

## GROWING IN HOMESCHOOL CONFIDENCE

### Lesson 1 - Introducing home schooling—the more excellent way

*“When so many in our society act like attending public school is a rite of passage, he is telling people that there is a better way. He simply believes that home education is the best option for creating independent thinkers and nurturing their natural talents and interests” -said by Nancy Carter about John Taylor Gatto in an announcement of Old Schoolhouse Expo 2010.*

Home “schooling” is not so much about schooling as about home educating your own children.

For many of us this alone implies a big paradigm shift to be made since we have grown up with schooling and education meaning two different things. Schooling was done at a school away from home, and education was done at home. In reality, homeschooling is about integrating the two; maybe the word is a misnomer. The truth is that when you homeschool you educate and every time you educate you are “schooling.” It is also true that a good education will support you in life anywhere and all the time. If your child is homeschooled, there may be time and opportunities available which are not provided by a school system requiring conformance to preset requirements. I truly believe that potential is not only not developed, but even lost in the constraints any human-designed system has. Many parents are considering the school systems, and they perceive the loneliness, the insecurity, loss of creativity and interest, and the boredom their children experience, and usually this is the starting point for many to consider home education. Others may have known all along that the school system did not develop their own potential and have, therefore, considered home education from the start as the way to educate their own children. So what is homeschooling about?

- ◆ It is a wonderful journey one undertakes in **faith** . . . the path is not clearly marked.
- ◆ It is a definite **COMMITMENT** you and your family make to each other.
- ◆ It is not just a good idea; it is so much more than that.
- ◆ It is a personal decision you make with your **heart**, and your head follows later.
- ◆ **It is the right thing to do.**

For an even better understanding of *why* people choose to home educate their children, read the Chris and Ellyn Davis’ eBook (available to read *free*) called *Developing a Strong Enough WHY* which emphasizes the importance of clarifying the real motivation for homeschooling. The intro reads as follows: *In home schooling your children, if you have a strong enough WHY, the HOWs will take care of themselves. Most problems with home schooling tend to occur because parents get hung up over the HOWs of home schooling without having a strong enough WHY.* To read the rest of the eBook, click [here](#).

## Lesson 1 homework :

- ◆ If you are at the point of considering home education, what would you say is your reason WHY? Is that reason able to help you formulate a vision of what you would like to achieve through homeschooling your children? (Refer to Lesson 11 for more on developing a vision for your homeschool.)
- ◆ In the following paragraph, the homework is to DO the actions as explained in the steps below.

### Are you considering home education?

Homeschooling is definitely an increasingly popular alternative to provide your children with a solid education, including academics. I say this to highlight the fact that educating your children can imply a great many things, including teaching manners, life skills, and character development, as well as academic skills.

**No education is neutral—there is always an agenda, as there should be.** Have you ever asked yourself what the agenda of the schooling system is?

In numerous studies, the quality of education provided at home has been found to be superior to those provided in schools. As the evidence accumulates, homeschooling is better established as a valid and truly effective educational option. This page will provide some research and statistics to support this statement.

Formal research studies in the US have been conducted by the National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI), as well as the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) with published reports, including:

- “Strengths of Their Own: Home Schoolers Across America.” (1997)
- “Homeschool Report 2009: Academic Achievement and Demographics” (2009)
- “Home Educated and Now Adults: Their Community and Civic Involvement, Views About Homeschooling, and Other Traits”
- “Homeschooling Grows Up”
- Research facts on homeschooling

The following are summaries of the reports’ most significant findings. (Note that these are only a few. For more complete information, see the reports available from NHERI or HSLDA):

- \* Homeschoolers are **still achieving higher scores** than their public school counterparts—no matter what their family background, socio-economic level, or style of homeschooling.
- \* Whether or not parents were teacher-certified had **no impact** on these high scores.
- \* Homeschool graduates are **active and involved** in their communities.
- \* Taking all things into consideration, 59% of the subjects reported that they were “very happy” with life, with another 39% declaring that they were “pretty happy.” This implies that nearly all home-educated students are pretty content with life in general.

- \* 73% of home-educated students' perspective on life in general is that life is exciting compared to less than 48% of their general US counterparts finding life exciting. (More than 50% of non-homeschooled children find life boring.)
- \* Homeschool students are increasingly being **actively recruited** by colleges.
- \* The home educated are doing well, typically above average, on measures of social, emotional, and psychological development. Research measures include peer interaction, self-concept, leadership skills, family cohesion, participation in community service, and self-esteem.
- \* Homeschooling gives young people an unusual chance to ask questions, such as "Who am I?" and "What do I really want?"

Other interesting findings were that:

- \* the vast majority of the parents of homeschoolers are married
- \* the families had an average of 3.5 children, compared to the general population's average of 2.0 children
- \* the homeschooling parents' formal education level was above average (but the homeschooled students whose parents did not have college degrees still performed at the 83rd percentile)

So, if you are considering home education for your children here are . . .

Ten steps to help you decide:

1. **Consider** your reasons. Is it for philosophical, academic, religious, social, or other specific reasons. Your reason will determine your vision, which will determine your success as explained in the [7-Step process to improve your homeschool](#).
2. **Research the law** of your country/state/province regarding homeschooling.
3. **Research, think, read, and think again.** For excellent scientific research conducted, visit my [Research and Statistics](#) page, or visit a list of [Pros and Cons](#). To help you make the paradigm shift, read my [Recommended Reading](#) page.

Some informative websites include:

[The Old Schoolhouse® Magazine](#): Here you will find articles on topics that matter to you most.

[Homeschooling Ideas](#): This is a website with a lot of creative ideas on homeschooling.

[Homeschool.com](#): This includes free resources and information about getting started with homeschooling.

4. **Get connected** with people who homeschool.

5. **Think through some factors** in making the decision, i.e., the *time commitment*; it will require some *personal sacrifice*, household organization, and *agreement between husband and wife*.
6. Determine **which phase** you are in with your children. This will determine what to focus on when. Read more about [Child Development Phases](#).
7. **Start a diary** to note what you and your children are already doing.
8. **Pray** and ask for wisdom, guidance, and peace. “*The Lord is your Shepherd to lead, guide and care for you*” Psalm23:1.
9. Know **you are not alone**—connect with somebody.
10. **Make the decision** to homeschool. Read [How to Start](#).

To read more on the pros and cons of homeschooling and a comparison of home education to public school, get the [Homeschooling Guide on Considering Home Education](#).

For even more information on the lesson topics, get the Homeschooling Curriculum Guide series ebooks available [HERE](#).