

# HOME SCHOOL HELPER

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FEATURE ARTICLE



## BJU Press's "It's Not So Hard" Drive

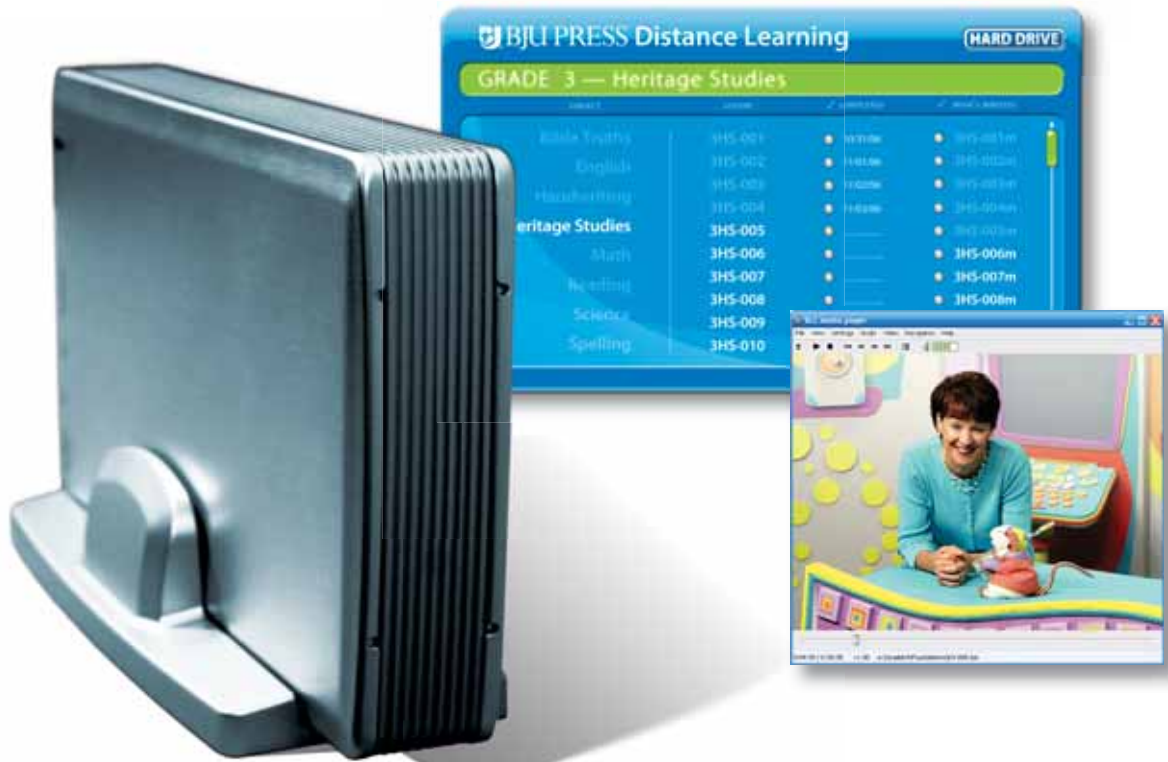
BJU Press continues to seek and find ways to make your homeschooling experience simpler yet still thoroughly educationally viable. The BJU Press Distance Learning Hard Drive is our latest innovation in that area.

The Hard Drive is a third Distance Learning option for homeschooling families with elementary-age children. Satellite downloads are still available, as are DVDs. But the Hard Drive includes all of the BJU Press Distance Learning lessons for an entire elementary grade level in one easy-to-use device. And all the textbooks, which are yours to keep, are included in the price!

If you're like me, you just "know what you have to know" about

computers and related items. So the idea of something new can seem rather daunting. CDs and CD-ROMs I understand; I know how to use DVDs, and I can find stuff on the Internet. But when I think of a "hard drive," I remember the time we took the car and the kids to Denver in two fifteen-hour days.

So what's a "hard drive" in this context? And how complicated is it to install and use?



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*But when I think of a “hard drive,” I remember the time we took the car and the kids to Denver in two fifteen-hour days.*

Simply put, the Hard Drive is like a second “brain” (and who couldn’t use one of those?) for your computer. You plug it into an electrical outlet and into the USB port on the side or back of your PC. (Don’t worry, the instructions come with helpful diagrams!) Then follow the on-screen instructions. Soon you and your child will be enjoying the high-quality programming from BJU Press

Distance Learning right on your PC’s screen. And the helpful menus keep track of what lessons you have and haven’t done, so you always know where to start each day.

*Steve Skaggs is Director of Product Development for BJU Press and editor of Homeschool Helper. He lives in Greenville, South Carolina, and never again intends to drive to Denver in just two days.*

### Minimum System Requirements

Pentium class, 1 GHz PC or equivalent

Windows XP

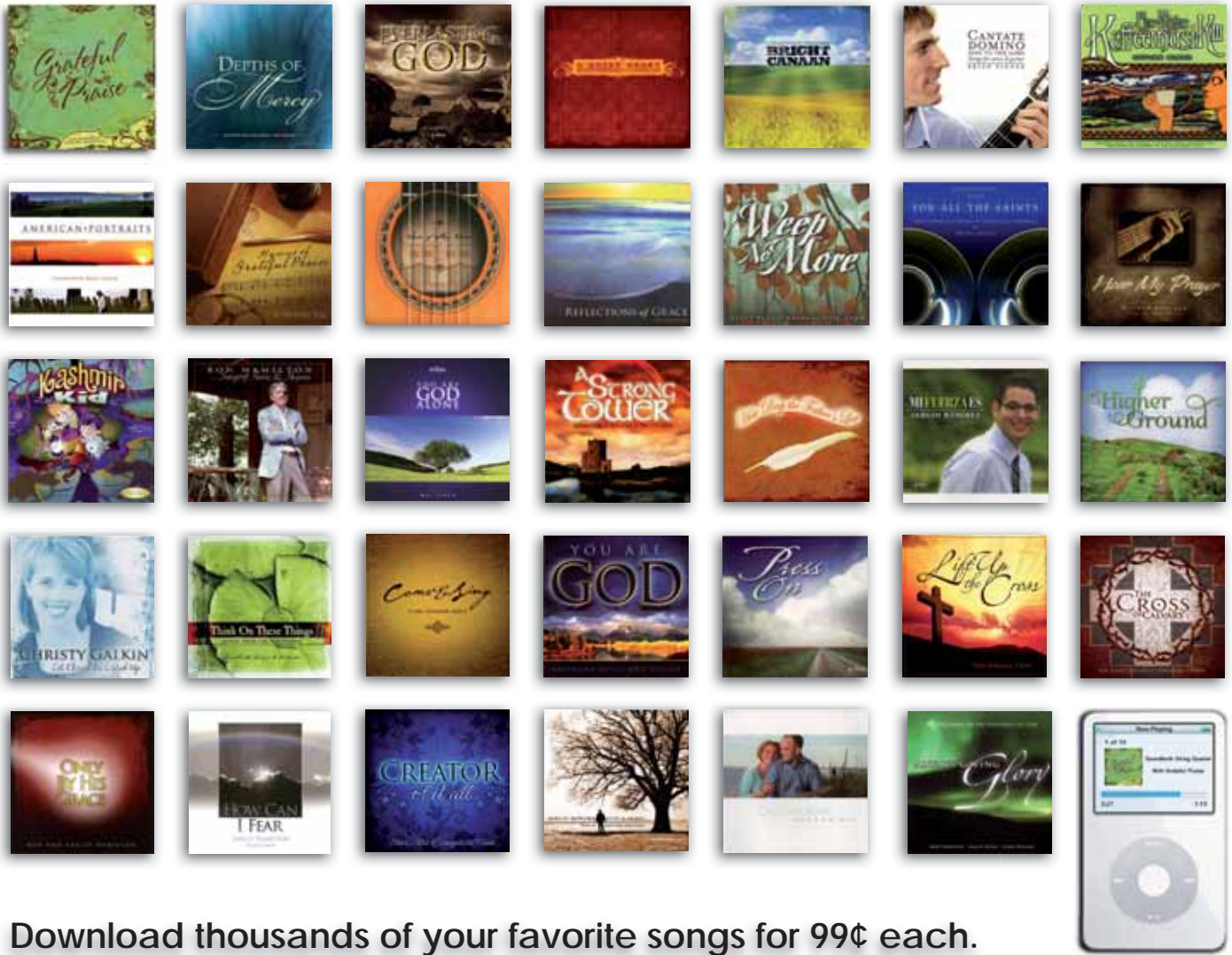
256MB RAM minimum (512MB RAM recommended)

Available USB 2.0

Best viewed at 1024 x 768 resolution






Installation requirements: No tools, special equipment, or drivers are required.

For more information, check out our website at [http://www.bjupress.com/distance\\_learning/hard\\_drive.html](http://www.bjupress.com/distance_learning/hard_drive.html).



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# Children and Fitness

Most likely you recognize your child's need for planned, purposeful activity.

Experts used to think that children would naturally get enough exercise on their own, and that may have been true when daily tasks involved self-transport and physical labor. But today's entertainment-oriented children are not inclined toward physical exertion unless attracted to competitive sports (which don't always provide consistent or well-rounded programs of exercise).

## Research that Relates

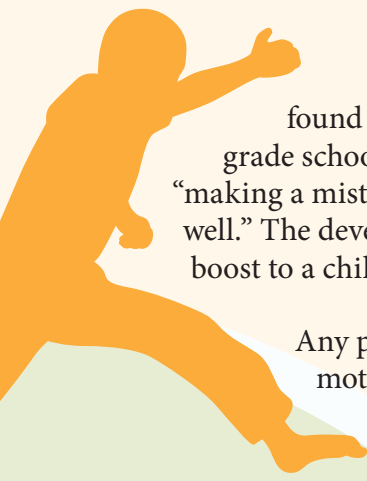
Dr. Joseph Zanga of the American Academy of Pediatrics has pointed out that he sees a generation of children working as hard as they can to avoid physical fitness. Life no longer requires physical exertion or even the burning of a great number of calories. Children look forward to watching TV, playing video games, and eating junk food (high fat/low nutrition). This explains why childhood obesity has more than tripled in the last thirty years, leading to a huge increase in children with type 2 diabetes, a disease once limited to sedentary, overweight adults.

Dr. Charles Kuntzleman of Spring Arbor College in Michigan studied seven-to-

twelve-year-olds and found that ninety-eight percent had at least one heart disease risk factor (e.g., high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol, excess body fat). Furthermore, thirteen percent had five or more risk factors. Kuntzleman has been able to reduce these risk factors in the children enrolled in his program. His exercise prescription for children is twenty to thirty minutes of heart work, three to four times a week.

The 2005 guidelines from the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services recommend that all children two years and older get sixty minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise on most, preferably all, days of the week. Experts also tell us that young children should not be inactive for more than an hour unless they're sleeping. School-aged children should not be inactive for longer than two hours.

Children should be taught skills that can be used later in life. A child who cannot play games will have a hard time staying fit. Parents often underestimate how much children want to play well. A study of two thousand children ages ten to seventeen



found that over fifty percent of grade school children worried about “making a mistake” and “not playing well.” The development of skills gives a boost to a child’s self-image.

Any physical workout requires motor skills: running, jumping, throwing, catching, skipping, striking, swinging, and so forth. These are “the basic vocabulary of sport,” according to Dr. Vern Seefeldt, director of Youth Sports Institute at Michigan State University.

### Age-Level Expectations

Motor skills can be taught at a young age. Even though children develop at different rates, the following guide should clarify what to expect at various age levels without pushing too hard.

### Birth to Two Years

Physical contact with parents is the first step toward stimulating the neural pathways needed to develop coordination. Even when changing a child’s diapers you can move his legs or arms. As children get older they enjoy being tossed in the air (carefully) and wrestled with. Take every opportunity to stimulate them physically.

Between the ages of nine months and two years, children generally move from crawling to walking and eventually to running. Moving around on his own requires a child to concentrate as hard as a tennis pro does in executing his serve. Offer guidance instead of scolding to explorers. Arrange their environment so that they can move around safely.

### Ages Two to Seven

This age span is the critical skill-gathering time. Games of catch in the yard and jogs with Mom or Dad are important.

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## Games that Develop Skill

### Soft Ball Tag (for running, throwing, skipping, hopping, kicking)

The player who is designated as “It” tags runners by throwing a soft foam ball or rolled-up paper wad. When tagged, the child must do three sit-ups to get back into the game. Variation: The player who is “It” must kick the ball instead of throwing it, and the other players must skip or hop.

### Snowball Fight (running, kicking, throwing)

Make a line on the floor. Kids stand on one side, parents on the other. Each team has a large supply of paper wads. Object: To clear your side of paper wads by kicking or throwing them to the other team’s side.

### Jump the Shot (jumping)

Children form a circle, and the parent stands in the middle holding a rope with a towel or rag tied at other end. The rope is turned in a circle under the children’s feet. Each child tries to jump over the rope as it moves by him.

### High Water, Low Water (running, jumping coordination)

Two players hold a long rope, gradually lifting it higher. After each raise, others must run and jump across it.



## A Mother-Daughter Reading Club

Christy was not a reader. Neither was Karen, her mother. So they weren't excited about the idea of a Homeschool Mother-Daughter Book Club—until they tried it. The dry run, which took place at their home, was so successful that the two have taken part in a second club and are looking forward to a third!

The formula for starting a successful club is this: four or five girls of similar ages, their mothers (age is not an issue here!), a book that they all agree on, and a pair of hostesses with adventuresome spirits. Once the members have committed to reading the book by the day of the club meeting, the mother-daughter teams make their own reading schedules. Karen and Christy set aside reading times through the week. Most days they read on their own. But when Christy got bogged down, Karen would read to her. As the club meeting time drew closer, Christy often read aloud while Mom did the ironing. The other reading teams plugged along too, some making better progress

than others, but everyone still keeping her eye on the goal: to have read the whole book by the meeting time.

Plans for what to do at the club meeting evolved as Christy and her mom talked about the novel. The meeting would start with a quiz to see who could match the most characters with quotations from the book. Christy searched for foods mentioned in the novel and then typed out the sections, including page numbers, where she found each one. She and Mom might have to use some imagination, but those sections from the book would determine what they served for refreshments at the meeting. Typed in a special font and printed on colored paper, the quotations made classy looking labels for the different foods. They brainstormed for other ideas and came up with a funny song from the novel's time period and a game that families of that era used to play.

Excitement was high on the evening of that first Homeschool Mother-Daughter Book Club meeting. Even the few who hadn't quite finished the book liked getting together, talking about the characters, and comparing favorite parts of the book. Of course, the snacks were a hit too.

The meeting ended with another mother-daughter team's claiming hostess duty for the next event—and the club continues to meet!

Gail Yost is the proud grandmother of four homeschooled children. She is retired from BJU Press.

## Suggested Titles by Grade Level

### Grades 2–3

*Mice of the Herring Bone* by Tim Davis  
The first book of a series of five that tell the adventures of two seafaring mice.

*The Treasure of Pelican Cove\** by Milly Howard  
Jimmy and his dog look for hidden treasure but find trouble.

*Tommy's Clubhouse* by Sharon Hambrick  
Book one (out of three) about the Fig Street kids club.

### Grades 4–6

*Mik-Shrok* by Gloria Repp  
Book one of three in the Adventures of an Arctic Missionary Series.

*A Dangerous Game* by Jeri Massi  
Book two of six in the Peabody Adventure Series.

*Jenny Wren\** by Dawn L. Watkins  
Jenny learns to trust God and people who love her.

### Grades 7–12

*A Sparrow Alone* by Alicia Petersen  
The story of an orphaned Jewish teenager who meets Jesus of Nazareth.

*The Rivers of Judah* by Catherine Farnes  
Book one of four in the Rivers of Judah Series.

*With Daring Faith* by Rebecca Henry Davis  
A biography of Amy Carmichael.

\*BJ BookLinks (teaching guides that accompany three novels on each grade level) are available for these titles and for many other JourneyForth Books. These guides contain games, songs, recipes, craft activities, as well as helps for teaching thinking skills and making scriptural applications that help build character and discernment.

(continued from p. 5)

Many parents assume that children are so naturally active that they develop skills on their own. This is not true. When a group of children are turned loose in a room full of equipment, they will play at first, but when the novelty wears off, they end up sitting around talking. They need to be directed into games that develop their skills and keep them active.

### Ages Eight and Up

During this time, children are usually introduced to team sports. However, children get more long-term fitness benefits from individual achievement sports such as swimming, gymnastics, or track. Parents will need to encourage these sports as well as cycling, running, and hiking. Children who know only how to quarterback will not grow up with a sport that is useful for life.

Most experts believe organized team sports with rules, coaches, and peer pressure should not take place until at least age ten. Most children under the age of twelve or thirteen will have a hard time handling losing. The child has to be old enough to understand that his value in the eyes of the adults close to him does not depend on the results of a game.

Parents can adapt games (see sidebar on page 5) or develop their own, keeping in mind that children are geared for short bursts of intermittent active play. The important thing is to promote fitness exercise. Doing so is more than mere recreation; it is a part of your child's education.

Linda Haught holds an MA in Physical Education and is a staff member at Bob Jones University. Her fitness DVDs may be ordered through [bjupress.com](http://bjupress.com).



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## What's New!

### JOURNEYFORTH



**Turn Away Wrath by Rand Hummell**—Written by a seasoned counselor, *Turn Away Wrath* uncloaks the enemy—its source, excuses, and consequences—and offers strategic help for banishing anger through step-by-step instructions and Scripture meditation.

(244145, \$8.49)



**The Man You Could Be by Paul W. Downey**—Drawing practical lessons from the struggles and successes of Joshua, a young man who became all that he could be for God, teens will enjoy Downey's straightforward, personal approach and solid biblical teaching.

(247874, \$7.99)



**A Life Surrendered by June Kimmel**—In this interactive devotional Bible study, June Kimmel reflects on Christ's life of perfect submission. She unveils the delight that every Christian

woman can find through submission to God's will.



**A Life Exalted by June Kimmel**—In this companion book to *A Life Surrendered*, June Kimmel reflects on the result of Christ's submission—His exaltation.

She unveils the beauty that every Christian woman can find through surrender to God's will. The wealth of biblical examples, the conversational style, and various supporting questions make both of these books ideal for personal or group study.

**A Life Surrendered (244277, \$6.95)**

**A Life Exalted (244285, \$6.95)**