



August News from the Holistic Moms Network

Unbelievably, it's time to think about going back to school. If you are like many holistic moms and dads, you have been trying to make every minute count while preparing for the transition. Are you preparing for back to school, homeschool, or a change like college? Share in [our discussion](#) on our Facebook Page, and find a chapter near you, where many of our members connect over a wide range of topics, including education. All are welcome!

[Find Your Chapter](#)

Holistic Education

by Mary Evelyn Lewis

Holistic education is probably the most beautiful, gentle, fulfilling way of educating our children. It's also probably one of the most misunderstood. I mentioned to a friend that I was writing an article about holistic education, and she said "What is it?" If you're reading this, I will assume you know what it is, but I'd like to share some educational history with you.



The first public school in America, the Boston Latin School, was founded in 1635. The first free taxpayer-supported public school, the Mather School, was opened in Dorchester, Massachusetts, in 1639. Up until these schools were established, the colonists educated their children by the traditional English methods of family, church, community, and apprenticeship. It might come as a surprise, but literacy rates were high in New England because many people had been deeply involved in the Protestant Reformation and learned to read so that they could read the Scriptures. The general population saw public school as a way for their children to socialize, more so than as a resource for "education." As time passed, children began to access their education at school. The three R's – reading, writing and arithmetic – as well as social behaviors, were now learned from teachers and peers, supplemented at home by family and friends.

In the mid-1980's, a relatively new movement called holistic education, began in North America. The premise of holistic education is that people find identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connecting to the community, to the natural world, and to humanitarian values such as compassion and peace. The term holistic education is often used to refer to the more democratic and humanistic types of alternative education. The most important theories behind holistic education are learning about oneself, developing healthy relationships and positive social behaviors, social and

emotional development, resilience, and the ability to view beauty, experience transcendence, and truth. Basically, holistic education is learning from the world around us and being compassionate to our fellow humans.

Before holistic education became a movement, there was the free school movement, which was an American education reform movement during the '60s and early '70s that aimed to change formal schooling through alternative, independent community schools. These schools were usually small grassroots projects and weren't highly organized.

Holistic education may be a relatively new movement, but the premises behind it are as old as humankind. Formal education was reserved for the rich and privileged as recently as four hundred years ago. The common folk practiced holistic education because that's how people learned to get along in the world.

Ultimately, we are and always have been our children's first teachers. Children are mimics at heart. They learn from watching what we do and then copying the behavior. If you watched your baby's face when they were learning to talk, you saw them work to shape their mouth the way you did. Now, some things just come to kids. We don't teach them to walk, but we encourage them and support them as they develop that skill.

Once our kids are walking and talking and feeding themselves, that's when the real joy begins. We read to them. We talk with them about the pictures in the books, and ask for their thoughts. We take them out into the world and experience it with them. The first five years of my children's lives were absolutely the most fun. And then, we are expected to send them off to school, so that someone else can instruct them. If we are lucky, we are still able to continue the organic, holistic teaching when our kids aren't at school.

In this day and age, there are many different options for schooling our children. Public school, homeschool, online school, and un-school are the most common ones. Every child is different and has their own style of learning. Every child has the very same beginnings, learning exactly the same rudimentary skills of life – communication, socialization, and security. How they learn and their particular understanding of the world is informed by the people around them.

If you're interested in more information about holistic education, you can click on the links below:

[Holistic Education: An Introduction](#)

[Holistic Education: A Comprehensive Guide](#)

[These are the different elements of a holistic education](#)

Mary Evelyn Lewis is a freelance writer and a mom to three grown children and one still at home. She lives in Minnesota. You can learn more about her at www.maryevelynlewis.com

The Holistic Moms Network Connection

Our members and leaders participated in surveys earlier this year. We are grateful for their feedback, and are working hard to share the results of those surveys, which are part of our strategic planning process. We want our members to have the best experience possible, and have their needs met as part of our organization.

Not yet a member?

[JOIN TODAY](#)



Leader Highlight: Jonna

Tell us about your family:

Partner: Mark Children: Isaac (3 yo) and Meadow (5 months)

How long have you been a co-leader of HMN?

I've been a co-leader of the [HMN Fox Valley, WI Chapter](#) for 18 months.

What brought you to HMN?

I enjoy bringing people together, to build our village, our community, and share it with the world to make it a better place for our children.

My holistic passions are...

plentiful! Healthcare for myself and my family is #1.



I'm a chapter co-leader because...

I enjoy bringing our community together. There are other members that are more educated than I am on certain topics, but that is what makes HMN so wonderful. It's not a competition, it's a community. We thrive on helping each other learn new information, find better goods than what we used before, to help each other through our defeats and struggles. It's not about memorizing all the holistic facts and comparing each other, and that is why I am a leader. Because I believe in our community, in our people, and spreading awareness to help save our generation, our children, and our children's children.

More about Jonna...

I really look to Gandhi for inspiration in times of struggle, defeat, happiness, and needing guidance. It only takes a few quotes to get me grounded back where I need to be in order to be a better mom. One of my favorite quotes:

"In a gentle way, you can shake the world." – Mahatma Gandhi

Interested in HMN leadership? [Become a co-leader](#) or [start a new chapter](#) today!

Local Chapter Highlight: Orlando/Winter Garden, FL

Kid yoga! What a great meeting held by our [Holistic Moms Network: Orlando/Winter Garden, FL Chapter](#). This chapter held their kickoff event in May and offer playdates in addition to their monthly meetings.

Find your chapter to connect with other parents. Whether you are a future parent, have babies,

children in school, or your children have their own children, you are welcome at HMN.

Interested in HMN's [member benefits](#)? Consider [becoming a member of HMN](#) today!

[Find a chapter near you!](#)



What's New at Holistic Moms

Looking for Co-Leaders!

We are looking for co-leaders for chapters in [the following areas](#).

If you don't see your community listed, [start a chapter in your area today!](#) For more information about becoming a leader, email mentoring@holisticmoms.org.



[DE, Lower Delaware](#)

[FL, Jacksonville](#)

[FL, Tampa](#)

[NY, Buffalo](#)

[OH, Butler County](#)

[PA, Southern Chester County](#)

[WI, Wausau Area](#)

New or Relunched Chapters

New chapters have kicked off last year or are getting ready to launch this year at the Holistic Moms Network! Find your local chapter and get connected in:

[CA, Ventura County](#)

[CO, Applewood/West Denver](#)

[CO, Boulder County](#)

[CO, South Denver](#)

[CT, Greater Danbury](#)

[FL, Orlando/Winter Garden](#)

[NC, Asheville](#)

[NC, Triad Area](#)

[NC, Triangle Area](#)

[NJ, Middlesex County](#)

[PA, Southern York County](#)

[TX, North Dallas](#)

Co-Leaders Needed

Below are existing chapters that need additional co-leaders to continue to grow and thrive:

[CA, Escondido](#)

[CA, Monterey Bay](#)

[CA, Mt. Diablo \(Pleasant Hill-Walnut Creek\)](#)

[CA, San Diego \(North\)](#)

[CA, Tri-City, \(South\)](#)

[FL, Northern Palm](#)

[County Coastal\)](#)

[Alameda County\)](#)

[Beaches](#)

[CT, Greater Hartford](#)

[HI, Oahu](#)

[IA, Greater Des Moines](#)

[MI, Detroit Metro](#)

[NY, Rochester](#)

[NY, Westchester](#)

[PA, Pittsburgh](#)

[TX, Houston \(Southwest\)](#)

[WA, Tacoma](#)

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The **Holistic Moms Network™** is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization connecting parents who are interested in holistic health and green living. We encourage moms and dads to trust their instincts, parent from the heart, use their innate sense of what is best for their children, live in balance with the Earth, and learn about the pros and cons of all healthcare and parenting options.

Holistic Moms Network, PO Box 408, Caldwell, NJ 07006

STAY CONNECTED



