

# More Fun = Less Burnout:

## How to Add More Flow, Playfulness, and Connection to Your Homeschool Days

Cultivating **True Fun** in your homeschool requires three overlapping elements: **Flow, Playfulness, and Connection**. When these three meet, you create magical moments where you feel fully present, carefree, and connected to your kids. Use the following strategies to add more fun to your homeschool.

### Flow: Removing Obstacles to Being Fully Present

Flow is the state of being completely immersed in the moment with your "inner critic" silenced.

- **Protect Your Time:** Set aside dedicated blocks for teaching where you are fully present. Schedule appointments and chores outside of these times and turn off phone notifications.
- **Manage Interruptions**
  - **Visual Cues:** Use a visual signal to show when you are unavailable for interruptions.
  - **"Parking Lot":** Have kids write down their random questions on sticky notes to be answered later.
  - **Question Marks:** Teach your kids to put a question mark by a hard problem and move on rather than interrupting your one-on-one time with a sibling.
  - **Use Resources:** Teach your kids to use printed examples, keywords, and the index to find answers to their questions when they're working independently.
- **Quiet Your Inner Critic:** Recognize that perfectionist or anxious thoughts are often just insecurities. Treat these thoughts like a "passing breeze" and refocus on the child in front of you.

### Playfulness: Cultivating a Lighthearted Attitude

Playfulness is a spirit of lightness and humor (not necessarily playing "pretend" with your kids).

- **Tweak Your Lessons:**
  - **Invite Toys:** Let younger children bring stuffed animals or dinosaurs to read aloud to or "explain" concepts to.
  - **Add Movement:** Incorporate jumping jacks, basket tosses with paper wads or nerf balls, or have a math snowball fight. (See directions on the next page.)
  - **Switch Roles:** Let the child "be the teacher" and explain the content to you while you play the confused student.
  - **Beat the Clock:** Set a timer and challenge your child to complete the assignment before the timer goes off.
  - **Snacks:** Put a small snack on each question for your child to eat as she completes it.

- **Schedule "Silly Breaks":** Take five minutes for a one-song dance party, a joke book, a few silly poems, or a short funny video to reset everyone's mood.
- **Plan Surprises:** Occasionally break the routine with pajama days, outdoor school at the park, or a spontaneous trip for afternoon milkshakes.

### Connection: Building the Relational Glue

Connection is the feeling of being "on the same team" and sharing an authentic experience.

- **Choose Interaction-Heavy Curriculum:** Prioritize programs that involve read-alouds, hands-on projects, and shared wonder.
- **Outsource Conflict:** If a specific subject is constantly causing conflict, switch to an independent program or an online class to preserve your relationship.
- **Make the Curriculum the "Bad Guy":** When a child resists a difficult task, validate their feelings and blame the curriculum (for, example, "The book says we have to show our steps.")
- **Share Your Passions:** Include your own interests in your homeschool studies.

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## Snowball Fight Directions

### Prepare to Play:

- Decide what operation you'd like your child to practice: addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division.
- Decide what type of numbers you'd like your child to use: one-digit whole numbers, two-digit whole numbers, decimals to the tenths-place, fractions with different denominators, mixed numbers...
- Choose 12 of these numbers and write each number on a separate slip of paper.

**Object of the Game:** Have a greater total score than the other player.

**How to Play:** Crumple the slips of paper and place them on the table. Both players count down in unison from 10 while throwing the crumpled wads of paper at each other. When you reach 1, both players stop and pick up the closest two wads of paper.

Both players unfold their paper wad and perform the chosen operation on them (addition, subtraction, multiplication, or division.) Your answer is your score for this round.

Crumple up your numbers and add them back to the pile of "snowballs." Repeat as many times as you want your child to practice the skill. Once you finish, each player adds up all of their scores. Whoever has the greater total score wins.