The overarching purpose of Heavenly Father’s great plan of happiness is to provide His spirit children with opportunities to learn. The Atonement of Jesus Christ and the agency afforded to all of the Father’s children through the Redeemer’s infinite and eternal sacrifice are divinely designed to facilitate our learning.” – Elder David A. Bednar

“The religion embraced by the Latter-day Saints, if only slightly understood, prompts them to search diligently after knowledge. There is no other people in existence more eager to see, hear, learn and understand truth.” –President Brigham Young

“The learning for which the Church stands is the application of knowledge to the development of a noble and Godlike character.” –President David O. McKay
A few things we can know...

- He yearns for us to learn – everything we can – and apply it to our experiences.
- He has a great vision for our learning – way beyond just our formal education.
- There is a unique mission for each of us – and our education will be an important part of that.
- We have great dreams to fulfill!
What do we know about education and motherhood?
1) Education is closely tied to family structure

- A separate and unequal nation:
  - 10% of mothers with 16 years of education living without husbands.
  - 36% of mother with 9-14 years of education.
  - 44% of out-of-wedlock children born to high school educated mothers
  - 54% to less than high school educated mothers
  - 6% born to bachelor’s degrees mothers
  - Higher rates of cohabitation – and instability
Divorce in First 10 Years
Source: NMP/IAV 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Least Educated</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Educated</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Educated</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Class Divide in Nonmarital Childbearing

Source: NMP/IAV 2010

![Bar chart showing the class divide in nonmarital childbearing across education levels from 1982 to 2006-08. The least educated have the highest percentage (54%) in 2006-08, moderately educated show a significant increase from 13% in 1982 to 44% in 2006-08, and the highly educated have the lowest percentages (2% and 6% respectively).]
Children with Both Parents at Age 14
Source: NMP/IAV 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>1974–81</th>
<th>2000–07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Least-educated Mother</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Educated Mother</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly Educated Mother</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2) Education is tied to Maternal Sensitivity

- A mother’s ability to detect, interpret, respond to needs; positive, kind interactions; respect for autonomy in exploring and growing

- Continued maternal sensitivity provides physical and psychological protection necessary for development.

- The strongest, most consistent predictor of her child’s cognitive, social, and emotional development (NICHD, 2003).
Mothers and babies...

- Maternal sensitivity in interactions development and functioning of the cerebral regions.
- Mother sensitively modifies her stimulation of the infant.
- Through fine-tuned inputs, she is able to match and synchronize to her infant’s inner state, appropriately providing the optimal “chunked bits” of stimulation needed for the child’s developing right hemisphere. (Schore, 1994, p. 355).
3) Education is tied to perspective taking & relationship building

- Education seems to influence a mother’s ability to perceive the needs and perspectives of her family members in ways that allow her to better nurture.

- Education strengthens her ability to articulate her own perspectives and needs in helpful ways.
4) Education is tied to Maternal Efficacy

- Outcomes appear to be better for children whose mothers who have been on welfare when their mothers go to work.

- Employment seems to change her sense of herself that benefits her mothering and then benefits her children.
5) Education is tied to carrying out critical routines & rituals

- **For parents & infants** → parents feel more competent, family adjustment is more positive; infants healthier; social interaction; bonding rituals.

- **For school age children** → better behavior, academic achievement, self-regulation; Routines require daily negotiation and shared problem solving; Dinnertime conversations/joint book reading → language development.

- **For adolescents** → fewer risk behaviors, parental warmth and affection, supportive communication, problem solving, stronger identity, less anxiety.
Education is closely tied to children’s cognitive development.

- The home is the critical place of learning…
- Cognitive Stimulation
  - Books
  - Museums
  - Cognitive stimulation in interactions
- Emotional Support
  - Sensitivity
  - Responsiveness
We are all mothers…

“Motherhood is more than bearing children. … It is the essence of who we are as women. It defines our very identity, our divine stature and nature, and the unique traits our Father gave us…”

I repeat we are all mothers in Israel, and our calling is to love and help lead the rising generation through the dangerous streets of mortality.” -Sister Sheri Dew
This education prepares us!

- For motherhood – in ways we cannot now see.
- For callings.
- For community work.
- For situations in marriage that we cannot now see.
- For greater wisdom.
- For greater joy.
“I want our children to be reminded of their mother’s education. I want them to know how she enriched her mind. I want them to know why she decided to study Family Life. I want them to know how she felt guided in her decision-making, how she blessed the lives of her students, and how she glorified her Father in Heaven as she learned by study and also by faith. I want them to know that their mother understands secular and religious learning to be part of the same eternal round, and that she has sought diligently to learn “of things in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth; things which have been, things which are at home, things which are abroad. I hope that it will be their deepest desire to follow the example of their mother in study and learning.”