

“Global Education Toolkit” with Homa Tavangar, Episode 81



Power of Moms
A Gathering Place for Deliberate Mothers

With April and Homa Tavangar

In [Episode 67](#) of Power of Moms Radio, Homa Tavangar and April Perry discussed powerful ways that deliberate mothers can create a global-minded family environment. In this podcast, Homa is back with another book to help bring a global worldview to schools (whether they are private, public, or homeschools).

Homa is the author of “Growing Up Global,” “Raising children to be at home in the world,” and co-author of “The Global Education Toolkit for Elementary Learners.” Homa’s mission is to strengthen our children’s knowledge of the world. Create stronger networks. Understand other cultures. Build relationships.

Homa was born in Iran but grew up in suburbia United States and has lived on both coasts and the Midwest. She has three daughters (21, 19, and 11) who were her focus group guinea pigs for growing up global and lived to tell about it. Her family has found home all over the world. Be able to connect with people who may not seem to have a lot in common on the surface but it’s quick to go slightly beneath the surface and find many things in common. Relate to people who are different. Be deliberate about globalization. This skill is essential in motherhood.

The younger we can teach our kids about other cultures and language the more part of the mindset it becomes and then it gets to be a lot of fun. Cultivate a process of discovery.

Goal is to get comfortable with people who are different. What if I say the wrong thing? What if I offend them? What if I don’t know how to act?

April recounts a time when her Muslim neighbors lost a son in a motorcycle accident. She wanted to help but didn’t quite know how, so she settled on making a loaf of bread and taking it over. The family invited her in and fed *her*. It was a wonderful experience to sit with this family and see how they went through the mourning process. It’s not that you don’t want to make connections but what feels comfortable with all parties.

A global education helps children to build friendships: Be a friend to the whole human race. Show sincere love and caring and compassion which are universal languages.

Benefits of starting with our children can turn love, caring, and compassion into habits at an early age. Adults are harder to change. The younger you start the easier it is to form these habits.

The Global Education Toolkit for Elementary Learners is marketed toward schools but it can also be a great resource for parents. One of the key elements in this book is reading. Hop around the world with what you're reading. Read a story from South Africa. Read one from the Middle East. Read a Native American story. Doing this builds empathy. What you read is an example to your kids. Encourage them to go around the world with their reading.

The book contains a booklist of 326 book recommendations organized by younger elementary through grade six and organized by continent. This list acts as a starting point.

The book began as a brochure. Originally, Homa and co-author Becky Morales set out to create a downloadable pdf to share with parents about creating an International Week at their children's school. Once they delved in, they realized that there wasn't anything like this and it turned into a full-fledged book. How to bring global perspective into the classroom, particularly in elementary school which is the ideal age (kids are more open and less pressure for college, sports, etc.) and the teacher gets the child for the whole day, instead of in segments. Helps teachers create relationships with people in other countries: skyping with students in another country, doing international science experiments.

What can parents do?

Book contains a whole chapter on how to incorporate this book in the school system. Before school: Geography star club: builds geography skills for kids who aren't track stars or into fundraisers. Planning list: all the things you might need to build an international league. Reaching out: some parents respond to social media, others respond to a phone call. Becky's school started an international night that included food, costumes, musical instruments, etc. Parents got involved in different ways which helped build the community. In these small ways people were able to tap into a community which is the way to build a community by getting to know one another.

The mere act of noticing the voices that aren't very loud at school makes a very big difference.

Even elementary school age kids can make a difference in the world by contributing to service projects. Use technology for service learning. Infuse a global awareness in all subjects. Any lesson can be turned into a global lesson.

There are so many fundraising organizations have school fundraising programs that promote learning and community building that rally towards something that has a bigger, global meaning. When you help someone it makes *you* happy. This helps infuse meaning into what you do.

Empathy is the idea of putting yourself in someone else's shoes. What is it you care about? What does the other person care about? Infusing empathy helps us be better readers, retain information, and want

to help. There is always an application to think about how we can help in every subject, reading, writing, music, science, home economy.

Empathy is a muscle. Thinking globally will help infuse freshness and build that empathy muscle.

The pen pal is such a classic and wonderful way to make a friend, possibly for life. How to find a pen pal? What are the resources? What about email? Snail-mail? Video-chat? How do you protect privacy and keep safe while enjoying the many opportunities that open up because of technology? All these answers, and many more, are available in the “Global Education Toolkit for Elementary Learners.”

Be balanced. Don’t hit your kids over the head with all this information. Do these things with moderation.

Find Homa at growingupglobal.net for all her books, including this new one (globaledtoolkit.com). Also, @growingupglobal on Facebook and Twitter. Homa and Becky are super accessible and more than willing to help! Just take a step!

How can we be helpful? How can we find the balance between taking time for ourselves and be helpful? Homa and April are great mentors for being deliberate mothers and how to find that balance.

QUESTION: What are your favorite ways to help children become more globally minded?

CHALLENGE: Consider the ideas in this podcast and identify one way you could take a current activity your family or school is doing and give it a global twist!

Transcribed by Rosie Liljenquist