

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

Featuring Peggy Ployer from
Sped Homeschool,
Annie Yorty from AnnieYorty.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,

valuable insights and practical tips.

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

Bye.

Welcome to Empowering
Homeschool Conversations.

I'm your host, Peggy Ployer,
and the founder and CEO of
SPED Homeschool.

Each week,
we bring you expert insights and
practical strategies to
help you homeschool your
unique learner with confidence.

Today,
we're diving into a fascinating
topic of how
neurodevelopmental movements
can help children build
strong foundations for learning success.

Many parents struggle to

find effective ways to
support their child's focus, coordination,
and overall development.

But what if simple natural
movements can make a profound difference?

Joining me is Sonja Storey,
creator of the Brain and
Sensory Foundations program.

Sonja has dedicated her
career to teaching parents, educators,
and therapists how innate
rhythmic movements,
primitive reflex integration,
and posterior reflexes can
improve sensory processing,
overall learning,
and well-being.

Her work has been featured
in multiple books,
and she has trained
extensively with leading
experts in the
neurodevelopmental movement arena.

I'm excited to dive into
this conversation with
Sonia and explore how these
powerful techniques can
help children thrive.

Let's get started.

Welcome, Sonia.

Thank you so much.

I am super happy to be here.

And I want to thank you, Peggy,
for everything you've done
to bring this event to its
live state and to all the listeners.

Absolutely.

Yes, you've been on the show before,
and it's been a while.

And I am just so excited
about the work that you do.

And I know the before and
after that families
experience when they work
with you is life changing.

And so I

So, definitely,
if you're just popping in
for this conversation, stay a while.

This is one you want to hear.

But, Sonia, if we get started,

I would just love for you

to give us a little bit of

your background and

introduce yourself just a

little bit more than what I

shared in the intro.

Sure.

I got into this out of desperate need.

And it was just so much fun, you know,

when you were just saying, stay a while,

stay for the whole conversation.

I got one little piece of

this at the beginning through a book,

and I just kept being more

and more fascinated.

I fell in love with

not only these movements,

but what they could do for

us and for our children.

And the way I fell in love

with it was through direct experience.

And I first started in my own body.

And I was like, wow,

I'm feeling a difference here.

And then I started with our two children.

And that's where the desperation comes in,

because I was a young homeschooling mom.

And our first daughter

tended to be more hypersensitive.

She had had a traumatic birth,

and she had some

hypersensitivities left over from that,

which I didn't realize

until I got into this work, you know,

really what we were dealing with.

And I just knew she was very sensitive.

Right.

And then our second daughter

had a very stressful womb life,

because I had some issues

that were very stressful at the time.

And so she tended to be more hyperactive.

So I had one very hypersensitive,

one very hyperactive,

and then I had my own

challenges left over from my

early childhood and the mix

just did not work.

I'm telling you, I was in tears a lot,

way more than I ever

expected to be becoming a mom.

And, um, I just, they,

my daughters were fighting

with each other.

I was teaching them things

like nonviolent communication,

which is a great set of tools, but it,

it really, um,

doesn't work when you're so

triggered that you you're

in that mode of just fight

or flight and you can't

access those tools where

you say okay I'm gonna say

it this way and I'm gonna
you know it just it didn't
work and what I realized
yeah what I realized no I
was I was there at one time
with you well I realized afterwards
once I understood this work
that what we needed was we
needed to change the
nervous system itself.

And when I started using
these movements also, by the way,
I should just say one day I
was yelling at my children for yelling,
which I think I've shared
with you before.

And I just thought, Oh, I'm so off track.

And I was so praying for a solution.

And I was also praying for
work that I could do that would, um,
allow me to help others and
would be something that I could, um,
utilize my skills.

That was, that was good for my skillset.

And, um,

it didn't come for a long time

because I was a mother and

that was my main focus.

But then in my, I was in my early forties,

we had,

I was actually kind of an older

mother when we had our last child.

Um,

And so I was in my early

forties when I found this

work and in a deeper way,

I had actually a couple of years prior,

just got a few little

things out of a book that did help us.

I can actually share one right now.

We did this position where

some people may be familiar,

but the thumbs go down,

the arms cross and we do this.

That was the thing that

saved my kids from so many fights.

I couldn't believe it.

And so-

We were going to do that if
ever things got intense or
someone was raising their
voice or someone got off track,
then we would sit and do that.

And I said,

we have to do it for a minute
and we have to do it in silence.

And then we can talk about it.

And it just changed everything.

Usually after a minute,
they just went off and played.

So that was the first thing I learned.

And then I really wanted to learn more.

So then later when I was in
a position where I could go to classes,
our youngest was by then, um,
six or seven.

No, she was six.

Um,

I started doing all this work for

myself and I realized, wow,
this is amazing because see, I had
low level anxiety and
overwhelmed that was just constant.

I just didn't know any different.

It was my, it was my fault.

Exactly.

Yeah.

And I,

I didn't realize there was another
way to be.

I just realized like that I
was struggling and I was,
I didn't know that my
nervous system itself was struggling.
not fully functioning well.

And when I did these movements,
I did them very consistently every day,
or every other day,
but mostly every day for four months.

And at the end of that four months,

I just could not believe
how I thought to myself,

this is how God means us to live.

Because I was

spontaneously joyful.

I had always had to work to be positive.

But I became much more

spontaneously joyful,

I could be much more of the

kind of parent that I wanted to be like,

going with the flow and not

being overreactive and not

being too controlling and

that kind of thing.

right my family was very

grateful that I did it and

then we saw that it

immensely helped our

children and um yeah and my

anxiety went away um I

actually my whole visual

perception changed I used

to like not be able to kind

of like tunnel vision

almost and I couldn't yeah

I had kind of like a literal tunnel vision,
which actually does come
from different stress and
trauma that we've had.

And I was so delighted.

You know how you see a
toddler walking around and
discovering different things?

I was like, yeah.

And of course different
stresses come and then you
have to sort of reset,
but it was so much fun.

And I just thought, wow.

And then I was working with
my own children.

I was working with other clients,
mostly school age kids.

And I thought, wow,
parents really need this.

And so I figured I would teach parents

But I knew that I needed a
lot more training and I ended up, um,

taking over fifty workshops
in neurodevelopmental movement.

And I just couldn't get enough.

And I still study it.

And I still do it.

And to me, it's the biggest gift.

And I just want everyone to know about it.

And that's why I'm so

grateful for these kinds of

things that you're setting up,

because they allow us to

talk about it in a deeper way.

Because once people understand it,

they say, wow, that makes so much sense.

Yeah.

Yeah.

I love your story.

I think a lot of our

listeners can really relate with you.

We've had shows recently a

lot on the nervous system

and it being out of whack,

how stress and utero things

can cause nervous system
issues in our kids.
that we can pass those along
um things that I I think
people are just starting to
really understand why we're
so out of whack and you
know and why we need things
like which what you're
going to be talking about
today but um you're coming
from a place of
understanding and not just
a professional
understanding but from a
place where um been there
done that I get you and I
want to help because this has helped me
Which is so practical and
also gives hope to parents
out there that are going, oh,
you know, I don't know what to do anymore.
And I remember being in that place.

I was,

I had anger issues with my kids and

I don't exactly know, you know,

the method.

I know God helped a lot in that process.

But for me,

movement has been a healing thing too,

just because of all the

aerial things that I do.

I find that that is my happy place.

And I come home happier than

ever every time I'm at the studio.

Yeah.

Yeah, it really helps.

Yeah.

And I think that we are led

to find the tools that are

going to work for us.

And this was so much what I needed.

And it turns out we you know,

a lot of people need this

because there is there are

a lot of things that that

really disrupt our

the natural way that we are

supposed to function.

And so and I feel so gosh,

my heart would just break

when I worked with these kids,

because I saw that they

were so big hearted and so sweet,

and they just could not function well.

And some of them so smart.

But there they had, you know,

What we're going to get into

here with they had the, you know,

the unintegrated primitive

reflexes along with other

neurodevelopmental

movements that just were hindering them.

Right.

From their full potential.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Well,

I would love for you to talk about

what are neurodevelopmental
movements and why they're
so important for learning
and development.

Yeah, well, should I?

I know I created a presentation.

Yep, I will pull that up for you.

Okay, wonderful.

And then do you make the slides go?

I can move them for you.

Yes.

Okay, well,

so that's a little bit of my background,
which we already talked about.

Yeah.

And I'm happy to provide
these slides for anyone who wants them.

But neurodevelopmental
movements are innate.

In other words, they're part of our,
intelligent human design.

They are not something that I made up.

They've been studied for

hundreds of years.

And they are, you know, everything in our,

I believe everything in our

creation has a purpose.

And it's so,

it was so amazing for me to

study these movements because I just saw,

I just kept seeing how perfect they are.

and how elegant and how

beautiful they are to get

us from the place of being

a little baby in the womb

to being able to come out

during the birth and

function in a way that's

going to help us survive,

protect us when we're vulnerable,

get us moving so that we

can nurse and do all the

things that we need to do.

and feel all the things we

need to feel to grow our

brains and bodies.

And they're just amazing.

They, they weave into each other.

They're like this beautiful web of, um,

movements that do so much.

They're not just for, um, I mean,

obviously a baby has to be born.

And so they, they do help with birth.

Um,

And they're automatic.

That's why I said they're

like hardwired into us.

They're automatic in our brainstem.

So it's not like the baby goes, oh,

I'm going to stretch.

No,

the baby turns the head a little and

then the stretch happens automatically.

That's the ATNR reflex.

That's the first picture up

there on the left.

Okay.

they're automatic so they're

you know god didn't leave

these to chance they're so
important that they were
wired into us from the
beginning not only to help
birth not only to help us
become upright and walking
and talking toddler but to
provide the foundation for
all of our future
functioning so just about
nearly every skill depends
on this foundation

And there's walking,
and then there's walking.

And what I mean by that is, you know,
sometimes we take it for granted.

I mean,

less so now because so many
children are having challenges,
but right when I grew up.
and I'm in my early sixties,
nobody questioned whether
you would walk or talk.

You just walked and talked.

Just about everybody did,

unless they were really

serious medical handicaps and challenges.

But now,

it's so tragic because there's so

much disruption to these movements.

That when I say there's

walking and there's walking,

what I mean is there's

walking that's aligned and

comfortable and smooth and

flowing and rhythmic.

And then there's walking

that has compensations

where you don't see the arms swinging.

Like if you just watch your

child walk across the room,

notice if it's smooth and flowing,

if the arms are swinging with the legs,

because that's what the way

human beings are designed

is that we do all these

rhythmic movements at the
beginning of life in the womb during, um,
early infancy,
and we have these things
called primitive reflexes
and postural reflexes.

They're all automatic
movements that every baby
will do as long as they're healthy,
as long as they're not stressed,
as long as they have room to move.

And they get us going for all of our needs,
not just in the moment as babies,
but for our lifetime.

They set us up to be able to learn.

They set our brain to be
able to be mature and our
sensory systems.

And then what I was starting
to say is that when we walk,
as long as we've had these
movements and we're not
walking with compensations

and tension and weakness and fatigue,
and we're walking with
alignment and good posture
and balance and coordination,
that in itself
activates our brain, it uplifts our mood,
and it keeps us in a state of good,
positive,
outward flowing engagement with life.

And so that's why I say we
were designed to be doing
rhythmic movements.

But if we don't get this foundation,
then even something that we
consider simple is not so simple anymore.

We have to

Right.

We have to compensate.

And then we're not as joyful.

We're not as effective.

Learning is hard.

All that stuff.

So they're crucial movements.

They're so important.

And that's why, like I said,

God didn't leave this to chance.

They're automatically wired into us.

So, yeah.

Yeah.

That's a really good explanation.

Yeah.

So you created this program

called the Brain and

Sensory Foundations Program.

And so,

and we're talking to homeschoolers

primarily.

I mean,

other people do listen to our

broadcast and podcast,

but especially we're

targeting parents who have

children with learning challenges.

How is what you're talking

about helpful to them?

Yeah.

Well,

This is a great slide, actually,
because if we didn't get
what we were supposed to
get in infancy with these movements,
we have two very different
outcomes in terms of our foundation.

And so the way that it's
helpful for homeschoolers
is that it goes back to
development to help development
proceed if it was hindered
and When you help
development proceed when if
it was hindered you start
getting more upright
posture you start getting
more balance You start
uplifting your mood you
start being able to focus and
um you get the brain
maturity that you were
supposed to get you get the

sensory integration that
you were supposed to get
naturally and that comes
with it the ability to
learn see all these things
you see on the bullet
points here on this slide
posture core strength
balance muscle development
sensory development focus
speech social emotional
skills and learning
They're all dependent on this foundation.
And that's why I show the
babies in the top row.
They're so much different
looking than the ones in the bottom.
The ones in the bottom are slumped.
They don't have their core strength.
They don't have the ability
to fully breathe properly.
and get oxygen, you know,
the oxygen that they need.

They don't have as much room
for their internal organs and their spine,
you know, the spine is curved.

Well, the spine should be aligned.

And, you know, it's going to be,
the more you grow from that
infant stage that wasn't fully set up,

And you gain weight and
you're expected to do
things because you're older
and you're tired.

I was reading an email the
other day and the woman said,
my husband comes home from
work and he's exhausted and
he doesn't have any energy
to do other things that he
would love to do.

And she's like,
now that I'm in your course,
I can see why.
you know and now she has
the tools to do something

about her about it um go

ahead to the next slide I

think sure I included um

OK,

so we've already talked about why these
are important.

And there's physical, social, emotional,
cognitive challenges.

If we don't get them,
go to the next slide.

I just want to see.

Oh,

and then this was my issue where I had
things left over from
infancy that never got completed.

And, um,

and I had anxiety and there
there's research about that,
that when children don't
have these early movement skills,
it leads to anxiety later on and it's,
it's predictable.

And so go to the next slide.

I'm going to, I want to see, um, okay.

Um, anyway, somewhere in there,

there's a slide where it

shows that when you were, um,

hopefully I put it in there,

but I can always supply it later.

When you're younger and you

start gaining weight and growing older,

I guess I didn't include it.

I'm so sorry.

I will put it in there and

then we can link to it.

I'll send a link.

But it shows that when you

have this deficit where

you're slumped as a baby,

it just carries with you

through your childhood, through teen,

through adult,

unless you know what to do

about it and how to get

back to development where

you can rebuild the core strength.

And it's not a perfect system.

It's not, you can't literally,

turn back the clock and

become a baby again and go

from that stage.

But it's as nearly perfect as we can get.

And the reason why it's as

nearly perfect as we can

get is because we're

replicating what was

already created in our

innate human design and function.

So that's why it works so well is because

we're replicating things

that were meant to do these

jobs in the first place.

So it is very exciting.

That makes a lot of sense.

Yeah.

Yeah, that is.

And it's nice to know that

it's never too late.

I think that's, that's,

it's just hopeful for, for everyone.

It is never too late.

Yeah.

So it's,

Let's just head to the next slide.

So you talked about this, I think,

already and why they're important.

And then I would love to

talk a little bit more about the anxiety.

You know,

we see so many kids with anxiety issues,

and I don't think we see

the connection about anxiety.

that and you know we we tend

to medicate it um or just

say you know that's all in

your head you know breathe

deeply and you know I think

we put a lot of band-aids

on things when we are in

essence needing to go way

back to the beginning like

you're talking about and so

I love that you um you bring this up

Yes.

And we have more mental
health therapists who are
starting to be interested
in this and to use it.

And the ones that are using
it are saying it's so
helpful and life changing
for their clients,
even for things like severe
trauma and neglect.

It's phenomenal.

And

The reason is because this
is the way humans are
designed to mature out of
states of anxiety.

I'm so glad you asked this question, Peggy,
because...

There is actually a reflex.

It's a primitive reflex,
which is part of the

neurodevelopmental movement system.

And it's called the Moro reflex.

And it's a startle.

It's a startle response.

And that is there for a

really good reason.

We need to have a way to

alert the caregiver.

I don't know if people...

can see me on this, but I think they can,

where I, if I go like this, you know,

you've seen the baby like

shake and startle when, you know,

some kind of sensory input comes in,

either they were jostled or

they heard a loud noise and

they'll do this kind of thing.

So if you're around infants,

you'll see that, newborn infants.

Ideally,

this thing will happen because

it's supposed to,

Right.

And it will alert the caregiver.

It will signal, you know,

cling onto the caregiver

and the caregiver, the parent, mother,

most likely, will hug the child,

reassure the child,

maybe rock them rhythmically,

which is innate.

And then they start to

settle down and they go, okay, I'm safe.

But if you are never able to

get that response out of your body,

then you're going to be constantly...

to one degree or another,

reacting to sensory input.

That was my issue.

I was hypersensitive.

Because I had this

underlying primitive reflex

in my system that never went away.

And

And these things, there's a spectrum.

So it's not like an on-off switch.

It could be like, oh,
it's partly integrated,
but not all the way.

And so there could be mild
to severe responses.

But the thing is,
is that if we do not
integrate this primitive reflex,
and that means it should be
dormant at about the age of two months,
four months at the latest.

If it's not, and you carry that with you,
it's such a problem because
it keeps you in a state of
fight or flight.

Um, it keeps you easily startled.
startled, it keeps you irritable.

You might have things like
hypoglycemia because when
you're in a fight or flight state,
your body wants to burn glucose,
it wants to burn sugar
because that's what's gonna

get you able to flee if you're in danger.

So if you think of an infant

being in that really raw,

vulnerable state and you go, wow,

and that's still there.

I mean,

I remember one little boy that I

was working with,

I think he was eight and he

said something like when

I'm in school and this is

not so much a homeschooler issue,

but he said,

when I'm in school and our

teacher gives an assignment, I can, um,

I can hear all the little

taps of all the little

pencils on the desks when

I'm trying to write.

And it just drives me crazy.

Yeah, that hypersensitivity.

I mean, in a way this could,

like if you're homeschooling,

there could be lots of other kids around,
lots of other things going on.

And so one way or another,
we have to be able to learn
to filter sensory input and
to function and to not get so irritable.

The other thing about that
moro is that it comes with
adrenaline and cortisol
because it's a survival and
protection response.

Absolutely, yes.

Yeah,
so we know that that makes us more
sensitive because when
we're in an actual emergency,
we need to be hypervigilant,
hypersensitive to see where
the danger is.

Do I have to fight?

Do I have to flee?

What do I have to do?

And but again, if it continues on,

it really wreaks havoc in
our ability to function.

Absolutely.

You can't stay in that and
really live a life.

You're just constantly
reacting all the time.

Yes.

And my heart went out to you
when you said you had anger
issues as a parent.

I did too,
because I had this hypersensitivity,
hypervigilance.

Oh, I was so ashamed and guilty.

And I hope parents...

I hope parents can really
give themselves so much
love and compassion about
that because it is hard.

But that's why it's so great
because when we do these
movements for our children,

we also need to learn them ourselves.

And then we get these benefits also.

Yes.

Yeah.

Yeah.

That's, that's awesome.

Yeah.

So thank you for sharing

about that because yes, I, you know,

I go back to,

I had a traumatic birth and

then my middle child who is

now suffering from PTSD had

a traumatic birth and there's, yeah, you,

you can just, you can see there,

there is that that added level of

inability to,

to really to do anything

because you are in that

reactionary mode all the time.

And, and so, yeah, that anxiety is,

is it's tough.

And so I'm glad there's

people out there like you that are,
are not only helping parents,
but also educating, you know,
therapists and other people that, that,
Yes, it is really important.

So I'm glad you asked about anxiety.

You know, that's what we're doing here.

We're helping with anxiety, overwhelm,
sensory issues.

Balance is one of the most
important sensory modality.

It's it actually there's a
research showing that when
and this is for all ages,
children and adults,
when our balance is poor,
we're much more likely to have anxiety.

And it's fascinating research.

So if we can improve the balance,
and there's research about this too,
when we improve the balance,
the anxiety levels drop to normal.

That's amazing.

Isn't it?

And it's actually simple and
fun to work on your balance.

Oh, yeah.

Yeah.

And anyway,
so it can address learning challenges.

And there are specific reasons,

like for example,

we know children with

reading challenges often

have a hard time tracking the print,

the line of print.

That's a pretty common one

we get for questions.

Well, these neurodevelopmental movements,

so there are primitive and

postural reflexes.

There's also innate rhythmic movements.

They and there's

developmental movements and

there are others but those

are the main ones that we

work with and They mature the brain

and especially the lower

parts of the brain,

which are the areas that

when you're an infant,

they really have to,

those lower parts really

have to get mature because

they set up the functioning.

They,

they literally build networks into

the higher brain centers.

That's why we don't expect

an infant to like manage their emotions.

We don't have executive

functioning skills yet.

Yes.

Um,

And they, by definition,

a toddler has what we would

sort of term as ADHD.

They're impulsive.

They can be hyperactive.

They can be, you know, interruptive.

They're not going to sit and focus.

But we're supposed to,

so we're meant to go

through that developmental stage,

but we're supposed to grow out of it.

Right.

We have to have brain maturity to do that.

So let me tie this back into

the eye movements and the line of print.

When we when we develop the

brainstem and the

cerebellum and the basal ganglia,

that links up to the higher

brain centers that develops

those pathways so that we can focus on

so that we can control our impulses,

so that we have our

executive functioning skills,

so that we can communicate,

solve problems.

But also,

there are direct links from these

lower brain centers to the
eye movement centers of the cortex.

And so when you start doing
especially the rhythmic
movements that especially
help the cerebellum,

It not only promotes focus
and good sensory processing,
but it allows the eyes to
move smoothly over a line of print.

So we've seen even just a
few minutes of day and
there's research about this now,
a few minutes of day of
just rhythmic movements
that are really soothing.

Kids love them for the most part.

Some kids are hypersensitive
and then we have a special
thing to help them get to that point.

But most kids love them and
will ask for more of these
rhythmic movements.

And then they start reading better.

Like,

Their reading fluency goes up.

They found that with a group of kids,

this was a study out of New Zealand,

they gave the kids rhythmic

movements at school for,

I think it was five minutes a day.

It was either four or five.

I'm pretty sure they gave

them four movements for

five minutes a day.

It might've been five

minutes for four minutes a day.

There's two studies actually.

One was done by, um, but I get a mix up,

but in any case, um,

It was a very small amount.

But as long as they got it

four days a week,

their reading scores improved.

Wow,

they were able to start integrating

these reflexes.

And that's the other thing

is that when you do these

really soothing rhythmic movements,

they help.

They're the first step in

helping integrate the moral

reflex that I talked about

before the startle.

So it's phenomenal.

I'm, I'm,

I get very excited talking about this.

Yeah, well, that's good.

Yeah,

you got to be excited about what you do.

Because if you aren't, then yeah, yeah.

So there's a lot of research to that,

like you talked about this research,

but just more and more

research that backs up all

of these different

movements and things that you use.

Yes.

And there's,
there is a body of research that's,
Five at least five decades
long showing maybe six
maybe more showing that
When we have deficits in
these neurodevelopmental
movements in other words we
can tell that they weren't
completed there's ways that
you can tell that just by watching and
And checking for things.
But when they're not completed,
it's associated with
physical challenges such as
balance and coordination,
gross motor deficits, fine motor deficits,
abnormal walking gait,
which we talked about before,
the importance of a smooth, aligned,
balanced walk.
And then visual motor skill deficits,
which is what we were just talking about.

The eyes need to work
together and they need to
be able to work smoothly and efficiently.
And these movements are how you get there.

That's how we're designed
for your vision to develop.

And then if you go to the next slide,
you can see that not only
it's physical challenges,
but also a lot of research
about how there are social,
emotional challenges and
mental health challenges.

And here's the thing that I
especially wanna share with
homeschooling families is
that this can be very
joyful to do for the whole family.

Because all the kids need it.

And the adults need it.

Because we live in a time
and place that is very stressful.

I mean,

we have all kinds of things going

against us,

which is why I don't want

parents to feel guilty about anything.

You know,

because it's just so hard right now.

There are so many toxins in our world.

Plastics, pesticides, herbicides.

There's electromagnetic radiation.

All these things.

potentially can get in the

way of our functioning.

Um, you know, we, we,

there's just so many things and, you know,

at the same time we have

doctors telling us to put

our babies to sleep on their backs,

which is not how babies

were naturally developed to sleep.

Right.

Um, and, um, so there, you know, there's,

um,

a lot of people trying to speak out like,

Hey,

We might be putting kids on

the back for one reason,

but is that a good idea?

Because

or missing out on all this

development that comes when

they're able to sleep on their bellies.

So that's worth looking into more.

And if anyone wants resources on that,

I'll be happy to, to share.

Um, but yeah,

so there's so much in our world right now,

the screens, the,

the work requirements that

families have to do just to,

just to get by.

And especially like

homeschooling family for many years.

And, um,

having one income, that's pretty, you know,

usually a lot of times,

there's just one income.

And I'll never I don't ever
regret doing it,
because I want I really
wanted to be there with my kids.

Right.

But there's just so much
that is that can get in the way of
proper development.

Like for me, my doctor said, you know,
don't put your baby on your belly to,
to sleep.

And I,

I thought that that was what I was
supposed to do.

So, um, yeah, I tend,

I didn't listen to them.

I, all my kids slept on their stomachs,
but,

and I bet they slept much more
peacefully.

They did.

Yes.

Yeah.

That's actually how it's meant to be.

But, um,

Yeah.

I'm glad that your kids got that.

I'm so glad because it really does.

That is what that provides

them with core strength to

be on their bellies and it gives them,

um,

so much more input because

the limbs have something to push against.

You're on your back,

your limbs have nothing to push against.

And there's just,

you miss out on so much

development when you don't

have that time in prone.

So that's good for you.

That was just something I needed sleep.

So I was like,

they're not sleeping on their backs.

We're going to the front

because they're happier and

I feel better.

Yeah,

it's so good that you had that awareness.

That's wonderful.

Yeah, yeah,

we have to bring that those

that knowledge back.

But anyway,

we showed how this is

associated with social emotional,

but also cognitive.

There's research, you know,

people can look this

research up that it if you have

these unintegrated primitive reflexes,

which are part of the

neurodevelopmental movements,

you can have reading, writing, math,

and developmental language challenges.

Peggy, just go back to that one slide,

just the one before.

So, no, sorry.

It was just the one slide before.

OK, stop there.

So I just want to point out this study,

which is why I said, you know,

everybody in the family

should be doing this.

Because in a study of one

hundred and twenty

apparently healthy children

ages three to eight without

a neurological disability,

this was in Spain.

Eighty nine point five

percent had incomplete

neurodevelopmental movements.

That's a lot.

And it may be even more in this country.

Another study I read came out of the UK.

Again,

it was a hundred and twenty

school-aged children.

I think it was four to eight

in this other study.

Out of those a hundred and twenty,

only three showed no motor abnormalities.

So even the kids who are college bound,
they're working at grade level or above,
they very often have these
underlying glitches.

It's just that you don't see
it in the academic realm.

That was actually the case
with our two children.

And thank God I was
homeschooling because if
they were just in a school system,
they would have never gotten...
this because they were
working at grade level fine,
but they had hypersensitivity,
hyperactivity.

They had, you know,
I'm sure that our youngest
daughter would have been
the kid that they said,
you need to put this child
on medication because she

would literally just be, she was nonstop,
mile a minute.

She wanted something new to do.

every two to five minutes.

And she was constantly
moving and talking the entire time.

It was just amazing.

I mean, so yeah, I mean, it was,
she would have been, you know,

I could have easily gotten
her an ADHD diagnosis in
about five minutes.

And, but the thing is, is that
because they were working at grade level,
they would have never been
flagged for having special needs.

But so all kids need this
and can benefit because it
helps with anxiety.

It helps them be more efficient.

It helps them with their goals.

And it's really a beautiful
system that way for everyone.

Yeah, can you share some success stories?

I'd love for you to be able

to share some of those.

I know you had a slide.

Yeah, let's go here.

So this one, go back just a little.

I can share any of these slides.

So here's one where this mom

wrote this letter to me in

And I love this story

because this young boy,

I actually got to work with

him only once.

He had ADHD and his tutor

found out about my work and

she sponsored me to come to

teach a class.

so that she could help this

boy along with others.

And I ended up going to her

home and staying there

while I was teaching the class.

And she said, see this closet door?

And she said, this is where I teach Andy.

And he wasn't trying to be bad,

but he just somehow like

fell into my closet door.

And now it's off the hindles.

He's just so...

wild, but he's like a bull in a china shop,

but he can't help himself.

He's a good kid.

Oh, this kid was just precious.

He so I got to do a

demonstration with Andy

during the class that I was teaching.

And I did a demonstration session.

And he was so fun to work with.

And he was a twin.

And his goal was that he

wanted to beat his brother at billiards.

So we play that out and then

we did movement.

So we just had a lot of fun with it.

And so his tutor learned the movements.

She taught his mom.

His mom did them at home.

And his mom wrote to me four months later.

I think it was about four

and a half months later.

And she wrote this most beautiful letter.

You can read it online.

But she what she described

was how he made gains in his academics.

He had been behind almost

two grades in academics and

he had caught up and he

tested in grade level.

except for one subject,

which he was only two points off.

But other than that,

he'd been one to two years behind.

He was testing at grade level,

but he also made huge gains socially.

She said he enjoys riding his bike now.

He'll go out unprompted and

just ride his bike.

And she said it was a real

time for them to bond.

And so here you see when you
do these movements,
this is what I love about
this because it helps with physical,
social, emotional,
and the cognitive and learning piece.

So that's why I love it so
much because it's not just
about getting kids to
succeed academically.

It's about helping them feel
comfortable in their body
helping them have the skills
and the stamina to do
what's meaningful for them.

And connecting families in a
way where there's less
stress and more time for enjoyment.

Yeah.

Yeah.

That's amazing.

And yeah.

And this,

this family could have been
working on these skills for
a long time using other methods,
just really trying to, to,
to work with the,
what they were seeing
versus what was causing it.

Right.

And they have been working
on other methods.

She said,
we've tried everything before we
found this.

And, um, including medication, which,
you know, it's anyway.

Yeah.

Medications are really tough because, um,
it, it doesn't, um,
allow for other
possibilities in some cases.

And I know I have no judgment.

I have no, um,
sometimes it's the only

thing that parents have.

It's the only thing that's been,

and sometimes it might be

necessary on a temporary basis.

But one of my messages,

because I learned this from,

one of my teachers was a

psychiatrist and he was a

very unusual psychiatrist

because he didn't prescribe

medication for ADHD.

He prescribed these movements.

And he, so if you,

if you are going to embark

on this and do these movements,

it is important to know

that if your child is on medication, that,

um,

According to Dr. Blomberg,

I'm not a doctor.

I just do movement education.

But according to Dr. Blomberg,

who was a psychiatrist,

he passed away in twenty twenty.

But he said that what you

want to do is work with the

parents and the doctor and

gradually over time,

once the child is getting

more and more functional,

then you gradually reduce the medication.

But he saw it all the time

where he had kids who were

on medication and sometimes

they'd been on medication

for years and he was able

to get them off and they

were functioning fine.

But it was through consistent movement.

You do have to be consistent with it.

Right.

Yeah.

I'd love for you to talk a

little bit about your program,

just what's involved with that, you know,

what kind of time

commitment parents have and,

and just what,

what's all involved with that.

Sure.

Well, it is online,

so it's very accessible.

And we have a lot of support

where we have Q and A's,

there's email support, phone support.

We give,

there's eight sessions and within

those sessions, there are lessons and

And you just go through,

you get a hundred page hard copy,

beautifully color photos and directions,

the wonderful spiral manual.

And then you learn the

movements as you go through

it's video training.

So you're, it's very interesting.

helpful to have those videos

because you can replay them.

I used to teach this in an

intensive weekend, three-day weekend.

But it was so interesting

because when I was doing that,

and I did that for years,

it was more like OTs and

PTs and educators were coming,

special educators,

but not very many parents.

And then I realized, well,

here are these parents.

On one income, you know,

with probably multiple

children and it wasn't

doable for them to get to a class.

So way back in twenty twelve,

I had a group of parents

asked me to make an online

class and I did.

And thank goodness because

it's working out really well.

Yeah.

So the parents learn the lessons.

It's not for the kids to watch with them.

It's for them to do.

It's their own time to learn.

And then they practice the
movements first.

And ideally in front of the kids,
because then the kids can go,
what are you doing?

I'm doing some care that
helps me feel happier inside.

Or this helps take the
tension out of my body.

I'll give you a turn later
when I have time.

And then they start being
curious and wonder about it.

So then they start
introducing it with their
kids only in small amounts to begin with.

Because the movements are
very powerful and we need
to be able to see how the child responds.

And that's actually really
important because some kids

are very sensitive and we
have to do just little bits
and then gradually work up.
And other kids will melt
right into it and love it
right away from the beginning.

But we do have a very... We
have what I call the
roadmap to reflex integration.

And it's like this flow chart.

If your child responds this way,
then you go to this step.

And if they respond this way,
you go to that step.

And we're here also to
support and help as you go along.

But because it's so
important to have something
that's customizable and individual.

Because...

Not everybody holds stress the same way.

And you may have two kids if
you're using it for your

whole family that need a
totally different approach.

And so but using the same thing,
but maybe at a slower speed or or.

Yeah, exactly.

That makes a lot of sense.

So we have two levels in the
curriculum and the first
level is about eighteen
hours of instruction time.

And then but you can start
taking little chunks,
like even if you did the first hour,
you'd already have great
tools to start working with.

You don't have to, like,
finish the whole thing and you have
depending on when you enroll,
you have between nine
months and a year to complete.

And then if you want more time,
you can do that.

We just have a very

reasonable extension fee,
but you get full support with that.
And the other thing about it that I love,
Peggy,
is that I've had parents come to me
and saying,
I've tried primitive reflex
integration before.
It didn't work.
And I'll say, okay, first of all,
I have a little heartbreak
when that happens,
but I've heard it too many times now.
Or I've tried something like
this where we did a bunch of crawling,
but my child didn't like it.
And I'll just be like, oh, no.
Okay, wait,
there's a different way to go about this.
Please try it again, but do it this way.
Because I learned a lot from
from a lot of different
mentors and also a lot of

kids taught me what you're
not going to see in the manuals, you know,
like this kid's not doing it that way.

And so I put like the best
of the best tools together
and gave a system for like
how to slowly and gradually
work up to it and make it
playful because it
there are other things built
into it that take the stress out of goals,
um, which is really important.

So those are things that are
integrated movements that
support the
neurodevelopmental movements
because yeah.

And so,
so there are things where the
parents stay motivated because
they can see changes
happening usually pretty quickly.

Even like one woman told me

she had two young girls
with special needs and she
said just the first session
of all of the eight
sessions of the first course,
she said that was more
impactful than anything
I've ever done for my kids.

And that was the first
session is all about the
rhythmic movements.

There's a brain tune-up and
then rhythmic movements in
that first session.

And then we go through each
of the reflexes from there.

So that's the thing about
other primitive reflex
integration approaches is
that you really want to
start with the rhythmic
movements because they're
calming and maturing.

And remember I told you
about the startle reflex
and the fact that that
could leave you in a stressful state?
Think of that in terms of muscle tension.
So when we hold stress,
our muscles are tense.
When we have unintegrated
primitive reflexes, our muscles are weak,
which also leads to muscle
tension because we tense
them up to compensate.
Right.
So you're doubling it up.
Yes.
And so when we start going
in and stimulating these
reflexes in order to integrate them,
it can be uncomfortable.
It can be a little like, wow,
what's going on here?
It can be emotional.
They're intense because they

bring us right back to our
most vulnerable state.

So we

I learned after years of
observing this and then
asking other practitioners, hey,
are you seeing this?

And is this how you are going about it?

And they'd be like, oh, yes,
that's how we do it because
that's what I found too.

So what we do is we do the
rhythmic movements first
because they're calming and
integrating and super powerful.

Then you have more brain, body,
and sensory development.

Then when you go into stimulate reflexes,
it's not so jarring.

And it's not going to be so hard.

I remember talking to you
earlier about how these movements,
how they mature the brain.

And one of the things that
that brainstem does when
it's mature is it modulates muscle tone.

That's one of its jobs,
but it can't do that job
until it's mature.

So that's why when you start
stimulating the brainstem
and getting it more mature
with the rhythmic movements,
it will help with muscle tone,
muscle strength.

And then when you go to do the reflexes,
it's much easier.

Kids will resist things that are too hard.

They're going to resist things.

They're going to find a way to say, no,

I don't want to do that.

So you have to make it easy
for them at the beginning.

You have to make it fun.

And then they'll be willing
to do more challenging things.

And that's such a beauty.

The other thing I just want

to share for the parents

who have kids who are more

on the hyperactive state,

one of those brain or lower

brain structures,

it's like a cap over the brainstem.

It's the basal ganglia.

That has to be mature in

order for the child to find

the ability to be still.

That's the part of the brain

that gets damaged in Parkinson's disease.

And we have the tremoring going on.

They're not able to be that

somebody who has that level

of damage can't be still

and they have tremors.

And so it affects our

movement and it affects our

ability to be still and to focus.

And you get that maturity

through the rhythmic movements.

And then you have more function.

You have more stillness, focus,

muscle balance, muscle tone,

muscle strength.

and sensory development and

so once you have that then

you can go on to the

reflexes and from there you

can um just weave that um

wonderful um web of

development they all all

the movements intertwine

and support one another we

learn them linearly because

we we kind of have to

because we're piecing this

together but um

But they all work together

as a beautiful system.

It is.

It's so fascinating.

I guarantee that anyone who

experiences these movements

will fall in love with them.

Maybe not to the extent

because I became completely

obsessed with them for so

many years and I still am.

But you'll just fall in love

with what they can do for you.

And the other thing about

other programs is that

oftentimes they might give you like

you know four or five or six

primitive reflexes to work

with and that's good but

it's way better to do

a fuller,

more broad range because they do

all work together and

support one another.

Yeah, that's a great point.

Yeah.

So we have eleven primitive

reflexes in our first level

course and then eleven more

reflexes and early

responses in our second level.

So it's very comprehensive.

And actually, Peggy,

if you want to go to the last slide,

I don't know how much more time we have,

but, um, we're actually out of time.

Okay.

So let me have you wrap up here.

Yeah.

Okay.

So I,

we have this free gift where you can

get a chart, um,

that gives you a whole checklist.

Share that link in the show notes.

Yeah.

You can share that link

where you can get a free

gift and you can see all

the different reflexes and, um,

responses that we,

that we share in our two classes.

Uh,

the first level and the

second level course.

And it'll show you, like,

if this reflex is not integrated,

here's what you might see in your child.

So you can go down the checklist.

It doesn't include the rhythmic movements,

but that's just something

to know that we have those

rhythmic movements in the course.

Right.

And so it's a great way to

like stimulate your thinking,

a great way to kind of get started.

But it is very important to

get the full training and

not just kind of piece it

together on your own.

Because

you'll save so much time and, um,

you'll be successful early on,

which is important for
parents and children.

Um,

especially as you were talking about
kids could be getting discouraged or,
you know, just being,
getting overwhelmed and that's so easy.

It can happen so easily.

So yeah, definitely visit, um,

Sonia's website.

It is, um,

Let me pull up my banner here.

It's moveplaythrive.com.

And I also have the link in
the show notes for you.

And we'll have the link for
that free gift.

And also they've shared a
coupon code with us, [spedhome](https://spedhome.com).

You can save thirty six
dollars off of their
program by using that code.

So thank you so much, Sonia.

I know you are just a wealth
of information and probably
could talk all day on this
topic and you probably have in the past.

And so I'm just delighted
that you were able to share
with us and that you're
just available for families to,
to be able to get to the
root really of why all
these things that they see
cropping up in their kids
and themselves are
are going on and that there
is hope in their solutions
and they're simple and
they're easy and they're
the way God made us.

And we need to return to
that instead of just trying
to use a lot of other
things to try to kind of cover it up,
like the medications you

were talking about and other things.

So I'm just so thankful for you.

Yeah,

it is such a gift to be able to share
these movements.

And thanks for your time and
all your efforts, Peggy.

I really appreciate it.

Thanks to everyone for listening.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And I want to thank you all
for tuning in today to our
episode of Empowering
Homeschool Conversations.

If you're looking for more resources,
support and encouragement
on your homeschooling journey,
be sure to visit Homeschool
Heroes powered by Sped Homeschool.
That's our site at Homeschool Heroes.
You'll find free downloads,
a supportive community of parents,

homeschool friendly

providers and expert

consultations that you are

available to use,

as well as a new test

called the Mindprint test.

And it does a cognitive test

for your child's

and gives you teaching

strategies on how to help them.

You can also explore tools, products,

and services designed to

simplify your homeschooling efforts,

all from our trusted

nonprofit that understands

unique challenges of

homeschooling children with

learning differences.

Just join us at

spedhomeschool.com to find

answers to your biggest

homeschooling questions and

develop your homeschool

superpowers with our resources,
inspirational articles,
and a supportive community
that's here for you all the way.

Thank you, everyone.

Have a blessed day.

Next time,

we are going to be talking about
parenting with faith when
your child hurts with our co-host.

Stephanie Buckwalter will be
doing that interview and
talking about just walking
your kids through faith
through difficult times.

And so we would love to have
you join us back for that conversation.

Till then, everybody, take care.

God bless.

And we'll see you next time.

Bye.

This has been Empowering
Homeschool Conversations,

provided by Sped Homeschool,

a nonprofit that empowers

families to home educate

diverse learners.

To learn more, visit spedhomeschool.com.