

Submission  
No 250

## INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

**Name:** Ms Norma Mou

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Partially Confidential

Norma Geelin Mou  
NSW

To whom it may concern,

There is confusion that Education = Schooling (including school registration methods, curriculum and systems). My conclusion on this matter based on personal research is Education is Compulsory but Schooling is not.

Home education is an intrinsic element of families and having children. I would like that this is recognized and made protected by law by the Australian Government.

Our family value an organic, holistic and synergistic approach in life. Home education, like natural birthing and breastfeeding are simply natural expressions of how one may CHOOSE to go about living and in this case in having a family.

A little about me, I am a Chinese woman in my late 30s born in Fiji and attended 3 years of Uni at UTS studying a Bachelor of Applied Science in Physics. I stopped due to starting my family then. My eldest will turn 18 in November and is doing his HSC right now. He intends to study law. I am also an Energy Healer and have had clinical success with my clients around physical health issues such as back pain and injuries where a physio and chiro have not been successful for years.

I choose to home educate due to our family values.

#### RE REGISTRATION

I started this year around February. \_\_\_\_\_ was registered by her 6<sup>th</sup> birthday in June this year. I was satisfied with the registration process. The authorized representative happened to mention, it was necessary to regulate these matters because a lot of children could fall through the "cracks". The fact is people fall through the cracks EVERYWHERE in life. Children who are sent to schools go through 12 years of schooling and some never learn a thing! Is this a problem of the school? In some cases it's really due to the family issues such as alcoholism etc. These kinds of families do exist and they are NOT to be confused with people who choose to home educate. In fact home education is work and a commitment.

Wishlist: I would prefer Registration be OPTIONAL and with as little regulation as possible.

#### CURRICULUM

Within Math & English alone, \_\_\_\_\_ understands and can do addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. She can comprehend the four different

kinds of equations verbally and translate them into written mathematical formulas. She can read 2, 3 and 4 letter syllables and therefore can read any word. She is able to write and recall 2, 3 and 4 letter words. I prefer to have my own curriculum and method of educating her and that is a natural holistic and synergistic method. I am extremely unhappy about having to adhere to the curriculum for many reasons. Everyone learns differently. I prefer an OPEN SOURCE method of learning where the child INITIATES the subject of learning. In today's world we have access to SO MUCH information, we teach ourselves ANYTHING IF and WHEN we WANT to.

I believe with open source learning, by the time RR in Year 7 she will have pretty much achieved a Year 10 student's objective / outcome due to the nature of holistic and synergistic approach – you end up ticking all the boxes.

Wishlist: It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure their child is sufficiently educated that or something better. Magic happens when one is in Open Source learning!

#### RE CHILDRENS SAFETY

It is as good as schooled children because we live in communities and are surrounded by people. If a child is being abused, family members, neighbours and friends are always amongst the first to know. Walls and people have eyes and ears.

To say that home educated children are more susceptible to abuse would mean that there is a higher percentage of abused children in isolated country areas, and this is simply NOT true!

A family who will abuse their children will abuse them and these families occur in regular schooling systems as much as anywhere else.

Families who abuse their children may often not send their children to school at all. These families are usually problem families and it's less likely they will go to the lengths of "registering" their child.

#### HOME EDUCATION LIFE:

Is fun for my daughter and I. It involves abit more work. For us, what works well even though we are an open source learner is to have a system. We do our lessons at least 4 times a week in the morning and it can be anywhere from 2 – 3 hours. We do meetup with other home schoolers in the community. RR has extracurricular activities like any school child – doing dancing, swimming, chinese lessons, and ice skating. She has a close group of friends.

Below is an extract of the law in regards to home education in the United Kingdom. Source: <http://home-ed.info>

#### **Home education and the law**

Home education is legal throughout the UK, although the laws in the four countries of the UK (England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales) are not exactly the same.

According to the 1996 education act in England and Wales, it is **parents** (not the state) who are responsible for providing their children's education 'in school or otherwise'. Their education must be suitable for the age, ability and aptitude of each child. The same wording is used in Northern Ireland. Scottish law says that 'every child has a right to an education, and it is the duty of the parent of every school age child to provide that education, either by sending the child to school, or by other means.'

My personal wish list items are:

1. Education is the responsibility of parents who may decide to provide their children's education in school or otherwise
2. Registration be OPTIONAL
3. It is up to each family to ensure that their children receive appropriate education.
4. That Home Educators have access to Educational Support Services which are currently available to those in the school system such as access to the hospital school, travel passes, TAFE, TvET courses, part-time schooling, school libraries etc.

And at the very least if not the above, then:

1. That an independent body be set up to oversee Homeschooling (made up of home educators and others) – a body which is directly responsible to the Minister of Education (not through the Board of Studies).
2. That Registration is based on a new Information Package through consultation with home educators, under the governance of the above mentioned Independent Advisory Body. (That it should be registration and not regulation.)
3. That Home Educators have access to Educational Support Services which are currently available to those in the school system such as access to the hospital school, travel passes, TAFE, TvET courses, part-time schooling, school libraries etc.

Yours Sincerely  
Norma G Mou