

Welcome to *Venture Upward's* Arizona Home Education Conference 2025



Come hear from inspiring speakers, connect with
the home education community, discover local resources
at our vendor hall, and leave with renewed energy
in your home-educating journey.

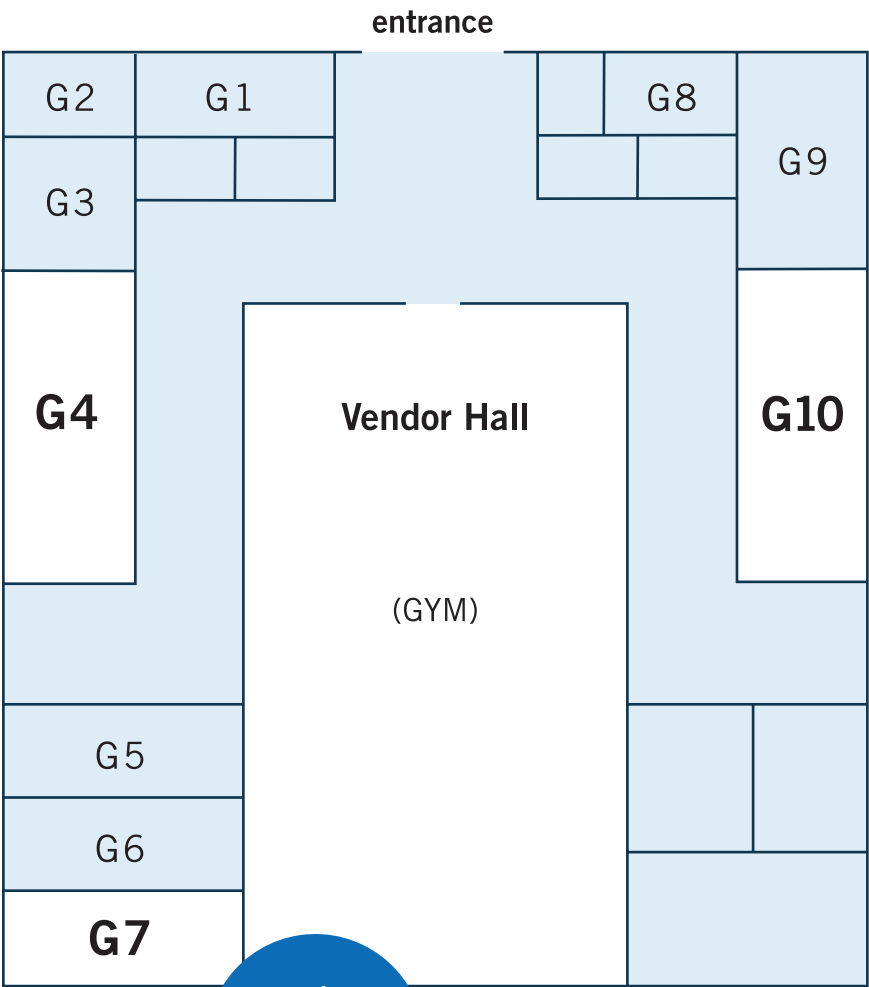
Venture ward™

10 am to 4 pm
SAT • June 21, 2025

Red Mtn Community Church
6101 E. Virginia St.
Mesa, Arizona

Red Mountain Community Church

Parking Area



▲ north

Conference Schedule

10am – 11am

Welcome / Introduction • Gym

Keynote Speaker • Joey Mascio

11:15am – 12pm • Classroom's G10 • G7 • G4

First Breakout Session

Three Breakout Sessions available:

• *Maria Hendershot • Sheri Morris • Laura Carpenter*

12pm – 1pm

Lunch Break

1pm – 1:45pm • Classroom's G4 • G7 • G10

Second Breakout Session

Three Breakout Sessions available:

• *Courtney Schloss • Marci Layton • Rachel Crupi*

2pm – 2:45pm • Gym

Mom's Panel

3pm – 4pm • Gym

Curriculum Sale



Meet Our Speakers

Keynote Speaker

10:00 am – 11:00 pm • Gym



Joey Mascio

Villain to Mentor: *Becoming the person your kids turn to instead of fights against*

Session Summary

Before we became parents of teens, we imagined how it would be. We would be our child's best friend, and they would come to, confide in, and listen to us. But, in reality they often view us as the bad guy. We try to walk that line between friend and parent, but it comes across as either fake or passive aggressive. We start to notice our communication with them weakening and our influence fading, so we double down on parenting strategies that, unfortunately, make us look like the villain in their eyes. In this presentation, we'll talk about how to change into a mentor mindset that will allow you to ask the right questions, set firm boundaries, and increase connection with a child of any age so you stop feeling like the villain and become their trusted advisor.

Bio

Joey Mascio is on a mission to help teens develop the habits of high achievers, boosting their confidence, emotional resilience, social skills, and motivation along the way. A former Disneyland performer and current professional improv comedian, Joey spent six years as a middle school teacher and counselor, where he perfected the "mentor mindset" and became a classroom management expert. He is the creator of Sidekick to Hero, a gamified confidence & resilience training app that helps tweens and teens develop powerful life habits through short, funny video lessons, real-world challenges, and interactive features designed to make self-improvement actually fun. He is also the host of the Secrets for an Awesome Life podcast, where he blends humor and psychology to help teens take control of their own stories. Joey and his amazing wife live in Utah where they raise their four incredible kids who keep him sharp, humble, and laughing. When he's not coaching or speaking, he loves spending time outdoors with his family, writing, BBQing, and getting lost in epic movies and stories.

First Breakout Session • 11:15am – 12pm

Three Breakout Sessions available. *You choose:*



Maria Hendershot

Classroom G10

**Joyful Reinvention: A 3-step reset for Moms
who feel stuck, tired, or disconnected**

Session Summary

Many homeschool moms pour so much into their families that they wake up one day wondering where they went in the process. This class is for the mom who feels stuck, exhausted, or disconnected—emotionally, mentally, and physically—and is ready to take the first steps toward joyful reinvention. In this powerful and practical session, I walk you through a “Joy Audit” to uncover the most common blocks to joy—what I call Joy Zappers—and how to shift out of survival mode and into intentional, joy-filled living. You’ll learn a simple 3-step process to reconnect with yourself, shift old thought patterns, and start creating small, sustainable changes that lead to lasting fulfillment—even in the middle of busy, messy, beautiful motherhood.

Speaker Bio

Maria Hendershot is a joy revivalist for burned-out moms who are tired of just surviving and ready to create a life they’re truly obsessed with. A Master Certified Life Coach with over a decade of experience, Maria holds certifications in life coaching, health coaching, and habit change, including The Masterful Coach Collective, The Life Coach School, Tiny Habits, and Faster Way to Fat Loss. Through her signature 90-Day Joyful Reinvention program, Maria helps moms identify their energy gaps and make sustainable shifts in mindset, habits, and nervous system health. Her clients go from drowning in to-do lists to living intentionally, feeling like themselves again, and building a life they genuinely love. A former homeschooling mom of six (now a grandma!), Maria leads by example. After healing from her own burnout, she made a bold move, selling her home to travel the world and reclaim her sense of freedom and joy. She’s passionate about helping women feel good enough to dream again, and bold enough to live it out. She also loves dancing, adventures, and crossing items off her wildly imaginative bucket list.



Sheri Morris –MEd, MA, LMFT

Classroom G7

***From Chaos to Confidence:
How the Little Gator routines help kids thrive***

Session Summary

Start your homeschool mornings with more peace and a whole lot more fun. Join Sheri Morris, licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, author, former teacher, and veteran homeschool mom, for an engaging and interactive class that shows how a simple five-step routine can build confidence, reduce chaos, and strengthen the bond between parent and child. Sheri brings a unique perspective as both a seasoned therapist working with today's modern families and as a long-time homeschooler who now helps teach her grandchildren. In this workshop, she shares the heartwarming story that inspired Little Gator's Morning Dash, teaches the five steps of the routine, and offers practical, joy-filled strategies families can start using right away. Whether you're just beginning your homeschool journey or have years of experience, you'll leave with tools that make mornings smoother and more meaningful.

Speaker Bio

Author, Marriage and Family Therapist, Former Teacher, and Homeschool Mom. Sheri Morris is a licensed marriage and family therapist, author, retired schoolteacher, and proud homeschool mom of five. In the early years of homeschooling, when curriculum was limited and expensive, she created her own. By developing lesson plans by subject and grade level, she was able to meet her children's individual needs. Today, she continues that legacy by supporting her daughter in homeschooling the next generation and cherishes her time with her energetic and curious grandchildren. Through her therapy practice, Sheri helps children, parents, and families reduce stress, strengthen relationships, and build emotional resilience. Her blend of personal and professional experience led to the creation of Little Gator's Morning Dash, the first in a growing series of uplifting, family-focused children's books. Sheri's workshops offer warmth, wisdom, and hands-on tools rooted in love, faith, and connection. Whether you're a seasoned homeschooler or just starting out, her class will leave you feeling encouraged, supported, and equipped to bring more peace and purpose to your family life.



Laura Carpenter

Classroom G4

Nurturing the Nurturer: *A Self-Care Class for Homeschool Moms*

Session Summary

“You can’t pour from an empty cup.” As homeschool moms, we give so much to our families—but caring for ourselves is essential to sustaining our energy, patience, and joy. In this session we’ll take time to reconnect with our own needs and learn simple, nourishing ways to refill our cups. We’ll begin with a simple chair yoga flow suitable for all levels, followed by a short guided meditation with essential oils to help quiet the mind and soothe the body. Then we’ll open up space for honest discussion about the challenges of self-care in the homeschool life—and share practical, grace-filled ideas to make room for it at home. You’ll leave feeling refreshed, supported, and equipped with simple ways to refill and refresh yourself right where you are.

Speaker Bio

An Arizona native and mom of three, Laura has been homeschooling for 12 years. When she first began, she often found herself hiding in the closet with chocolate and Gilmore Girls, overwhelmed and unsure if she was doing anything right. Over time, she discovered that simple, meaningful self-care practices—like a few minutes of yoga, the calming support of essential oils, and time outdoors—helped her feel more grounded and present with her kids. Now a certified yoga teacher of seven years and outdoor advocate, Laura is passionate about helping other homeschool parents care for themselves without adding more stress to their day. She still has days where she feels like an insufficient teacher, but she’s learned that when she fills her own cup first, she can show up with greater patience, strength, and joy.

Second Breakout Session • 1pm – 1:45pm

Three Breakout Sessions available. *You choose:*



Courtney Schloss

Classroom G4

Finding Balance in Your Homeschool Life

Session Summary

Homeschooling is a rewarding journey—but without intentional balance, it can also lead to burnout. In this encouraging and practical course, parents will explore simple but powerful habits that support both effective homeschooling and personal well-being. You'll learn how to recognize the signs of burnout, define what success looks like for you, and identify life-giving routines that help you thrive. Through guided reflection and hands-on exercises, you'll create your own list of six weekly actions that leave you feeling accomplished and filled up. Whether you're a seasoned homeschooler or just getting started, this class offers inspiration and tools to bring joy and sustainability to your homeschool life.

Speaker Bio

Courtney is a dedicated educator, leader, and homeschooling mom of 18 years who has graduated three students and is still homeschooling her last four children. With an Associate's degree in Early Childhood Education and a Bachelor's in Elementary Education, she spent five years teaching at Headstart preschool and three years in elementary classrooms before transitioning to virtual teaching. As a training manager, program director, and now Vice President of Program Development at Venture Upward, Courtney excels in curriculum development and enhancing student-teacher relationships in online settings. A sought-after speaker at home education conferences, she continues to inspire educators with her insights on homesch



Marci Layton

Classroom G7

What I'm glad I've done and what I would've done differently

Session Summary

We are not alone in this great effort of educating our children; we are blessed to be able to learn from each other. One of my favorite questions to ask older moms is what they're glad they did and what they would have done differently. After 17 years of educating my children at home, I have learned so much! I want to share some of those things with you, what my experience has taught me, and especially how we have found more joy and peace in our days.

Speaker Bio

Marcina has seven children, ages 25 down to nine years old (several of whom are neurodiverse), and has been home-educating for 16 years. Classic literature is her passion and after years of taking classes from Angelina Stanford, she recently got accepted into the Fellowship, a two-year literary mentorship program at The House of Humane Letters. Morning Time with her children is her favorite part of the day, and she is deeply grateful for all the moments spent learning together with story, poetry, art, music, and song. Through the years, she's been discovering what matters most and how to resist the fear of failure that every mother comes up against. She is excited to share her experiences with you.





Rachel Crupi

Classroom G10

Co-Regulation and Preventative Strategies: *Helpful tips and strategies to support families in the home*

Session Summary

Navigating challenging behavior using co-regulation and preventative strategies involves proactive and responsive approaches to support emotional and behavioral regulation, particularly in children or individuals with developmental, emotional, or behavioral difficulties.

In this lesson, we will discuss: • Behavior • ABC Model • Understanding Trauma Responses and Learn to Identify Signs of Dysregulation • Home and Community Applications of Preventative Strategies • Functions of Behavior • Importance of Co-Regulation and Co-Regulation Strategies • Home and Community Applications of Preventative Strategies

Speaker Bio

Rachel was born in Highland, Indiana and graduated from Highland High School. She has a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration and a Master's in Psychology from Kaplan University. Rachel moved to Arizona 6 years ago with her husband and three boys after her husband retired from the US Navy following 25 years of service. As a parent of a young adult that was diagnosed with autism almost 20 years ago, giving back to the autism community has been her mission since day one. She started as a behavior technician, but quickly became an RBT, and thereafter BCBA. Most recently she has had the opportunity of providing support to families as a Clinical Director of an early intervention clinic and providing Telehealth services to families all over the Valley. Most of Rachel's expertise has been with early learners (ages 2-6), but she has provided ABA services to children ages 2-18 over the years in the home, community, clinic, and school settings and has been working in the ABA field for 11 years. As the Director of Behavior Services, Rachel has the unique opportunity to not only provide individualized behavioral plans that support each student in the classroom, but also provides a level of support for teachers, RBTs, and Caregivers that target best treatment outcomes. On campus, you can expect Ms. Crupi regularly in the classrooms! While there are times she needs to be at her desk analyzing data, experiencing the learning opportunities directly with students provides a level of understanding like no other. By providing continued supervision, training, and collaboration to our amazing Polaris team, Rachel will help to ensure best practices and treatment fidelity to each child's individual treatment plan. Additional Caregiver training and support will help generalize skills from classroom to the home and community settings. Rachel believes the possibilities for our students are endless, and she is excited to support and be part of that journey! Outside of school, she loves baseball, camping, jeep'n, and exploring Arizona!

Final Session • 2 pm – 2:45 pm



Seasoned Mom's Homeschool Panel

Gym

Navigating home education can be a tricky balance! Whether you work inside or outside the home, full or part-time, join us as we close our conference with a panel of seasoned homeschool moms for helpful hints and tips. The panel will be open for your questions!



*We want to thank our speakers,
vendors, and all those that attended
and participated in this year's
Venture Upward Home Education
Conference. We look forward
to seeing you next year!*

Vendors in Vendor Hall



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Vendors in Vendor Hall



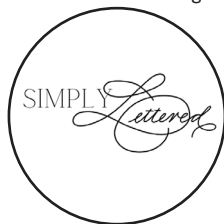
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*At Venture Upward,
we are here because of our families.
We are here to serve them,
not in just any way,
but in the best possible way.*

Jon Funes

CEO & Founder
of Venture Upward

VentureUpwardTM



VentureUpward.org

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