

Submission
No 84

INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

The Director
Select Committee on Home Schooling
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I am currently homeschooling my youngest child. My older children both attended public school. Homeschooling was little known when my other children were growing up. Since having my last child I have spoken with homeschooling parents and carried out much research into the subject. One of my children is a classic example of being let down by the education system and would have benefited greatly from being home schooled.

When my youngest child reached school age I decided to send her to school. By the end of the first term of year one she was unable to read and had very limited maths skills. I removed her from school and began homeschooling. By the end of the year she was reading fluently.

I decided to put her back into school (a different one this time), and she lasted only two terms before I was compelled to remove her once more. She was suffering severe separation anxiety, and was greatly distressed by some of the activities at school as they were in direct opposition to the values and morals we taught at home.

We are now homeschooling very successfully and my child is working above her deemed grade level in many subjects.

Homeschooling must remain a choice for all parents. It is not the mark of a free and democratic society to force parents to have their children educated by a system which often goes against all of their personal beliefs, standards, morals and ethics.

The education system in this country is also very poor and is completely unable to cater for the individual needs of every child. In every classroom children are missing out, usually those at the top end and those at the bottom.

It is impossible for one teacher to attend to all of the needs of 27 children. One thing I noticed in the class was that there was a set amount of time to get something done and if the child hadn't finished they

moved on regardless. This must be extremely frustrating for those children who are unable to complete their work.

On the contrary, with homeschooling, I can tailor the lessons to suit the exact needs of my child. I can spend more time on her weak areas and less on the things she "gets". This to me is a much more effective method of learning.

As Christians we are firmly of the belief that it is our responsibility to educate our child. We do not wish to hand our child over to a stranger who may well have a directly opposing world view to us. With us, our child is always safe, and properly supervised which can't be said of most schools. She is always with people who love her and only want the best for her. She is free from the stress of bullying and from the influence of children and adults who do not share our views. Lets face it, 30 hours a week is a lot of time for children to be subjected to views, language and behaviour that is unheard of within our home.

Homeschooling must remain an option for all Australians, and if it does not, then this would no longer be Australia! We should be free to teach our children whatever we deem necessary for them to lead fruitful lives, in whatever way we believe is best for our child. The state does not own our children and should not be dictating to parents how they are to be educated. I hope and pray the my child does well academically however it is not the be all and end all. I would be happy with an obedient, compassionate, loving, kind child over a Rhodes Scholar any day.

Please consider carefully the wishes of parents who choose to homeschool. It is not an easy path to take, (it would be much easier to drop her off each morning and pick her up in the afternoon), however the easy path is not always the best.

I believe that at this point in time homeschooling is the best option for my child and I truly hope that this choice is not taken away or made more difficult for my family.

One last point, you do not have to be a trained teacher to teach your own children. In this day and age information is abundant and accessible. If you can read, you can learn it's as simple as that.

Homeschooled children can learn just as well as those sitting in a classroom fronted by a "trained teacher".

I know someone who recently graduated with a Masters degree in Education, and in four years of Uni was never taught how to teach. They had to write lots of ridiculous essays but never learnt how to teach a child to read or write. In fact they didn't even know many of the rules of grammar when questioned.

Many homeschooled children graduate years before their peers and also often complete Uni degrees much earlier.

Please consider carefully the wishes of parents such as myself. We have only the best interests of our children at heart.