

# Better Late Than Early

## Episode 139

Rachel Winchester [00:00:03]:

One of the core truths we carry on from the work of Dr. Raymond Moore is the idea that late is better than early. While the world presses in on us for children to learn to read in preschool and be able to do high level math early on, the research shows it's actually better to slow down and wait for developmental readiness. Today, we're diving into this topic. You're listening to the Homeschool Made Simple podcast. This is a podcast to help you homeschool simply, inexpensively, and enjoyably. Carol Joy Seide has been helping families homeschool for several decades now through her seminars and consulting services. In this episode from the archives, Carol shares about the book *Better Late Than Early* and some of the research that still surprises many of us today. Listen in!

Carole Joy Seid [00:00:51]:

Today, I wanted to talk about the concept of being better late than early. This is a phrase that was coined by doctor Raymond Moore and his amazing wife, Dorothy, and was the title of the book they went on to write in 1975. Soon after that, doctor Moore was invited for the first time to appear on doctor Dobson's radio program, *Focus on the Family*. That day changed the course of education in America, and it was basically the launch of the American homeschool movement. *Focus on the Family* received more inquiries as a result result of that program than of any program they've ever done before or since. Doctor Dobson and doctor Moore became very close friends, went on to ski and do life together. But that day, all those years ago, our son was two years old. I was driving down a beautiful country road in Nashville, Tennessee where we lived, and I almost drove off the road when I heard this man talking about such radical, nonconforming concepts completely opposed everything I'd been taught in graduate school, every way that I had been trained as a school teacher myself.

Carole Joy Seid [00:02:15]:

I turned the radio off. I never wanted to hear that man's voice again. But soon after, I was visiting with a friend in Orange County where we had moved, and she and I had lived together as young women, in the in the early seventies with a group of other folks. And she had this crazy man's book on her bookshelf, and I asked to borrow it. She said I could have it. I took it home, put it on my bookshelf. Why would I wanna read it? But one day, the holy spirit gave me a little poke in the ribs and said, you need

to read this book in order to disprove it. And in reading doctor Moore's writings, I had to admit that he was right and I was wrong.

Carole Joy Seid [00:02:57]:

And I became a proponent of his philosophy, and it grew as as I did more research and had more life experience. And now being a grandmother of four, I am seeing the wisdom of doctor Moore's writings and research, more than ever today. So what was this idea of better late than early? Doesn't that go against everything that we've been taught, you know, in utero flashcards, get them while they're young, reading at two, driving at three? What what's wrong with that? Seems to be great. Well, the truth is that we've never had more reading failure and learning disabilities than we have right now in our country, and we've never taught children to read and write and do arithmetic at younger and younger ages. Doctor Moore and Dorothy, studied 8,000 different quantitative and qualitative research studies on early childhood education, And what they found was that there was not one reputable study that said that early childhood education for any long term benefit was faithful or effective in children's lives, and there were great deal of long term concerns for its harming children, their ability to learn, their love for learning, their love for school, their ability to attach and bond with their parents. And so I have reread the book that I haven't read for several years now, Better Late Than Early, and I want to share a little bit about some of the research that doctor Moore and Dorothy uncovered. First of all, he starts out with the concept. He says, look at the facts instead of the neighbors, which is to say, do your research.

Carole Joy Seid [00:04:55]:

Do your homework. Don't just go by peer dependency within the neighborhood or the church, but look at the facts or look at the research instead of the neighbors. And as doctor Moore used to say to us over and over again, every morning, get up and ask yourself the same question. What is best for my child? Not what's best for my ego, but what's the best thing for my child? And when you study the scientific evidence, both in Better Late Than Early and in School Can Wait, both books by doctor Moore, they found this. The researchers found that children receive a better foundation for future development and learning from a secure and responsive home environment. Children receive a better foundation for future development and learning from a secure and responsive home environment, whether they have understanding where their teachers are the parents. So he said asked this question, will my child be better off at the local preschool or at home? Doctor Edward Zigler, who is the former head of the US Office of Child Development, says this, quote, I believe that we should do everything in our power to strengthen and support family life rather than supplant it in any way. We

should be wary of those who suggest that centers or experts are intrinsically superior to home settings.

Carole Joy Seid [00:06:32]:

The research shows that the most powerful stimulus to a child's development is warm, continuous mothering. Warm, continuous mothering is what stimulates children's development. Shocking, I know, but the research proves it. Now this whole issue of socialization, a lot of families feel that they're sending their children off to preschool or mother's day out or something so that the child can be, quote, socialized. But this is what the research says about that. First of all, the question is, do we want our child to have many acquaintances, or do we want them to have a concern and a consideration for others and respect for older people, that respect for authority? The research shows that values are best developed in a, a home where parents can respond to a child on a consistent, warm, and constructive basis through the day, or in a crowded situation where the child has relatively little attention from an adult model. Which one do you think would best develop a child's social abilities? And we always have to remember that preschool does not necessarily socialize ideally. Preschool does not necessarily socialize ideally.

Carole Joy Seid [00:08:03]:

And so very often, we think that our children are going to learn to be kind or to share, but one two year old doesn't teach another child how to share or to be kind. We, as adults, loving, nurturing parents, are the ones who teach our children these really important social characteristics. The Moores said this, parents should make up their minds what kinds of children they want and what sacrifices they are willing to make. What sacrifices are we willing to make to get to the goal that we've set for our children? We want them to be godly. We want them to be kind. We want them to be smart. How do we get to that goal, and are we willing to pay a price in laying down our rights? Doctor Morris said not even the best schools compare statistically and through research with a good home. Arnold Giselle, who, created the early childhood development program at Yale University in 1911.

Carole Joy Seid [00:09:13]:

His ministry has gone on all these years, the Giselle Institute. There's no one quite like that organization for helping understand children and their skill levels and their abilities at various ages or what we call the ages and stages of child development. He and his organization through the years have said that through their research, they have found that by the end of the third grade, early readers have no discernible edge from those who've been reading much later in in life. And the research shows that the later readers have a lower incidence of reading failure, reading difficulties, reading struggles than

children who've been taught to read at an earlier age, and it's very clear statistically. Also, the Giselle Institute has just come out saying that they're very concerned that kindergarten has become the new first grade, that kindergarten has become the new first grade, which is to say that kindergarten now is a place where children are expected and are taught to be readers. But in previous generations, not that long ago, first grade was considered the place that children learn to read, and in the Scandinavian countries, it can even be later. The Giselle Institute is concerned that learning will be should be fun, not skill and drill worksheets. Louise Ames from the Giselle Institute said this, Home provides a three-dimensional experience of real living.

Carole Joy Seid [00:10:56]:

School tends to be two dimensional. So school is kind of a false environment, a false reality. Home is really true living and normal life. Children can sense rejection. They feel that if a parent is putting them to in school, that very often they wonder why. Why doesn't mommy wanna be with me anymore? Now a child may express excitement about going to school. Of course, they don't even know what it is or what it's going to be like. But to them, you know, particularly if the parents act excited about it, they will begin to act excited about it.

Carole Joy Seid [00:11:38]:

And the parent will think, well, they want to go to school. But it very often boils down to, as doctor Moore talks about, being willing to sacrifice our parental freedom for our children's welfare. That's a hard thing to think about, but most every parent in America that I speak with would take a bullet for their child. They would lay down their life for their child. And so I know they're giving up maybe tennis or getting their nails done or going to more fellowship time with their friends, but our children are with us for such a short period of time. And to just nurture them and invest in them. And we have the rest of our lives to do those other things that we're thinking about or even having a career. But when they're young, being front and center with our kids, there's no replacement for us.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:36]:

Now in preschool, an intimate relationship with an adult is virtually impossible for every child in the class. Having been a teacher, I can tell you that, of course, every teacher has favorites. They're not supposed to, but they do. And there may be one or two children that are getting a wonderful, intimate, personal relationship with the teacher, but the vast majority of the children are just kind of in herd. It's kind of crowd control no matter how small the classroom is. And so at home, we have to compare what goes on at home. You have a loving, continually personal response to every child in your home. Now I know you're not perfect, and I know your home isn't perfect.

Carole Joy Seid [00:13:19]:

But as they kept repeating in better late than early, even a poor home is better than a good institution. Also, sending a child to school can create a degree of insecurity, and very often, it doesn't show up for some time. You might, reap emotional or learning problems in the future that you don't really see coming, and all of a sudden, they rear their ugly head and there they are. Also, and this was my experience as a school teacher, teachers usurp parents' place of influence and authority. On parent nights, the parents would come in and say how their children thought I hung the moon and whatever I said goes and, that even if what they said contradicted what I said, my word ruled in the child's life. And we all thought that was so cute and but it isn't. It isn't cute, and it's not funny because no one should usurp your god given place of influence in your children's lives. Also, because personnel fluctuate a great deal, let's face it, preschools don't pay well, and many schools don't pay that well either.

Carole Joy Seid [00:14:30]:

And so there's this constant fluctuation. The teacher gets pregnant or they move or they are ill, and it becomes a traumatic loss of attachment. Doctor Moore used to teach us that when a child bonds with a child will always bond with someone. And so if they go to preschool and they bond with their teacher, it becomes their parent's substitute. And then if that person is removed from the child's life for whatever reason, that the child will go through mourning as though there were a death because it's like Velcro that just keeps being ripped off and then reattached and ripped off. And finally, it won't stick, And you're going to see a child who's not able to maintain deep and lasting attachments because every time they have in the past, they were disillusioned and robbed, and so they just shut themselves off from hurt and abandonment. Also, the whole nature of getting a child to school and getting them dressed and packing their lunch and the right clothes and the permission slip, and it creates a sense of hurry and the transportation issues, the overstimulation, too many children. As doctor Warren Dorothy always used to teach us, a young child's life should be quiet, simple, and uncluttered.

Carole Joy Seid [00:15:54]:

Quiet, simple, and uncluttered. They said this. They grant privileges to the children but in school, but they do not help them learn responsibility, order, industry, honesty, and similar values. When they can no longer control children, like, when parents can't control their children, many parents punish them in effect by sending them away to school. Very often, I will talk to families who tell me that they their children are not obedient or they're disrespectful, and so they're thinking of sending them to school. And it always makes me think, so what you can't accomplish for love, do you expect

someone else to accomplish for pay? I doubt it. Having been a school teacher, I know that parents are the first and most important teachers. So when parents can't control their children, they often send them away to school instead of enjoying them and working daily with them to build their values.

Carole Joy Seid [00:16:56]:

So parents spoil their children by giving them privileges, but not helping them learn responsibility, order, industry, honesty, and similar values. Our job is to disciple and mentor our children for the kingdom and glory of God. Nothing is more important than that. Doctor Moore said a good home has so much more freedom. School by its very nature must be standardized, and gifted children are most affected. When a gifted child is put into a classroom setting, they feel like they've been sent to a form of prison because their minds are so fertile. They're they're just constantly inventing and creating and coming up with wonderful things. And a child who's sent to school very often has that creativity, squelched.

Carole Joy Seid [00:17:47]:

Now, I wanna finish up our discussion here with the concept of attachment and how vital and important the researchers are telling us that this is. Alan Berger, a well known researcher, said this. The principal sources of anxiety in early childhood are the loss of parents or separation from parents. The principal sources of anxiety in early childhood are the loss of parents or separation from parents. Glenn Glenn Nimnick, I hope I'm not pronouncing his name incorrectly, was the principal psychologist for Head Start, which was an organization started by the United States government to help children at risk in, impoverished areas, things like that, to go to preschool and be taught many of the skills that would prepare them for school that were not being taught in a very traumatic home setting. But this is what he Glenn Nimnick, who was the principal psychologist for Head Start after working with the Head Start families for many, many years, said this. Quote, there is no evidence that a young child needs to go to preschool. It's my hunch that twenty minutes a day playing with his mother does a child as much good as three hours in a classroom, unquote.

Carole Joy Seid [00:19:15]:

There was an amazing study done by a French researcher named Marcel Guibert. She went to Uganda, and she studied 300 different Ugandan babies from 300 different homes. And this was what she found. Using the Giselle Institute testing, she found that the children in tribal village areas, children that were worn, carried either on the front or the back of the parent at all time, children that were slept with, children that were rarely if ever allowed to cry, rarely if ever put down for any reason, that those children, when she tested them, even though they probably didn't have running water, they didn't

have electricity, their parents may not have been able to read, but this was what she found, that these 300 Ugandan babies out in the in the villages there were superior in their scores on the Geselle Institute tests than their Western counterparts. She said they were more mature in psychologically, physiologically. They had better coordination. They are more adaptable. They are more social, and they had better language skills.

Carole Joy Seid [00:20:36]:

Then she went into the cities there in Uganda, the wealthy families that are driving around with nannies and Mercedes Benz's and designer clothes. And wouldn't you know that the affluent city children were less mature, less developed, and they were below Western norms? So fascinating. So we think that giving children all the luxuries and all the benefits and all the material things is going to make them more sophisticated developmentally and intelligently, but the opposite is true. The greatest riches you can give your children are yourselves. Doctor Moore said a concerned, loving mother who is willing to learn can usually do more for her child than can any stranger regardless of training and ability. Sylvia Bell at Johns Hopkins University did a large testing on two different subgroups. One was a middle income white subgroup. The other was a low income African American subgroup.

Carole Joy Seid [00:21:42]:

And she found across the board for both groups that the closer and better the quality of mother child relationship was, the greater the ability of the child was to learn. Let me read you that again. The closer and better the quality of mother child relationship was, the greater the ability of the child was to learn. And so this idea that earlier is better, get them into school, start, you know, flashing those flashcards at them. The research is very much opposed to that concept. And what a child needs to be doing is learning life skills, having a schedule where they're eating at certain times, sleeping at certain times, playing, working. Doctor Moore and Dorothy spent a lot of times talking about this three legged stool. Study is one leg, but, of course, you're reading to your child by the hour.

Carole Joy Seid [00:22:44]:

You're cooking with them. You're baking with them. You're gardening. You're sewing. So it's a three legged stool. There's part of it is study because, of course, you're always teaching your child, but then there's work, and then there's service. And if you want a well rounded child, they need all three legs of that stool, study, work, and service. And the best place I know to get that is in your home in a low stress environment with a lot of warm, nurturing responses.

Carole Joy Seid [00:23:15]:

The Smithsonian Institute studied 23 world class geniuses, and they found the way to create a world class genius was to have warm, loving, nurturing parents, which you all are, to have very little exposure with children outside the home, and to give children lots of freedom to explore their own interests under parental guidance. And so this is how to make your children smart and who is better able to make them godly and socialized than you. And so this this concern of get them while they're young is really an unfounded premise that has been perpetrated on the American public. Tragically, our children are the ones who are suffering as a result of it. In better late than early and school can wait, this was even before the homeschool movement had begun. The term homeschool is never even mentioned in the book. But what he was recommending in his book was this concept of waiting till a child is eight or nine years of age to teach him to read. Eight or nine, and he bases this on the integrated maturity level.

Carole Joy Seid [00:24:32]:

All the different senses coming together that reading incorporates all your senses, your sense of hearing, your sense of seeing, your sense of touch, all different things that come together. And so when you wait for readiness, you're going to see success. When you are forcing a child before readiness has kicked in, you're going to have years of heartache and heartbreak. Your children are gonna be crying. They're gonna be, acting out. They're gonna be frustrated because in their heart of hearts, they wanna please you. They wanna be successful. But it's like asking a child in a wheelchair to run a race.

Carole Joy Seid [00:25:13]:

They physiologically cannot do it. And so it's really abusive to force a child or ask a child to do things that they just are not ready to do. And yet in a year or two, when readiness kicks in, they will love it. Their their first exposure will be, I love this. I'm so smart. This is so fun. When can I do more of this? Because as John Saxon taught us, we're good at what we like, and we like what we're good at. We're good at what we like, and we like what we're good at.

Carole Joy Seid [00:25:42]:

Giving them a lot of win or positive situations every day, positive experiences every day as Dorothy Sears Dorothy Moore, sorry, taught us. That is how to create a lifelong learner, a child who loves life, is well adjusted, secure, hasn't been pecked on by the other hens in the hen house, but has been home where they've been cheered for and loved and nurtured. This is how to create healthy, successful children very simply right in your kitchen or in your garden or on your front porch.

Carole Joy Seid [00:26:20]:



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