters From Families

Dear NATHHAN families,

I have written some social stories for children with delays or autism. My son is autistic and these little books have really helped him learn important things such as:

"I Don't Go Outside Alone"

"I Can Wash My Hands"

"I Can Say Excuse Me"

There are more I am working on. The pictures are real-life photos and in some cases fine art prints. I am offering the books free if you would like to print them yourself and for \$8 @ laminated cover and comb bound with shipping.

Email me for your free books or to order: teachingathome@lycos.com



We read Sherry Bushnell's article in the *Above Rubies* November issue. That issue of the magazine highlighted adoption, and there were many testimonies of adoptions, including ours... **we adopted from West Africa two years ago.** The reason for our writing you is that since the time of that magazine we have become deeply involved in assisting families adopt and in ministering to the orphans of Liberia.

We were recently re-reading the articles in the Nov. magazine and came across Sherry's... we see that your organization assists people in adopting special needs children. In Africa, the 'special needs' children are outcasts, useless in society and often are abandoned. We have been to the Deaf Home, a ministry of ACFI (African Christians Fellowship International) – and it is enough to make anyone cry! These dear, precious children – they are such sweet children and they speak fluent sign language. They crave the love and attention of us when we visit. And they are adoptable!

Would you be interested in possibly making their needs known to families that would desire to adopt such a child? Liberia is the cheapest of international adoptions.

We are Children Concerned, a not-for-profit

organization that helps these children in Liberia. We receive no compensation for our efforts, we simply desire to see these children, our friends, get the homes they so desire. Please visit our website to learn

more: www.childrenconcerned.org

Thank you for your consideration!

Candy Zackey



I am the parent of a child who had sensory integration dysfunction, I co-wrote a book with my son's occupational therapist, Lindsey Biel OTR/L. It's the book that I wish I'd had three years ago when my son was diagnosed.

Luckily, because I'm a professional author and editor and Lindsey has been a professional writer in the past, we made an ideal team to write a book about sensory integration dysfunction. Thus, we wrote *Raising A Sensory Smart Child: The Definitive Handbook for Helping Your Child with Sensory Integration Issues*. Temple Grandin wrote the foreword for us, which is such an honor.

All the best, Nancy Peske

www.sensorysmarts.com



Boy Scout Troop for Disabled Children

Hello, I am just writing you to let you know about a special program that my husband and I started for special needs children. It is a boy scout troop for disabled children. Whether physical, mental, developmental or learning disabled all are welcome. It is for boys in Broward and surrounding counties that are 7-18 years old. We will be doing everything the other scouts do just in a modified way to accommodate for their special needs.

We are working very closely with: Bill Gilliland, District Executive, South Florida Council, BSA 954-584-4200 www.sfcbsa.org

We will be having our meetings at 7:00 on Thursdays at the American Legion Post 222. We do require that at least one parent or other responsible adult is present at all times during our meetings and events.

For more information or to join please email or call me at: Teresa Julian

jtjulian2003@yahoo.com
(954) 729-9428

.....

Your web page has been brought to my attention from someone who knows of my special program and who en-

couraged me to contact your organization so I could become part of an email group.

I have a specialized program that uses therapeutic music and hand-writing movement patterns to "train the brain" or "retrain the brain" as the case may be. This unique program has been used with learning disabilities, brain injured, autism, etc. and also by homeschoolers as a program to prime the young brain for the learning process.

I'd be glad to send some info if necessary or you can check out my web page for content.

Jeanette Farmer

www.retrainthebrain.com

.....

We'd like to give you this **free new educational program** for you and your classes. It works right off the Internet so its

just one click and your students are learning. Your students will learn Parts of Speech, Vowels and Consonants or Rhyming Words. Play this fun interactive game where you move a fox around and collect falling words or letters. Get to level three and win a certificate. Please go to:

www.tldsb.on.ca/Schools/GrandviewPS/Room_108/alphacatch/begin.html

.....

I wanted to introduce myself to your group. My name is Erin Hopf, and I have a daughter with Cystic Fibrosis. When she was diagnosed **I created a health journal to help organize all of her medical information.** Soon her CF Clinic asked me to make more for the other parents.

The Little Acorn now offers "Juggling Cystic Fibrosis", "Juggling Down Syndrome", "Juggling Cerebral Palsy", "Juggling Asthma", "Juggling Diabetes", "Juggling Autism",

**Keep clothing dry with
"CHIN MOPPET" bibs**

**Bright, cheerful, custom made with pocket
Material used is age and gender appropriate
Soft opaque plastic backing
(Infant to Adult sizes)**

***Sample available upon request
Sandie Holt
503-761-1690 nommie@iwon.com**

“Juggling ADD/ADHD”, “Juggling Epilepsy”, “A Woman’s Health Journal”, “Healthy Kids” and more...all health journals with "need specific" pages to help keep information organized and together.

I have a website which explains in greater detail about The Little Acorn, and why I started it for other parents just like myself.

The web address is: www.thelittleacorn.net



Adopting a child with Albinism and family integration...

What a blessing to read your stories! Last year we adopted a six yr old girl from China with albinism.

This is not what we (I) had planned in the beginning of the process, but it was God's plan. I wanted a baby that would be easier for me to "train up" rather than an older child who came with "baggage". Part of my concern was that an older child might be dangerous to our 8yr old if that child had been abused. I was pretty sure a special needs child would be too much work, too! Yup! I was being selfish. I did argue with God, too.....He always wins!

So I was determined to have my way(because I always know what is best for me) until the news letter from our adoption agency arrived. The children waiting were beautiful and my heart began to melt. Then I saw her...and I was drawn to her. My husband took one look at her and said "That's my little girl". My 8 yr old daughter really wanted to have a baby sister to dote on and "mommy" but when I asked her how she really felt about this little girl she said "Mom, she belongs to us".

Our papers had already gone to China so imagine our social workers surprise when we called her and told her we wanted to apply for a special needs child. Anyway, we went to China for a two and a half week trip to claim our treasure. I home school the eight yr. old so it was considered a field trip. Quite the learning experi-

ence! We met some people who run Hope Foster Home in Beijing. They help children acquire the surgeries they need to survive. They do have a web site if you're interested.

Children with albinism in China do not have much of a chance at life there and they rarely get adopted. If I could talk my husband into it I'd be there again for another one! I think he's still trying to recover from the paper work and the pain in the wallet !

I thought that the public school could help her with her vision issues and they tried for 1/2 h. per week, however, the teacher was sending her home with homework that was way above where she needed to begin. So I pulled her out and started her with preschool and kindergarten curriculum. I am getting to the point where she's going to need a magnifier and a slant board, so I'm at a loss as to what to do for materials in the future. Do you know if they sell good curriculum for legally blind students?

Also I need your advice if you're willing to part with it. My older daughter gets jealous because when we are in public EVERY-ONE makes comments to her sister about her hair and how beautiful she is and completely ignores the older one. They are both beautiful to me!

Thank you for letting me talk your ear off. I have learned much about myself through this little girl and about special needs. Kris

Respond to Kris by e-mailing nathanews@aol.com with “albinism resources” in the subject line.

Editor’s response: We get our products for visually impaired learning from LS&S www.Lssgroup.com

It seems that when we have children with special needs in America, we become “public property” and lose some privacy. When we are in public or in a church setting and are meeting people that are not understanding about meeting the social needs of the whole family, it is hard to speak up without embarrassing our other children by drawing atten-

tion to them. People will be drawn to your daughter because she is different and beautiful, just like you were drawn to her.

Is it quality, one-on-one attention your birth daughter is seeking from you? Is beauty something that as a family is really important? One thing that helped our family was helping our birth children understand about our feminine desires about beauty and how God looks on the heart.

Our attitudes toward the attention our children receive can greatly influence how they receive it. I know I as a parent, I struggled with a feeling in the pit of my stomach when folks would praise my adopted daughter and ignored my birth daughter. Thankfully, my birth daughter did not feel slighted, but went out of her way to join in the fun, not taking anything personal. Smile.

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Dyspraxia: Does anyone know anything about this?

I am a homeschooling mother of four. My middle daughter has recently been diagnosed with dyspraxia. From the time she was a little baby I knew something was wrong and have spent her whole 11 years trying to figure it out. As a baby she would not suckle and so breast feeding was a complete frustration. She constantly threw up her food and milk but had no stomach problems. If she goes in a car she gets car sick. She cannot ride a bike, skip, run well and she walks oddly. She has struggled to use a knife and fork, or to throw or catch a ball. She has great difficulty in printing or writing but her verbal skills are amazing. Her reading ability is leagues beyond her age and she can think and verbalize beyond her years. I honestly don't know what to do with her! She is so smart and is secure socially! She gets along with anyone of any age and everyone loves her. She is sweet and tender and truly amazing. But she is so frustrated not to be able to do things that others do, or to write down the amazing things she thinks of. Has anyone else had these struggles? If you have any advice or direction please email me: P. Doyle address: sagecanoe@yahoo.com

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

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We recently received your magazine "NATHHAN News" and we certainly applaud your fine work with these very special children. I have just briefly looked at your website but I am wondering if you have **any resources for these very special children who grow up to be very special adults?**

My daughter is 27 and a very special young woman. My husband and I are constantly looking for ways to help her continue to grow and learn. She went through the special education programs in our public school system and some classes at junior college. She was labeled a "slower learner" but she has continued to grow and learned beyond what we were told she would be able to do. She is also partially deaf (uses a hearing aid) and has some fine motor skill issues. Employment, however, is a very serious issue. Right now we are looking for a position for her where she will be in a safe environment but can continue to grow and feel useful. She works part-time at our church doing childcare for various women's ministry events and special meetings. She continues to live at home with us. We want to be good stewards of her future, particularly if God calls us home before her.

Thank you for any tips or ideas or testimonies you can share with me. Many blessings for all you do. Beth Willis
beth_willis@acsi.org

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I wanted to tell you that your article "Preschool Level Learning Over and Over...and Over and Over...AGAIN?" is wonderful!!!

It fits us to a tee! Joseph Matthew is going to be 13 next month - yikes! His last developmental testing showed him way below his actual age level. But, let me tell you, at times he comes out with the smartest of answers! And I wonder "where did he find that one?" I tried to explain to him what a teenager is, and this is what he asked me: "Does that mean that I can wear earrings now like the tough kids do?" WHAT? I bet that God laughed at that one, too!

I'm going to use all the suggestions in your article. Thanks so much for them! Our school doesn't begin at 9AM to 2PM either. I teach all day long, and even on the weekend. Yes, my child is mentally disabled and "stuck" at this level, but one thing that I notice about myself is that I seem to be enjoying 'being a kid again' when doing school work, especially anything to do with nature.

I must remember to ask God for A LOT of the everything that I need to be strong on this journey. Some websites that I use:

- www.ChristianADHD.com
- www.HomeschoolEnrichment.com
- www.SitesforTeachers.com
- www.EnchantedLearning.com

Some books that I like: "Life Skills for Kids" by Christine M. Field, "Special Education: A Biblical Approach" by Joe Sutton, and "Physical Activities for Improving Children's Learning and Behavior" by Cheatum and Hammond.

Thank you for all that you do. You are an inspiration, and I can't wait for your newsletter each time that it comes out. May God bless all of you with happy days full of sunshine and His love.

Blessings,
Barbara Farrow Norfolk, Va.
Jenkatie2@aol.com

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I have homeschooled my 8 year old son for the past 3 years, **and I would like to begin homeschooling my 9 year old daughter who has autism.** I thought it might be a good idea to contact some families who are homeschooling their autistic children, specifically those who are non-verbal, to see what resources have been useful to them. I'm not sure what I need to do in order to find some families in a similar situation. I would appreciate any help you could give me.

Thank you,
Wendy Hilton Hilton.wendy@comcast.net

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Praise the Lord,

I enjoy your NATHHAN NEWS so much. I have some questions I am hoping you will be willing to help me with.

I logged into www.webmd.com to find some info on autism. { In consideration of adopting a 5 year old boy with this being one of his diagnosis. }

One of the first things it said was that Autism is reversible. - **When I clicked , I was linked to a generation rescue website , the claims they made sounded VERY encouraging. Some of the testimonials made it sound as if the autism was cured. The major treatment was chelation, followed by diet changes, vit. & min. supplements, colostrum, ect.....** Is this true?

If so, I would try to do my best to follow whatever I had to do to 'cure' my new son. I was wondering if you know of anyone who has used this chelation method, and if it has been successful ? Or is it one of those 'too good to be true' things ??

Thank you for your time - Patti
rewind_2_2000@yahoo.com

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Mother of 15 year old son with Aspergers seeks ways to help him with social skills.

I am a Catholic homeschool mother of a fifteen year old boy with developmental delays. He has what doctors are now assessing to be a possible Asperger Syndrome diagnosis also. I am searching for ways to allow him to find accepting peers and opportunities for socialization. He functions around 9 - 12 year range. I am also looking for other homeschool curricula options.

We live in the South Euclid/Cleveland Heights area. I look forward to any direction or info that you could afford me.

God bless, Lisa calabrese61@mac.com

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Hi, I haven't joined yet, but I was encouraged by a Winter 2002/2003 article by Bonnie Klein. **I am now convinced that I am homeschooling THREE "ADHD" children. I love them, I love Jesus, and it's been a hard year!!!**

I have four beautiful girls, all who joined our family by adoption. Victoria, the oldest, is 13, and in 8th grade. The three youngest are triplets, who will be 8 on July 30. They have been my challenge. This is the "second" year of doing first grade, and this year they finally "got it". However, I am still having doubts and uncertainties about their behavior. I cannot afford the testing that would officially diagnose them, but I've had my suspicions for many years.

This article by Bonnie helped me to put it all in perspective. I also liked the fact that it was based on biblical principals, and did address the fact that if I'm doing everything consistently, then there may be an underlying problem. My girls were parentally exposed to drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. I often wonder how much of this is a factor.

I'm not sure if I should join NATHHAN, can you tell me what would be the benefit? I'm also wondering what can be done for people with limited resources for their children with this.

Thank you for your time.
Laura Schmidt
LJshomeroom4@aol.com

Financial Planner offering his time and knowledge to help....

Hello,
Today, I read an article about the financial difficulties that parents with special needs children face. I am a 63 year old financial planner in Southern Oregon. I have both time and knowledge that I can contribute, but I don't know how to find parents that I might help. Can you help?

Thanks, Merl
merlmiller@qwest.net
.....

I was wondering if you can help me --- I have a 9 year old who is completing 4th grade. He has some language delays and processing as well as short term memory weaknesses.

He is strong in spelling isolated words phonetically, but needs help in writing and reading comprehension. I am new to homeschooling and am trying to gather strategies to improve his language skills/writing and reading. Would you recommend any particular curriculum? We are looking for Christian curriculums and really need a lot of help in the language piece and strategies for him to help organize himself. Writing is extremely difficult for him. Any advice will be so helpful. Thanks so much,

Rita ritam2@charter.net

Any suggestions for 7-year-old with high functioning autism?

Our son has high-functioning autism and we are looking for a program to help him learn how to read. He knows most of his letters and sounds they make. But he can't seem to grasp how to put the sounds together. Any suggestions?

Ms. Julianne Rizzato
615 Indiana Ave.
St. Charles, IL 60174-3016
(630) 443-3704
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Family seeking Christian fellowship

My wife and I have three children. Valorie is 9, and probably functions at about 1 1/2 or 2 years. We are currently starting a special needs ministry at our church (Can Do Kids), but we have little or no Christian fellowship with families that identify with our life style. I serve as an elder in our home church, am a part time seminary student, occasionally provide local pulpit supply, but am beginning to wonder where our time as a family is best spent. It seems like it is a lot of effort on our parts to make church happen for us, what are other families doing? My experience has been they either quit church or fellowship with a secular (negative attitude) special needs support group. The church has been my life since I got saved, but I

am beginning to feel a tug to minister outside the church (or do church different), but am unaware of realistic options. I have begun turning over the rocks, and doing a little idea fishing asking God to reveal a clear target for future ministry ideas. Any thoughts or ideas you offer will be appreciated and considered as we as a family seek God's best for us.

In Christ, Don dons@ldcm.com

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Some help please...

Dear friends at NATHHAN

We think of you all often and keep you in our constant prayers. Today I am contacting you for some help with our daughter. Hannah, now 11, joined our family through adoption last August. She is a sweet child, and has been kept innocent (by the Grace of God) throughout all of her trials and abuses.

While in foster care, Hannah went through some psychological testing, and it was determined that her IQ is in the 84-85 range. She was also diagnosed with ADD. The doctors immediately put Hannah on 60 mg. of Strattera. When we brought Hannah home, she was like a zombie. She had no emotions at all. She was also having a terrible time with Math, Science, and History. We've since (with the help of our pediatrician) weaned Hannah completely off of the medication. Her schoolwork hasn't changed a bit.....she is still struggling with all three subjects, her Reading comprehension is below grade level, and she really has no "common sense". How do we prepare our little girl for life? How far should we push her with school work? What does she really have to know in order to be a productive member of society? Hannah wants to someday marry and have children of her own. We want that for her, too, if it is God's will, but how do we make sure that she has all of the skills and knowledge she needs for those important jobs?

Hannah doesn't have the severe physical disabilities like so many of the children we read about in your newsletter. Never-the-less, Hannah does have some big learning challenges, and I don't think I'm doing such a great job in my efforts to teach her. Can you please point me in the right direction?

Sincerely,
Trish Rowan erikntrish@bellsouth.net
Editor's response:

It is always hard to help a child re-evaluate goals. Basically we need to establish that God has a perfect plan for her. It may be in special service for Him with children, with the elderly, with those who need daily care. Anyway, it is best for all involved to not be set on marriage but instead, working at ministering TODAY to those around them.

Learning to manage money, budgeting, making change (even is it is with a calculator) learning self-control to eat the right foods for her health, handling children safely and competently, reading directions, cooking skills, these will stand her in good stead.

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Looking for homeschooling resources for 13-year-old daughter with CP

Hello! My name is Piper Holtzer and I am just beginning to embark on the journey of homeschooling my special needs daughter, Haileigh, who is 13 and has C.P. She is at about a 1st grade level right now. I am looking for any resources to help me get started, and even any resources that would direct me to a teacher that would be willing to take on this burden with me, as I have 3 other children. I would appreciate any help you can give me, or any contacts of a family in my area that would be willing to help answer some of my "getting started" questions. Thank you so much for all your help.

In Christ,
Piper pholtzer@hotmail.com

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Chores for handicapped children?

I wrote to Christine Field, author of Life Skills for Kids and asked her about how to give my quadriplegic 12 year-old chores. She suggested that I contact your organization. Do you have any suggestions or resources to help me come up with some chores he can do/be responsible for? Thank you.

Donna Barbato Sdbarbato@aol.com

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Dear Friends,

Greetings of love to you in the precious name of Jesus. **I am teaching a 10-year old girl with a traumatic brain injury and I would like to hear from any others who have this experience.** Loretta is a very sweet child and a joy, in spite of her challenges. She receives speech, occupational, vision, and physical therapy and also sees a mobility instructor. This will be her third year attending our Christian school after going to public school prior to that. I would love to have contact with anyone willing to share. God bless you all.

Veronica Weaver
6771 N 40th Ave.
Sears, MI 49679 (231)734-0519



I need help finding my way. My son went to public school last year - kindergarten - and it did not go well. He has Asperger's syndrome (autism). We were hoping he could cope with a full time aid in regular kindergarten . . . but it didn't work out .

He now has an IEP - and the district wants to place him in a behavioral public special ed school that we know would be absolutely awful for him!! We did NOT sign it!

We just want to homeschool him - how can we find a homeschool that will accept him even though he has special needs and an IEP???

We tried to enroll him here locally, but they refused due to his special needs status!!

Please help - we are in San Diego, CA and would like to connect with other families that home school typical kids as well as special needs kids!

Best, Lissa lissa@visividesign.com



Family wanting to cancel early intervention...

Hello. I have a 2 year old with down syndrome and a 4 year old- both are boys. I would like to homeschool. I am wanting to cancel (and my husband has agreed to let me) the early intervention services through the public schools that I have had for my youngest son for the last 2 years.

Do you agree with Home School Legal Defense that it is best to not use public school services?

Anyway, I am weary of the therapists with the public school, though I have tried to be grateful; and they are not supportive of homeschooling and it feels intrusive at times and critical.

Can you help me find a private therapist who is affordable? I assume other families have had this problem? I have tried to contact home educators networks in Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska but have not found anything useful to me yet. These would be the closest big cities to where I live.

Preferably I think 4 to 6 times a year with a therapist would be sufficient to help me set IEPs and evaluate, test or whatever is needed to protect myself legally to teach my special needs child. I work with him on my own often (I'm a stay at home mom) when he is in a good mood, to stand, crawl whatever I can think of, so do I have to have therapists? Sometimes I think they seem stupid. Sigh. They were trying to get him to crawl at a year old and he wasn't ready and it would make him mad. Then he started army crawling/scooting and it was just wonderful and they never told me he would do that. He did it all on his own at 18 months and has just now at 23 months decided to crawl.

I assume I will need help with speech therapy later.

Rachael Nebraska C ncinman@alltel.net

Dear NATHHAN,

I have adopted a child with CP and have a birth child with Dys-

lexia. For different reasons they both need a good computer program that they can speak into and it will write for them. We've tried Dragon Speak but it was DEFINITELY not worth the money. Got any suggestions?

Thanks,

Donna, keeperathome@clarksville.com

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I have a 21 year old, highly functioning, disabled daughter, diagnosed with Corneila DeLange Syndrome. Emotionally she could not deal with regular ed classrooms.

She can talk, but mostly at home. Once graduated from high school she cannot emotionally survive in a transition program. We've tried several community based transition programs but once there's an upsetting situation for her, she refuses to go back. Her level of learning is between 2nd and 4th grade. She can read, but lacks comprehension. She can do basic 2-digit math. She is good at spelling, but not understanding the meaning of the word. She can do some writing, but mostly copying type of writing. She's good on the computer and can do some data entry. I would like to see her improve and grow in academic skills as well as learn to talk with others. Do you know of where I could get help for her? We live in Albany, CA.

Thanks so much for your help!!!

Donna donnambat@sbcglobal.net

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Hi My name is Dorothy Neely and I have a child with tourette's syndrome and I just could use someone to talk to on our "bad" days.

I tried the tourette's syndrome association, but that didn't work out. I belong to H.E.L.P.S., but there are

times I just need to feel there are others where I am. I live in St.John Mo. Thank you for listening

Dcold45@aol.com

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I was so relieved to see your article on teenage boys with mental disabilities "touching themselves".

We have been dealing with this for a couple of years and didn't know who to talk to about it because it's so embarrassing. I mean, who do you get advice from----teachers, therapists, your pastor? You don't want to tell anyone because you feel ashamed or maybe not ashamed, but you just don't know what words to use. Since reading your article, I sat down with our son and explained to him that it was not polite to do and also that is was a sin, a self-pleasing activity, but so far that hasn't helped. I still "catch him" at it. Do you have any other advice for us?

Editors Response:

It is hard to share with you any further advise, as I am not sure of your son's mental age, and so forth. Basically, we have made sure that Jordan keeps his hands on top of the blankets at night and during the day if he is resting. A hands off the area policy should be implemented (except for cleaning and bathroom.) Supervision in the bathroom may be an idea until he gets through this. Going to the bathroom is expected to be just that, and no more.

Sometimes if we head it off early, or if you see he might be having a bad day or exhibiting behavior that precludes this sort of thing, get him busy doing something.

I think that for many normal young men, self-stimulation is a real issue, mental disability, Down syndrome or William's syndrome aside. What we can do is continue to keep the lines of communication open, pray with your son and celebrate the little victories. An incentive might be an idea, if you are sure that he is not fudging, such as purchasing something he

likes, or going somewhere he would enjoy. Sometimes mentally disabled young adults, (mental ages 6 or 7) respond really well to a goal ahead.

Your young man seems like a real sweetie. Perhaps try not to major on this (although I remember when Jordan was going through this at age 15, it was hard not to be constantly thinking...what is he doing right now?).

We also make sure that everyone in the house is on the same page as far as what is expected. If anyone sees him going in that direction, we verbally warn him (which is usually enough) or have them go get mom or dad.

Also, we want to rule out any irritation such as ingrown hairs, rashes, not sufficiently washed, tight underwear or pants (or not secure enough either).

If your son is not masturbating in his sleep, hopefully after a period of time (say 6 months) of reminders, the day-time habit (for that is all it is) should go away.



Dear Family in Christ,
The youngest, Kameron is the child that you helped to place with us though Bethany Christian Services. He is doing very well. This picture was in December and he has done a lot of growing since then.

He is beautiful and it seems unbelievable to us that God blessed us with this precious bundle of joy!

We thank God for you and your ministry. Though this gift is not substantial, we have no doubt that our Heavenly Father will bless you enormously for your love and care you show to birth families and their special little blessings.

We pray that God will bless your year and that perhaps our paths will cross again in the future.

With all the love we have to offer,
Chris, Janice, Janice, Timothy and KAM-ERON

Mary Eberly
5606 State Route 14A
Dundee, NY 14837-9464

I would like to share with NATHHAN News of the neurological development program available that has been of much help for our cerebral palsy daughter with multiple disabilities.

Midwest Education Service provides individualized programs that can be integrated into family life and homeschooling, and still allow you to lead a decent life. It is a Christian service with reasonable rates. Basically, it is a program of simple exercises that stimulate certain areas of the brain. We have millions of brain cells and we use only a small portion of them, therefore, in the event that the neurological pathways were not developed, or were destroyed by trauma, it is possible to develop new pathways. Our brain develops with movement, motion, and stimulation. If there are areas of the brain not doing their job it is possible to go through a specific stimulation program, and improvement is obtained. This program is not a quick fix, nor a cure at all, but a base for dealing with many problems such as hyperactivity, Fragile-X syndrome, ADD, ADHD, Cerebral palsy, bedwetting, vision, speech, hearing, or reading problems, poor coordination, and a host of many others. Our Daughter Lois is our miracle baby. She aspired meconium before birth and was twenty hours old before the blood passed through her lungs. At nine months old she was more helpless than a newborn and started on a development program. Today, at almost five years old, She can sit unsupported, do her version of the belly crawl, has a few words, and lots of understanding. This is far more than the medical world ever expected her to achieve. Doctors and therapists are amazed at the excellent condition of her body, especially her muscles.



I am a speech therapist and have written a book called Fisher’s Net.

In this book I have included objectives, directions for completing activities, games rules and extra suggestions in how you could use each activity to teach new objectives.

It became very evident to us at a homeschool convention that we attended, that parents of special needs children are struggling for effective ways to teach their children. Our hearts went out to these parents who desired so strongly to educate their own children, but lacked the materials and the knowledge. I believe my book along with Picture This software could help parents identify goals and



The Seasons of Life with a Special Needs Child

By Cathy Steere *(This article originally appeared in Home School Enrichment On-line.)*

"Mommy, tell me a winter story about when you were little," my son, Drew, begged, climbing next to me on the bed.



Having discussed, earlier that day, the four seasons and their differences, I understood why he put his request in for a seasonal pastime report. "Hmmm," I said, lightly tapping my chin, trying to think of one. My eight and ten year old boys loved hearing any story I told, no matter how trivial, about the time when I was little. It seemed hard for them to think of me as anything but their mommy: a grown up, married to their daddy. "Okay," I said smiling, "here's one."

I sat up part way, leaning back on my elbows. Drew beamed, locking eyes with me, anxious for a tale about my girlhood in the snow. I began with, "When I was your age," which was always an appealing start to any story I told him, "my sisters and I woke up one morning to discover several feet of snow had fallen onto our little city during the night." I described how we felt, barely able to contain ourselves, aching to get out and play in it. I admitted how we didn't know what made us happier--playing in the fresh snow or the fact that school had been called off for the day. I told how

we went into the house for lunch and ate cream of mushroom soup and English muffins with butter and how good and warm it felt in our tummies. Drew smiled, wanting more, but satisfied when I stated, "The End."

After he'd gone, I thought about the seasons we parents with special needs children go through. And while there are four of them, like the seasons in creation, I found that we have traveled through them by way of an almost backward trek.

When we discovered that Drew had autism, back when he was nearly four years old, it was like we had just been told he had died. What actually died was the realization that things were not what we believed, that our child was not normal, but severely impaired, neurologically. There was a sense of death when we peered into the future. No longer seeing the brightness most parents see for their beloved child's life, we saw only bleakness and loss. This was our winter: a harsh, impolite coldness. Darkness. Death.

Within months, after plowing through piles of books on the subject of autism, my husband

and I charted a course of action to address this insidious condition. We then began an intensive individualized home program, working one-on-one with Drew, seven days a week. After pouring our lives into desperately trying to save our son, hope appeared. There was progress. Yes, there was still a long, hard road before us, but we had found our way out of the cold. We could see color now, beautiful colors all around us. And like the leaves flitting and swirling to the ground during the autumn season, so, too, was the releasing of symptoms of autism for Drew and, as well, the letting go of the feelings of despair in my husband and I. And although there were some stubborn leaves, as there always are, which cling their hardest to the branch of a tree, not yet ready to give in to the beckoning wind, we knew that it was only a matter of time that they, too, would find their way to the ground, no longer a part of that which they once adorned.

With the summer comes the heat. Overwhelming. Smothering hotness. We were told, as we carried out Drew's therapy, to be prepared--often times things get worse before they get better. That first year was intense. We sweated through our sessions. New issues would come up in Drew that needed attention. We felt we were running a feverish pace, thirsty for the finish line and desperate to survive. And yet, despite the heat, it was clear that sunshine had arrived along with it. The beauty of the sunshine whispered to us to perse-

vere.

I would say that today we are enjoying the springtime. Seven years after beginning our home therapy program, as well as adding other therapies along with it, I can honestly say we see growth, and life, and blooms wherever we look. The goals in Drew's development are being realized. God, as well, is giving us great comfort and hope in regard to Drew's character development. God is giving Drew sensitivity to the Truth of His word. One of my first thoughts when Drew was diagnosed was, "How can he ever be saved?" I couldn't see how a child, who couldn't understand the love his own parents had for him, and who had no ability to reason or communicate--how he could know the love of his God and his need for a Savior? I then remembered, "God is the One Who saves. No one on earth--normal or impaired--has any hope apart from the grace of God." It was all about grace--God's grace.

Just recently Drew meandered into the kitchen where I was making sandwiches and asked me, "Mommy, how do you become a Christian?" I set my knife down and taking his hands in mine, I told him how to be saved. This wasn't the first time he'd heard it, but it was the first time he'd asked about it. I'm ashamed to admit that I, again, wondered if, with his yet limited understanding, it was even possible for him to be saved--that is, until, by God's kind

Too Wise To Be Mistaken Too Good To Be Unkind

Written By Cathy Steere - A family dealing with autism, professionals, homeschooling and successfully using Biblical child training

—An excellent book recommended by many NATHHAN families. This book has literally changed the lives of many families dealing with autism or special needs children with extra challenging behavior.

Grace and Truth Books
3406 Summit Boulevard
Sand Springs, OH 74063
(918) - 245-1500

***Editor's note: We have just received the newest edition of this book here at the office. It looks like a lot has been added and updated.
We look forward to reading it all over again!!***

providence, I just happened to read this quote by J.C. Ryle that very evening:

"The extent to which one man may have true saving grace, together with much ignorance; and another may have much head knowledge and yet no true saving grace; is one of the greatest mysteries in religion, and one which the last day alone will unfold."

J.C. Ryle "The Gospel of John" 1873

The constancy and surety of the changing seasons reveal the steadfastness of our Creator and our God. All of mankind is a witness to this, never having to wonder or worry if the next season will indeed come. God shows us that we can trust in Him. We can trust that His good and wise decree will be carried out in His world and in our children--their development, their character, and their salvation. Trust in Him. The spring comes when He sends it.

Cathy Steere and her husband, David, live in the beautiful Pacific northwest and homeschool their two sons, Drew and Elliot. Cathy is the author of the book Too Wise to be Mistaken, Too Good to be Unkind: Christian Parents Contend with Autism.

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In response to the request for more input from how others are dealing with caring for large families, Debbie Mills sent in some things for us to enjoy reading.

- You know you're a BIG family when...
- ...Somebody gets the flu, and you cancel the fellowship dinner 3 weeks ahead.
- ...You go to the Laundromat and fill every washer up - and then wait for them to finish so you can throw a few extra loads in.
- ...A double batch of cookies doesn't last the day.
- ...Someone in Wal-Mart says, "My are these all yours?" and three of your children are in automobiles with Dad.
- ...You visit a Sunday school and double the attendance record.
- ...People stand and stare and count on one hand...and then use the other hand too.
- ...The "family-sized" car is entirely too small.
- ...When the average number of socks in the dirty laundry pile is 964!

...When people ask if you run a daycare center.

...When you actually have enough people for a softball game without inviting the neighbors.

...When Mom and Dad groan to think of buying hope chests for the girls, (really, where are you going to put five of them?)

Here are some more notes about large families from Debbie Mills:

If a number of the following statements apply to your family, you may have a large family...

You count your children my multiples of two or more.

Washing underwear takes more than one washer load.

You laugh at "economy size" boxes.

The IRS doesn't question you anymore when you add dependents.

Your children think that all families get a new child every year or so.

A year pass to an attraction is cheaper than buying everyone a ticket.

Attendance drops by 20% when you don't show up for church

You have more shoes than Imelda Marcos, but yours are varied sizes.

It takes three families to baby-sit your children.

Your family car is an airport shuttle.

One room is no longer an option when you go to a hotel.

You think matched socks means two socks that are the same size.

You see a mom of three and you wonder what she does with all her time.

You count children when you are by yourself.

The new pediatrician asks you questions about childhood illnesses.

You still get a free car wash when you get a 1/4 tank of gas.

Diapers are a line item on your household budget.

.....

You laugh hysterically when someone asks you if you “work”.

The “walk-ins welcome” barber requires an appointment for your family.

Size doesn’t matter when shopping, because the clothes will fit “someone”.

You never worry about what to do with leftovers.



Pictures to Teach a Thousand Words

Stages® Learning Materials’ real photographic picture cards are ideal for teaching basic language skills to children and adults with learning delays.

Stages® product line features up-to-date, real pictures that capture and hold the students attention. The products include: The Language Builder Noun and Occupation sets, The Lang-O-Learn® Series and now, Real Life Learning Posters.

The **Language Builder: Picture Noun Cards** include 350 cards divided into nine categories of animals, foods, vehicles, clothing, furniture, toys, shapes, colors and everyday objects. The set includes similar and identical images designed to teach basic matching skills, as well as individual images which are perfect for teaching receptive and expressive language, sorting, adjectives, functions, storytelling and more. Some images are on plain white backgrounds to reduce confusion, while others appear in their natural settings to promote generalization.

The **Language Builder: Occupation Cards** feature 115 cards depicting both men and women in the most common occupations. Meeting the NAEYC (National Association of Education for Young Children) standards for gender and ethnicity within education, these cards are great for labeling, role-playing, storytelling and other imaginative play.

The **Lang-O-Learn® Series** includes the most popular cards from our large Noun Set, broken down by category into five smaller sets. You can get a 50 card food set, a 50 card everyday objects set, a 30 card animal set, a 20 card vehicle set and a 20 card clothing set. As an added feature, the Lang-O-Learn® cards are also labeled on the reverse side in 17 common languages. This set is great for ESL and foreign language learners, as well as basic language and speech practice in English.

Stages® most recent addition, the **Real Life Learning Posters**, consist of four sets: 10 farm animals, 10 wild animals, 14 fruits & vegetables and six community helpers. Enlarged to 14” X 19” and printed on heavy cardstock, the posters are great for small group discussions and decorating the walls of classrooms, doctors’ offices, nutritionists’ offices and therapists’ offices. The posters also provide a great transition for students going from one-on-one learning to a classroom setting.

Stages® Learning Materials is committed to offering you the best photo teaching tools possible. For more information on any of Stages® products, call us toll free at: **888-501-8880** or look for our products in educational stores and catalogs.

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Making Lessons Simple

By Diane Ryckman

Sometimes life is challenging. Whether dealing with sickness, or pregnancy, or new family members (either by birth or adoption), or moving, or death, or loss of jobs, or children with special needs, or toddlers, or care of aging parents...there are times when streamlining school becomes necessary in order to keep up with the rest of life's demands. Here are ways we've simplified our schooling through some of those extra busy seasons of life.

For our children who are just learning to read, we cover the basics step by step. Teaching reading is the priority (and the most time consuming for mom), and math is a close second (easier to teach a math concept and have the child practice it on his own over and over). Handwriting can be taught along side

reading and math by showing a child how to form a letter or number as it is required.

At times our schooling has been off and on, especially for these youngest students. When life is very busy we do school in snatches – I snatch a quiet moment to teach or review whatever I've planned next. Sometimes these quiet moments are very short, and sometimes they are very rare. I've found, though, that when I reinforce and build on the learning that does manage to happen - by emphasizing it, or pointing it out, or bringing it up as the day (week?) goes on - it really does begin to stick.

As a matter of survival, once our children have learned how to read they've been pretty much on their own with their studies (our children have ranged from 6 to 10 years of age before they've really begun to read and enjoy it). In the elementary school years, this has again meant sticking with the basics.

Ensuring that our children are reading daily has never been a problem for us – the problem becomes getting them to stop reading! Besides reading novels of their choice (approved by Mom or Dad), our younger readers also read history books, science books, or other books that follow their interests. Providing them with a wide selection of books written in various historical or geographical settings helps to widen their understanding of the world, and encourages their curiosity about other times and cultures. They also love to be read to, something that makes for great school some days, at all ages. As a minimum “school” requirement, I have the children keep a book log including the date a book is begun, and the title of the book.

Our children have always kept a daily journal. Through their journals they practice basic grammar, learn to express their thoughts and impressions, and learn to spell words as they ask for help. In the elementary years, our grade one students write (or dictate) one sentence, grade two write two sentences, grade three write three, etc. When I read their journals I try to refrain from correcting them so I won't discourage their writing. Instead I make a note to myself of what I need to teach

them in the future.

When I know that the children are at least doing math daily, I know we are still moving forward. Math doesn't require a lot of help once a child is able to read and understand a lesson on their own. And because math builds on itself, when a child doesn't understand a concept and does need help, it quickly becomes apparent without my needing to keep a close check on their work – that call for help is a good indicator of when one-on-one teaching is necessary.

For the teen years, our schooling has branched out to include history, geography, the sciences...At the beginning of the year I set them up with their courses and figure out what pace they need to follow in order to be done in the year. Then they set the pace they are comfortable with.

When we began simplifying our schooling, I would often worry whether the children were getting the education they needed. But now that two have graduated, I have confidence that their education has been more than adequate, and realize there have been many other benefits as well. By keeping school simple our children have known what is expected of them without my needing to be super-organized, or even up yet! They have learned to work independently, and are motivated to get things done so they can follow whatever their current interest is. Sticking with the basics has provided them with the tools they need to keep on learning, and allowing them the freedom and time to follow their own interests has cultivated their joy in learning. But by far the greatest benefit of going through those days that seem too much to handle has been mine as I've had to learn to lean heavily on the grace of God.

The grace of God...It's one of those well-used phrases that are hard to define. Last year when preparing a lesson for a teen Sunday school class, I was mulling over the grace of God, thinking of a way to explain it. One of the Bibles in our class used the phrase "undeserved kindness" for grace. To me the word kindness doesn't seem adequate to describe grace, but the undeserved part – *that* got me thinking.

Grace *is* undeserved – totally undeserved. None of us deserve any of the good things God gives us daily. We're all deserving death and eternal separation from God. But God...“who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...” (Eph 2:4-5). And that's only the beginning. “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...” (Eph 1:7). Totally undeserved! God has given us so much through that ultimate act of grace, the death and resurrection of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ.

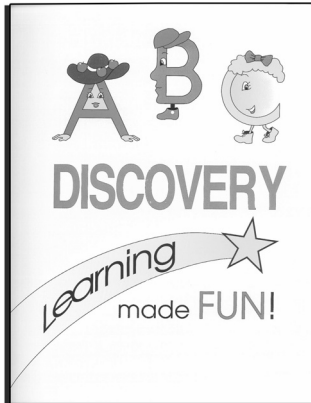
But grace isn't only a thing of the past, it's also available here and now. We are told to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may...find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16), and that, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor12:9).

So with my mulling, this is the definition I've come up with:

Grace – God's undeserved (kindness, goodness, strength, compassion, wisdom, power, attentiveness, provision...) **to me, right now.**

No matter what my need, His grace will meet it. Those challenging days when life feels so overwhelming – so many things to be done, and only one me to do them; stretched so thin that things which usually don't bother me become huge frustrations making me feel I could snap any moment – those days are when I know it's time to unburden myself before the LORD, and find in Him the help I need to carry on. Days when my strength isn't there...but His strength is. Days when I just can't do it...but He can. Days when I need to remember to “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 2:1).

NATHHAN Resource Review



Are you aware that the way in which letter sounds are taught can either help or hinder a child in the process of learning to read?

ABC Discovery Kindergarten Phonics and Reading Program is especially useful to children who are experiencing difficulty in learning to read. In fact, it was with them in mind that I wrote the program.

Several aspects of the ABC Discovery program contribute to children learning how to read letters correctly.

(1) As each letter is introduced, children are made aware of the way in which they make that sound in their mouths. This strengthens the association between the letter sound and the printed symbol. It also enables the parent to correct faulty speech patterns as they teach reading.

(2) Many hands-on opportunities are provided, including building words with letter cards prior to writing and reading them.

(3) Confusion is avoided through use of a controlled vocabulary and introduction of a single phonetic pattern, consonant-vowel-consonant.

(4) Each lesson proceeds step-by-step

from the kinesthetic review and instruction to the final reading of the story in the Phonetic Reader.

Recently, I used the program with a mentally-challenged ten-year-old who could print letters but could not read. In about an hour he had learned eight letter sounds and was able to read page one of the Phonetic Reader.

The ABC Discovery does this in a way that captures the imagination and interest of children. In addition, the letter lessons are organized in such a way that relationships between letter sounds can be readily recognized and demonstrated. This serves to strengthen phonemic awareness and also enables the parent/teacher to correct any faulty speech patterns that may exist. A remedial program based on the same principles is also available.

To learn more about the K program,
www.abcdiscovery.com

For information about either
program, e-mail

reinsoeducation@mail.com

Or call toll free:
(866) 734-6261

Grandpa and Grandma's Corner

(Editor's note: Grandpa and Grandma are Dennis and Linda Lamphere, Sherry Bushnell's parents. They have graciously chosen to spend their golden years serving the Lord and their family through NATHHAN / CHASK.)



Sharing A Heritage of Godly Living With Our Grandchildren

As grandparents, we have a wonderful opportunity to impact the lives of our grandchildren for the better. Can we share with you some of the things the Lord has been showing us lately?

First, it is never too late to implement change for the better in our lives. We should also remember that it is never too late for the Lord to work in the hearts of our children, grandchildren and in us.

In acknowledging our circumstances, we can accept where we are at, admit our faults and ask for God's help.

If we need to change our attitude, actions or responses to others, relax. Take time to pray daily. Repent and worship. It is very refreshing, spiritually.

In the same way, by example, let's teach our children

and grandchildren to call on the name of the Lord for help.

By example, teach work before play. Teach them to earn, tithe, save, spend and be thankful for what they have. Much of our lives are made up of work. If we are obviously enjoying it, as unto the Lord, they will too.

Teach the practice of volunteering. It is an attitude of the heart. Are you ready to help without grudgingly agreeing to do so? Our children and grandchildren will be just like us in many ways.

Teach them to pray that the Lord would use them today. Having a servant's heart, look for Divine appointments that the Lord has set up.

Let's remember to pray with our children or grandchildren. Growing children of gracious character, being humble in heart, is not easy. But it helps to look at the long range view. Your children will raise your grandchildren or even great-grandchildren. Love them

equally, but treat them all uniquely.

Sometimes we take too much for granted. There are sacrifices made for us by others (dad, mom, brothers, sisters, grandparents, friends, neighbors, employers, church leaders, and public servants.) In appreciating others, we are letting them know that we are aware of their contribution to our lives.

Encourage the acceptance of cross cultural styles different from our own, within godly living. Girls are treated differently than boys. Don't be narrow minded or critical of anyone different than ourselves.

Don't be afraid to impose boundaries in your home that are consistent with your convictions.

For instance, we do not allow TV, videos, sitcoms, etc. that teach disrespect, destroying, killing. We don't say "shut-up", "stupid" or other degrading comments. Setting limits sets an example of godliness that our children may more bravely follow in a culture that knows no limits.

We hope that in sharing our hearts, the Lord will minister to your household in some way.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Nutrition

By Stephanie Nielsen

I cannot claim any scientific studies and I'm certain that many traditionally trained medical doctors will poo-poo my experience and tell you that following my suggestions will produce a severely obese child with heart disease and early onset diabetes. I assert that the diet could not possibly be worse than that of the average American youth and that whole foods are always better. However, what works best for one child may not be best for another. As parents, you are given the right and responsibility before God to make health choices for the children with which He has blessed you.

Three of my eight children carry a diagnosis of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. They came to us from a 'group home' which participated in the USDA feeding program and therefore served what the government considers 'healthy' foods. Of course the children themselves were left the choice of which of the foods served they would eat and in what quantity. They had unlimited access to 'fruit punch' and chocolate milk low-fat, of

course. The breads and pastas were made of white flour, sugar found frequently, and potatoes came from a box. Vegetables were optional and canned. Desert a constitutional right!



In the past five years, we have gotten a correct diagnosis, weaned them off of a number of drugs - Risperdal, Ritalin, Imipramine, etc.- and made some connections between diet and behavior. The first clue was the way Rachel's behavior changed when she ate something red. She got mean and hyper didn't even begin to cover it. Her eyes went wild and it really seemed that she was out of control. She would cry because she was trying to be good but couldn't quite manage it. Shortly after making the connection, someone suggested the Feingold diet. I read the book and some other little things began to click. We noticed a simi-

lar but less dramatic change in Michael when we removed the food dyes from his diet.

I have been obese most of my adult life and periodically get depressed enough about it to try the diet of the week. One winter, it was Atkins. The difference was that it actually worked for me and seemed to help my kids pay attention and function more peacefully. I had a copy of a book called "Nourishing Traditions" which sounded like great theory but totally impractical with a large family. After noticing the improvement of a lower carb diet, I got back into that book and determined to make it work. The reward of that

effort is children who are functioning well beyond where I was told they could. They are, for the most part, pleasant, helpful, and likable kids. My major behavior problems are the same as most any other mom of young teens: they talk back every now and then, they leave towels on the bathroom floor, their bedrooms get messy, and they will employ any method they can think of to avoid math. These are not the FAS children of which special ed teachers lament. All of this I can attribute to the grace of God since I am hardly a world class mom, but we recently saw quite clearly how big of an impact the diet makes. We fell off of it for three months.

It began with a family vacation. We came home and it was still dark depressing winter. Then we took a new placement of a child from a disruption. Then I found out I was pregnant & I was sick. So sick that I stocked up on generic hamburger helper and left all cooking to the kids. By this time, Michael was surly, Mary Katherine was beyond flighty, and Rachel was intolerable. I was mentally composing posts to the disruption lists. There was constant fighting and bickering among the children and Rachel could always be found at the center of it. I'm sure that my being unavailable didn't help. One night I couldn't sleep. I had been praying for the grace to deal with her contentious and disruptive behavior & to be loving to her. I got up for a snack and made a cup of tea and a piece of toast (store bought white bread) which I then slathered with butter and jam. The jam was the sort I had been buying for a few years because I knew it to be free of dyes, especially Red 40. As I stood at the counter alone in my kitchen at 1 AM scarfing my snack and tea, I picked up the jam tub and was looking at the label. Then I noticed that my formerly safe jam was no more. The formula had been changed and it now contained not only Red 40 but also high fructose corn syrup.

The realization that Rachel's downward spiral was at least related to her diet was sharp and painful: all of the discord in the family was related to the fact that I was slacking! We had a junk food purge the next morning, I apologized to Rachel, and within 24 hours she was a different child. We liked her again. As an added benefit, my morning sickness disappeared almost immediately. I can't say for certain that was diet since I did miscarry a few weeks later but it's worth considering.

Now that I've given you the why, it's time for the how:

First, you need to invest in a copy of Sally Fallon's book "Nourishing Traditions". Everything that follows is from a series of posts on this topic to the Adoptive MOMYS list and will not make much sense until you've read the book. Prices given are current as of July 1, 2005 for Alaska. Yours should be cheaper!

(Adoptive MOMYS is an offshoot of regular MOMYS and Amanda has tried to keep it a really safe place because we tend to be a little more 'real' about the challenges of parenting the children we are raising. Her address is mommaplus@earthlink.net)

I have never seen anything that specifically deals with feeding FAS kids. My ground rules:

1. No chemicals - no dyes, no hydrolyzed vegetable protein, nothing I can't immediately recognize as "Food"; no hydrogenated fats.
2. No refined sugar, most especially high fructose corn syrup.
3. As low on the complex carbs as I can afford and manage and as high in good animal fat.
4. Whole, raw, dairy products whenever possible.

The key to managing a Nourishing Traditions (NT) dietary program is pre-planning. You have to have things planned, prepped, and ready plus some back-ups in the freezer or one stressful day can throw all the best intentions right out the window.

My biggest weakness is breakfast. I am not a morning person. My mother used to say "Nothing good happens after midnight", but I'm more like, "Nothing should happen before noon". My solution is a plan and a teenager assigned to breakfast so I don't have to think. We rotate:

Eggs w/ cheese & toast - The toast is made from homemade bread (pre-sliced and frozen in the proper portions);

Smoothies - I mix these up part of the way in advance. Then we thaw in the fridge overnight and just add ice and some milk in the morning in the blender. The base mix is yogurt (plain), bananas, other fruit, some coconut oil, a pinch of salt and a dash of vanilla. For the apple ones I add some apple pie spice. In the winter we do hot cereal instead.

Muffins & milk-I do muffins in huge quantities-mix up the batter except eggs and fruit and let it sit 12 to 24 hours to soak. Then portion it out to add fruit and flavoring and eggs. then I pour it into muffin liners in my muffin pans and freeze. The liners pop out so you can stack them in plastic bags in the freezer. When you want to use them just pop them, frozen, into a muffin pan and bake about 25 to 30 minutes at the normal temp.

Yogurt and granola- I make up big batches of granola and put those into single meal servings in the food saver so it stacks well on my pantry shelves.

Hash brown quiche- this is a great use for leftovers. I make my own hash browns with the shredder blade on my food processor. To do these, pre-cook potatoes just about 10 minutes, then shred. To make the quiche, just grease your pan and then line it with a nice layer of hash browns. Make up a filling with whatever is left over or some ham & cheese, beaten eggs, a little cream and some salt & pepper. If you form your crust the night before and have the filling all together except for the eggs, this is also very quick. Bake at 350 for about 30 minutes, depending on the size of your pan.

Brunch casserole & fruit- this is browned sausage, sliced mushrooms (sautéed), toasted bread cubes, shredded cheddar cheese, and beaten eggs. Mix, top with more cheese and bake until the eggs are cooked and the cheese on top is bubbly.

We fast before taking communion on Sundays & I feed the little guys yogurt those mornings.

For yogurt, we do the Brown Cow cream top - maple, usually, since it's sweetened with maple syrup. They used to make an Organic version but Brown Cow was bought out by Stoneyfield and that option disappeared.

Lunches are an area I'm just not happy with. I really want to keep the carb. count down but neither my brain nor my budget have been able to do it. Again, we rotate. Sandwiches are always made with

homemade bread.

Grilled Cheese / Soup

Pasta

Burritos (this is a new Wednesday thing. I've got a Lentil burrito recipe that is out of this world)

Meat sandwiches (whatever is left-over or on sale)

Chicken soup

Tortilla Pizza

For tortillas, you can get sprouted grain whole wheat or buy the real Mexican corn ones- they've been soaked.

Suppers: This is where I rely on the freezer again. I've tried the once a month cooking thing but it wasn't working. There are too many of us! But I do try to keep at least 4 meals in there that require almost no further prep. One of my favorites is Chicken Enchiladas which I actually do more like lasagna. Instead of filling each enchilada separately I layer the filling and the tortillas and cheese like a lasagna. Tastes the same with lots less work. When I buy meat now I try to prep it out before it goes in the freezer - the big pork loins give me three meals. 1/3 into pork chops and into a marinade. 1/3 into a big chunk for Cuban pork and therefore with a spicy rub. The other 1/3 cubed for stew, dredged in flour and browned then frozen. I also brown my pot roasts before I freeze them. I tried freezing the carrots and onions in a bag with the roast for a dump & go kind of thing but the veggies had a nasty texture. Meatloaf can be pre-mixed, etc. The only fermented food my kids will eat are the gingered carrots so I do those twice a week. Lesson learned the hard way: Do not over salt! They won't taste salty enough at first but it will happen.

I've gotten out of the habit of making Kombucha and need to get back on that. My husband will stay off Coke when I've got it around.

Equipment I couldn't live without: my freezer! I really need a few more of them

Bosch with blender and food processor

Grain mill - although our health food store has one of those "grind it right there" thingy's for grain, you can't grind anything else.

Potato ricer - you can boil whole un-scrubbed, un-peeled potatoes and just squish them through the ricer. It separates the peel off and you have nice mashed potatoes

Food saver- vacuum packer

Keeping costs down:

I buy our meat from a restaurant supplier. Organic is just more than I can afford. We try to do non-meat meals twice a week. Beans are cheap and, up here, fish is free. Lamb is generally clean even though it doesn't carry an organic label since most of it is grass fed exclusively from AUS/ NZ. I do buy pork - it's a great bargain and, as Sally Fallon points out, there are cultures for whom that's the bulk of their diet and they live to be OLD! Turkeys when they are on sale. We have done cows before but I just don't have the freezer space. When we move out of Alaska and I have room, maybe we'll try that again.

I also order from Azure Standard. I do 60lbs of butter at a time, grains by the 50lb

bag, raw milk cheeses, etc. It's a little more expensive than Costco but I think that skipping the drive works it all out in the end.

A couple other things I buy in big bulk and not organic because of price: heavy cream and apple sauce. 1/2 gallon of cream is 9.58 but organic 8oz is 4.69

We do not do organ meats, except for Margaritsa at Pascha (Easter). Generally I think that if the organ's job is to filter the nasties from your blood stream, it should not be eaten - sort of like eating a pool filter or a vacuum cleaner bag. I'm sure brains and tongue are fine - I'm just a spoiled American who gets a big "Ick" from the idea. The odd thing is that I absolutely LOVE headcheese.

You will not be able to eat 100% NT all the time. Decide what you can do, what's most important, and go with that. If you have any about 10 or so, teach them to do it too! Victoria (13) and Rachel (14) do all the bread and lots of the other meals (Rachel is the breakfast lady, Mary Katherine(12) is the lunch lady, and Victoria is the Dinner lady + responsible for keeping abreast of the bread supply.)

They don't do it all by themselves but it means that I have another brain helping keep up with it all, remembering to thaw, replace, etc.

Plan for dessert at least a

few times a week

Start slowly. Kids will revolt if you go cold turkey. Take out the preservative and dyes first. Then move to whole grains, etc. Watch labels, even on things you've bought for a while. Danish Orchards recently snuck red 40 into their previously OK strawberry jam. If you have a choice of a product without high fructose corn syrup, take that route.

Snacks: apples with peanut butter. Tortillas fried into chips with salsa, fresh bread with butter and jam, carrots and ranch dip. Potato chips- you can find good ones fried in olive oil. We love the Rosemary and Sea Salt flavored ones. Try cheese cubes, or whatever fruit is in season.

I really do love to cook. I like the direction and ideas in NT but some of the recipes are a little lackluster. I have gotten my best stuff lately from a magazine called "Cuisine at Home" and I did get a few good ideas from the Sue Greggs cookbooks but not enough that I would spend that kind of money for the whole set if I had to do it over again.

Maid or Mother?

By Sherry Bushnell

Are you the maid? Are you mother? Looking at all the many tasks a mother needs to do in the care of her children, only God gives us the strength to keep on giving and giving, sometimes getting hate instead of love.

I am speaking from a parent's perspective, so what I write here should not be taken as professional advice. 10 years ago, when we were in the thick of things dealing with our daughters' attachment issues, it seemed like a kind of hell. Now, looking back I can see things that we did wrong (should have done better), and things that we did right. Thanks be to God it has all turned out beautiful in the end.

As a prelude to reading this article, go to www.nathhan.org. Look under Articles by Subject, then under Adoption. Read the article

[Adoption - Is It Always Happily Ever After?](#) and [The Winning Of Little Lynny](#)

Folks ask us if we feel our daughters have gotten over their (RAD) reactive attachment disorder. I want to say yes, but then, at this point in their lives, I can still see lingering damage at age 13 and 16. Obviously the scars are still there. At least in Sheela, our 16 year old, we can see that getting over these obstacles in her life means a lot to her. She is totally open to having us share with her where she needs to be careful socially. Today she is extra careful not to lie, but I think in my heart, I probably wouldn't trust her ability to overcome when push came to shove if she knew she was in trouble.

Recalling what our family has been through during those years after we brought the

girls home from India, I am reminded of the phrase, hindsight is better than foresight. As with a lot of families, ours was no exception, the whole issue of bonding had never occurred to us. We just automatically assumed that the child we just spent thousands of hard-earned dollars to bring home to our loving arms would love us in return. Then we were really naive thinking that bringing a second

little one home couldn't be harder than what we had just gone through. I guess we are just gluttons for punishment. If only we had been better prepared emotionally. I like to speculate that if I had understood what it would have taken to help Sheela and Lynny, I still would have welcomed them home, but with a different plan of action and not wearing my heart on my coat sleeve.

Bitterness is the enemy of relationships. As a mother who eagerly wanted to share my home and love, being rejected not just the first month, but the first 5 years, was almost more than I could bear. What Sheela needed was unconditional love, just like Our Heavenly Father gives us. Unlike the Lord's love for us and how we treat Him sometimes, repeated rejection ate away at my tender feelings. Anger and bitterness replaced that love-at-first sight. How did we ever overcome?

In the story recommended above, [The Winning of Little Lynny](#), we placed Lynny out of the home for 5 weeks after being with us for over 2 years, with the intent to disrupt the adoption. Just having her out of the home gave us a chance to breathe again, to



get our nose off the grind stone and think about what God would have us do. Together as husband and wife, we resolved to be Sheela and Lynny's loving CAREGIVER. In other words, the way we survived was to be obedient to what we knew God wanted us to do for the girls. For a while we put aside our desire for hugs and a normal parent/child relationship. Instead, we resolved to teach them to think of others, to not laugh when someone was hurt, not to lie, not to monopolize strangers in conversation, to respect mom and dad and stop inappropriate destructive behavior. Knowing that God has a plan for our children and that salvation for them is His will, we decided to implement Biblical child training and be very consistent. Still, their constant rejection of mommy was very difficult.

Enter Bushnell's Baby Boot Camp. It is 7:00 in the morning. Lynny is crying and angry because she thinks someone took her pair of pants. They are found on the floor at the foot of her bed. With an attitude like this, it takes her an hour to dress, due to cerebral palsy. This morning is no exception. When she has a good attitude, she can get dressed in 10 minutes. Lynny is not present at the table for breakfast. Just as breakfast is over, she comes scooting into the dining room, pouting, with both legs in one pant leg. Mom sends her back to the bathroom, and takes them off of her and helps her try again. She curls in a non-communicative ball and stares at the wall in the bathroom until mommy leaves the room.

At lunch time, Lynny won't eat her food without gagging. She is once again mad, yet satisfied, realizing that everyone is disgusted at her antics. Pouting, she refuses to participate in the family meal and fun. After lunch Lynny spends time on the toilet before



nap time. She is totally smelly. At 5 years old, she is in the habit of letting tiny bits of poop out all day, as the urge comes. Getting into the bath tub is another scene as she hates to take cold baths, but that is the treatment for letting poop out all day, reaching in her diaper, then pasting it on the wall, herself and toys. Later, with a scrub brush and bucket of soapy water, she cleans the items she smeared with poop earlier, while she thought no one was looking.

After nap comes music time. Lynny enjoys listening to a certain tape. The others would like a change after an hour of the same songs. Lynny gets mad and pinches her brother. Mom comes into the room to settle the dispute and smells poop again. Off to the bathroom for another cold bath. (Potty training is rough!!)

5:30 Dinner time brings a very hungry Lynny. She eats very fast. She knows that ice cream is coming for desert. No gagging, no complaining. She starts pouting because she is not served ice cream first. We make sure she is last, due to demanding to be first.

Today, reading my journal as I write this, I can hardly believe that the little Lynny above is the same one that tonight comes to me and asks for a bedtime blessing and a hug. But what is more amazing to me is what has transpired in my own heart. As damaged as the girls were and as inadequate as I felt to help them, God has shown us the way to healing and a happy relationship.

If I had known that getting off the plane in Seattle, Washington, with my new daughter Sheela, age 21 months, would lead to 5 years of struggles, pain and rejection from her, I might have armed myself with more resolve. At first I trusted my hope that within 6 months or so, she would stop behaving negatively. Instead it only got worse. She tried to pit us as mom and dad against each other. She loved and obeyed Daddy. She hated mommy. Her primary care-giver, Mom, was THE enemy. She loved men in general and somehow, even at an early age, was able to wrap them around her finger emotionally.

Sometimes it was terribly comical. (Like

when Sheela snuck into the pantry, taking 1 little bite out of every apple in the whole big box and throwing them all over the floor.) After all, how much damage can a tiny-for-her-age, 5-year-old blind girl do?

But sadly, the steady diet of rejection had ripped a huge hole in my heart. As a godly mother, who strove to be a good example to my children in how to be obedient to authority, love my family and serve them with joy, all I could see was my increasing failure. I felt totally sabotaged. What had begun as an act of love for Sheela, Lynny and God, had turned into a pile of "dirty rags". When we were at the worst point in our relationship, each morning I would groan with dread, as I got showered and dressed. I had to be in the same room with her. She worked hard to make me crumble...to prove that my love was not good enough for her.

One morning, after a round of morning sickness #9 (I was pregnant with Jayben), tears, prayer and talking with Tom (my husband), he gently told me that I did not need to love Sheela myself. I needed to let Jesus love her through me. I sat back on my pillow and mused for a moment. Suddenly it was as if all the bitterness that had accumulated over the last few years drained out my big toe. I knew that Jesus loved her. All I needed was to let the Lord love Sheela through me. I could handle that. In other words, I stopped taking her damaging behavior personal. In fact, as the Lord's care-giver of the girls, I felt totally released (and still do) to be the loving mother that I need to be for Christ's sake. Their rejection, misbehavior, and hateful ways were nothing but a result of what Satan had allowed to happen to them BEFORE they came into my home. It was my God-given job to help them heal. Letting the emotional sickness in their hearts affect me personally rendered me helpless to help them. Just like a doctor that takes on the illness of his patient makes him useless as a physician to help his patient get well.

Each child affected by early emotional damage and bonding issues tries to disprove the love of his new family to avoid further hurt in his heart. Let-

ting another take authority in their lives is scary. They cannot let go and let someone else be in charge of them for long. Self-preservation is a powerful emotion. Once again trust is an issue. I do not believe that there is a one-therapy-fits-all program to help children or adults with RAD heal. I think that whatever a family implements as treatment, be it trained counselors, reading therapy, "baby boot camp"... the most important aspect in healing is time, coupled with consistent love. Once again I repeat... the only sure cure for RAD is consistent "tough love" (This is a Christ-like love) and time.

Are all families suited to raise children with RAD? Absolutely not. Tough love is not for everyone. Being tougher than a brick, meaner than a she-bear with cubs, and harder than a steel ball to crack is not fun. Are there any parents out there like this? I know a lot of families that have become like this in order to survive. Their relationship as husband,

wife and child (family) meant more than personal comfort. These families are survivors. Occasionally we have run into parents who adopt children with RAD just for the sheer enjoyment of the challenge. Incredible as it sounds, they are do-

ing a great job and have several of them at one time in the home! What do they have that makes them able to parent children who are emotionally damaged? They have thick skin. They are not easily offended, not easily hurt. They have a healthy understanding that damaged children are just that. Damaged children.

Today I am very appreciative of Sheela's hard work in helping me around the house. She loves to please her mommy and daddy. She craves approval and love. This is totally normal for children who have come out of RAD and are trusting parental authority. What wonderful treasures Sheela and Lynny have become.



I just want to encourage those who are hurting, dealing with their children who have RAD. Rejection, anger, day-after-day of horrible misbehavior, the seeking to pit one parent against another and turning on the charm for strangers while hating us as parents are all awful to live with. Please remember, bitterness is truly the enemy, not our children. Making it through one day without a melt down emotionally is truly a triumph. Lean on Jesus to make it through the incredible anger a child might display when asked to do a simple command or when killing the cat. This is the only way to survive. Pray for your child while holding them tight in a blanket, sausage style, during their great emotional struggle, if that is the way God shows you is effective.

Make an extra effort to talk calmly and kindly with each other as husband and wife as a child seeks to destroy your marriage over a piece of candy they should or should not have. If you cannot leave your child with a sitter to get some alone time with each other, because you feel they might lie or manipulation the sitter, set a time to have a quiet dinner at home. Put the children in another room or in bed if they cannot behave. It surely won't hurt them to read a book (or scream) alone for an hour or two. Above all, make it plain that you are going to have a good time in life, with or without them behaving. God gave you each other as husband and wife to love and cherish.

Maid or mother? Thankfully the Lord has given me the ability today to feel like being both, even to my two girls, who at first did not want the mommy part. When we give the Creator of our children the responsibility to fix their hearts, and trust He will show us how, we can rest assured He will give us the ability and the strength to do His will. Looking at all the many tasks a mother needs to do in the care of her children, only God gives us the strength to keep on giving and giving with sometimes nothing in return from those we love.

Now How Do You Say That?....

People First Language, Etiquette and Not Offending Folks...

By Sherry Bushnell

It's not that I am a stickler for saying things just right, or that I get offended when someone uses the word "handicapped." My problem is knowing what to say to the folks who ask me the "right way" to say something. So, thanks to a practical pamphlet shared by Debbie Mills, CA, printed by Community Interface Services, I have in my hand the "right way" to say it!

If given my druthers, I'd just as soon stick with my regular way of saying things. But those of you who are curious, here is how "they" prefer we say it.

Here is a poem that condenses the whole idea of "person first" mentality.

"I Am A Person First...and I Have a Disability."

When you deal with me,
treat me just as you would any other person...with respect and courtesy.

Please look me in the eye, and speak directly to me, not to my companion.

I am used to coping with my disability, but I appreciate your help when I need it.

If I have trouble seeing or hearing or moving easily, please remember that it is my eyes or ears or muscles that do not work as well as yours...

Beyond that I have the same needs and wants, hopes and desires as you do.

I have problems and fears, just like you but I also have strengths that sometimes even I don't recognize.

I need to talk to you about those abilities

and I need you to listen.

But most of all, I need you to remember that *I am a person first*.

People with disabilities prefer to be called “people with disabilities”. This way, you acknowledge that they are, indeed people first.

If you saw a person in a wheelchair unable to negotiate the stairs of a building, would you say: “There is a handicapped person unable to find a ramp”? Or would you say “There is a person using a wheelchair, who is handicapped by an inaccessible building?”

- Emphasize abilities, not limitations “He uses a wheelchair.” “She walks with crutches”.

- Don’t label people as part of a disability group—say “people with disabilities” not “the disabled”.

- Don’t patronize or give excessive praise or attention.

- Don’t say, “Isn’t it wonderful how he has overcome his disability?” People live with a disability—they have to overcome attitudinal, social, architectural, education, transportation and employment barriers— not the disability.

- Be aware that choice and independence are important. Ask a person with a disability if they want assistance before you help. Your help may not be wanted or needed.

- Treat adults with disabilities as adults. Call the person by his or her first name only when extending that familiarity to all others present.

- Make eye contact and speak directly to the person, not a companion or interpreter.

- Do not shorten a first name; say “Bill” not “Billy”.

- Be aware of the distinction between “disability” and “handicap”.

A disability is a functional limitation that interferes with a person’s ability to walk, hear, talk, learn, etc.

A handicap is a physical or attitudinal constraint

that is imposed upon a person. Use handicap to describe a situation or barrier imposed by society, the environment or oneself.

- Be considerate of the extra time it might take for a person to get things said or done.

People who have speech difficulties

- Give whole, unhurried attention to the person. And keep your manner encouraging, rather than correcting.
- Rather than speak for the person, allow extra time and give help when needed.
- When necessary, ask questions that require short answers or a nod or shake of the head.
- Don’t pretend to understand when you don’t. Repeat when you do understand; the person’s reactions will guide you and clue you in.
- Look for communication aids like pictures or symbols.

People who are hearing impaired

- If necessary, get the person’s attention with a wave of the hand or light tap on the shoulder.
- Speak clearly and slowly but without exaggerating. **DON’T SHOUT!** Use body language or facial expression to help.
- Try to maintain eye contact. Allow for a clear view of your face—the person may be lip reading. Don’t speak directly into the ear.
- Don’t be embarrassed about communication via paper and pencil.



People who use wheelchairs

- Always ask the wheelchair user if he or she would like assistance before you help.
- Don’t lean on a person’s wheelchair. It is part of their personal body space.
- If the conversation lasts more than a few minutes sit or kneel to get face to face.
- Give clear directions including physical obstacles and alternative routes.

- Don't discourage children from asking questions about the wheelchair.

People who are visually impaired

- Always identify yourself and any others who may be with you. For example, say, "On my right is..."
 - Use the person's name when starting a conversation as a clue to whom you are talking. Let the person know when you need to leave.
 - When offering a handshake, say "Shall we shake hands?" If the person extends a hand first, take it or explain why you can't.
 - Ask the person if he or she wants help in getting about. When providing assistance, don't grab and start steering—allow the person to take your arm, bent at the elbow.
 - When offering seating, place the person's hand on the back or arm of the seat.
 - In handling money or other papers, identify each piece as you place it in the person's hand.

Compassion, in the form of help, may not be help at all if we are not thinking about the real needs of the person with a disability. For instance, someone who is struggling to get a word out, having difficulty due to stuttering, may not appreciate having things said for them.

So, here is what to say...

Say...

Person who has,

Person with...

Person who is affected

Instead of... afflicted, suffers from, victim or stricken.

Say...

Person with...

a disability

cerebral palsy

retardation

epilepsy

Down syndrome

Instead of... disabled / handicapped, palsied, C.P., spastic, retarded, epileptic, mongoloid.

Say... of short stature
Instead of...dwarf or midget.

Say... without speech, non-verbal
Instead of...mute or dumb.

Say... deaf or hearing impaired
Instead of hard of hearing.

Say... visually impaired
Instead of sightless.

Say... developmental delay
Instead of slow.

Say... emotional disorder or mental illness
Instead of crazy or insane.

Say... learning disability
Instead of learning disabled.

Say... non-disabled
Instead of normal, healthy.

Say... mobility impaired
Instead of lame.

Say... cleft lip
Instead of hare lip.

Say... seizures
Instead of fits.

Say... congenital disability
Instead of birth defect.

Say... condition
Instead of disease (unless it is a disease).

Say... medically involved,
Instead of sickly.

Say... uses a wheelchair
Instead of confined to a wheelchair bound.

Say... Physical disability
Instead of crippled or lame.

Unruh Update continued from Page 27.

How? Through those small things we joked about a few minutes ago and the daily seemingly insignificant moments. Did you know a glass of water can have eternal value? (Matt. 10:42) Sorting socks? (Col. 3:23,24) Prayers for bad dreams? (Prov. 3:24, Phil. 4:6-7, Ps. 23) Spanking a Bottom? (Heb. 12:11, Prov. 13:24) Wiping away tears and bandaging knees? (Rev. 21:4) Stopping a fight? (1Jn. 4:20, 1Pet. 4:8) Our Example? (1Cor. 13:4-8, Phil. 2:14, Gal. 5:22,23)

Deut. 4:9 and 6:4-9 teach us to focus on our relationship with God and to love Him with our whole being and then to teach our children and grandchildren. We can get excited about reaching our great grandchildren for God's glory!

Galatians 6:8-9 reads "For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary." We are on the mission field, Mommas. We are up against an enemy who wants the souls of our children and seems to be working harder as the days draw near.

Take heart, He will not forget you, He has inscribed you on the palms of His hands.

Unruh Update: Jim still struggles with various things related to his spinal cord tumor, but he is on both legs, Praise God! He is beginning to get involved in the Church home we finally found and is looking forward to dedicating more time to NATHHAN.

Jerri is expecting a baby in March 2006. She has never struggled with quite so much "all day sickness," but seems to be getting to the end of that, now what to do with this tiredness!

Our oldest son, Peter, has recently been appointed Youth Pastor at his church and is going on a mission trip to Egypt soon. We still miss him desperately, but hope a move closer to town may allow us to see him more.

Joy has graduated now and is working many hours at NATHHAN. She is a big help at home although there is a fine young man in her life who poses a slight distraction!

Zack worked hard this summer for the Forest Service in the YCC Program. He is now getting back into his books and persevering though he is a different learner and the reason we got to know the Bushnell's in the first place.

Luke, Jonathan, and Daniel are also back to the books and have joined AWANA at our church. They ask most days if we are going to work at NATHHAN. They are so dedicated! (the fact that they have good friends there and always have lots of fun could be the reason, I suppose)

Sean is now two years old and very much in training. As always we are seeking Gods continual guidance and direction in our lives and pray the same for the NATHHAN/CHASK families.

NATHHAN Web page

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www.nathhan.org
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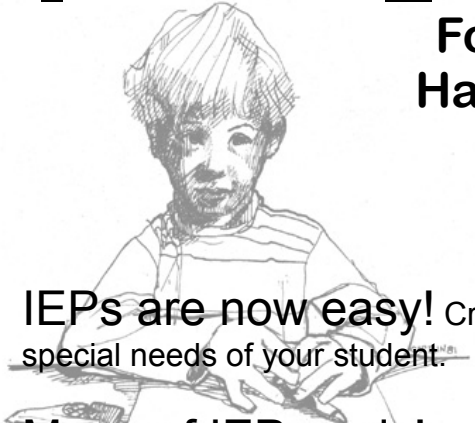
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By Deborah Mary Kathleen Mills



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