

**Submission  
No 1**

## **INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date received:** 17/06/2014

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*Partially Confidential*

To the Home Schooling Inquiry

Dear Committee,

I have been a teacher for over 30 years, in government and private schools, in Australia and overseas. When I heard about this inquiry today, I decided to use the opportunity to share thoughts that I have been harbouring for a while.

In brief, I have found the following issues with home schooling –

1. Students that were home-schooled, were considerably behind, academically.
2. Homeschooled students have very little social resilience, and mostly abandon an attempt at school after a short time, to go back to the comforts of home for their schooling.
3. Homeschooling mothers are generally overprotective and possessive of their children, making them fearful and dependent. This at times borders on child abuse.
4. It has always been a mystery to me, how a parent can possibly take on the job of several professional teachers, as well as the complex school administration, - and succeed at it. The inspections by the Board of Studies appear to be rather superficial, - or the students would be better prepared for life.
5. I concede that in some situations, like in remote areas, home schooling is an appropriate option. However, if a school is nearby, it should not be an option for parents. The 'learning by life' philosophy might appeal to some, - but I think that we moved away from that a couple of centuries ago. As even home-schoolers are required to teach the Australian Curriculum, the argument really seems to be about the location, rather than the content.
6. There are also questions about children's rights, and the definition of boundaries between the family and the society. I believe, that our society has an obligation to keep children at school and away from possible dangers, like abusive situations and religious fundamentalism. I have often found that the school rings the alarm bells, before counselors, DOCS, police, etc. become involved. If this option was taken out of the equation, children could be doomed in an abusive situation, with no protection by the public.

In summary, I suggest

- To limit home-schooling to areas, where schools are too far to travel to. Online services will soon be available for those families.
- To increase BOS control and regular visits by liaison officers. It is important that this is not a purely bureaucratic act, as it is with the registration of Independent Schools, but that the families are actually visited, work is sighted, children are interviewed and tested, etc.
- If there was to be a push for more home-schooling, I would suggest that parents need regular training, to justify them functioning as teachers.

Sincerely,