

Welcome to *Venture Upward's* IDAHO Home Education Conference



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 Upward™



10 am to 4 pm
SAT • August 2, 2025

Twin Falls Reformed Church
1631 Grandview Drive N
Twin Falls, Idaho

Conference Schedule

Morning

10 am – 11 am

Welcome / Introduction

Keynote Speaker • Jamie Sneed

- *Marathons Don't Run Themselves*
—*Hard is Where the Magic Happens*

11:15 am – 12 pm

First Breakout Session

Two Breakout Sessions available. *You choose:*

- **Courtney Schloss**—*Finding Balance in Your Homeschool Life*
- **Abby Littleton**—*Nature Journaling*

Afternoon

12 pm – 1:15 pm

Lunch Break

1:15 pm – 2 pm

Second Breakout Session

Two Breakout Sessions available. *You choose:*

- **Nicole Becker**—*Teaching a Large Family: Practical Strategies for Managing Multiple Grades*
- **Whitney Schiffler**—*Practical Joy: Adding Fun and Creativity to Your Homeschool (Even If It's Not Your Style)*

2:15 pm – 2:50 pm

Homeschool Mom's Panel

3 pm – 4 pm

Curriculum Sale



Meet Our Speakers

Keynote Speaker • 10 am – 11 pm



Jamie Sneed

Marathons Don't Run Themselves —Hard is Where the Magic Happens

Session Summary

We ask our kids to take risks and do hard things, but what does that look like for us as families? The magic happens when we all lean into the hard together.

Speaker Bio

Jamie Sneed is a proud fourth generation educator with a rich family history in many avenues of education. Jamie is a native Oklahoman, loves to read, occasionally runs and is a cowboy boot aficionado. After graduating from Southern Nazarene University with degrees in Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education she spent 6 years in the classroom before taking time to stay home with her two daughters. Last year she returned to teaching with Venture Upward and serves as the teacher of record for Hagerman Joint School District. Jamie is passionate about home education and strengthening families through quality time together, and is excited to share the ways that leaning into challenges benefits our children

Meet Our Speakers

First Breakout Session • 11:15 am – 12 pm



Courtney Schloss

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 homeschooling, virtual teaching, and effective curriculum design.



Abby Littleton

Nature Journaling

Session Summary

Nature Journaling is the practice of observation, recording, and reflection. In this class we will discuss how to create a practice and how to engage your students in curiosity, wonder, and the skill of noticing through nature journaling.

Speaker Bio

Abby Littleton is a wife, mother of four and passionate lover of both nature and home. For the past 12 years, her family has embraced the homeschool journey—an experience that has stretched, shaped, and gifted her with the joy of learning alongside her children. Whether exploring the outdoors or creating a nurturing environment at home, she finds deep purpose in the rhythms of family life and growth.

Meet Our Speakers

Second Breakout Session • 1:15 pm – 2 pm



Nicole Becker

Teaching a Large Family: Practical Strategies for Managing Multiple Grades

Session Summary

Juggling multiple kids and grade levels can feel overwhelming—but it doesn't have to! Join me in a session full of encouragement and hands-on tips for effectively teaching a large family and/or a wide range of abilities. Whether you're a seasoned home educator or just getting started, you'll leave equipped with practical tools and renewed confidence to start the new year strong!

Speaker Bio

Nicole Becker has spent many years in the field of education, serving in a wide range of roles. As a home educator to her five children, she has found both joy and growth in the rewarding challenges of teaching at home. Nicole has also served as a Mentor Teacher with Venture Upward, where she supports and encourages other families on their homeschooling journeys. In addition to her work in education, Nicole helps run a volleyball club in the Magic Valley and serves actively in various ministries at her church. Her passions are many—playing guitar, singing, reading, enjoying a good cup of coffee, spending time with her husband, cheering on her children in their sports and activities, connecting with friends, and gathering with her book club. Nicole is passionate about both learning and teaching. With a natural ability to juggle many responsibilities and adapt to a variety of roles, she thrives on the challenge of coordinating complex schedules and diverse needs to create something both beautiful and functional.



Whitney Schiffler

Practical Joy: Adding Fun and Creativity to Your Homeschool (*Even If It's Not Your Style*)

Session Summary

If you aren't naturally inclined to creativity or spontaneity, it's easy to lose the delight you envisioned when you started your home education journey. Join me as I give you practical, easy to implement ways to add fun and creativity to your day!

Speaker Bio

Whitney Schiffler is a homeschooling mom of two curious and creative daughters, ages 10 and 12. A former high school English teacher with five years in the classroom, Whitney brings a deep love of literature and language to her homeschool. She's passionate about cultivating delight in learning and believes wonder and joy are essential. In her spare time you can usually find her lost in a book or a quilting project. Whitney's session is designed to encourage and equip fellow homeschoolers with both practical tools and a renewed sense of joy in the journey.

Visit Our Vendors



CMP Singing Group
Elizabeth Free
cmpsinginggroup@gmail.com



Venture Upward
Angela Lierman
VentureUpward.org



Miss Wendy's Books
Wendy Pedersen
misswendysbooks@gmail.com



Gemstone Climbing
Patty McFarling
patty@gemstoneclimbing.rocks



GG Music Co
Grace Gogerty
ggmusicstudio208@gmail.com



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

*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

Venture UpwardTM



VentureUpward.org

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