

Submission  
No 270

## INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 7/08/2014

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Partially Confidential

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am sixteen and have been home educated for the last five years. I attended school until halfway through year six, when Dad and Mum decided to trial home education for six months before high school. My younger brothers and I really enjoyed it and our family decided we'd like to continue. We still kept contact with some of our school friends and also made new friends, home educated and non-home educated.

At school my brothers and I had been really shy and quiet. We did not like talking to people we didn't know and although our classmates were nice, we only had a few friends that we played with but weren't extremely close to (best friends). After leaving school I made new friends through a local Kids club, a local drama class, the community centre (which runs hip-hop classes and holiday activities) and gymnastics and basketball classes. I had to talk to new people I had never met before, and my confidence grew. Now I am able to approach any group of kids or adults and introduce myself and join the conversation. I firmly believe that had I continued attending school, I would still be shy and withdrawn.

Sometimes I think I would have liked to be at school, so I could be a part of the musical theatre performances. I love to sing and act. However, I realize that I would have been too shy and would not have been chosen for any roles, except for maybe a part of the choir. I visited the Bankstown Theatre Company and said that I would like to work with costuming and take part in the musicals when they had appropriate roles for a young person. The drama coach encouraged me in this and gave me a tour of the theatre and costume design and storage areas. Unfortunately, when reviewing it with her colleagues, they decided I have to wait until I am eighteen to join in any capacity.

I like home education because we get up early and finish our work and instrument practice, leaving the afternoon free for activities such as sport, home education gatherings, sewing dresses, visiting a local nursing home, reading novels (set and personal choice), art, music theory, teaching flute, youth group etc. I enjoy going for bike rides with my brothers, teaching my 4yo brother to write numbers, teaching piano to my 6yo brother, reading in hammocks with my 9yo brother, sewing with my 11yo brother, hanging with my 14yo brother, spending girl time with my Mum, and going on outings with my Dad. I like spending time with my family, as well as with friends.

We love attending musicals, concerts, shows and Shakespeare. Mum recently booked my brother and me in to see The Phantom of the Opera next year. As I will be seventeen I will no longer qualify for a student concession card and therefore have to pay full adult rates. I will start university the year after. I will continue home educating next year even though the government does not recognise it. I do not think that it is right that my parents' cover the full cost of my education and in addition have to pay adult rates when I am obviously still a student.

Collecting signatures for the petition helped me learn to present my view and start a discussion with people I do not know. It has been very interesting learning about the government and attending Community Cabinet meetings. Watching the various people present their issues, and hearing the responses, has made me realise that I need to be more concerned with what is happening in my community. My family has visited our local MP, Glenn Brookes, twice. He is interesting and inspiring. I hope to take him up on his offer of work experience.

I would like to see significant changes made to the way home education is administered in NSW. I hope to do a degree in music, teach flute and piano, design and present workshops in the creative and visual arts in schools and other functions, get married, have kids and home educate them. This is why it is important to me that home education is well supported, easy to manage, and helps me

provide quality teaching and resources. I see the effect that the new Information Pack is having on my Mum and I hope I will not have to face the same difficulties.

I ask you to put home education under an independent body which will not only register home educators, but will support and provide resources for them. I also ask that all home educated students are provided with the same advantages as school students and for the same ages.

Yours sincerely,