

Homeschool CEO Podcast Episode 46: New Homeschooler, Successful Entrepreneur: First Months as a Homeschool CEO with Angie Trueblood

27:07

SPEAKERS

Angie Trueblood, Jen Myers

Angie Trueblood 00:03

For business, I'd really been evolving into CEO over the course of 2020. But I feel like I've also gotten to a place where I can make some shifts, live with them for a couple of months, evaluate and then if I need to shift back to something or go in a different direction, I'm totally okay with that. Because I feel very confident that this is the business I am supposed to be in. I am skilled at what I do. And I feel like owning that has allowed me the flexibility.

Jen Myers 00:33

Welcome to the Homeschool CEO podcast, the podcast dedicated to entrepreneurs who want to successfully homeschool their kids while writing a profitable business. In this podcast, we'll reveal the truth of what it really looks like behind the scenes of an entrepreneur who homeschools and how to make it all work. If you're an entrepreneur who currently homeschools or you want to start, you are in the right place, my friend. With 16 years experience combining entrepreneurship with homeschooling. I'm your host, Jen Myers, and this is the Homeschool CEO podcast.

Jen Myers 01:14

Welcome back to another episode of the Homeschool CEO podcast. Now, you know most of the time we talk more about business than we do homeschooling. But today's a little different because you get to meet a brand new homeschool CEO and listen in as we chat about what her first year of homeschooling is looking like as it's actually happening, not five years after the fact. If this is your first year homeschooling or you're still in that research phase, today's podcast will be an inspiration to you. It is an honor to introduce you to my friend and fellow homeschool CEO, Angie Trueblood from Go Pitch Yourself. But first, a quick love note from one of our podcast listeners.

Jen Myers 01:56

Linzi900 said, "Exactly what I need right now. The stars aligned when I found this podcast. Thank you for creating this amazing resource for entrepreneurs who feel called to homeschool." Thank you so much, Lindzi. You're welcome for creating the podcast. I'm glad it's a blessing to you. And friend, I am so glad that you are here with us today. You are the reason that I keep coming back week after week. Alright, without further ado, I am excited to introduce you to first year homeschool CEO Angie Trueblood. Let's get started.

Jen Myers 02:35

Alright, Angie, welcome to the show today. I'm so excited to have you here.

Angie Trueblood 02:39

I know I'm so excited to be here. I'm honored to be on the Homeschool CEO podcast. That's what I never expected to be on.

Jen Myers 02:47

I know, Angie, because when we met three years ago, you never thought that your life would involve homeschooling, did you?

Angie Trueblood 02:53

No. I mean, I honestly - I've always had it in the back of my mind as an option and something I was really intrigued by, but I never thought I would really pull the trigger on it. So.

Jen Myers 03:06

Alright, well, why don't you tell our guests about who you are.

Angie Trueblood 03:09

So, I'm a podcast visibility strategist from the business perspective. And my team and I work with clients in a one-on-one capacity and help pitch them for relevant podcast interviews. And then I also have a program side. So, we have a membership and a course that teaches entrepreneurs who want to pitch themselves, how to do it authentically in a way that really feels right. And also, effectively, with a focus on conversions and growing a strategic network.

Jen Myers 03:40

And the personal side. You got a couple of kiddos.

Angie Trueblood 03:43

Yeah, so we have - I'm married. I have a almost nine year old and almost 11 year old. And this year, we decided over the summer to pull them and to homeschool. And it's, I mean, it has been a journey. And I love it. I mean, there's days that are super hard. But you know, that happened when they weren't being homeschooled. So, I feel like I have such a better sense of who they are as kiddos and individuals than I ever would have otherwise.

Jen Myers 04:13

So good. And I like what you said. There's challenges if you send your kids to school and have a business, and there's challenges if you keep them home. Either way, we're gonna have challenges. We just get to pick which ones will be.

Angie Trueblood 04:25

Yeah, I mean, the beautiful part for me is that the challenges come more during the day. And I mean, I really segment when it's mom homeschool time and when it's mom work time. And so, I feel like the challenges no longer come at night when I'm exhausted. I mean, we have challenges at night. But for

the most part, you know, it's not that homework grind and really like disrupting the evening time. So, I feel like the challenges are at a time of day when I'm much more prepared to handle them in an appropriate way.

Jen Myers 04:58

That's awesome. So, one of the reasons, Angie, that I wanted to invite you on to the podcast was because this is your first year homeschooling.

Angie Trueblood 05:05

Yeah.

Jen Myers 05:06

And so often the people who, the women who come on have been homeschooling for a long time, you know, or at least several years, and they have, you know, businesses that have been established for a long time as well. So, they kind of have their systems in place. So, I think it's always so valuable to hear the perspective of somebody who's really new at the homeschooling side of this. So, since you've just started this year, can you explain a little bit or kind of share with our audience a little bit about what the beginning of your homeschool journey looked like? And how that felt to you?

Angie Trueblood 05:36

Yes, so I came in hot with really creative plans and ideas. In my head, I silently judged open and go curriculum. And I thought that if we were going to homeschool, I was going to pull the coolest and most creative curriculum I could find. So, we went with Brave Writer with Julie Bogart, who I'm obsessed with. And, you know, a couple like, the math curriculum is not super creative. But we went with a more creative history curriculum and science. And what I found, and I didn't realize it at first, but I definitely found that it was requiring so much of my time to lesson plan. And over, it was really over the holidays, I would say between, I think it was over Christmas, actually, I recognized I was spending weekend time when I would otherwise be with my family. Like pulling together all of these different pieces of curricula, especially with language arts, you know, we were doing one thing for spelling and another for reading. And I just got to a point where this is not what I want to be doing. Like I want to spend the time with my kiddos. And so, we made, I made some pretty significant shifts. But we eased into it. So August, we started homeschool, but it was really just us doing a little bit of morning time and read aloud. And then in September, we started adding on more traditional curriculum.

Jen Myers 07:10

So, how did that feel at the beginning, when you were trying to pull everything together? I know you said like you were spending the weekend times. But what did your day-to-day during the week look like while you were trying to manage your business because you're growing, you know, your, your visibility business that you have a team that you manage? So, what did that feel like when you were trying to do all of that?

Angie Trueblood 07:28

Yeah, it was interesting because 2020 was actually a really big year of growth for us. I mean, when the world sort of stopped turning, a lot of other options for visibility, kind of shut down. And so people were

much more looking for podcast visibility than anything else. So, we were in a point of growth. That is when I started to bring on team, because I knew I could not manage all of this myself. So, I was basically onboarding team members while I was starting to ramp up homeschool. And I'm a quick start. So, I don't often sit and think about how am I going to feel when I get overwhelmed, I just ultimately will be overwhelmed. And then that is when I sort of recognize it and take action.

Angie Trueblood 08:17

So, I think I went into it a little blind, which is probably great. It was probably very helpful. But you know, I knew ahead of time I had to get support. My husband works a job. He's actually in the education field. And so, I knew he would be leaving the home. He had been home for a while, which made it pretty bearable in the spring. So, I found a babysitter that I could take my kids to two to three afternoons a week. So, we would homeschool in the morning, and then we would go to her in the afternoon. So, it was just really feeling that out and getting a sense of when can I work. And I will say, I found myself working at night a lot more than I was comfortable with. And I think it really was over Christmas that I got, I kind of had come to Jesus with myself really about is this really what I want this to look like moving forward.

Jen Myers 09:09

So tell us about that. What was that pivotal moment that changed it all?

Angie Trueblood 09:12

I think it was just recognizing that for probably a month or month and a half. You know, when my family went to bed, I was carving out time to work and I didn't like that. I mean, I feel like evening times can be, it can be special. I like going to bed when my family goes to bed, you know, and I didn't like the idea of staying up. And I also didn't feel like that type of schedule had any sort of longevity to it that if homeschooling is something we decided to do forever I didn't want to be working until 11 o'clock at night forever.

Angie Trueblood 09:45

So, I kind of reevaluated what we were doing and changed a couple of things. I have actually - I know when I emailed you in January it was only two days into 2021 but I was feeling very proud of myself. But I started getting up at 5am. And pre-COVID, I got up at 415 to go exercise with friends. So, I knew I could do it. I just had never had enough incentive or motivation to get up and work. And it was enough, though, for me to say, "Well, if I get up and work two hours before anyone wakes up, I can really crank out a lot and feel pretty fresh going into the day with the kids." So, that was a real pivotal change that I made.

Jen Myers 10:29

That's something that we talked a lot about - finding where you work best. You know, some people do work best at night. And that's their thing. Like, they do not want to get up early. But then there's people like me, I'm the same way. I have to get up early because if I don't, if I don't have that productive feeling first thing in the morning, then I always feel like I'm chasing, like chasing myself in circles. You know, like, I'm never quite caught up. And I, over the years, I've let some of that go. But I still get up early. But - so I love that you did that. Now we had a discussion offline before that kind of precipitated this whole

podcast interview, was that you felt like you finally, in January over Christmas, stepped into that CEO role in your business, in your homeschooling, in your life. Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Angie Trueblood 11:13

Yeah. So, for business, I'd really been evolving into CEO over the course of 2020. But I feel like I've also gotten to a place where I can make some shifts, live with them for a couple of months, evaluate and then if I need to shift back to something or go in a different direction, I'm totally okay with that because I feel very confident that this is the business I am supposed to be in. I am skilled at what I do. And I feel like owning that has allowed me the flexibility. So, for 2021, we're pulling back a little bit on client work, because I recognize I cannot start growing a team and really onboarding and managing them as I'm also learning to homeschool. It's something I can do later. But right now, that's not ideal. So, we've scaled back a little bit on client work, and I am taking more of an active role in it. And then we're really working to leverage the programs that we have. And if it doesn't work, you know, if my revenue dips into the toilet, then I know we can get clients within a month, you know, without much problem. So, that is kind of on the CEO side.

Angie Trueblood 12:24

And then from a home perspective, I really kind of identified the pain points, right? It was the evening. So, I knew I needed to figure out a different period of time to work. And that's where the morning came in. Also, one thing I recognized was, this period of time, when we were leaving our house to go to the sitter's was often, like, very rushed because I would feed the kids lunch before they went to the sitter. And then typically I needed to drop them and get back because I would have a call or an interview or something. So, I just asked the sitter, "Hey, can you feed them lunch? Like, can I pay you more for you to feed them?" And she was totally cool with it. So, I don't now have to on those days - it's kind of what you said before. Like, it's that panic feeling of like, "I gotta do this, I gotta do this." And so, it really eliminated a lot of that. And also, I didn't want to feel like I was rushing my kids to eat lunch. And so, that was really helpful and sort of shifting the schedule and the energy that I feel like I show up with.

Jen Myers 13:32

I think that's really important what you said about the energy that you show up with because so often as homeschool CEOs, especially when we're new, when we're new at starting a business or new at homeschooling, whenever we're new at making that blend, we feel like we have to do everything.

Angie Trueblood 13:47

Right.

Jen Myers 13:47

And that creates this panic and this rush and this feeling like we're not enough.

Angie Trueblood 13:52

Yes.

Jen Myers 13:52

And then we carry that into homeschooling, and we carry that into our business, which serves us neither plate. So, it's really interesting that you said that. So, where you are right now, how is it different than where you were just six months ago?

Angie Trueblood 14:06

I mean, I would say, I just have a greater sense of peace of where businesses going. And being okay also, with not really knowing what the end goal is. You know, I feel like 2020 taught us a lot. And I feel really privileged to have options in pretty much every area of my life. I feel like I've gained the confidence to just know that I can make a choice and kind of roll with it and then edit as necessary. I mean, even with the curriculum, we switched curriculum, but I also, I had stressed my - not stressed. That's a little aggressive. But you know, I was holding myself to this standard of making sure we were covering science and covering history. And I felt that we were covering it just different ways. And so, kind of just like pivoting a little from the one-on-one work. You know, on the CEO side. I said well we can tackle science. I mean, that's sort of my passion. So, we can tackle that just in a different way. It doesn't have to look the same as what I envisioned six months ago. So, I think my ability to roll with that in all areas of life has been super helpful.

Jen Myers 15:15

You know what? I agree with you. And I think that that is something that entrepreneurs have that's different than most of the homeschooling community, because we understand that clarity is usually comprised of a whole lot of pivots. And that pivot doesn't mean failure. Pivot means you're making a conscious decision that that solution no longer serves your family for whatever reason. And we're gonna try a different path. You know, it's not the same thing as chasing, I mean, maybe sometimes it is.

Angie Trueblood 15:43

Right.

Jen Myers 15:43

Chasing that shiny object syndrome, not to say that, as entrepreneurs, we all sometimes fall into that category. Let's be real. But it is because so often pivoting or switching directions, has this feeling of failure. But as entrepreneurs, we're like, no, that means we're going to a better solution.

Angie Trueblood 16:01

Yeah, totally. Yeah.

Jen Myers 16:04

So, what are your kids think about homeschooling right now?

Angie Trueblood 16:06

So, my son, it's so interesting. My daughter loves school in general. We switched her math curriculum. We were using Singapore to begin with, and she said one day, "Mom, why can't we just do this like, we do it in school. Like, you teach me a lesson, and then I do worksheets." And I said, "Okay, let's do it." If you know that she's not - she's super creative but when it comes to school, she likes school, just like I did. I loved worksheets and workbooks. So, that is Chloe, and she is interested in going back to school

in some capacity. And so, we're also navigating that like, what would that look like? What our options, you know. We now have more than one option for what school looks like.

Angie Trueblood 16:55

And then Henry is - loves his mother a lot. And he does not ever want to go back to school. But it's also frustrating, because when he sees people, and they ask, "How is homeschooling going?" He said before, "We're not doing that much. Like, I mean, we don't we don't really have school that long every day." I'm like, "Bud, can you just dial that back a little bit?" So, but I mean, they - he really digs it. And I think we're starting to find a really nice groove. But you know, there's sibling fighting. That's definitely something that we've had to tackle. But yeah, I mean, for the most part, I think they, they love the option that they have right now, compared to, you know, like some of their friends that are kind of going back and forth between virtual and in school.

Jen Myers 17:45

I would think that would be a hard thing for kids and for teachers and for everybody who's currently going through what is happening right now.

Angie Trueblood 17:52

Yeah

Jen Myers 17:52

The in and out. The inconsistency, I think, is almost harder than the - either, either or, but that back and forth would be really difficult. I would think. Obviously, I'm not experiencing it from the, from the people that I know that are doing that hybrid model. It's tough. But I love that you can explore, you know, like we - first of all, I'm glad that you said that your daughter likes workbooks. Worksheets. Because here's the thing. So often, in the homeschooling community, well, in the Homeschool CEO community, worksheets are looked at as kids hate them. They're busy work. But I have told people I had one daughter, that was just like your daughter. She's like, "Mom, can I just do a worksheet?" She gets so much satisfaction from, like, crossing that off of her list and having a page, like a start and a check. Like an end this thing. Does that make sense?

Angie Trueblood 18:44

Oh, totally.

Jen Myers 18:45

I remember processing that. And I almost felt like a failure when she said, "Mom, can I just have a workbook?" And I said, "You don't like our unschooling lessons? What is wrong?" She said, "No, I need to feel -". She needed a really concrete way to measure what she completed. The other three, they don't want anything to do with workbook. But that child she thrived.

Angie Trueblood 19:04

Yeah, I know. The little guy, he doesn't love them, because there's a lot of writing, but we switch to The Good and the Beautiful language arts. It's been a game changer. I also am like, "Well, I mean, we studied the continents yesterday. So, that's geography." I just, it is such a more rich curriculum than

anything I could have pulled together on my own. So, I think it goes back to what we know in business. Go with the experts. Like we don't have to forge the path every single time. And you know, where before I was like pooh-poohing open and go curriculums. I was so having to create that on my own. I mean, I, you know? So, I think there's just - I've just learned a lot, even in the six months of doing it, as to what we need to be successful and to keep our energy and our relationship where it needs to be.

Jen Myers 19:59

What do you think the top three lessons the first year of homeschooling has taught you has been?

Angie Trueblood 20:04

Oh, I think it's definitely the ability to pivot. You know, I'm very skilled at that in my work life. And I don't know that I had really embraced that in my mom life. I've never been one of those moms who consciously compared myself to others. But as I look of how I walked into homeschool, it was with an ideal of what I thought it should look like. And so, dropping that immediately, I have learned that my relationship with my kiddos is far more important than what they learn.

Angie Trueblood 20:42

And I mean, I had a conversation with my son the other day, and I've - so virtual school and the spring was a hot mess. It was not pretty. It was just very, very tough. But even the other day, my son, he was supposed to be working, and he was laying in the hallway, snuggling in a blanket. And I finally said, "If you're not going to work, you just need to go to your room, you know, because we're trying to work here." And I told him, "If I am not the right teacher, for you, I am open to finding someone that is, but I am not going to yell at you. I'm - we're not going to be mad at each other. We just have to figure out a way for you to continue learning." So, I think prioritizing the relationship has been a really big thing. And I mean, just on a lighter note, I love snuggling on the couch in the mornings for our read aloud. Like I never anticipated that that would be fun. But every morning, I am in the middle the couch, and they each have a blanket. And that is one thing that Brave Writer has been super helpful, is helping me find books that just suck them and me in and it's been great.

Jen Myers 21:48

Those are those magical moments.

Angie Trueblood 21:50

Yes.

Jen Myers 21:50

That create the memories.

Angie Trueblood 21:51

Yeah, totally. Like that. We will remember that. CNN 10 with Carl Azuz followed up by our read aloud. That is the story of our homeschool life.

Jen Myers 22:02

That is awesome.

Angie Trueblood 22:03

Yeah.

Jen Myers 22:04

All right. Let's say you're sitting down for coffee with another mom who currently has a business and is considering homeschooling and right now maybe she's doing that virtual schooling and she's exploring the option of, "Can I really make this work?" What would you sit down and have coffee with her and say to her?

Angie Trueblood 22:22

I mean, I would say for sure, I think it definitely depends on your business model, and how willing you are to change what that looks like, in some cases. Because, you know, you can't just invent time, right? So, depending on how much you're already pouring into your business, I've always had an approach that I didn't want my business to take 40 hours a week. So, I wasn't putting that into it in the beginning anyway. So, I would, I would say first, they would just have to look at their business and see what - what can they pivot. Are their goals going to shift a little bit? That piece of it. But that stepping into it, and it's kind of like learning from me. And I remember hearing this from everyone else was, I guess, just give yourself grace. Because no matter what anyone tells you about, you know, go into it, and you don't need to get all the curriculum and don't let the curriculum guide you. You know, you just - you sometimes fall into that, and you have to find your own way. And so, I've been really, okay lately with not beating myself up, like, "Oh, we probably have far more curriculum purchases than we needed to make." And I am okay with that. So, I think it's just, if she is able to kind of roll with the punches, and give herself that grace, she's going to be much more successful.

Jen Myers 23:41

So good. So good, Angie. This has been such a good interview. Tell our audience where they can find you online.

Angie Trueblood 23:47

Yeah, so I have a podcast of my own, Go Pitch Yourself. And it's definitely business related. So, it's not homeschool-focused.

Jen Myers 23:55

That's okay. We're not homeschool-focused either, usually.

Angie Trueblood 23:57

Exactly. Yeah. Yeah. No, this has been great though. So, they can definitely check me out there. I share a lot of information and really cool guests. And we talk about podcast pitching and guesting and just how to grow your visibility, but in a way that focuses on human connection. So that is over there. And then I'm most active, I would say on Instagram. I'm not on there all the time. But it's definitely you know, a place that we can connect. I'm definitely active in the DMs and that sort of thing.

Jen Myers 24:26

Very cool. And just for an extra plug for Angie's podcast. It was a result of Angie's podcast that I got featured in Forbes magazine.

Angie Trueblood 24:34

Oh, that's right.

Jen Myers 24:35

Did you remember that, Angie? I literally tuned into one of the - you had done a live recording. And I just thought, "Well, they just make it seem so easy." And literally I pulled it up and I'm like, "Oh, there's Forbes." And because of this podcast, I had the audacity to apply for it. And I got it. I was like - And everyone, everybody said, "How did you get into Forbes?" And I'm like, "Angie. Go check this podcast."

Angie Trueblood 25:02

Well, that's the whole premise of my build of my business is you just ask, you know. We all deserve to be in many, many places. And as women, we need to be in many, many places to have our voices heard. And typically, people are not - I mean, people will invite you, but for the most part, you need to step up and ask.

Jen Myers 25:21

Absolutely. All right, thank you so much, Angie for being here. Everybody, check out her podcast, her Facebook group and all the things. Thank you again.

Angie Trueblood 25:28

Yep. Thanks, Jen.

Jen Myers 25:31

Angie's journey is a great example of how pivots lead to clarity. I'm so glad that she took the time to really acknowledge that what she was doing wasn't working. And pivoting is not a failure. As entrepreneurs, we know that pivoting is the fastest way to clarity and success. If something isn't working in your homeschooling, it is 100% okay to change directions. And also remember what Angie said, always value your relationship over the curriculum. If this is your first year homeschooling, would you do me a favor? Send me a message on Instagram, and tell me how it is going. I want to encourage you on your hard days and celebrate with you on those wins. Because we are all in this together. I will be looking for you in my DMs this week. Talk to you soon. Bye.

Jen Myers 26:32

Hey, friend, I just want to say thank you so much for tuning in today. If you loved what you heard, please be sure to head over to Apple Podcasts and leave a review. I really appreciate it. And for more information on connecting with other homeschool CEOs just like you, be sure to check out our website at www.homeschoolCEO.com and as always Team Homeschool CEO, you ladies inspire me. Thank you for always showing others what is possible. You guys are awesome. See you next week.