

**Submission
No 257**

INQUIRY INTO HOME SCHOOLING

Name: Ms Monica Brown

Date received: 14/08/2014

My husband and I have been home schooling our two children (age 10 and 12) for 6 years. We originally started the home school journey to ensure they were instilled with good values and a solid education.

It has been an amazing journey as we have come to see so many other benefits that this life style choice has made. Home schooling groups have provided us with help, advice and mentors as our children's educational and social needs change and develop.

My son was diagnosed with Asperger's 2 years ago. I was greatly heartened when the psychologist who did the testing and diagnosed my son's condition assured me that my son had significantly lower levels of frustration for an Asperger's child; she attributed this to the home school environment. Since his diagnosis I have remained in close contact with other families with children with Asperger's. The children who attend school appear to struggle much more with meltdowns and anxieties than those who are home schooled. Thankfully my son has not required medications; all our school attending "Aspie" friends are on medications to sleep and for behaviour management.

We are able to have more flexibility with accessing allied health professionals because we home school. And rather than miss out on school work to get to appointments with the occupational therapist or speech therapist, we can and do adapt our timetable to ensure school work is done and health appointments attended to.

We do not home school to socially isolate however because we home school we need to reach out for more sport and social groups to ensure our children socialise with others. We are blessed to have a vibrant home school group in our area and consequently do activities together; e.g. Art, basketball, Film making. This group is very accommodating of my son's Asperger's, and I greatly appreciate this.

Academically I am happy with my children's' progress and this is affirmed when my children are socialising with their friends who attend school. The Board of Studies and NSW Dept of Education's curriculum is followed and we are checked every 2 years by the Board of Studies.

I think it is wrong that my husband and I can't claim our school costs as a tax deduction. We like our children to have good quality resources and don't mind paying the cost. But do think we should be able to claim. Ironically we also have to pay GST on everything we buy.

Home schooling is not for everyone, I always say that home schooling is a lifestyle choice. One we have enjoyed and hope to continue enjoying.

Feel free to contact me.