Welcome to Empowering Homeschool Conversations, your authority in navigating the world of homeschooling diverse learners. Featuring Peggy Ployer from Sped Homeschool, Annie Yorty from Annie Yorty.com, Leilani Melendez from Living with Eve, Stephanie Buckwalter from ELARP Learning, and Dawn Jackson from Dawn Jackson Educational Consulting and Tutoring. 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,

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.	valuable insights and practical tips.
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	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

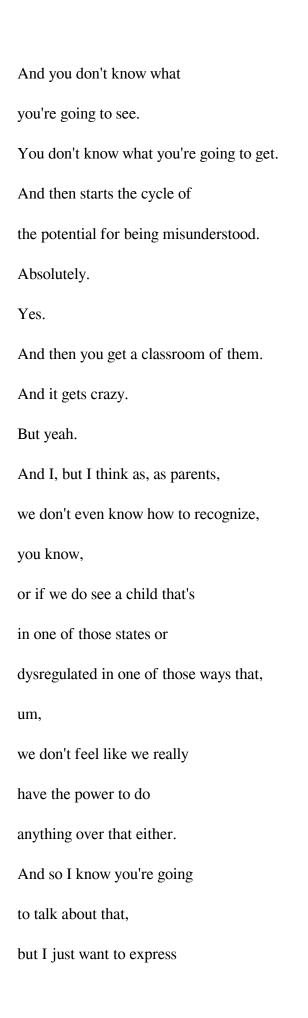
that's dealt with as a low IQ. And so that's kind of what drives me every single day. And just to be an advocate and a voice for a misunderstood child. that will probably keep me doing this until I'm a hundred. Yeah, that's awesome. Yeah, it's amazing how those experiences within our immediate families 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.



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 behavioralist.

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

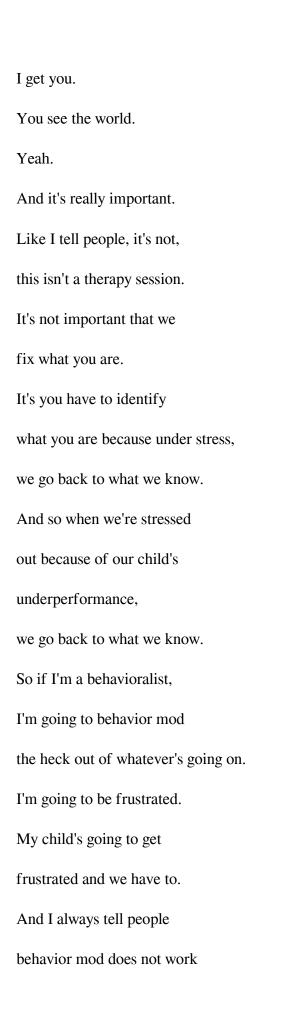
come to me and they'll say,

I want you to take a look at this kid,

probably a little ODD, maybe some ADHD,

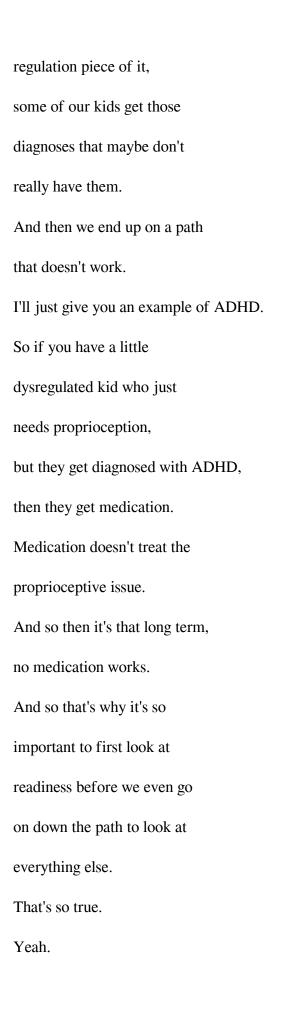
maybe some ASD, a little...

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



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



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

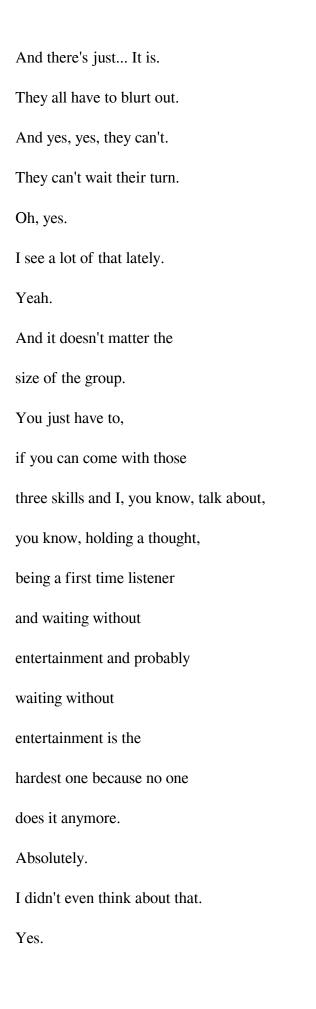
group membership skills,

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.



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,

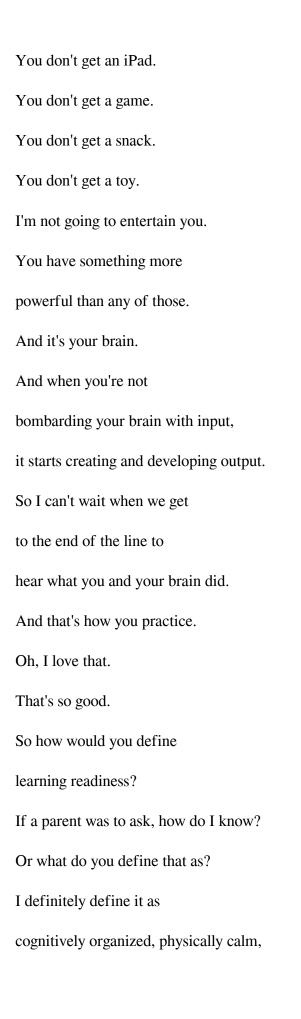
take your long list, take your kids,

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.



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

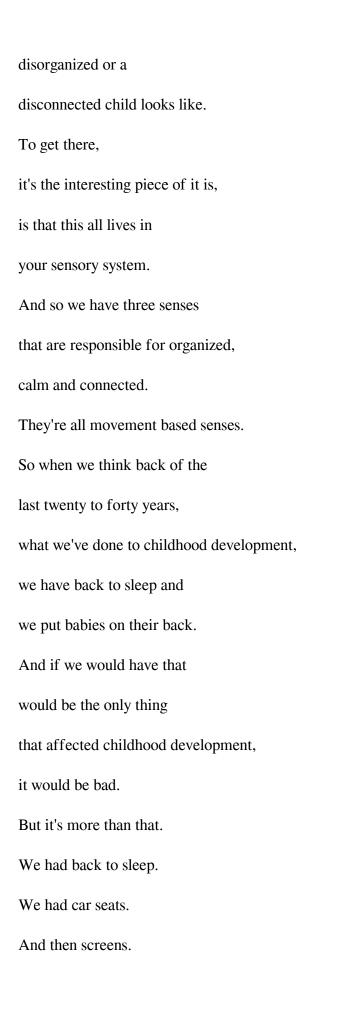
have a child who's in

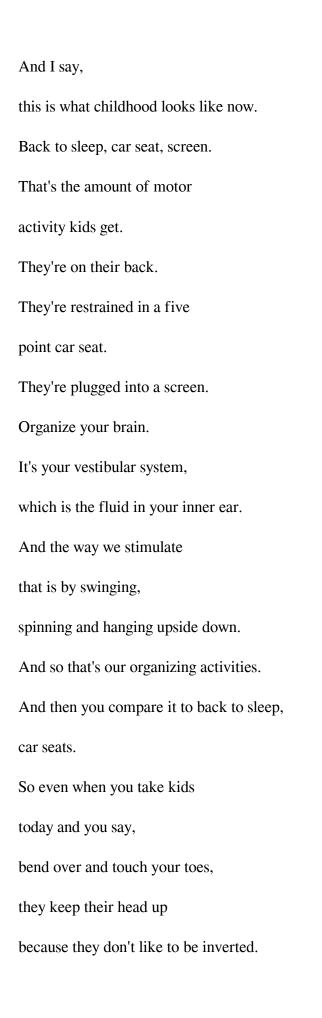
speech therapy and they've

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





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,

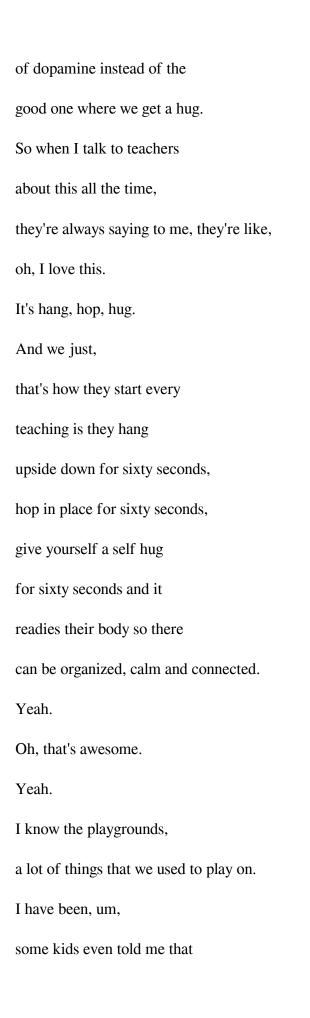
it releases dopamine,

which helps us feel connected, which

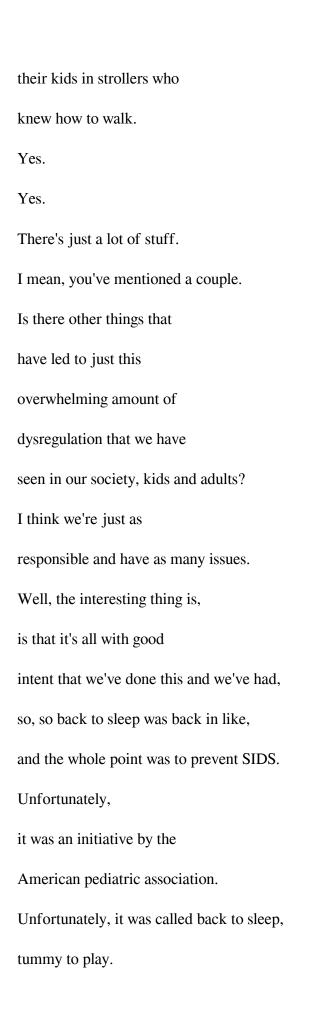
is what we are getting on screens now.

We just go plug into our

screen and get that sense



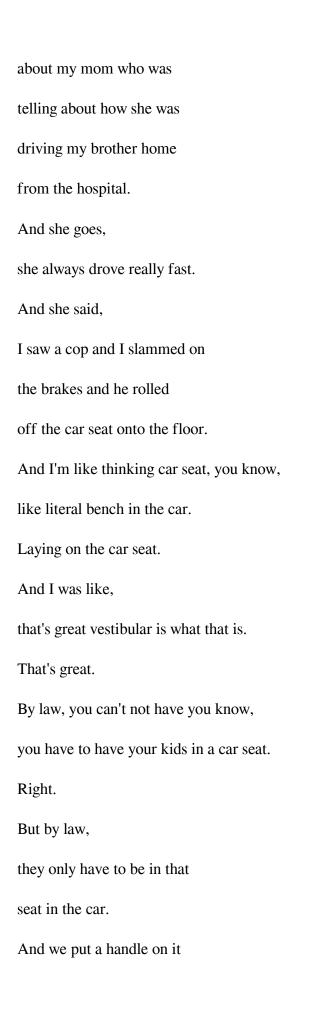
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the jungle gyms are off the, the, um,
school playgrounds now
because they're too dangerous.
And, um,
there's just so many things in our
U S culture that have changed.
I,
I went to Norway recently and they've
got these two story high structures.
And 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
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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



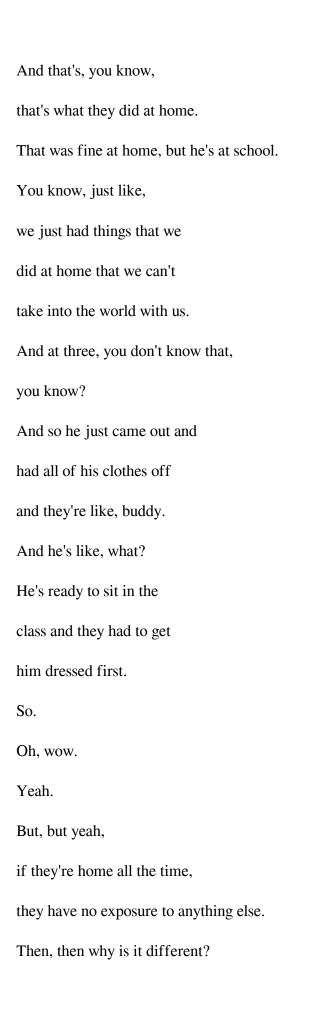
and we made it a bucket and we put it, it fits on a stroller and it fits in a grocery cart and it fits on the counter. And if you're super fussy, it fits on the dryer. And if you're a second and third kid, you're lucky to ever get out of them because we just carry them around a bucket. And then the screens 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

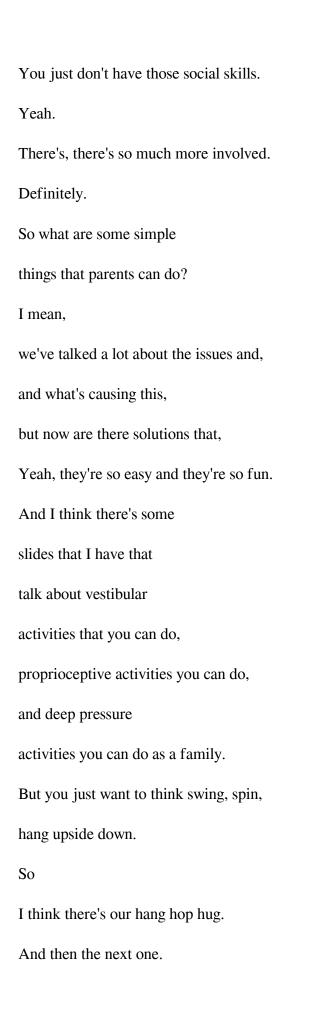
handicapped child who can't get out and experience life, that's a beautiful way for them to experience life is to get to see underwater fish and, you know, cause it's very beautiful, but, but if you have a child who is able to get out, get them out playing in the mud, the mud's much better. So that's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





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

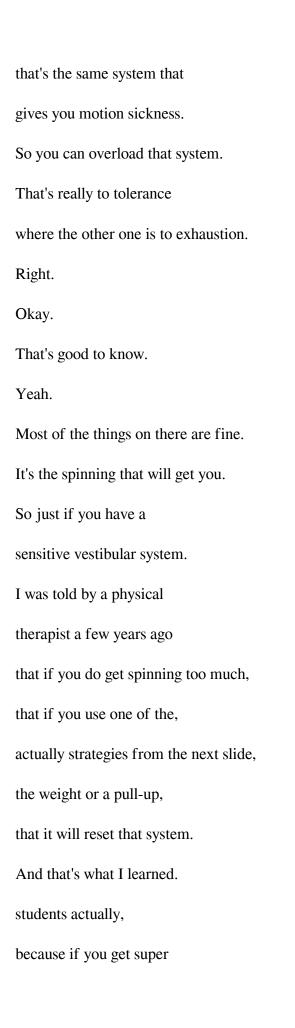
I'm only trying to get them to jump.

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,



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

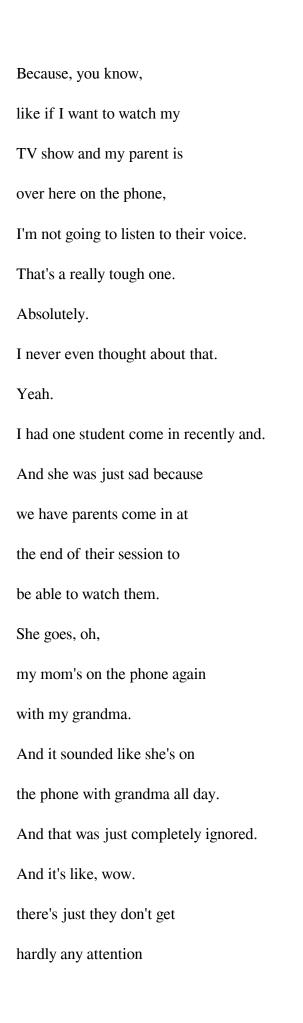
to show up to the group

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.



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,

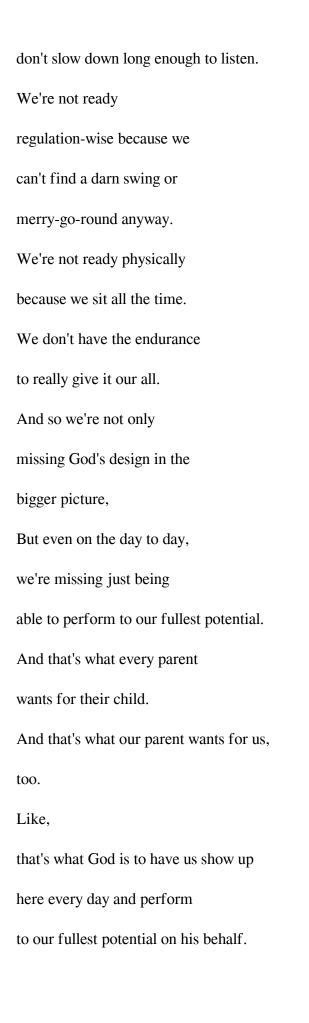
these are all life skills

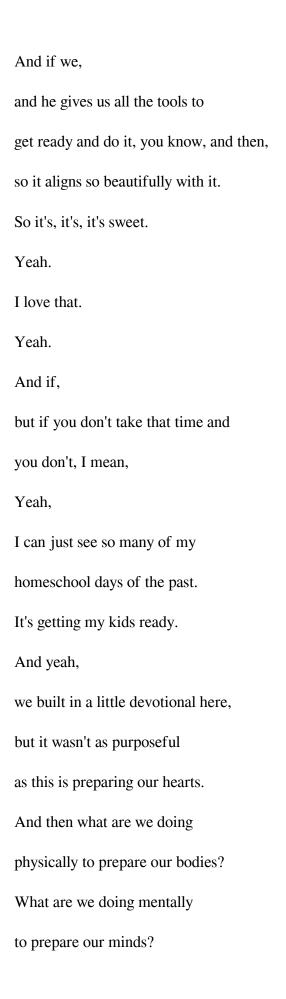
that you're talking about. And I love that you, you bridge the gap to the spiritual side too. Um. Can you talk a little bit more about that as well? Because I think we forget that this discussion topic in general was the whole child readiness instead of just learning readiness. And so there's that spiritual 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.

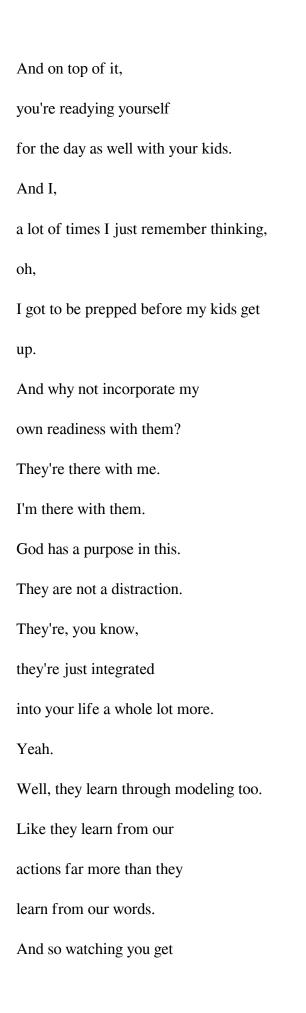
Their performance is their output. You know, they're how they responded, how they learned, um, And when we have an issue, we circle on demand and child performance. We're like, well, maybe the demand wasn't right. Maybe I didn't teach it correctly. Maybe I'm not a good teacher. Maybe it's me. Or we do, 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

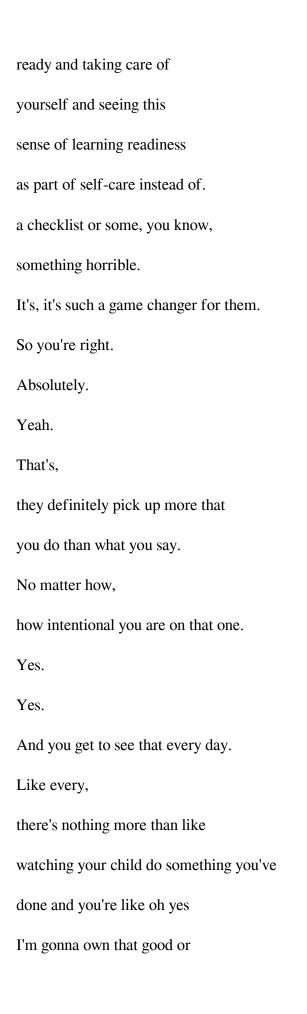




And now we're ready to learn. And so just listening to you, I'm looking at this and going... Just the whole way we can restructure our homes so that readiness is kind of built in at the front end. Just like when you build, you know, a full day lesson plan that, you know, let's think about this first 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.





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

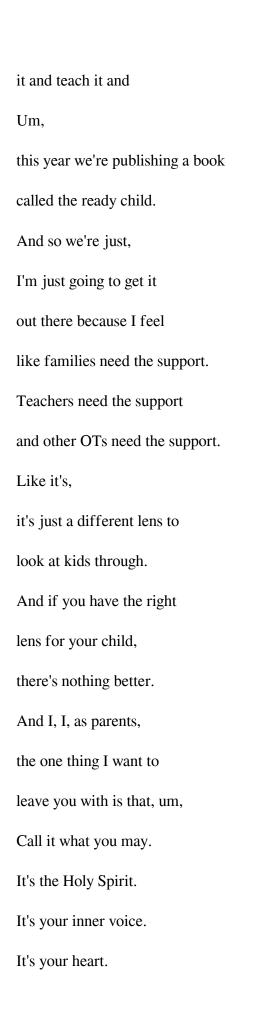
we serve kids in

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,

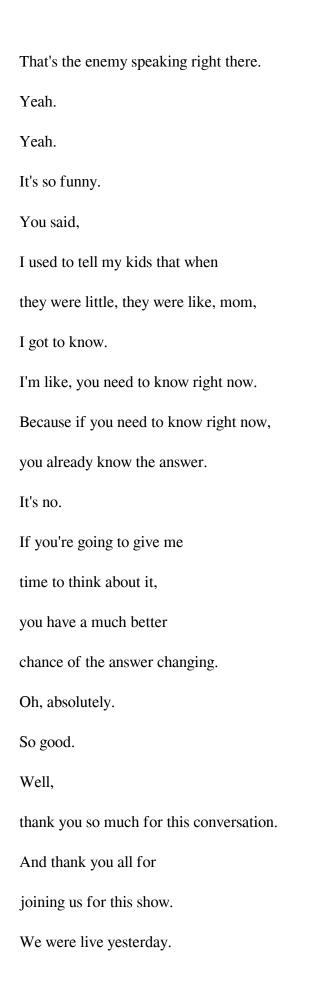
families coming in and being like, where are, what's in? You know, I just this morning, I got a video of a kid throwing down and the mom's like, we don't know what to do. And I was like, oh, that's perfect. Like my heart just is like, I don't know what to do. I can tell you. I was not thinking that's 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

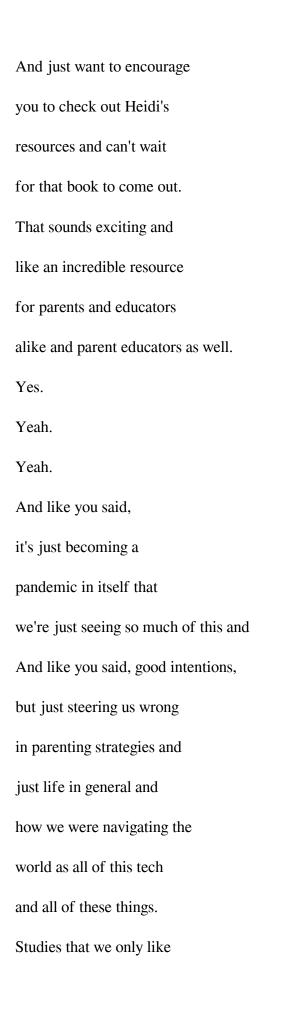
to be able to to talk about



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.





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.
This has been Empowering
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