

Submission
No 203

INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

Name: Name suppressed

Date received: 9/08/2014

Partially Confidential

I am a single mother of 2 teenage sons. My boys were in the school system from kindergarten until August 2013.

My eldest son was traumatised by the pressure the school put on him, bullying he had endured from year 7 and already having low self confidence he wasn't coping. He struggled with anxiety, depression, acute stress disorder and interactive disorder and my first priority was his mental health.

My youngest son was behind academically and after years of asking for help from his school, he had made no progress. We then faced a 3 term bullying incident which contributed to my sons anxiety and school refusal. The school didn't address this bully and I was left feeling unsupported, frustrated and confused as to how others have such an impact on our children's well being within a school, the place we are told we should send our kids who will be safe and looked after.

In fact the school's answer for my son was to offer him 'Partial Attendance' for the remainder of year 6. I was disgusted at this offer, and couldn't believe this was offered to my son who was already academically behind and in my opinion NOT ready for highschool.

It was sending my boys to school that put them into these unfortunate situations having such negative consequences, ultimately changing who they are.

After years of meetings with both schools (Primary & High School) I was desperate to help my boys with there education and self worth. I took both boys to see the appropriate doctors in an attempt to help them.

I learnt about Home Schooling and I applied via the enrolment forms sent to the Board of Studies. I soon received a phone call from BOS telling me that I needed my ex's permission in order to home school.

My ex hadn't seen his sons in over 2 years and didn't know of any of the circumstances relating to this decision. In fact his absence was a factor in my boys low self worth & depression.

I felt like I had hit another brick wall when all I wanted to do was help my boys.

My ex hadn't been involved in either sons lives let alone their schooling- he had never seen nor requested a school report, photos, come to a sports day, concert, teacher interview etc NOTHING! He didn't even know what high school my eldest son attended. I did not need his permission to enroll them into a school and was shocked I needed his consent to Home School.

I finally made contact to ask my ex for his written consent to Home School.

I was verbally degraded, abused and ridiculed for over 2 hours discussing why this was necessary. I was blamed for the boys having issues, told I was doing everything wrong and my self worth was ripped to shreds. I felt like I had been hit by a bus. After AGREEING with all my ex's statements he agreed to give his consent to Home School.

He visited that weekend to see the boys and sign a letter giving permission.

12 months on and my boys are excelling in all they are doing. Our confidence has grown, our academics are at stage level and we are finally HAPPY, enjoying what we learn and how we learn it.

My boys have completely turned around and I am so very proud!

It's now time to re register for our next stage of Home Schooling and I pray another signature from ex is not needed.

I do not understand why when enrolling into a school only one signature is needed, but to Home School you need 2.

In my situation where my ex has no input, no contact, no interest in his children's lives, needing that 2nd signature only provides ex's with POWER, more POWER to use against and ex when he/she has no idea on what's been happening in the lives of the children.

This really needs to CHANGE, my marriage was abusive, and I can honestly say having to contact my ex in order to help my kids was totally stressful and emotionally damaging to me. I knew he was going to degrade me, but I had NO CHOICE.

Oh and since that signature last Year we haven't heard or seen my ex since.

Sent from my iPad