

Welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations,
your authority in
navigating the world of
homeschooling diverse learners.

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With over seventy five years
of combined homeschooling expertise,
experiences and perspectives,
this group is eager to
share their wealth of
wisdom to empower your
homeschooling journey.

So grab your favorite mug,
settle in and get ready for
insightful discussions,

valuable insights and practical tips.

Give your homeschool the
power boost it needs to
successfully educate the
unique learners in your home.

Hi, everybody,
and welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations.

Today,
we are going to talk about whole
child readiness,
simple steps to prepare
kids for learning body, mind, and soul.

And my special guest today is Heidi.

Oh, Heidi,

I forgot to ask how you say your
last name.

So I'm going to have you say it.

Heidi Tringali.

Yeah.

Tringali.

Yes, I would have massacred that.

Thank you.

Heidi is a pediatric occupational therapist, speaker, writer, and mother of two adult children.

Heidi holds a bachelor of arts degree in special education in psychology from Hastings College and a master's of science degree in occupational therapy from Tufts University.

She has practiced as an occupational therapist for over thirty years.

Heidi founded the Tringali Occupational Therapy Services, or T.U.T.S., in response to an identified need for occupational therapy services in independent schools.

Since then, she's expanded and now provides support and consulting services to independent

schools and preschools throughout
the country.

She provides training and
education to faculty and
families on topics related
to classroom success and
maximizing student performance.

Heidi's currently a licensed,
she's currently licensed in Maine,
North Carolina and South
Carolina and a member of
the American Occupational
Therapy Association.

Welcome Heidi to the show.

I'm so excited to have you
here and to talk about this subject.

Thank you.

Yeah.

So often the first question

I ask my guests when they come on is,
why are you so passionate
about this topic?

There's usually a story or

something that just drives
you specifically to have
enough to say in an hour on the topic.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I think if we track it way back,

I had a brother with Down syndrome.

So we just kind of were

raised in a family to be

respectful and kind and

appreciative of everybody,

regardless of what they're dealing with.

And as I became an OT,

what I found out was a lot

of our kids are just misunderstood.

And that's really what wakes

me up every morning is just

to make sure that

to help that child that's misunderstood.

It might be that it's a

dysregulated child who is

viewed as a behavioral child.

It might be a learning issue

that's dealt with as a low IQ.

And so that's kind of what
drives me every single day.

And just to be an advocate
and a voice for a misunderstood child,
that will probably keep me
doing this until I'm a hundred.

Yeah, that's awesome.

Yeah,

it's amazing how those experiences
within our immediate
families can really affect
the trajectory of our lives.

It's because God gives us
compassion for people that
we wouldn't have had that
compassion for had we not
had that experience.

And I think a lot of parents
that I've talked to over the years,
they sometimes feel guilty
that they have this experience.

kind of typically functioning child.

And then they've got another
child with a lot of needs.

And just as an encouragement to them,
just based on your story
and so many others that I've heard,
is that it's not a deficit.

There's something that God
has planned for every child
in your family.

When you go through hardships,
they change how we think,
they change how we
with the compassion that we have.

And so, so that's, that's awesome.

I love that.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So we're going to talk about
whole child readiness.

And if you're watching,
we have viewers popping on.

Usually it takes a little
while for people to get on

and to start conversing with us,
but we'd love for you to be
part of the conversation.
That's why we are live.
And so just if you feel like,
Either your child has
started school and we're
running into problems.
They don't seem to be ready
to learn or or even
inspired to learn what might be going on.
Or maybe you even have a diagnosis.
You think that that's kind of figured out.
what you're dealing with,
and yet you seem to still
be hitting roadblocks.
We want to know what you're
struggling with and how we
can help you with this
conversation as well.
So definitely put those in the feed,
and we'd love to address them.
Yeah.

So I think a good place for
us to kind of get started is –
we talk about school
readiness and we talk about
learning readiness.

And is there a difference?

And if so, what is that?

Yeah, I think that a long time ago,
they were interchangeable
and rightfully so.

So when you got to school,
you were ready to learn.

But throughout the change in
the way that we,
our kids have been raised
in the environment that has been
kind of evolved in the United States,
they're now different
because school readiness
looks like you have your
lunchbox and you have your
bag and you rest your teeth.
That's school readiness.

But you can have all of
those things and get to
school and not be ready to learn.

And so the easiest
definition I have of
learning readiness is

And we talk about it with kids,
but it's adults too.

It's true for everybody.

We're all going to perform
to our fullest potential if
we show up cognitively organized,
physically calm, and socially connected.

And that's the definition of
learning readiness.

Because if every child shows
up to the demand placed on them,
organized, calm, and connected,
they can perform to their
fullest potential.

If you show up or a child
shows up disorganized, excitable,
and disconnected, all bets are off.

And you don't know what

you're going to see.

You don't know what you're going to get.

And then starts the cycle of

the potential for being misunderstood.

Absolutely.

Yes.

And then you get a classroom of them.

And it gets crazy.

But yeah.

And I, but I think as, as parents,

we don't even know how to recognize,

you know,

or if we do see a child that's

in one of those states or

dysregulated in one of those ways that,

um,

we don't feel like we really

have the power to do

anything over that either.

And so I know you're going

to talk about that,

but I just want to express

that question because I
think a lot of times we
feel like there's just, yeah,
and that's what I deal with every day.

I mean,

I've heard it from so many parents is,
yep, that's our house.

That's just the way we roll.

And so the thought that
pattern even or the ability
to even change the thought
pattern that there could be
something different is
sometimes it seems like a
dream for a lot of parents.

I always tell parents too, I said,
when you see a kid throwing
a stinky fit in the grocery store,
you have one of three reactions.

You want to help them, spank them,
or medicate them.

And it doesn't matter what
your reaction is.

It's just you have to know

that's your gut reaction.

Because if you want to help them,

you tend to be a functionalist,

which means you believe you

can make the situation

better for the child.

If you want to spank them,

you're a behaviorist.

You believe behavior mod works.

Just a good, as my mom used to say,

a good spanking

We'll take care of that behavior.

And then if you want to

medicate and you tend to be

a diagnostician where you

see the world through

diagnoses and teachers will

come to me and they'll say,

I want you to take a look at this kid,

probably a little ODD, maybe some ADHD,

maybe some ASD, a little...

And they start throwing and I'm like, okay,

I get you.

You see the world.

Yeah.

And it's really important.

Like I tell people, it's not,
this isn't a therapy session.

It's not important that we
fix what you are.

It's you have to identify
what you are because under stress,
we go back to what we know.

And so when we're stressed
out because of our child's
underperformance,
we go back to what we know.

So if I'm a behavioralist,
I'm going to behavior mod
the heck out of whatever's going on.

I'm going to be frustrated.

My child's going to get
frustrated and we have to.

And I always tell people
behavior mod does not work

on dysregulation and
regulation does not work on
diagnosable stuff.

You really just have to be like, wait,
we've got to sort it out.

That's my favorite part of
what I do is getting to get in there,
roll your sleeves up and
figure out what's going on
with the child.

And to figure out,
is it something that OT can help with?

Is it a regulation issue?

Is it a behavioral issue?

Can we do some counseling
and do behavior monitoring
to get it cleaned up?

Or does it need to be diagnosed?

But when you think about the
idea of being cognitively organized,
physically calm, and socially connected,
what does disorganized look like?

It looks like disorganized language,

purposeless play,

difficulty recalling

previously information.

When you hear that,

you think learning issues.

When you see an excitable

kid who's all over their

chair and falling out, you think ADHD.

When you see a disconnected

kid with low eye contact,

you think autism.

And so you can see how

dysregulation or the lack

of learning readiness

can look like a diagnosis

and send us down a path

that can get so tricky.

I tell people all the time,

those are all very real diagnoses,

like all learning disabilities, ADHD,

autism, very, very real diagnoses.

I think sometimes because we

skip over the readiness and

regulation piece of it,
some of our kids get those
diagnoses that maybe don't
really have them.

And then we end up on a path
that doesn't work.

I'll just give you an example of ADHD.

So if you have a little
dysregulated kid who just
needs proprioception,
but they get diagnosed with ADHD,
then they get medication.

Medication doesn't treat the
proprioceptive issue.

And so then it's that long term,
no medication works.

And so that's why it's so
important to first look at
readiness before we even go
on down the path to look at
everything else.

That's so true.

Yeah.

And yeah,

it seems like just this mishmash.

So having an expert be able to come in and,

you know, because like you said,

we've got these instinctive

ways to react to things.

And I think we kind of train

ourselves over time then

that that is just the way

our child is because based

on how we instinctively react to them.

And,

and then be able to have a second

person come in with a new set of eyes,

maybe, you know,

and the knowledge to be

able to look at things from

multiple different ways or

pathways of what might be

underlying can change that

situation in just minutes

because of an understanding

that we never had,

or we were just never could
conceive as being the,
the thing that our child is
really struggling through.

Yeah.

Yeah,

that makes me think like when I talk
about the misunderstood child,
when we misunderstand them,
they then misunderstand themselves.

And there's kind of this
sequence that you go
through through life.

So our young kids, like, I don't know,
zero to eight, those kids,
we want to teach them to
accurately self-assess.

Like, you know, I tell people all the time,
I want you to be able to
tell me what the same level of confidence,
what you're good at and the
thing you're working on.

And because then that gives

you accurate self-assessment,
which then in the next phase of your life,
which is sort of middle school,
it allows you to
self-advocate accurately
and independently
self-advocate because
you're asking for what you
need because you understand yourself.
Being able to self-advocate
then allows you to successfully launch.
And so it's so important.
So no matter where I get
involved along the way,
we have to kind of
I stay true to that framework of like,
do we have an accurate
self-assessment then, you know, and,
and the earlier do it, the better.
I just have a little guy in
here and he's born.
I was at his preschool the
other day and his teacher said, you know,

the craziest thing about this little guy,

he asked for what he needs.

And I was like, good, good.

That's exactly what he'll say.

Like, I need,

I need to have some alone time.

Or he told the kid,

he's kind of the kid that,

His name comes off of

everybody's tongue first

because he creates the

issues in the classroom.

And he did all his classmates.

You need to stop blaming me

for everything.

That's what he said to you before.

Yes.

It was the sweetest little thing.

Oh, that's great.

Yeah.

Yeah.

If they have the ability to, you know,

to see those things, yes,

it does give them, like you said,
as they get older,
that ability to advocate
for themselves versus a lot
of kids that age then would
turn to self-blame if they
could not identify it.

And so there's huge
repercussions in that
transition age because when
they're younger is what
I've kind of heard in past
interviews is that they'll
always see it as an external.

There's something else
causing that until they
flip to a certain age and
then they start pointing
back internally that
there's something wrong with me.

And you don't want to let it
go to that point if you
have the ability to stop it before then.

Yeah.

And we have the capacity to model it.

And we have a lot of adults

that aren't good at it either.

So I tell people at dinner,

sit around and say,

this is the one thing I'm working on.

And this is something I'm

really good at and say it

with the same level of confidence.

It's really funny.

I've seen from like four to seven,

four to ten,

probably girls identify with

their weaknesses very

confidently and struggle to

identify what they're good at.

And boys are

identify what they're good at.

And, and I would say, well,

what's something you're working on?

Nothing really.

I'm pretty good at everything.

Like they don't identify
with their weaknesses.

And so I always help them both.

I'm like with the same level of confidence,
that's the important part
is with the same level of confidence.

I want you to tell me what
you're good at and what
you're working at because by God's design,
that's perfect.

And so we can't ignore one or the other.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yes.

That's,

that's a great strategy to be able
to do that.

And I know dinner time was
always the greatest
learning time in our house
when our kids were growing
up because there's so many
interesting conversations

you could have and we, you know,
to just encourage sitting there longer.

And I know that seems to be
a thing of the past for many families,
but just encourage you to take that time.

I know we, we,

We actually did a survey a
couple of years ago and the
time when parents would
read our emails the most
was at six fifteen at night dinner time.

And that just made me mad.

I'm like, aren't you making dinner?

Aren't you sitting with your kids?

And so I just want to
encourage you to to really
carve out that time and
make that time to be together.

Probably a little bit later,
we'll be talking about
group membership skills,
like help helping socialize
your children.

And the three that I love
the most are being a first time listener,
holding a thought and
unentertained waiting.

Like if you teach your kids
those three skills,
they're going to thrive in
a group setting.

And at dinner, that's that.

Yeah.

So I tell them at dinnertime, I'm like,
here's how I want you to
practice holding a thought.

I said at dinnertime,
you're all going to sit
down and you're going to
start the conversation.

You say,
we're going to go around the table and

And I want you to share the
funniest thing that happened today.

I'm going to go first.

And you tell your story and

they have to wait and they
have to hold their thought
because you're teaching them to hold.

Because what I think most
dinner tables look like is
like you sit down, we're rushed,
we're shoveling food in and
the kids talk and we're
just like my time to eat.

And we don't get to really
work on any skills, you know?

And so, and I tell them, I'm like,
every night,

make your story a little longer.
and a little longer and a little longer.

Because when you sit in a group setting,
if there's twelve kids there,
someone is number twelve to share.

Someone has to hold their thought.
Exactly.

And if you send twelve kids
in who cannot hold a thought,
it's chaos in that group.

And there's just... It is.

They all have to blurt out.

And yes, yes, they can't.

They can't wait their turn.

Oh, yes.

I see a lot of that lately.

Yeah.

And it doesn't matter the

size of the group.

You just have to,

if you can come with those

three skills and I, you know, talk about,

you know, holding a thought,

being a first time listener

and waiting without

entertainment and probably

waiting without

entertainment is the

hardest one because no one

does it anymore.

Absolutely.

I didn't even think about that.

Yes.

So they get so entertained these days.

So they get to school or, you know,

any setting where there's

more than just them.

And, um,

they're forced to wait and

they've never done it before.

And so then that's when they

get in trouble.

That's when the phone calls

start going home is, you know,

touching his friends in line.

He's getting out of line and

going and entertaining

himself because he never

had to just sit and wait, you know?

So I tell parents, I'm like,

Saturday morning, go grocery shopping,

take your long list, take your kids,

buy everything, get to checkout,

look for the longest line, get in it.

And then you're going to tell your kids,

listen, you don't get my phone.

You don't get an iPad.

You don't get a game.

You don't get a snack.

You don't get a toy.

I'm not going to entertain you.

You have something more

powerful than any of those.

And it's your brain.

And when you're not

bombarding your brain with input,

it starts creating and developing output.

So I can't wait when we get

to the end of the line to

hear what you and your brain did.

And that's how you practice.

Oh, I love that.

That's so good.

So how would you define

learning readiness?

If a parent was to ask, how do I know?

Or what do you define that as?

I definitely define it as

cognitively organized, physically calm,

socially connected.

I'll tell you what each one

of those look like.

When you show up that way, though,

you're allowed to perform

to your fullest potential.

There's a lot of things we

can't do anything about.

We can't do anything about IQ.

Get what you get.

You don't throw a fit.

We can't do anything about

the learning disability that you have.

We can't do a ton about your ADHD.

We can medicate it or not.

But those are things that you get.

You can move the dial on

learning readiness,

which I can get a child who

is disorganized, excitable, disconnected.

I can get them organized, calm,

and connected by a series of activities.

And so here's what,

when you're looking at for organization,

what you're looking for is

a child who plays with purpose.

So if they go into a playroom,

they sit down and play with toys,

with either a creative or a

purposeful end result way

our disorganized kids will

go in and tear up a

playroom in two seconds

because they get it all out

and they're super excited

about it and they're

they're just touching

everything but they have no

plan because their brain is

disorganized and so that's

just purposeless play is a

big one verbal articulation

is another one so if you

have a child who's in

speech therapy and they've

plateaued on their articulation

Bring them back to OT.

I'll get them regulated.

And then their verbal articulation,
verbal organization.

So can tell a story with the beginning,
middle and end.

So our little ones that come
up and they start just
throwing nouns and verbs at
you and you're working
really hard to put the story together.

That's disorganization as well.

So those are some signs of
disorganization.

Physical excitability is
that kid who's just all over the chair,
you know,
and has very low body awareness
and has to touch the walls
when they're walking down
because they can't,
when they're walking down the hall,
have to touch the walls

because I can't tell where

I am compared to where everybody else is.

When you tell them to sit down,

they sit really close to

you because they can't tell

how far away they are from you.

And so those are all,

those are all proprioceptive issues.

And then our socially disconnected kid,

I always describe as no

consequence matters.

The parents will come in, they're like,

You know,

they don't give great eye contact

and no consequence matters.

And so they're like,

I took all of their toys away,

all their privileges away.

They have no active.

I'm like, then it's not that.

So then it's not me.

We've got something else going on.

So that's what a

disorganized or a
disconnected child looks like.

To get there,
it's the interesting piece of it is,
is that this all lives in
your sensory system.

And so we have three senses
that are responsible for organized,
calm and connected.

They're all movement based senses.

So when we think back of the
last twenty to forty years,
what we've done to childhood development,
we have back to sleep and
we put babies on their back.

And if we would have that
would be the only thing
that affected childhood development,
it would be bad.

But it's more than that.

We had back to sleep.

We had car seats.

And then screens.

And I say,

this is what childhood looks like now.

Back to sleep, car seat, screen.

That's the amount of motor

activity kids get.

They're on their back.

They're restrained in a five

point car seat.

They're plugged into a screen.

Organize your brain.

It's your vestibular system,

which is the fluid in your inner ear.

And the way we stimulate

that is by swinging,

spinning and hanging upside down.

And so that's our organizing activities.

And then you compare it to back to sleep,

car seats.

So even when you take kids

today and you say,

bend over and touch your toes,

they keep their head up

because they don't like to be inverted.

And their hands are tight
because they've been sitting so much.
And so they can't bend over
and touch their toes,
which I tell teachers,
this is the greatest activity you can do.
It takes two weeks to teach it.
because they can't do it it
feels uncomfortable to them
so swinging spinning
hanging upside down are
organizing activities the
ones that calm us are the
ones in our proprioceptive
system which is just a
fancy name for the
receptors in your tendons
ligaments and joints so you
have little receptors in
your tendons ligaments and
joints and what they do is
they tell you where your
body is in space so if you

shut your eyes right now

you can't see your body but

you can feel where it is

that's your proprioceptive

system telling you that

Yeah.

When that system gets

stimulated by jumping, hopping, stomping,

running, pushing,

pulling again in comparison

back to sleep car seats screens,

it activates serotonin, which is calming.

So it's like a runner's high for kids.

So they need that.

So so I tell parents all the time,

I'm like,

if you've got a little guy who's

all over his chair.

Our natural parenting instinct is to say,

sit still,

because we're trying to ready

them for the world.

And you can't be twenty

years old crawling all over your seat.

So I'm going to tell you to stop it.

I said from today forward,

when you see a child all over their seat,

we're going to say is, hey,

I can tell your body's

trying to calm down.

let's do some more joint pressure.

Let's jump on the trampoline.

Let's do some chair pushups.

So it's real specific types

of movement that get the

state of organized, calm, and connected.

And then the last one is the cool one.

It's your deep pressure system,

which is a hug.

And so when we get deep

pressure through our skin and muscles,

it releases dopamine,

which helps us feel connected, which

is what we are getting on screens now.

We just go plug into our

screen and get that sense

of dopamine instead of the
good one where we get a hug.

So when I talk to teachers
about this all the time,
they're always saying to me, they're like,
oh, I love this.

It's hang, hop, hug.

And we just,
that's how they start every
teaching is they hang
upside down for sixty seconds,
hop in place for sixty seconds,
give yourself a self hug
for sixty seconds and it
readies their body so there
can be organized, calm and connected.

Yeah.

Oh, that's awesome.

Yeah.

I know the playgrounds,
a lot of things that we used to play on.

I have been, um,
some kids even told me that

the jungle gyms are off the, the, um,
school playgrounds now
because they're too dangerous.

And, um,

there's just so many things in our
U S culture that have changed.

I,

I went to Norway recently and they've
got these two story high structures.

And I, I had my husband film me while I, I,

I,

went up one.

I was like, this is so fun.

Why did,

why did they not have these in the US?

But we have, we've,

we've taken so many things away.

And I, I just,

I had a conversation with my
daughter when she was home
for college break.

And she said, when she worked retail,
there were parents pushing

their kids in strollers who
knew how to walk.

Yes.

Yes.

There's just a lot of stuff.

I mean, you've mentioned a couple.

Is there other things that

have led to just this

overwhelming amount of

dysregulation that we have

seen in our society, kids and adults?

I think we're just as

responsible and have as many issues.

Well, the interesting thing is,

is that it's all with good

intent that we've done this and we've had,

so, so back to sleep was back in like,

and the whole point was to prevent SIDS.

Unfortunately,

it was an initiative by the

American pediatric association.

Unfortunately, it was called back to sleep,

tummy to play.

And no one heard that.

And so as Americans, we supersize it.

And so if I'm going to keep
my child on their back when
they're sleeping,

I'll keep them on their
back all the time.

And the toy industry started
building those arch toys.

That was about the same time
they came out.

Yes.

And then shortly thereafter,
the helmet industry came
out to fix the shape of the
head because they laid them
there for so long.

And I say that alone changed
upper body strength,
neck strength and extremities hands.

It changed all core strength.

And, um,

And then, you know,

also we between I think it
was seventy five and eighty
five or seventy two and eighty five.
We passed every state in the
country passed a law for car seats.
So back to sleep was for SIDS.
And I don't know if you know,
but after a while they
realized it didn't cut back
on SIDS the way they thought it was.
So they changed it.
too safe to sleep and it
includes bumpers and
temperature and blankets
and all that other stuff now.
But we haven't stopped
putting kids on their back
because of fear.
We parent from fear.
And then we put car seats by law.
You have to have your child in a car seat.
Again, a very good idea.
I always tell the story

about my mom who was
telling about how she was
driving my brother home
from the hospital.

And she goes,
she always drove really fast.

And she said,
I saw a cop and I slammed on
the brakes and he rolled
off the car seat onto the floor.

And I'm like thinking car seat, you know,
like literal bench in the car.

Laying on the car seat.

And I was like,
that's great vestibular is what that is.

That's great.

By law, you can't not have you know,
you have to have your kids in a car seat.

Right.

But by law,
they only have to be in that
seat in the car.

And we put a handle on it

and we made it a bucket and we put it,

it fits on a stroller and

it fits in a grocery cart

and it fits on the counter.

And if you're super fussy,

it fits on the dryer.

And if you're a second and third kid,

you're lucky to ever get

out of them because we just

carry them around a bucket.

And then the screens from there,

when you do get released,

we plug you into a screen,

which the evidence is just

pouring in on how bad

screens are for kids emotionally,

visually, socially, intellectually.

It's bad.

I tell people,

do you think screens are bad

for everybody?

And I'm like, the one I think when you,

if you have a severely

handicapped child who can't
get out and experience life,
that's a beautiful way for
them to experience life is
to get to see underwater fish and,
you know, cause it's very beautiful, but,
but if you have a child who
is able to get out,
get them out playing in the mud,
the mud's much better.

So that's the only time I
could see that screen in
early development would be relevant.

Otherwise people ask me all the time.

They're like,

what's your screen recommendation?

And I'm like, zero.

Yeah.

Nothing.

You are trying to raise a
child and fully develop them emotionally,
spiritually, intellectually, socially,
physically.

That's a lot.

And none of it comes from a screen.

And now we're seeing

actually it's the opposite.

It's negative comes from a screen.

So those are big things.

I think the pandemic was a multiplier.

Like when we were having,

like kids were coming out of the pandemic,

I think we forget about

like how traumatizing the pandemic was,

like that we were trying to

keep family members alive,

we were trying to figure

out if we had a job,

we were trying to figure

out who we could and could not touch.

We were living in like this

massive traumatic fear and

we were raising kids in that.

And so I always tell people

count back to that period of time

And whatever that was

supposed to happen

developmentally for your child didn't.

No matter what, it didn't.

And so those skills are missing.

So they're four years post now,

missing skills that they

would have learned four years ago.

And we have to fill that in

somehow because it's making

our kids look difficult to understand.

Right.

Yeah, I never thought about that.

Yeah, those kids are entering,

especially those that were preschoolers,

toddlers, and really learning by example.

They're the ones entering

school right now.

And it's not a wonder why

they're struggling as much as they are.

My favorite story is a

little three-year-old boy

who came out of the

bathroom at school completely naked.

And that's, you know,

that's what they did at home.

That was fine at home, but he's at school.

You know, just like,

we just had things that we

did at home that we can't

take into the world with us.

And at three, you don't know that,

you know?

And so he just came out and

had all of his clothes off

and they're like, buddy.

And he's like, what?

He's ready to sit in the

class and they had to get

him dressed first.

So.

Oh, wow.

Yeah.

But, but yeah,

if they're home all the time,

they have no exposure to anything else.

Then, then why is it different?

You just don't have those social skills.

Yeah.

There's, there's so much more involved.

Definitely.

So what are some simple
things that parents can do?

I mean,

we've talked a lot about the issues and,

and what's causing this,

but now are there solutions that,

Yeah, they're so easy and they're so fun.

And I think there's some

slides that I have that

talk about vestibular

activities that you can do,

proprioceptive activities you can do,

and deep pressure

activities you can do as a family.

But you just want to think swing, spin,

hang upside down.

So

I think there's our hang hop hug.

And then the next one.

So these are all organizing
activities for you.

So swinging, spinning,
good luck finding a merry-go-round.

I always say that
merry-go-rounds and swings
have been replaced with it.

I love that you say office chairs.

Office chairs are great.

Those are great.

Just, I always say,
lower them down as low as
they go and spin them and
then just give them stuff.

And every time they come around,
they have to throw
something in the garbage can or, you know,
just make it a fun little game.

Inversion,
any way that you hang your head
upside down.

A lot of families will catch
their kids watching TV

hanging upside down off of the couch.

Toe touches.

I call it bats and butterflies.

I'm going to say when I say bats,

go find a place to hang upside down.

When I say butterflies,

go find a place to spin gracefully.

So that's a fun little way to do it.

Inverted wall walk.

Yeah.

Just put your hands on the

floor and walk your feet up the wall.

And then over passing balls

over and under inverted ball pushes,

just hang upside down,

roll the ball back and forth.

You can do it academically.

You can do spelling and

counting while you're doing

that and make it a heavy ball.

So you're doing

proprioception and inversion.

Right, you got that heavy lifting.

And then rolling like log
rolls or front rolls or, and again,
You know, if you're doing comparisons,
you can roll down and find
something that looks like
or that sounds like or, you know,
go down and find three
pictures that start with
the letter A and then log roll back.

So you can do tons of it in
your home school environment,
academically in a regular classroom.

Right.

And you're working so much
on their core strength,
where they're not using a
lot of that core strength, just sitting,
because then they're
slouching and their posture
is getting off as well.

And I noticed when I have kids invert,
because I do it often.

Yeah.

being on the silks,
but they're always not looking down.
They're always looking up at their feet.
And it's a struggle with
many kids to get them to
look down because I think they just,
they don't feel safe, but they don't,
when I show them and I'm like,
which looks better with me
looking down at the ground
or with me looking up here
and having to hold my whole body up now.

And it's like,
you have to realize when the
straighter your body is,
the easier it is to hold.

And but they internally
don't even know that.

They have to be taught it.

Yeah,
their vestibular system is the one
that's like our foundational system.

It's one tells you where

your head is in space,
just like proprioception
tells you where your body is in space.
It tells you where your head is in space.
it has not had swinging,
spinning and hanging upside down.
So in the silks,
that's some of their first
time of being inverted.
And so they're like trying
to return to what feels normal,
which is not upside down.
So that's funny that you see it there too.
Yeah.
Yeah.
And then on the next slide is, um,
things that you can do that
are calming for kids.
And so carrying things,
I would tell people if
you're using a weighted ball,
use the weight of the
number of years old your child is.

So if you have a four year old,
use a four pound ball.

I just don't exceed a ten pound ball.

So like after ten, if you're twelve,
still use a ten pound ball.

I'm not responding.

That turns into
weightlifting when you get that heavy.

So it's just keep max out at ten.

But that's how you figure

out weight of ball to do

weight of ball catches,

slam them on the ground,

joint pressure on a mini trampoline,

any running, hopping, stomping, marching,

like park as far away from

the front door as you can

and figure out how you're

all going to get in there.

Put in little one-pound wrist weights.

Exactly.

put a little one pound wrist

weight on your ankles and on your wrists.

And that really helps with
proprioception and
understanding where your body is.
Any pushing, pulling, dragging,
just a basic punching bag
deal doing the wheelbarrow
walk jump yeah jump rope
now here's the thing is
jump rope is heavy motor
planning like so you have
to know how to move your
arms and your legs at the
same time so a lot of kids
cannot do that so I just
get like the three quarter
inch rope at like um
tractor supply and um tie
it to the doorknob and then
I turn the rope
And they get to jump because
I'm only trying to get them to jump.
I don't care if they know
how to do the motor planning.

That's a whole separate role.

I just want them to jump.

And so,

so many kids come in and they're like,

I'm like, we're going to jump rope.

And they're like, Ms.

Heidi, I can't jump rope.

I'm like, let's give it a try.

And I'm like,

I'm going to turn the rope

and I'm going to tell you when to jump.

And then they jump.

They're like, I did it.

I can jump rope.

You know, so it's a really big form to it.

That's so cool.

And then the next slide.

And these are super easy

things for parents to be

able to do at home.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Those mini trampolines that
they sell at Walmart,

I think they're like fifty
bucks and they have like a
little timer and counter on it.

So it counts how many jumps
and how long you're doing it.

Our boys love a good competition like that,
you know,

so they love to see how long
they can jump or how many
jumps they can get.

So it's a great way to,
because proprioception you
do till exhaustion,
like you really want to load that.

The more you do,
the more serotonin you get,
which is calming.

So you can't get too much serotonin.
spinning on the other hand,
on that first slide of with
the vestibular,

that's the same system that
gives you motion sickness.

So you can overload that system.

That's really to tolerance

where the other one is to exhaustion.

Right.

Okay.

That's good to know.

Yeah.

Most of the things on there are fine.

It's the spinning that will get you.

So just if you have a

sensitive vestibular system.

I was told by a physical

therapist a few years ago

that if you do get spinning too much,

that if you use one of the,

actually strategies from the next slide,

the weight or a pull-up,

that it will reset that system.

And that's what I learned.

students actually,

because if you get super

dizzy and then you do a
heavy weight or a pull-up,
the dizziness disappears.

It's just- So the one activates histamine,
the other one activates serotonin.

So you just kind of envision
that serotonin flooding
over the histamine and settling it down.

And so it does.

So just simple things like
just pushing your wrist
together or interlacing
your fingers and pushing
down on your head.

Those give you joint
pressure and will settle
that overload feeling that
your kids are getting on the silks,
honestly.

So you can always counter it.

And that's why we do it.

That's why we do it in this
order of organized, then calm.

And then the final set of
exercises or connection
ones on the next slide.
okay yeah let me get there
here we go all right these
are these are fun ones you
just get to squish them you
get to squish your kids so
like a family sandwich like
so dad lays down then the
child lays down then mom
lays down on top of them or
you can do a family hug
like that and just squish
them until they say let go
um you can wrap them up
tight in a blanket or a
towel just always keep the
nose and mouth open so that
they have access to breathe
Deep massage is great.
Weighted blankets are great.
If you're doing a weighted blanket,

it's ten percent of the
child's body weight plus a pound.

That's usually what I do.

Squishing between two couch cushions,
just couch cushion, child couch cushion,
sit on them.

So when I sat on my kids to
get them in their car seats,
it was probably a good thing for them.

It was so good.

They feel so connected to
you in that moment.

Yes.

I always joke,
if they sell something therapeutically,
it's four times the cost.

And so there's pressure
vests that you can get.

They're like a hundred dollars,
if not more.

You can just go to Under
Armour and buy a shirt a size too small.

That does it.

That'll give them a nice hug.

Wear it under your clothes.

um there's resistive tunnels

and body socks that kids

can get into too um that's

probably its own little

presentation honestly

because they're so fun to

do but they they just crawl

through and it just hugs

them like a body sock and

they love that so just

anything like that is great

just giving them deep input

through their skin and

muscles it releases the

dopamine which helps them

feel connected I mean

that's why we hug people on

purpose there's a reason

behind it you know it's like

why you feel so good.

Yeah.

My, my husband, I think it was over break.

He was saying,

I just read this study and

that if you hug somebody for, you know,

so long,

or I don't remember how many

seconds it is that it releases something.

And he's like, okay, come on,

let's try it.

And he's like, after a while,

it's just feeling kind of awkward.

So there's the awkward hug too.

Yes, absolutely.

But there is like, we do that.

That's why I tell you on this one,

you just do it until they're like,

that's enough.

So like I have these big fluff,

Like they're huge beanbags,

like six foot beanbags.

And the kids will lay on

them and they'll put

another one on top of them.

And then I'll sit on them.

I'm like, just tell me when to get off.

And we just sit there for a while.

And they're like, that's enough,

Miss Heidi.

And then I just get off and

we go on our way.

So yeah,

so the awkward hug your husband's

talking about.

Yes, that one does exist too.

I don't know if it gives you

more dopamine.

I'm not for sure about that.

Or maybe it's just you've

been conditioned and that

just seems like it's too much.

I don't know.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So I want to make sure that

we talk a little bit about

group readiness as well.

We had touched on that kind of at the beginning of our conversation and you had talked about that as being part of learning readiness is for them to be able to participate in a group.

Yeah.

yeah um the world functions in a group like it just does that's like you're you're just we're designed I mean even I think spiritually we are too because you know in fellowship like we're two or more gather like I think we're designed so you have to show up to the group with skills enough to to find success and um

We did find, especially after the pandemic,

kids were coming in with
very few group membership skills.

And there's tons of them,
but I really picked the top
three that are a real game
changer for a learning environment,
which is holding a thought,
being a first-time listener,
and unentertained waiting.

I think that there's a
fourth one trying to push in on the scene,
and it's recognizing a
voice of authority.

I think that we're really
struggling with that as well.

And if I have to track it back,
my first thing when I see an issue,
I'm like, why?

What is going on?

But I think parents are on devices.

And so the very first voice
of authority a child hears,
they're programmed to tune it out.

Because, you know,
like if I want to watch my
TV show and my parent is
over here on the phone,
I'm not going to listen to their voice.

That's a really tough one.

Absolutely.

I never even thought about that.

Yeah.

I had one student come in recently and.

And she was just sad because
we have parents come in at
the end of their session to
be able to watch them.

She goes, oh,

my mom's on the phone again
with my grandma.

And it sounded like she's on
the phone with grandma all day.

And that was just completely ignored.

And it's like, wow.

there's just they don't get
hardly any attention

anymore and and so yeah but
to be mindful because it's
addictive for for adults
alike and and so it's
something you have to
proactively work against to
be able to change that as
well I tell parents I'm
like if you want to see how
bad it is I want you to
ride an elevator without
your phone in your hand
I want you to sit in a
doctor's office without
your phone in your hand and
just see how because it's I
do it to myself.
I don't like it either.
Like I it's super uncomfortable,
but I do it just for the awareness of it.
Because they said, like in our little kids,
they're learning to tune
out all the voice of authority.

So they they come into a
classroom and they might
listen to their friends
more than they hear their teacher.
Because those are the
friends that have engaged with them.
And that's tricky because, again,
there's spiritually a voice
of authority that we need
to be able to be silenced enough to hear.

Exactly.

in a classroom or when
there's a teacher-student relationship,
there's that voice of authority.

And then you get out in the
world and there's voices of authority,
police officers and things
like that that you also
have to be able to
recognize and identify and
respond appropriately to.

And so as much as I mainly
talk about holding a thought,

being a first-time listener
and unentertained waiting,
I think that other one's
sneaking up there and going
to make a showing on my
recommendations as well.

But

Holding a thought, we talked about that.

That's a great one to practice at lunch.

It's just your capacity to
hold your thought until the
appropriate time to say it,
which there might not be one.

You may not get to say every
thought that comes to your head.

And that's a tough one.

and as parents we're like

they're little geniuses I

want to hear everything

they say that's great but

the world doesn't and like

to again to be in a group

sometimes you have a great

thought and you just have
to hold it and you just
have to hold it and the
meeting might be over and
you still get to speak it
and so um that's that's a
really big one um being a
first-time listener this is
the definition of it that
you respond appropriately
the first time I ask you in this voice
without raising my voice, repeating myself,
or becoming emotional.

And every parent just busts
out laughing because they're like, nope.

I repeat myself.

I yell and I scream and cry.

Like that's how I get my
child's attention.

I'm like, so you taught them that.

So now you have to teach
them to respond to this voice.

And so we're going to practice it.

And so again,
instead of taking a
behavioral approach to the
child and saying, you're not doing that,
we're going to take an
education approach and say,
we're going to practice this.

And it's going to be a skill
we're going to learn as a family.

So we're going to learn how
to hold a thought.

We're going to learn how to
be a first time listener.

And we're collectively going
to practice waiting and
feeling the discomfort of
waiting without

entertainment because you have to,
even if you don't step foot in a school,
let's just say you're
homeschooled and you don't
step foot in a school,
you have to wait in line at

sporting events.

You have to wait in line

when you try to check out

during Christmas time at any store.

Like there's all this

waiting that we have to be

able to do successfully and

we may or may not be entertained.

Yeah,

it goes over to every area of a

child's life and as they

start to become an adult.

And better to teach these

things before they become a

teenager because their

exposure to so many things

just increases and you

don't have the ability to regulate that.

where they go, what they do, what,

you know, who they listen to.

And if they're able to be

able to stop themselves, I'm,

these are all life skills

that you're talking about.

And I love that you,
you bridge the gap to the
spiritual side too.

Um,

Can you talk a little bit
more about that as well?

Because I think we forget
that this discussion topic
in general was the whole
child readiness instead of
just learning readiness.

And so there's that
spiritual component too.

And it does bleed over into
our ability to hear God and
just be able to grow spiritually.

So love your thoughts on that too.

Yeah.

all of that um I do think
that we don't like to hear
the holy spirit or the
still small voice or god's

voice whatever the language
you use you have to stop
like you have to stop and
we don't stop you know and
then I just love the image
of the armor of god
you know, that we put on this armor,
we get ourselves ready for the world.

Right.

No.

And so this is like,
like some families will
come in and they'll understand that,
but then not understand
learning readiness.

And then some families come
in and understand learning readiness.

And then like, Oh my gosh,

I never thought about our
spiritual readiness.

You know, even though it's like,
we don't know the day and
time and you have to,

you want to always approach
God's or kind of ordered us
given us the tools to be ready.

And so it just aligned so
perfectly with kind of what
he expects of us.

And then when you think he's
got a purpose for each one of us and, um,
for us to fulfill that we
have to show up ready, you know,
like if you think about the day, yeah,
you think about the day,
here's what it looks like.

You get ready for the demand
and how you respond to the
demand is your performance.

So it's kind of ready demand performance.

That's, that's your day.

That's my day.

That's every child's day for a child.

They get ready.

They go to school.

That's the demand.

Their performance is their output.

You know, they're how they responded,

how they learned, um,

And when we have an issue,

we circle on demand and

child performance.

We're like, well,

maybe the demand wasn't right.

Maybe I didn't teach it correctly.

Maybe I'm not a good teacher.

Maybe it's me.

Or we do, what's wrong with the child?

Maybe he has a learning disability.

Maybe he's not listening.

Maybe he's lazy.

Maybe he doesn't want to try.

But we very rarely stop and say,

was the child ready in the first place?

And so many times now,

because of the world we grow up in,

our children aren't ready.

And we're not ready

spiritually because we

don't slow down long enough to listen.

We're not ready

regulation-wise because we

can't find a darn swing or

merry-go-round anyway.

We're not ready physically

because we sit all the time.

We don't have the endurance

to really give it our all.

And so we're not only

missing God's design in the

bigger picture,

But even on the day to day,

we're missing just being

able to perform to our fullest potential.

And that's what every parent

wants for their child.

And that's what our parent wants for us,

too.

Like,

that's what God is to have us show up

here every day and perform

to our fullest potential on his behalf.

And if we,
and he gives us all the tools to
get ready and do it, you know, and then,
so it aligns so beautifully with it.
So it's, it's, it's sweet.

Yeah.

I love that.

Yeah.

And if,
but if you don't take that time and
you don't, I mean,

Yeah,

I can just see so many of my
homeschool days of the past.

It's getting my kids ready.

And yeah,

we built in a little devotional here,
but it wasn't as purposeful
as this is preparing our hearts.

And then what are we doing
physically to prepare our bodies?

What are we doing mentally
to prepare our minds?

And now we're ready to learn.

And so just listening to you,

I'm looking at this and going...

Just the whole way we can

restructure our homes so

that readiness is kind of

built in at the front end.

Just like when you build, you know,

a full day lesson plan that, you know,

let's think about this

first before we start just

pulling the books out and saying, well,

let's just get school done.

Yeah.

And how much more successful

would we be if we had

approached every day like that?

You know, I'm sure by mistake or, you know,

God's divine intervention,

many days I was able to do

that without even knowing

what I was doing,

but it's different to be intentional.

Yeah.

That's what's so sweet about
the homeschool environment
is that you do have so much
more say in it.

You know, you're not busy
lining up sixteen kids to
wait to go to recess or to
wait to go to PE or anything.

So you have that freedom to do it.

But it is a it's a it's a
it's a heavy weight to homeschool to,
you know, to feel fully responsible.

I mean,

that's where God comes in because
we're not fully responsible for anything.

But you can share as a mom
who's doing it to burden
your mind and your heart
with it a little bit.

So.

Absolutely.

Yes.

And on top of it,
you're readying yourself
for the day as well with your kids.

And I,
a lot of times I just remember thinking,
oh,
I got to be prepped before my kids get
up.

And why not incorporate my
own readiness with them?

They're there with me.

I'm there with them.

God has a purpose in this.

They are not a distraction.

They're, you know,

they're just integrated

into your life a whole lot more.

Yeah.

Well, they learn through modeling too.

Like they learn from our
actions far more than they
learn from our words.

And so watching you get

ready and taking care of
yourself and seeing this
sense of learning readiness
as part of self-care instead of.
a checklist or some, you know,
something horrible.

It's, it's such a game changer for them.

So you're right.

Absolutely.

Yeah.

That's,

they definitely pick up more that
you do than what you say.

No matter how,
how intentional you are on that one.

Yes.

Yes.

And you get to see that every day.

Like every,
there's nothing more than like
watching your child do something you've
done and you're like oh yes
I'm gonna own that good or

bad that's awesome well
this conversation has been
so amazing I'm I'm
surprised we just got five
minutes left but I would
love for you to talk about
just some of the things
that um you offer for for
parents and families um
And I'm going to share your
websites as you're talking about that.

And just, yeah,
what we want to kind of
share as your closing,
just encouragement or
whatever else is on your mind and heart.

Yeah, thank you.

Um, so I'm in Charlotte, North Carolina,
and we haven't, like you had said,
it's TOTS, Tringali, OT.

So I love a good acronym and
we serve kids in
independent schools and in like,

we have a clinic.

So if you're not in the schools we go to,

you can come to our clinic

and it is a ton of, um,

providing a new lens.

Like it's the most beautiful

journey because people come to OT and

in a very hard place.

Like you don't come to OT

because you're having a great time.

You come to OT because life is hard.

And to be,

have the privilege of like

partnering with these

families and walking out of

that with them is,

Like I said, I don't,

I just don't see retirement

in my future because it's

the most beautiful,

like it's a privilege to get to do that.

And so that's what we get to do.

We have the privilege of just, you know,

families coming in and being like,

where are, what's in?

You know, I just this morning,

I got a video of a kid

throwing down and the mom's like,

we don't know what to do.

And I was like, oh, that's perfect.

Like my heart just is like,

I don't know what to do.

I can tell you.

I was not thinking that's perfect,

but yes.

They were not thinking it was perfect.

They thought that was one of

the worst mornings they had had.

And I was like, we got this.

and so we get I get to do

that but as I've it you

know it's a very physical

job and I'm getting old and

so it's been a nice yes and

so the transition has been

to be able to to talk about

it and teach it and

Um,

this year we're publishing a book
called the ready child.

And so we're just,

I'm just going to get it

out there because I feel

like families need the support.

Teachers need the support

and other OTs need the support.

Like it's,

it's just a different lens to

look at kids through.

And if you have the right

lens for your child,

there's nothing better.

And I, I, as parents,

the one thing I want to

leave you with is that, um,

Call it what you may.

It's the Holy Spirit.

It's your inner voice.

It's your heart.

But listen to that.

You are the expert on your child.

And the world tells you you're not.

The world tells you you need

one of everything.

You need an OT and a PT and

a speech therapist and a

doctor and an audiologist.

And you don't.

At baseline,

God handpicked that child and said,

you're the person for them.

And so...

That to me is like I see so

many parents who have just

given up on that.

I'm like, no, I'm I don't even need me.

You have everything by God's design.

You have everything you need

for that child.

So go with it.

And you are the gatekeeper for your child,

the gatekeeper of your head,

your heart and your home.

And you get to decide whose
opinions come in and not
everybody's get to come in.

Yes, that's so true.

Yeah.

And God will give you a
sense of peace about what
what is in his plan.

And if you feel anxiety,
it's one of the biggest
things I always told
parents when I was working
as a consultant.

is if you feel anxious about this and like,
you got to do it right now
or else it's going to go away,
then that's not God.

It doesn't work that way.

He has a peace and it will
all work out in his timing.

And he would never rush you
to make a decision.

That's the enemy speaking right there.

Yeah.

Yeah.

It's so funny.

You said,

I used to tell my kids that when

they were little, they were like, mom,

I got to know.

I'm like, you need to know right now.

Because if you need to know right now,

you already know the answer.

It's no.

If you're going to give me

time to think about it,

you have a much better

chance of the answer changing.

Oh, absolutely.

So good.

Well,

thank you so much for this conversation.

And thank you all for

joining us for this show.

We were live yesterday.

And just want to encourage
you to check out Heidi's
resources and can't wait
for that book to come out.
That sounds exciting and
like an incredible resource
for parents and educators
alike and parent educators as well.

Yes.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And like you said,
it's just becoming a
pandemic in itself that
we're just seeing so much of this and

And like you said, good intentions,
but just steering us wrong
in parenting strategies and
just life in general and
how we were navigating the
world as all of this tech
and all of these things.

Studies that we only like

half know the results of
like the child on their back.

I would have never even
related that to some of the
things that that we're
seeing as being one of the
main contributors.

So but but yeah, we learn as we go.

And God has a lot of grace for everything.

So so don't feel like, oh, man,

I really messed up and I
just learned all the things
that I did wrong.

That's OK.

God knew.

And he also knows everything.

a lot of things that he gave

heidi to help you get

through that so and you'll

get more so well thank you

so much um just appreciate

all that you had to share

with us um next week we're

going to be talking about play
and the importance of play.

And so you'll want to join
us back for that conversation.

I know I had a conversation
a couple of years ago on
the show about that and
just how play helps your
children to be able to
actually learn better.

So we're going to go into that.

And so hopefully you can
join us back for that
conversation next week.

So until then.

Thanks again, Heidi.

Appreciate all your wisdom
and your time for sharing with us.

And thank you all for joining us.

Take care.

God bless.

And we'll see you next time
here on Empowering

Homeschool Conversations.

Bye, everyone.

Bye.

Sorry.

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