

## INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially Confidential

We homeschooled because the school system did not work. We were asked to leave 6 schools before my son was 7 years old because they lacked sufficient funding for his special needs. He has a high IQ but was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Since funding is related to IQ they could not financially cater for his emotional and behavioural special needs.

Homeschooling was not our first choice. It was actually our last resort. We had temporarily moved to QLD and I enrolled him in Distance Education. The rocking and screaming behaviour that had dominated his school experience resolved once the severe anxiety linked to the school environment and bullying was alleviated.

Although we initially started Distance learning in Queensland, when we moved back to NSW there was a requirement for 21 days face-to-face teaching. For obvious reasons, I would not subject my son to that environment again. We were able to register as home schoolers because I did not have to fill out extensive paperwork to start. I used the isolated childrens payment and carers payment to pay for a teacher to help me write a plan and to buy books. This would have been impossible otherwise because of my reading skills. (This letter is dictated.) However since then, my son is now so improved we no longer qualify for the isolated children and carers payment. His psychologist says he does not have autism anymore.

We went bankrupt because I was unable to work whilst homeschooling. I am a video editor by profession. We had to sell our home and are in the process of moving away from our family and social support. We are relocating to regional NSW to be able to afford to support ourselves and keep homeschooling. We are not putting him back in the school system even though it has cost us our Sydney home.

My son who is now 10, has a love of learning and displays appropriate predictable behaviour. He reads above his age level even though school "professionals" told me he would never read. I would never send him back to school. Our relationship has improved too since I don't have the constant criticism of my son to contend with.

I actually have severe dyslexia and never learnt to read at school. I have been learning to read with my son, although he has far surpassed me in this skill. He has written a book about the Goldfields which is going to be published by Allen and Unwin. He is gifted in writing despite his mothers learning disability. I am very proud of him.

Recently we attended a 3 days writers festival at a Sydney Montessori School, a school which had previously refused my sons enrolment application as they were unable to cater for his needs. (None of the other schools in the area attended this excellent, free event with 30 literary writers because they had to do Naplan preparation. Naplan was still weeks away.) The Principal of the school was so impressed with the engagement of my son with the talk and by the quality of the written work he displayed that he commended me on it. I told him that this school had refused an application for my son. He examined their records and offered me a spot straight away which we refused. When I refused their offer the Principal asked me to give a talk to their staff about fostering a love of learning as the difference between my son and the other children was so great. They even minded my younger children so I could give this talk.

When we started homeschooling my son was 2 years academically behind and 3 years later he is 2 years ahead. I have a year 11 education and I couldn't read but it has not stopped my homeschool success.

The psychology tests cost a lot of money and if my child was in school they would be free. The last time I had them done he was assessed as not having autism but when enrolled in school he was labelled as severely autistic.

I would like to somehow access the isolated childrens allowance either for my son or because of my learning disability to facilitate registration. I don't need the support to homeschool well but I do need it to complete extensive paperwork, if that is what is required.

I feel the system in NSW failed him (and me) so badly that I wonder why I have to be so continually assessed when his schools could just label him as impossible and kick him out.

I would like access to the same resources as teachers can. If I have to do their thing then they should resource my skills.

I do not think the BOSTES are the right people to administer home education and would like instead an independent body who is supportive and helpful for home educators. I would like the option for part time schooling, not for my, son but my other children who may benefit from it.

I am unregistered at present. I was registered, but at the same time as my rego was due we sold and bought a house. Since registration is linked to an address and there is couple of months of flux in the change-over period I could not register. I also do not feel confident that I can produce a reapplication that would satisfy BOSTES. At this stage I do not intend to reregister when we settle into our new home.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Regards