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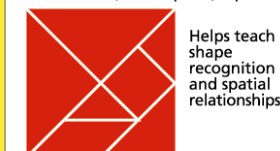
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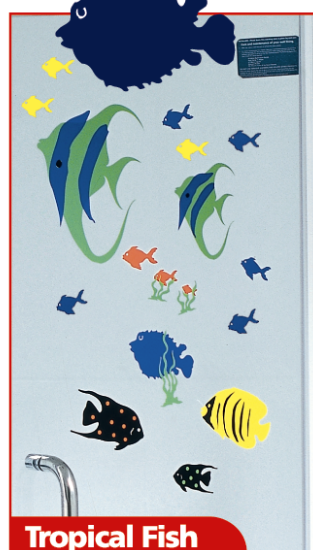
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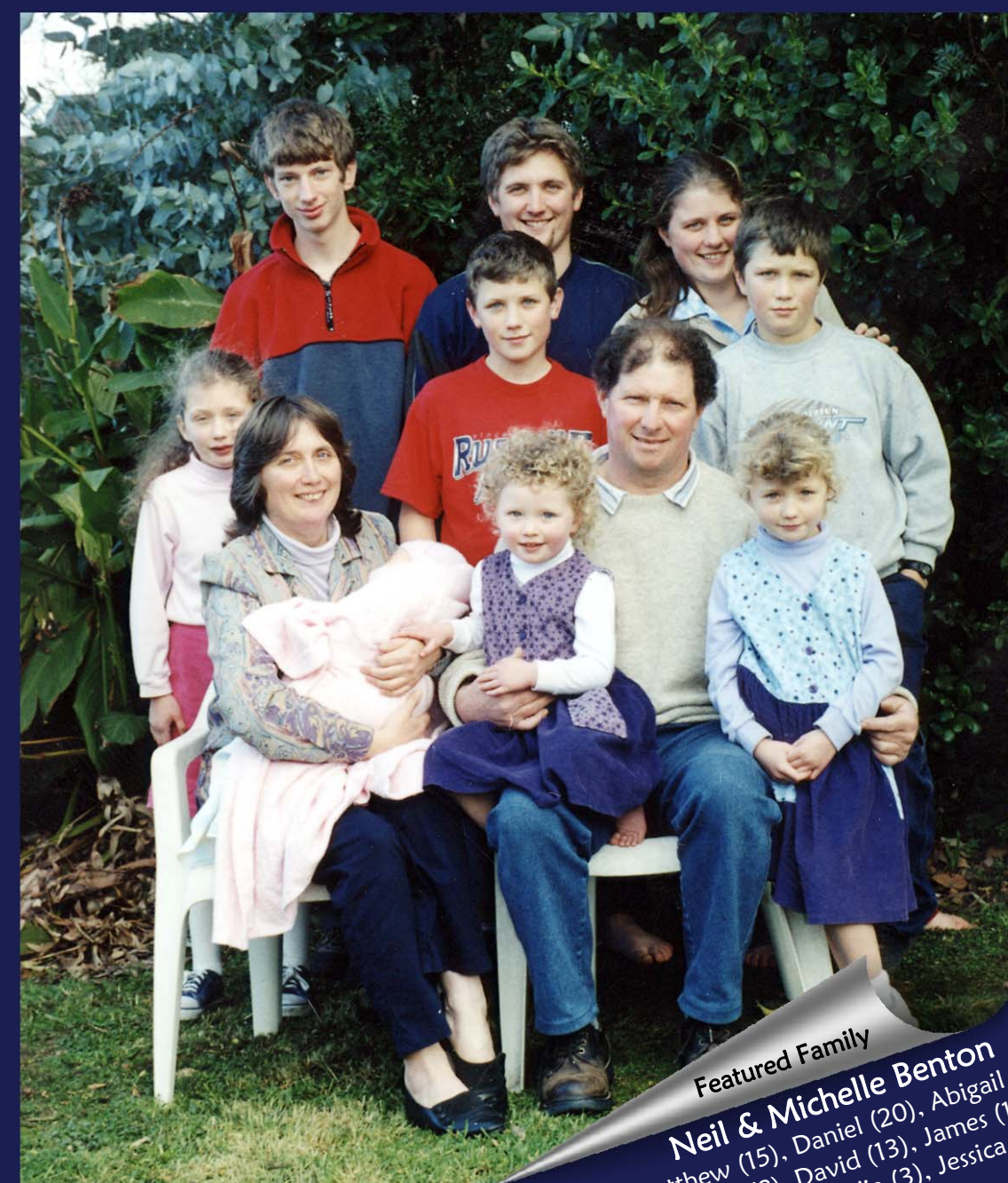
The Journal of Christian Home Schoolers

of New Zealand

Vol. VIII No. 4

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Blessed is the man who fears the LORD, who delights greatly in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth. — Psalm 112:1-2



Featured Family

**Neil & Michelle Benton**  
Matthew (15), Daniel (20), Abigail (18)  
Sharon (8), David (13), James (10)  
Ruth (2mo.), Lydia (3), Jessica (5)





World Views in Focus

Taking Pop-culture for Jesus

by Stephen Johnson



For several years, I played in a praise band. At a previous post I held, we had a knock-down, drag-out, rock & roll revel at 8:30 every Sunday morning. We were good too. All the musicians had some talent. You might be surprised at how I can tear up a piano keyboard.

One of the things that used to amuse us in rehearsals was when we were able to connect praise and worship choruses up to secular counter parts. It was not difficult to do. You know “Shine Jesus Shine” is really Neil Diamond’s “Sweet Caroline.” We used to use an introduction to that song which was a direct quote from Pat Benetar’s “Hit Me With Your Best Shot.” The chorus “All Honor” is really Kenny Rodgers’, “Lady.” “You Are My All in All” is like the Bette Midler tune “From a Distance.” And the list can go on.

Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) always defines itself in terms of the pop culture. The pop culture sets the trend and the CCM artists follow along. Almost every Christian group has a secular counterpart. Recently, I was listening to a CCM station in my area and I could swear I was hearing Alanis Morissette singing about how she loves Jesus. Well, it was not she of course, but boy was the likeness uncanny. She had that little girl, breathy quality and the contrasting guttural abrasive quality; I mean it was all there. She made her voice sort of squeak at the end of phrases just like Alanis does. By the way she sang about him, you would have thought that she and Jesus were romantically involved.

CCM is the secular culture gone to church. We Christians have compromised with the world on this one. I have heard the claims that CCM is going to “take rock and roll for Jesus,” but just the opposite has happened. Not only have we adopted the stylistic approaches of the secular popular culture, we have mirrored it almost to the point of being cheap replications. Replications because we have copied; cheap because it has already been done by more innovative and often more talented musicians than CCM has to offer. Furthermore, what message is it that CCM claims is “taking rock and roll for Jesus?” Unfortunately, our theological categories have been eroded away by our lust for the pop culture. When I listen to CCM I hear hardly any Gospel, and what little I do hear is only a passing reference. There is nothing in CCM about original sin. There is nothing about the atonement. There is nothing about confession, absolution, the sacraments, justification, bearing one’s cross or the character of God. Now when I say nothing, there are exceptions. But they are very few

and far between. And if a song references any of these things it is likely done with inadequate understanding.

CCM does not teach as Colossians 3:16 says we are to do with our music. CCM does not preach in the sense of revealing God’s Word and Christ to our souls. CCM in no way functions as the Word of Christ dwelling in us richly. Oh, CCM does dwell in us. Very easily so. The melodies are trite and the chord and rhythmic structure simplistic beyond description. The words, vapid of significant truth, focus on the immediately accessible. If fast food is unhealthy as a steady diet, CCM is the McDonalds of church worship. It may taste good and may be quick and easy, but it has very little spiritual nutrition. It is popular because it is so much like the world. Besides, the themes tell us things we want to hear. CCM tells us that God understands our weakness and is our therapy to get over it.

It tells us that we can contribute to our salvation and sanctification. It promises self-improvement and that Jesus will help us. It gives us an outlet to “express ourselves” to Jesus. But it does not help us understand scripture, nor does it teach us the deep and important truths of our God, or our faith and salvation. It is a diet that erodes our theological sensibilities and makes us fat with an easy unchallenging Christianity that is foreign to the scriptures.

I would almost rather that young people buy CDs and listen to groups from the popular culture instead of CCM. Because the pop-culture tells us who they are. If they are sadists you know it up front, and you can listen as an informed consumer. If the song is about wanton sex, at least they are saying so outright. Our sons and daughters, taught right and wrong in the home, can learn that secular values are wrong, even if they do like certain secular groups. CCM claims to be doing something it is not. It claims to be giving people Christ and it is not. Young people who listen to the therapeutic, moralistic and theologically errant messages present in CCM are apt to adopt a different gospel than the Biblical one. They are apt to be grossly misinformed about themselves and their sin condition as well as their God and their salvation. Appreciating the styles of certain secular pop-culture musical entities might be far less of a concern than the spiritual damage CCM can cause.

When Christ comes again to judge the living and the dead, nothing will burn up faster than late 20th century popular culture. Yet, many churches lust after it, evidenced by their anxiousness to bring it into their worship services. They say they are trying to convert the culture. But it cannot be converted in this way, and time has shown that efforts to do so can actually hurt us. The American church is about as anti-theological and carnal as it can be. Yet, CCM still claims to be conquering secular music in the name of Christ. When are the blinders going to come off?

(Stephen Johnson is Director of Music at St. Peter Lutheran Church in Norwalk, CT. He holds an MM from Manhattan School of Music and serves as Vice President of the Shandee Music Festival based in New York City and Sullivan County, NY. Used by permission. Stephen may be contacted at sr.johnson@verizon.net)

Editorial



This issue will be reaching New Zealanders just after national elections. They were called by the current government (or perhaps more accurately, by the present collection of parties that have more or less banded together to form a government) early because of the fear that their popularity may drop if they waited until elections would normally be held in November. Two things have shocked me during this election. First has been the amount of support for the godless Labour Party by church goers. What’s more, they are shocked at me calling the Labour Party godless and evil. Well, here they are wanting to fully decriminalise prostitution so that male & female 16 year olds can participate; to allow for homosexual “marriages” and adoption rights as well as access to in-vitro technologies; to ban spanking by parents in the home; to increase sex and sexuality education as well as access to condoms and abortions for school-aged children, rather than teach abstinence; and Helen Clark, Labour Prime Minister of New Zealand, delivered not only a clear declaration of war against Christianity in public life but also a humiliating slap in the face to Queen Elizabeth II, titular world leader of the Anglican Church, when she announced they would dispense with saying grace before the state banquet in the Queen’s honour. Having been raised in the USA I am no royalist, nor do I care for the institution of royalty. But Clark’s move appeared to me to be rude and denigrating in the extreme to the Queen’s position, her status and her office, apart from its anti-Christian nature.

The second shock has been to see again two parties competing for the Christian vote. Two elections ago, in 1996, we saw the Christian Heritage and the Christian Democrats form a coalition so it wouldn’t appear that Christians were running against Christians. At the last election in 1999, there were actually two parties going for the Christian vote, Christian Heritage again and Future New Zealand, although the competition didn’t appear so obvious, perhaps because the names were so different that time. Even so they were both fairly overt about being Christian parties. This time we certainly have both Christian Heritage and United Future going for the Christian vote, although they present themselves quite differently, one being very overt about it, the other somewhat ambivalent at times but presenting a Christian face and policy to a Christian audience.

These issues have provided a ton of opportunities for home educators to discuss with their children some basic, important, foundational concepts about life as Christians in New Zealand. Does being a “secular” country mean we should have no public acknowledgement of religion, such as grace over a state banquet? Is it true that we shouldn’t ram our morals down other peoples’ throats? Can you legislate morality or not? Does legislation reflect a moral code or not? Is there such a thing as neutrality in public life, in politics? Are all politicians neutral by definition, are they all religious by definition, or are some religious and some not? In the public forums of life, is it better to be overtly

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Christian or covertly so? Can you actually be covert and Christian at the same time, or does Christian witness need to be overt to be effective? Is it one way in private life and another in public life, such as politics, or do we need to evaluate each situation as it comes?

How we answer these questions will determine the methods we adopt in our home education curriculum to disciple our own children for Jesus Christ. Evangelist Juan Carlos Ortiz used to say we Christians are Fifth Columnists, meaning we operate like guerrilla fighters and under-cover agents among the lost. Surely much evangelism takes place in everyday interactions, historically and most effectively within families and among close friends. William Booth donned a uniform and marched his loudly-playing brass band of Salvationists straight into the strong-holds of the lost with great effects. The one certainty is that we are all called to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily and follow Him, being His ambassadors on the earth as we seek to make disciples of all nations. We must always be about our Father’s business, overtly or covertly, as long as we’re doing the job He gave us to do!





Those who understand the absolute necessity of the Christian community's recommitting itself to Christian education have no choice but to take on the battleships and heavy cruisers of the humanist establishment on the one hand and simultaneously cope with the flak *from our own people* on the other. Unbelievably our own church leaders are telling us to go ahead and let our children enter the enemy's training ground, the schools, for there our children can witness for the truth. The church leaders won't do intellectual, moral and spiritual battle with the humanist education establishment themselves, but they expect our seven and eight year olds to do so! At best this is ignorance. At worst it is irresponsible cowardice.

Folks, it is simply not possible to save the public school system. We must come out of that corrupt system, just as the children of Israel left Egypt for the Promised Land, and establish Christian schools that are thoroughly Christian, not just cheap copies of the state system with a few Bible verses sprinkled around. Far better still is to bring them home (an institution the Lord definitely established, something I can't say about schools) and teach them ourselves. Jesus Christ did not sacrifice Himself so that we could copy the world's systems, but to be a peculiar people of His own possession, thinking His thoughts after Him. You can know for sure that God did not pour out His wrath upon Egypt and part the Red Sea and lead the people out of there with a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day so that the Israelites could have the fun of packing a lunch for their little ones each day to send them back down that same road to Egypt to go to school! Neither should we render unto Caesar our children who belong to Christ.

(This is a re-write by Craig Smith of a 1997 article by E. Ray Moore, Jr., Th.M., Executive Director of Exodus 2000 found at [http://www.christianity.com/partner/Article\\_Display\\_Page/0,,PTID21938|CHID122759|CII D364225,00.html](http://www.christianity.com/partner/Article_Display_Page/0,,PTID21938|CHID122759|CII D364225,00.html))

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By Delwyn McAlister

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## Teaching Tips

### Doing Science with Your Children

by Peter Rillero



He did not speak until he was three, and when he could talk, choosing words was difficult. His frequent angry outbursts occasionally turned violent. As you might expect, he did poorly in school and his teachers predicted that he would amount to "nothing good." But when taught how to make buildings from playing cards, he spent countless hours at it, constructing some structures 14 stories high. He also enjoyed making jigsaw puzzles and constructing buildings from pre-fabricated blocks. By the age of 10, his skill in building elaborate structures was recognized, and at age 15 he was put into a special school that stressed learning through observation and doing. These early experiences, combined with his unique intellectual gifts, helped this young man -- Albert Einstein -- to become one of the most creative scientists ever to expand our knowledge of the world.

#### The Meaning of Science

You do not need to be an Einstein to value and use science. Most of us grew up believing that science is an organized collection of facts. However, science is better defined as a way of observing and thinking about the world, and communicating these thoughts to others. Experience and research show that young children are excited about science when they are given the chance to "do" science. To give your children a firm foundation in science they should be encouraged to think about and interact with the world around them. Concrete experiences that require the use of children's senses, such as planting and watching a seed germinate, provide a strong framework for abstract thinking later in life.

Many skills that help your children succeed in science also help in everyday life. Observing, inferring, measuring, communicating, classifying, predicting, controlling variables, interpreting data, and developing models are important science process skills recently identified by the National Science Teachers Association. These skills are not just essential for careers in science, but they are important for almost any career, as well as in daily life.

#### When Should Science Instruction Begin?

As a parent, you are your children's first and most influential teacher. The best time to introduce children to science is when they are curious about the world around them. From their first moments of consciousness, children are on a passionate quest to understand their world. Placing interesting mobiles over your child's crib helps focus the infant's attention, spurring the development of observation skills. As children mature, they naturally become more curious about their environment and begin to interact with their surroundings. From simply touching things with their hands, feet, or mouth, they progress to moving objects, twirling spinners, and dropping food from the high chair to enjoy the effects these actions produce.

Science in the early years should be an extension of these natural behaviors. Rich sensory experiences (seeing, hearing, tast-

## Neil & Michelle Benton

of Marton



*Back:* Matthew 15, Daniel 20, James 10. *Middle:* David 13, Neil, Lydia 3, Michelle, Ruth 2mo., Abigail 18, Jessica 5. *Front:* Sharon 8.

Home education has really worked for our family. We are now officially in our 16th year of homeschooling, and although it has never been an easy way of life, it has been very rewarding and usually enjoyable.

I met Neil just after I left school in 1978, shortly after he returned home from travelling through South America. He had committed his life to Jesus Christ three years earlier when he read the Gospel of Matthew, and as a result of his testimony I was also inspired to read the Gospels and became a believer too. I had just begun a three-year stint at Victoria University studying for a B.A in English Literature, and Neil was working as a lab technician at the D. S. I. R. in Lower Hutt.

In 1979 Neil felt called by God to Faith Bible College in Tauranga. After graduating from a year's course, he moved to Ashhurst to take a fulltime position as a voluntary church-worker. I left University with my degree not quite complete, and we were married on the 7th February 1981. Eleven months later our eldest son, Daniel, was born and our lives were changed irrevocably!

Now there are eleven of us. Daniel is 20, currently studying for a BSc in Biochemistry at Massey University in Palmerston North. He has been supporting himself since he first left home at 16 to work on a dairy farm. When he's not working he especially likes to be out in the bush hunting. In addition to his growing arsenal of firearms, he is acquiring a large and eclectic collection of books. In the church he is particularly involved in reaching out to youth and encouraging teens in their walk for Christ. He has read more Shakespeare than any other Benton and spent considerable time learning art. He loves stories, both written and filmed, and in addition to appreciating these, spends time writing his own. His brothers are going to miss the daily soccer skills practices he has organized for them and their friends this last term when he moves into Palmerston North next week.

Abby is 18 and is halfway through a three year Bachelor's degree in Education at Bethlehem Institute of Education in Tauranga. She intends to become a missionary and is honing her natural teaching abilities in preparation. Just now we are looking forward to her return from Tonga where she has been having her first taste of short-term missions. Since her early teens Abby has been involved often in teaching younger children both at home and also in swimming programmes, church and at children's holiday camps. This year she has also taught in a programme for gifted primary-age children on Saturdays. She loves to play the piano and passed her Grade 8 exam before she left home. She chose to do a year's course of French language study extramurally from Massey University as her first tertiary education experience, which she passed very credibly. She also loves literature, crosswords and wordgames.

Matthew is 15 and still at home. He studies hard working towards his current goal of completing a 7th form-level secondary education in mostly sciences. He is not decided upon a career course yet but wants to be well prepared for university study. He is a keen sportsman, currently playing soccer and squash and is always keen on an outdoor adventure. He is an enthusiastic Christian music buff and helps on the soundboard in our church services. He worked regularly in our sharemilking business from the time he was 10 and is a competent milker and dairy herd assistant. Currently he is developing his carpentry skills helping us with renovations to our new house.

David is just about to become a teenager. He has been studying high school science and maths for about a year now and is quickly becoming an independent student. He will be doing a full quota of high school courses by the end of this year. He is also a music fan and is just about to begin to try learning to play the flute. He is a sports enthusiast, playing soccer in addition to swimming, skateboarding and gym. He is especially good at looking after and teaching little children. The latest responsibility he has taken on in our church is to join the crèche supervision roster, and he has done a very impressive job of his turns. He is also often my right-hand man in the kitchen.

James is 10. He is a very outgoing individual who has always shown a particular ability to watch and learn. Neil found his ability to learn and understand what was being done on the farm was notable. He recently enjoyed two weeks of assisting a carpenter doing alterations to our house, showing the same observant interest in a hands-on job. He likes company and makes many friends. In the last year he has also become something of a bookworm.

Sharon is 8. She is especially interested in arts and crafts - it is a rare day that would close before Sharon has completed some kind of artistic project of her own design. She is a natural reader and is prone to read for hours. She is also unusually well organized and often completes much of her regular school tasks with very little prompting from me. She has begun piano lessons and has joined Every Girl's Rally this year.

Jessica is 5 and usually on the move. She loves to dance to music as well as perform all kinds of acrobatic manouvres as she plays. Even as a baby she found it hard to stay still and walked well by the time she was eight months old. She is in the learning to read stage at present and is making rapid progress towards fluency following the *Bannatyne System*, which is a multi-sensory reading, writing, spelling and language programme. Her own goal at the moment is to practice hard to learn how to look after babies so that she can be a good mother when she is grown-up. She told me recently that "God doesn't give us babies because we deserve them, but as a Special Treat." This was all her own thought, and although it is very un-PC in today's society I found it very encouraging.

Lydia is three and a busy and sociable little girl. Finally, Ruth is our ninth, much loved baby.

Our style of home education has developed and changed considerably over the years, but the basic goals we are aiming at have not. We are still home educating firstly because we feel it provides the best opportunity for us to help our children develop a Christian world-view and absorb our social and moral values in the midst of a humanist society; secondly because we want each of our children to reach standards of excellence in academic skills and still be able to develop in creative and practical skills; thirdly because we wish to "socialize" our children in the real world, not in the artificial and child-centred world of a school classroom.

When we began all those years ago, home education did not enjoy the relative popularity it has at present and none of our family or friends thought we were doing the right thing. Indeed, I often worried that we were undertaking a foolish "Grand Experiment", and my children would be the ultimate victims of this folly. Overcoming my inner fears was probably the biggest challenge to our home education for the first eight years or so. I so often felt inadequate and overwhelmed that probably a year didn't pass when I didn't have to mentally revisit the decision. I found that our HE support group was a great help in encouraging one another over these times and to enable me to keep a sense of perspective instead of caving in to the idea that every problem I struck would be solved by sending the children to school. I valued the *Teaching Home* and *Key-stone* for the same reason.

Now that my children are older everyone, myself included, can see the excellent academic results they have achieved, their strong and informed faith, and especially that they are NOT social misfits. Some of our early critics have become open supporters, and I no longer think of sending them all to school after all.

The greatest challenge I face now is simply dealing with the sheer size of my job. Being able to buy our own home in Marton recently after selling our share-milking business has been a big help in reducing the organizational stress, because now we have a lot more space, and the amount of getting out and putting away we have to do is greatly reduced. Being in town has meant that a lot of the taxi-driving I used to do has disappeared (along with the fuel bill!). There are still a lot of people needing my close attention however.

I find Luanne Shackelford's advice in *Survivor's Guide to Homeschooling* very helpful in trying to bridge the gaps between my perfectionist ideals and the realities of a world with laundry, meals, shopping, babies, sickness and interruptions, etc., etc. I have tried various curriculum options over the years - Daniel did some NZ Correspondence School science at third-form level (too little, not challenging enough for the cost) and then we tried Carey College Correspondence Programme for four terms in an effort to reduce the amount of planning I had to do (still had to do lots of planning, plus much more marking than before and had to pay for it all). After that Matthew, Abby, and Daniel did A.C.E. This was to help me have time to teach the little ones as the older ones could work on their own, and to help the eldest two gain a qualification for entry to university. Daniel and Abby did finish their Year 13 Academic Certificates and did use them to gain entry to university. A.C.E did not suit Matthew at all, and I dislike its "predigested" style of teaching where the student is told what to think. Nevertheless it served us well at a time of pressure and there is a lot of good content in it.

My last try at a packaged curriculum was Sonlight 5. I like the ideals stated by the Sonlight authors, and the books are fantastic; but I think I've probably decided that I have to do my own planning, scheduling and marking to be happy, as one of the greatest benefits of home education is the opportunity for each child to have a tailor-made curriculum. Henceforth I'll spend the money on household help instead. My ideals in curriculum are heavily influenced by Ruth Beechick's writing and also somewhat by Susan Schaeffer McCauley's *For the Children's Sake*. I suggest everyone will benefit by reading Ruth Beechick's 3Rs series and its companion *You Can Teach Your Child Successfully*.

None of us regret our decision to home school. The fact that we can see our children's developing faith as it grows and be there to enjoy their progress as parents is great. Our family has been able to become a team with the common goal of God's glory. We have found that when we live together as a family our individual efforts to demonstrate the Kingdom of God to the community around us are enhanced. Opportunities to explain our hope have arisen so often because other people can see the way our family are truly friends with each other and want to know how we think we've come to be this way. Best of all to me is that every day I can see the evidence of God at work amongst us as He enables us to achieve something good for Him.

It should have been no contest. But realizing the gravity of the moment and heedless of their own peril, the smaller American force immediately went into a full scale attack against the vastly superior Japanese. Their unexpected heroism fooled the Japanese into thinking they faced a greater force and had blundered into a trap. The battle inflicted severe losses on the weak American screen, but the Japanese veered off, sparing the landing forces from destruction.

Admirals Kinkaid and Halsey were by no means military incompetents. Halsey in fact is rightly regarded as one of America's outstanding leaders in World War II. Yet their combined strategic errors and failure to coordinate their actions almost led to a serious defeat.

So it is with many of our larger Christian ministries. They seldom talk to one another or coordinate their efforts. Sometimes they act as competitors rather than allies. Frequently they fight battles they cannot win and even if won, would not be of significant impact. Our ministries concentrate on remediation, not prevention. Even the struggle against abortion and homosexuality, important as they may be, are struggles against the symptoms of a Christ-rejecting culture.

Our best ministries are chasing diversions, leaving the San Bernardino Strait unguarded; that is, Christian children by the thousands are totally naked and exposed to the rabidly secular, anti-Christian teaching in the public schools. Just as Kinkaid and Halsey misjudged the intentions of their enemies and were tricked into making serious strategic errors, so today many Christian leaders are off in pursuit of lesser enemies while a major enemy force, the secular humanist left, is allowed free access to our children six hours a day, five days a week, nine months a year. What's worse is that we Christians are paying our worst enemies to inculcate our own children with nonChristian propaganda through our taxes. And who is left to guard the children? Only a few Christian school and home schooling organisations, and a handful of teachers and parents. This is all that is left to face the leviathan government school system, the liberal educational establishment and their allies in most political parties.

These brave few are charging into the teeth of the enemy while many of our best Christian ministries and denominations either remain unaware of what's going on in the schools or are unwilling to face the problem. They are pursing diversions and leaving the most vital battle areas unprotected: the future soldiers of Christ, whose minds are *already* being trained by the enemy.

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It is difficult to convince Christian leaders and pastors of the imminent danger. Some will not take the time to study this issue and become informed, for to do so might compel them to leave their comfort zone. Too many pastors seem content to allow the secular humanists to indoctrinate their children during the week while they urge their members to engage in peripheral battles on Sundays.

watching TV. This over-stimulation may tax their still-developing neurological systems, and that may result in a short attention span and hyperactivity.<sup>8</sup> There appears to be evidence that the approximately seven minute length of featured TV programming between the ads may condition a child to a seven minute attention span. The professional story teller Odds Bodkin, performs before some 10,000 people a year, most of them children. After about seven minutes, he says, restlessness sets in as their inner clocks anticipate a commercial break.<sup>9</sup>

The constant high levels of sounds and rapidly-changing images can condition a child to expect similar levels of stimulation in other circumstances. You probably don't fancy turning your home education endeavours into a show that rivals TV programmes in this way. Your children will be expected to speak, to listen attentively and respond appropriately, to work some problems on their own occasionally, to read and to write. Since none of these contain the same level of attention-grabbing effects of TV's dual stimuli of sound and image, TV-educated can become easily bored and then restless. Anecdotal information suggests that one of the main reasons university professors are introducing power-point and other multimedia (sound and image) segments into lectures is to retain the attention of the TV-raised student. A chalk-on-the-blackboard lecture is less likely to keep students attentive.

Home educators are perfectly placed to give their developing infants and children a wide range of sensory experiences under immediate, loving supervision that is also interpreting, commenting and explaining the experiences. Interaction with a living and loving parent is infinitely superior to the one way traffic of a pre-recorded couldn't-give-a-hoot TV show, no matter how educational it is. Once the child has learned to read and listen actively with comprehension and discernment, able to sift fact from opinion, objective reporting from propaganda, then he may profitably watch selected educational TV shows and videos.

Notes:

1. Based on two articles at [www.limitv.org](http://www.limitv.org)
2. Dunn, J., & Kendrick, C. (1982), *Siblings*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. *Newsweek*, "Your Child's Brain," February 19, 1996, pp. 55-62.
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Tough Questions People Throw Your Way



(Here is one we can throw at our opposition!)  
**Who is Guarding the San Bernardino Strait?**

Let me tell you of the Battle of Leyte Gulf.

Though largely forgotten it was the greatest naval battle in U.S. history. It started as a high stakes gamble by the Japanese, one that almost succeeded, due to the temporary diversions of two of the US Navy's best fighting admirals. A military disaster of great magnitude was prevented only by the heroism of a handful of U.S. skippers who saw the sudden danger and knew what had to be done, even though it meant confronting and being totally outnumbered and outgunned by the might of the Japanese navy. They sailed into the fray with little hope of surviving because they knew the price of inaction or retreat was far greater than losing their own lives and their ships.

In October 1944, General Douglas MacArthur began to fulfill his promise of "I shall return," to the people of Philippines. The campaign to liberate the Philippines opened with the successful invasion of the island of Leyte by the U.S. Army and Marine Corps.

The Japanese then sent a small fleet to the north near Luzon, luring Admiral "Bull" Halsey's main task force away from his responsibility of guarding the northern entrance to Leyte Gulf, a passage called the San Bernardino Strait. Admiral Thomas Kinkaid was responsible for protecting the Americans who had landed on Leyte Island by guarding Suriago Strait, the southern entrance to Leyte Gulf. Each thought the other was guarding the vital northern entrance to Leyte Gulf and the vulnerable landing beaches. This confusion led to Kinkaid's famous message to Halsey, "Who is guarding the San Bernardino Strait?"

On the morning of October 25, 1944, the main Japanese fleet under Admiral Kurita suddenly emerged in Leyte Gulf from the San Bernardino Strait and found no significant American opposition covering the exposed landing beaches. Thousands of American soldiers and marines, along with unarmed transport and supply vessels, now lay unguarded. The only thing between the Japanese and the landing area was a surprised and considerably weaker screen of American destroyers, destroyer escorts, and small carriers, now suddenly facing the superior might of a Japanese fleet of battleships and cruisers.

The Faith of Us Fathers



**Be Unafraid of the Unprincipled**  
by Craig Smith

*When Protestant Christians came to this country they possessed and subdued the land. They worshipped God, and his Son Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world, and acknowledged the Scriptures to be the rule of their faith and practice. They introduced their religion into their families, their schools, and their colleges. They abstained from all ordinary business on the Lord's Day, and devoted it to religion. They built churches, erected school-houses, and taught their children to read the Bible and to receive and obey it as the word of God. They formed themselves as Christians into municipal and state organizations. They acknowledged God in their legislative assemblies. They prescribed oaths to be taken in His name. They closed their courts, their places of business, their legislatures, and all places under the public control, on the Lord's Day. They declared Christianity to be part of the common law of the land.*

*In the process of time thousands have come among us who are not Christians. Some are Jews, some infidels, and some atheists. All are welcomed; all are admitted to equal rights and privileges. All are allowed to acquire property, and to vote in every election, made eligible to all offices, and invested with equal influences in all public affairs. All are allowed to worship as they please, or not to worship at all, if they see fit. No man is molested for his religion or for his want of religion. No man is required to profess any form of faith, or to join any religious association. More than this cannot reasonably be demanded.*

*More, however, is demanded. The infidel demands that the Government should be conducted on the principles that Christianity is false. The atheist demands that it should be conducted on the assumption that there is no God. The sufficient answer to all this is that it cannot possibly be done. The demands of those who require that religion, and especially Christianity, should be ignored in our national, state, and municipal laws, are not only unreasonable but they are in the highest degree unjust and tyrannical.*

— Charles Hodge, in *Systematic Theology* (1871-1873), vol. 3, pp. 345-346.

Gentlemen, although Mr Hodge wrote this 130 years ago about the USA, he makes valid points applicable to NZ. But if he had written this last week, then I would say he understated the case by quite a margin.

We are being *flooded* by all manner of pagan, wick-

edly evil, anti-Christian influences. This is not simply reflected in the numbers of immigrants from nonChristian lands. The Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist, Shinto, animist, communist, secularist adherents who come to stay here occasionally offer the Christian an ally in regards to traditional family values and a desire for advancement through hard work and thrift. Occasionally. However, we must not be surprised if we should find that a Muslim's two sisters are actually his second and third wives; that the Hindu uses this country's virtual abortion on demand industry to eliminate unborn – and unwanted – daughters; that the Buddhists' disregard for the physical realm contributes to the rise in prostitution and infanticide; and that the ultimacy of pragmatism over unchanging spiritual values in them all sees the graft and corruption endemic to the non-Western world becoming common place here as well. Sadly it is the rising tide of *native-born* apostates who are leading these trends.

The real issue we Christian men need to address, as emphasised by Mr Hodge, is not the bad influences around, but the way in which nonChristians want to institutionalise their freedom to publicly express non-Christian thought and morality, and in fact to see both legal and social sanctions favouring such things, while at the same time inhibiting the Christian's freedom to express Christian thought and morality in the public arena.

Isn't it odd how Christian standards of morality, right and wrong, are turned around 180 degrees, stood on their heads by legislation, yet Chrisitans have been convinced we cannot and should not ram our morality down other people's throats? Those who *will* not work are guaranteed food, clothing and shelter, whereas the Bible says to let them not eat. If the thief is deemed too poor to ever pay back what he stole, he is not required by the judge to make restitution, but instead has access to legal aid, community services card, unemployment benefits, sickness benefits or complete care in prison, meaning the *victim* ultimately *pays for his robber's upkeep*. Those guilty of capital crimes are not executed but given by the state 24-hour-a-day care and protection, access to recreation, crafts and education as well as retaining the right to vote. Rather than keeping the marriage bed undefiled, sexual activity of all kinds is viewed as a form of recreation, subsidised by one-stop-shops which give advice, medical checks and condoms for free. Perversions such as homosexuality are raised to a state of honour equalling marriage. Things that are wrong, such as murdering unborn babies, are considered right and compassionate. Things that are right, such as a teacher of history pointing to the redemption in Jesus Christ as the pinnacle and whole point of history, are illegal. And the parent spanking his own child for disobedience, is now seen as wrong and may soon have legal moves made against him.

Look here, this is plain old heathen immorality being rammed down our throats; that is, someone else's non-Christian morality being forced upon us. Why is it OK for the enemy to do this but not for us? Why do we put up with it? It is worse when you think that the state takes money from Christians (via taxation) and uses it



to abort babies and subsidise immorality and irresponsibility. It is just as bad when you realise that we Christians are forced to pay for a totally nonChristian, secular schooling system and teacher training system and in addition are forced to send our children to these places for at least 10 years to be trained up in nonChristian thought, which according to Matthew 12:30, Romans 6:16-23, Colossians 2:8 and others is nothing more than anti-Christian thought. That is, Christians are not only forced to send their children, for whom Christ died, to the enemy to be trained up as atheists, but Christians are also forced to pay for this indoctrination of their own children against them! Why do we still render to Caesar the things that are God's?

Well, praise God, He is helping us home educators to see this more clearly all the time. We are only lacking in confidence, for we listen too much to what the enemy tells us about ourselves, our Saviour and our Faith. They say that mere parents relying on God cannot train up children as Bible believing Christians and still expect them to survive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Listen, men: when the Rabshakeh told the officials of King Hezekiah in the hearing of those on Jerusalem's wall that Sennacherib king of Assyria was going to wipe them out (Isaiah 36); when Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshem were giving Nehemiah a hard time about rebuilding Jerusalem's wall, saying it couldn't be done (Nehemiah 4-6); when Peter and the other apostles were told by the high priest not to preach in the Name of Jesus (Acts 5:27-32), listen: those uncircumcised heathen and those self-righteous church council jokers (with the possible exception of Gamaliel) were simply *not qualified to comment*. What did they know about the faithfulness and omnipotence of God? Zippo. Accordingly, God's people *didn't listen* to God's enemies, but instead *paid attention to their Lord*.

As basic as this is, we easily lose sight of it. We are creatures of this world and are often afraid of the consequences of standing up for Christ and ordering our lives according to His Word. It's tough these days, eh? I mean, we may even have people call us names like "fanatic" or "extremist" or even "narrow minded". And yet it is the secularist and the materialist of today whose minds only acknowledge the narrow physical aspect of life, ignoring the much wider range of understanding and variation a spiritual view of any situation imparts. In addition, these mockers of Christians are also generally only ever interested in the here and now, having no time for the hereafter.

The fact is, of course, Christians are far less narrow minded than the secularist, since we see both the spiritual and the physical sides of life; and the Christians are nowhere near as short-sighted as the secularist, for we see way beyond the here and now, out into God's eternity. We are accused of being "old fashioned" and not "up with the times", when in fact we have the far more superior perspective of *eternity*. Why let their uninformed comments intimidate us?

Mainly because we also let them define the

terms. By narrow minded they mean Christians don't *embrace* the full variety and diversity of thought and lifestyle out there in the modern pluralist society. That is to say, we don't like to tolerate the intolerable. And so it is: the state agents and others can use legal force and social pressure to force Christians to accept fornication, adultery, divorce for no reason, prostitution, homosexuality, unwed parents of multiple children by multiple "partners", non-traditional definitions of "family", etc., as legitimate activities/lifestyles. (The only reason child prostitution and bestiality are not in this acceptable category is because their respective lobbies aren't yet big enough.) Any of these options can be freely taught as legitimate alternatives in state schools (and remember, we Christians are paying for this garbage through our taxes), but one must be extremely careful in presenting Christian Biblical morality, for such instruction in state primary schools is against the law! (See Education Act, Section 77).

The bad guys around us are a bit late to be trying to wipe out Christianity.....about 2000 years too late! Satan did his best then; Pilate also tried to wash his hands of Jesus; but who'd want to be where those guys are today? The Scriptures say repeatedly that every knee shall bow to Him (including our Prime Minister, every member of Cabinet and on down), and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. There is no need for embarrassment, or even timidity, when you're on the winning team. Let's go to it! Let us live it and teach it to our children.


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One could list such beneficial activities for pages. TV, however, would not appear on this list as a useful activity for young children. The difference is that the non-TV activities exploit the most valuable opportunities home educators and parents of young infants have: that of parent-child interaction and of allowing the child to explore his own environment under safe supervision. Playing with toys stimulates brain development. Repeated experiences, whether alone or with a parent, help "wire" the child's brain. Advocates in this area believe TV should not be a part of a child's environment until age five.<sup>5</sup>

### Thinking Skills & Imagination

A crucial element within the skill of thinking is moving from the known to the unknown; that is, working out how to use in new situations knowledge and understanding gained in the past. Real life situations, of which home education is fully composed, requires this constantly. TV does not. In *The Development of Children*, Michael and Sheila Cole report on the work of G. Solomon who found that children who have been raised to do their learning from TV have lower than normal expectations about the amount of mental effort required to learn from written texts. That is, they reckon it should be just as effortless to read books or listen to a teacher's lesson as it is to absorb stuff from the TV, and they are frustrated when they find it is not so. These children also tend to read less and perform relatively poorly in school. Indeed, research shows a direct relationship in preschoolers between amount of TV viewing and academics and social skills: The more preschoolers watch TV, the less well they do academically


and the less well-socialised they are in the first grade.<sup>6</sup>

Jerome & Dorothy Singer conducted field studies on children to see if TV can stimulate imaginative play. They subjected four groups of children to different types of classroom situations; two incorporated TV into the sessions, one was a control with no TV, and the last had no TV but an adult present to stimulate imaginative play. The greatest increase in imaginative play occurred within the last group.<sup>7</sup>

A child must learn to move the eyes back and forth across the page, while holding the head still, in order to read. While watching television, the eyes are fixed on the screen as well as the head being in a fixed position. Many children watch TV for four or more hours a day, learning that information automatically comes into their senses as long as the eyes and ears are all in a fixed position, focussed straight ahead. Otherwise you might miss something. The half-brother of our adopted sons has exactly this problem. From day one this now 12-year-old was plonked in front of a TV as a form of baby sitter. Today, take him for a ride in a car, and he cannot see the animals in the paddocks on either side of the road, for your eyes have to shift laterally to see them. Take him to the zoo, and he cannot see the monkeys in the trees just above his line of sight. When he reads, he laboriously moves his whole head from left to right, rather than his eyes alone.

### Overstimulation

Werner Halpern writes about the potential overstimulation of young children that may result from


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Wendy Capill  
Moriac, VIC  
Australia

### Voice of Sanity

Thank you both for putting together the most encouraging, informative magazine. I am so blessed and encouraged to keep up our stand for Godliness in the home, in every aspect of our lives. The written word is powerful indeed and I've used so many of the articles to encourage others, home educators and non-home educators. Thank you both for your ministry – please be encouraged in Jesus' Name – you are making a difference – a voice of sanity, Godliness and hope.

Nicola Gray  
Renwick

### Enormous Interest

I've just read the latest *TEACH Bulletin* with enormous interest.

Thank you for all the time & research that you put into this publication. Reading it this morning helped me refocus (yet again) which was extremely helpful at the end of a very busy term. I am absolutely reassured that our decision to home educate Sam & Matt is unquestionably the best we've ever taken, and it has also helped me begin to formulate a fresh learning strategy for the rest of this year.

Craig & Barbara, I trust you have a strong sense this morning of how valued you both are, and that your contribution to informing & supporting NZ home educators makes a tremendous difference to that community. Interesting, isn't it, that your publications always seem to arrive just when I am in need of a re-charge!

Loran Reid  
Auckland

### Not Worth the Paper

Being a university lecturer myself (PhD, in my fifth year) and having gone through two university systems (one in New Zealand and one in another country), bluntly, I personally think that the state curricula are not worth the paper on which they are written, although it is useful to have them if only to see what they are doing in schools. The best of them are maths and science because there is an established body of facts about which there are no controversies. Even still, science is very much "a jack of all trades and expert in none"; they touch on a lot of things but never get to do anything in any depth, and the depth is where the real learning about the scientific process occurs. My experiences suggest that the most important attributes students can have are the following: good preparation in English and mathematics; the ability to argue logically; an understanding and exposure to "the scientific method"; be knowledgeable concerning world history and geography. Of these, the first two are the most important.

Professor "G"  
New Zealand

## Parenting Paradigms



### Parents, not TV, Must Be the First and Most Important Influence in Their Child's Developing Brain

by Craig Smith<sup>1</sup>

Both parent-child interaction and the child's own experiences during the formative years profoundly affect two foundationally important aspects of the child's future prospects: the development of the child's brain and the degree to which that child will function to his potential. Most parents seem to know this on an instinctive level, and automatically talk to their infants in *motherese*, a higher-pitched voice than normal<sup>2</sup>. They do this all day, even though the infant only gurgles and coos in response. All peoples world-wide talk to infants in this higher-pitched voice, and indeed it is recognized that infants' brains are pre-wired to take in and de-code sounds until they learn the language – or languages – being spoken. Much of the research reporting these findings has been contained in scientific journals that parents would not customarily read. But in 1996 and 1997, *Newsweek*<sup>3</sup> magazine and then *Time*<sup>4</sup> magazine brought the findings of pediatric neurology to the popular level.

It must be noted that in 12 pages of coverage in the *Time* and *Newsweek* articles, television was never mentioned as benefiting early childhood development. Rather, the waking hours babies spend in front of a TV robs them of the time for parent-child interaction and their own play time. These two activities are crucial to the development of intelligence and imagination. The development time lost to a TV allowed to dominate a family's time from birth through age five cannot be made up in later years. It is crucial for parents to understand this. Certain aspects of brain development only occur during certain ages, and a child who to some degree misses out on the appropriate stimuli during that period may be somewhat disadvantaged from then on.

### Exploit the One-on-One Opportunities

Switch off the tube; scoop baby up for cuddles, smiles, talk and play. Sing to baby, put on classical music tapes and CDs. Play peek-a-boo, number games, hide and seek. Take baby for a tour around the back yard introducing him to everything there: the colours, the smells, the textures and contours; have baby reach out and touch leaves, spider webs, branches, bricks, boards and puddles. Infants love to be held and carried and talked to. They listen. Make this a nightly habit and your child will forever listen to you.

## Bits of Books



### The Politics of Survival: Home Schoolers and the Law, Part 2

by Scott W. Somerville, Esq.<sup>1</sup>

### Home Schooling Takes Off

No one imagined how quickly legal home education would catch on with the general public. No longer did families need to be compelled by ideological or religious reasons to embark on homeschooling. Once the legal barriers to home education fell, a whole new wave of home schoolers appeared. Soon no informed person could dismiss home schooling as a right-wing reaction to secular humanism.

The Florida Department of Education used to ask parents why they chose to teach their children at home. Religious and/or moral concerns were the primary reason for home schooling in Florida until 1993, but "dissatisfaction with public schools" moved into the lead in the 1993-94 school year. Florida discontinued this survey the next year, and no other government agency has been able to gather similar information. (Florida Dept. of Ed., 2001, personal communication.)

For the first time, large numbers of families began to choose home education for purely academic reasons. Home education had long been a way to protest the military-industrial establishment, or to seek a more holistic lifestyle, or to flee the secularized schools. These earlier families tended to view home schooling as a moral necessity, rather than a personal choice. With the new legality and social acceptability of home education however, many newer home schoolers viewed it as just one more choice on the academic menu.

Home schooling today consists of an ever-more-diverse array of American families. Although there is little in the way of reliable statistical data on the changing face of home schooling, it is not hard to identify several new streams that are flowing into the home school movement. Three of the more significant new layers of home schooling are "soccer moms," Roman Catholics, and African-Americans.

### "Soccer Moms"

So-called "soccer moms" are suburban mothers of school-aged children. Politicians know these are important "swing voters" who are not locked into either political party. Bill Clinton strategically deployed a number of bite-sized policy initiatives (school uniforms, daytime curfews, etc.) that were designed to win the

votes of these mothers. But homeschooling is proving to be an even bigger success with these highly motivated mainstream mothers.

Soccer moms are not political radicals. When homeschooling was still a fringe activity, they were not interested. Now that it is acceptable and produces good results, they are willing to try it out. These parents have undoubtedly been influenced by the good press that homeschooling is receiving. Journalists have pumped out a steady stream of articles exploring this intriguing new educational phenomenon, noting the advantages of one-on-one instruction, mastery learning, and parental involvement. When a home schooler won the Scripps-Howard National Spelling Bee in 1997, parents of children in traditional schools began to wonder if their children were really getting the best education possible. By the time home schoolers won first, second, and third place in the 2000 Spelling Bee, and the winner also took second place in the National Geographic Bee, the rush was on.

It is still too soon to tell whether the surge in "soccer mom" home schooling will be more than a fad. Suburban schools have a lot going for them, and home schooling is very hard work. It is possible that these new home schoolers will be teaching their children at home for years to come, but it is just as likely that they will return their children to a more traditional setting. But even a brief experience home schooling tends to change people. Charlene Mabie-Gamble writes about one woman's brief experience of home schooling:

"Joshua will be re-enrolling in school next semester. I have chosen not to return him to the same school he left, because I still feel his education is compromised in that setting. We are currently looking into other options. I feel that home schooling is still a valuable way to educate children, but it also takes a commitment that we, unfortunately, were not able to make. I do not regret my decision to home school my son. Though we learned it is not as easy as we had planned, we also learned a lot about each other and ourselves that we could not have known otherwise; if for no other reason, that learning has made this experience worthwhile. After all, not all of life's lessons are learned in school. (Mabie-Gamble, 2001, p. 55)"

### Catholic Home Schools

Roman Catholic families were initially turned off by the common stereotype of white fundamentalism, but home schooling has finally taken root in Catholic circles. Catholic home schooling may be about 15 years behind the evangelical home school movement, but it is gaining ground at extraordinary speed. Four mutually reinforcing factors appear to contribute to the rate of growth in Catholic circles.

First, the more observant Catholics have been quick to notice that evangelical home schoolers put Catholics to shame when it comes to matters of human sexuality. The Catholic teachings that most offend secular America (regarding abortion, contraception, divorce) are enthusiastically practiced by many Protestant home

schoolers. Protestant home schoolers are some of the most committed pro-life activists, and can often be found side-by-side with Catholic pro-lifers at crisis pregnancy centers or anti-abortion rallies. Instead of seeing home schoolers as an especially threatening kind of Protestant extremist, the more observant Catholics increasingly view them as kindred spirits.

Second, many parochial schools have lost their Catholic distinctives. This article will not attempt to catalog the many different pressures that affect parochial school systems as they try to serve an increasingly diverse population, but the net result is that traditional Catholics sometimes feel the parochial schools are becoming more and more like the secular public schools. This is particularly true in the sensitive area of sex education. Home education provides Catholic families a way to guarantee a distinctively Catholic education.

The growth of Catholic home schooling has brought this trend to the attention of the Vatican, which has responded favorably. This constitutes a third factor in the explosive growth of Catholic home education, since the most devout Catholic families are usually those who are most influenced by the opinion of the Pope.

Finally, parish priests have begun to notice the distinctive lifestyle of the Catholic home schoolers. When a mother attends daily Mass with all her children, including children of school age, her priest is bound to pay attention. Though there are some exceptions, the reaction to home schoolers at the parish level has been quite positive. This fourth factor also helps spread Catholic home education.

This is not to say that Catholic home schoolers encounter no opposition within their church. They are supported at the highest level of the hierarchy, and are usually encouraged at the parish level, but there is significant resistance to home education at the middle levels of the church structure. In general, parochial school administrators are far from sympathetic to home schooling, and few American bishops are openly supportive of the movement. Home schoolers are a dynamic new force within American Catholicism, and it is too early to tell whether they will become “mainstream” or “marginal” within that church.

### African-American Home Schools

It is riskier for African-Americans to start home schooling than it is for other families. Grace Llewellyn is a teacher-turned-unschooler who wrote *The Teenage Liberation Handbook: how to quit school and get a real life and education*. She was surprised by an invitation to talk about it at a public high school. Llewellyn writes:

“The final bell rang, and most of the students hoisted their textbook-filled backpacks and went home. But several stayed and clustered around me, their eyes intense. Among them stood a young man whose voice wavered between resignation and longing. He told me his name was Michael. “I totally see what you’re saying about school, how it’s a waste of time,” he said. “And I

know there’s a lot more I could learn and do on my own. But I can’t do it, because I’m black. I walk into some business to get a job, they want to see my diploma. I tell them I educated myself according to my own interests, and it’s over. They say, ‘Right. Another dropped-out nigger.’” (Llewellyn, 1996, p. 12)

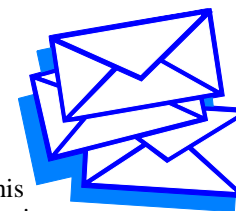
Yet black families are choosing home education in increasing numbers. Llewellyn suggests several of the reasons why African-American home education is on the rise:

“While I’ve worked on this book, people have often asked me why black people homeschool. Having only communicated with about twenty families in the process of editing this book, I’m hardly the expert. What I do know is that homeschoolers, in general, are an extremely diverse bunch. People, in general, homeschool so that children can learn more naturally and develop their unique talents. They homeschool to lessen the possibility of children being shot with a gun at school. They homeschool to maintain close family relationships. They homeschool to avoid the brutal school socialization process, which often turns thoughtful, unique children into rude conformists. They homeschool to honor their children’s individual learning styles, which are not always compatible with sitting in a desk and shutting up. They homeschool to provide more challenging and thorough academic educations. They homeschool because they are tired of the racist, sexist propaganda that masquerades as truth in history textbooks. They homeschool to break down artificial barriers between life and learning. They homeschool for other reasons too, concerning health, religion, geography, and self-esteem.

“As the writers in this book show, African Americans homeschool for all these reasons and then some. Some homeschool because they see that racial integration in the schools has not always worked for their benefit. (Among other things, they feel that it has disrupted community life and thrust children into hate-filled classrooms where few people encourage or hope for their success.) Some homeschool because they see that schools perpetuate institutionalized racism. Some homeschool because they are tired of curricula emphasizing Europe and excluding Africa. Some homeschool because their children are overwhelmingly treated as problems in schools, and quickly labeled Attention Deficit Disordered or Learning Disabled. Some homeschool because black kids drop out of school at much higher rates than white kids. Some homeschool because they want to continue the Civil Rights struggle for equal educational rights, and they feel that they can best do so by reclaiming their right to help their own children develop fully-rather than by working to get them equal access into conventional schooling.” (Llewellyn, 1996, pp. 14-15)

Black families have many reasons to consider home schooling, but they face opposition from inside the African-American community. Black grandparents remember all too well what it cost to get their children into the public schools, and they are not eager for those children to pull their grandchildren out.

## Letters



### Keep Telling Us This!

Thank you so much for writing this (below). I know others will appreciate this article. I love the way you wrote it in the form of priorities for your homeschool. That is so important, there are so many choices out there that we need to choose the most important things first and not get bogged down in trying to do it all.

You wrote: “Your home education programme, almost regardless of what it is, has vast advantages over even the most gifted of teachers in a classroom simply because it is you, their mum, doing one-on-one for as long as you like, any way you like, any where you like, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. With such a conviction you will be *spilling over* with the kind of confidence that stirs up not only your own children but nearly everyone else you engage in conversation to want to know more! You are a picture of excitement, enthusiasm, conviction and confidence.”

Amen sister !!! Keep telling us this!!! There is nothing that robs the joy faster than fear of not doing it all, worry/guilt over not doing it all and anger (frustration) that we are not doing it all. We need to enjoy our children. I want them to remember that we had fun learning together, that Mum and Dad liked homeschooling and would not want to send them to school because I would miss them too much! I need to keep working on this!

Thank you for the encouragement.

Tarnya Burge  
Manurewa

### A Bastion

*Keystone* is a great magazine and somewhat of a bastion in this age of sliding values!

Merle Duxfield  
Pongarua

### Always Take Heart

I just wanted to say how much I appreciate your regular *Keystones* and *Teach Bulletins*. They are always a highlight! I appreciate your sourcing of stimulating and encouraging articles from all sorts of places. Sometimes the encouragement and affirmation is so very timely, especially after a patch of doubt or inadequacy!

Thank you for the time and effort you both put into your ministry to home-educators: we value your diligence, dedication, well-balanced approach, sense of humour, and desire to serve the Lord’s people. We pray that the Lord will richly bless you and your family, and that you will be given the necessary strength and inspiration for each day.

At times it is easy to feel unprepared and inadequate for the task of teaching and shepherding little ones. But I always take heart when I read your articles on the benefits of reading, including reading aloud, the benefits of reduced TV and computer games etcetera, etcetera.....You have a ministry of encouragement to us all!



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- need these items anymore. Of course you are using the “wait time” to train them to worship.
- \*No going to the toilet unless there is a medical need.
  - \*Help children and toddlers prepare for worship during the silent confession as well - young children can be quietly guided in this
  - \*Older children can take notes.
  - \*Younger children can draw picture portraits of the sermon, but watch that it does not turn into doodling.
  - \*Give young readers a list of key words for them to tick each time they hear the words spoken during the sermon.
  - \*Parents work at the follow-through of training the child to worship: -- We use our daily devotional time around the table to train the children how to behave as they should in Church. One will have the toddler on his/her knee and whisper, “We are praying now,” and we expect the toddler to pray as well. Use the same forms of discipline around the table as in Church. When the child’s behaviour is unacceptable, it is taken out of the dining room or church, dealt with, and brought straight back into church. Otherwise the child may see misbehaviour as a passport out of worship services, exerting his little will on you.
  - \*Encourage children to sing or hum during singing no matter how young, just as at devotions at home. Make sure *you* are singing with gusto, according to the mood of the hymn.
  - \*Trace a finger along the words of the hymn while singing - we also point out words the child already knows, and he will sing them while humming the rest.
  - \*Sing church favourites at home so the children learn more quickly and can join in the congregational singing earlier.
  - \*Have children stand up and sit down with the rest of congregation.
  - \*Trace a finger along Bible passages as it is being read.
  - \*Train the children to make the preacher’s prayers their silent prayers. Train them to pray themselves.
  - \*Help the children listen to the sermon. Encourage them to listen by directing their attention to specific things: nudge and point; whisper, “Did you hear that?”, “Remember reading about that last week?” If children have questions during the service, write them down to answer afterwards if they require a long answer.
  - \*Help the children see how the preacher’s point is relevant to them.
  - \*During training time sit near the back or near doors so a quick exit to discipline or whatever is easy.
  - \*Older children can write down their own questions to be answered after Church

#### After Worship

- \*Children should stay near parents not running and bumping into older folks.
- \*Parents’ talk should always be edifying.
- \*No complaining about the service or other people.
- \*Practice hospitality by inviting others to lunch.

#### At Home After Worship

- \*Watch the talk in the car on the way home from worship - no complaining about the service,

minister or people there, but let our talk be of how wonderful it was to be able to worship the Lord with His people.

- \*Go over the sermon with family and guests at lunch - review the highlights.
- \*Ask questions. If we expect our children to answer questions on the sermon afterwards, we’ll be surprised at how much they remember and how they begin to enjoy listening to the sermon.
- \*Visit those prayed about during the service and continue to pray for them as a family. Children will often remember better than we do those who need prayer.
- \*Do sermon post-mortems. Dr D.M. Lloyd-Jones says in his book *Life in the Spirit in Marriage, Home and Work*, “What are parents to do? They are to supplement the teaching of the church, and they are to apply the teaching of the church. So little can be done in a sermon. It has to be applied, to be explained, to be extended, to be supplemented. That is where the parents play their part.”

### They Don’t Understand the Sermon

JC Ryle in *The Duties of Parents* says, “What I like to see is a whole family sitting together, old and young, side by side, — men, women, and children, serving God according to their households.” There’s that idea again of corporate worship being a service rendered to God, rather than something we attend to get something out of. He answers the objection often raised that little ones cannot understand the sermon by showing how neither Samuel nor the Apostles seemed to understand, yet they did their duty (1 Samuel 3:7, John 12:15).

Do we go to church or do we go to worship? As Castleman says, “God must be real in our experience of faith. He must be known and encountered. We cannot be satisfied with worship that simply fulfills social and religious obligations.” It is clear also that we *will not* be satisfied with worship that simply fulfills social and religious obligations.....our children will not stick around if that’s all it is.

There are already countless activities specifically for children. But corporate worship is unique. This is where children belong: within the family of God, as one body, worshipping Him. Like home education, there are many wanting to break it up, who insist on special programmes just for children. But remember, worship is to serve God, not to serve children, although of course children’s best interests are served as they perform with you this service of worship.

Christian parents, brothers and sisters in Christ, there is no greater calling in our lives as Christians than to raise up the next generation of faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. Surely within that calling, the most noble, the most necessary, the most foundational task is to ensure our children have been thoroughly trained to properly, earnestly, honestly, from the heart and soul and mind and strength, offer their reasonable service, their spiritual worship to God the Father Almighty in the name of His only begotten Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Despite this, home education is catching on within the black community, and each new African-American home schooler opens the door for many more. As Grace Llewellyn puts it:

“Later I thought back to the conversation, and I wished that I had also been able to say, simply, “Well, Michael, black people homeschool too.” But at the time I didn’t know whether that was even true.

“Now I know that it is true, and that many black people homeschool to save themselves from a system which limits and destroys them, to reclaim their own lives, families, and culture, to create for themselves something very different from conventional schooling. I also know that the numbers of these people increase every year, and-especially when I remember my first year of teaching-I hope the numbers will continue to increase, by hundreds and thousands. I remember the horrifying smell of human energy and talent rotting in all schools, any schools, but especially in the mostly black, badly funded schools where I substitute taught in Oakland, California. I remember a Friday when the school secretary told me to plan on coming back Monday because the chemistry teacher liked to take Fridays and Mondays off. I remember walking past vice principals’ offices that were bulging with young men who had been kicked out of class. I remember the soft eager eyes of preschoolers and the hard cynical eyes of high school seniors. I remember the principal who introduced me as a long-term sub for a choir teacher, telling the class it didn’t matter what they thought of my teaching, the state had given me a certificate (though in English, not music) and that’s all they needed to know.” (Llewellyn, 1996, pp. 13-14)

If governments don’t fix the problems with predominantly black schools, families will. They will pull their children out and teach them at home.

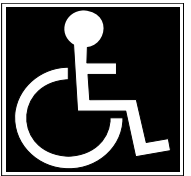
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# Learning Disabilities



## He’s So Busy Learning We Forgot To Do School! (Part 1)

An article for parents of curriculum disabled children  
by Tom and Sherry Bushnell

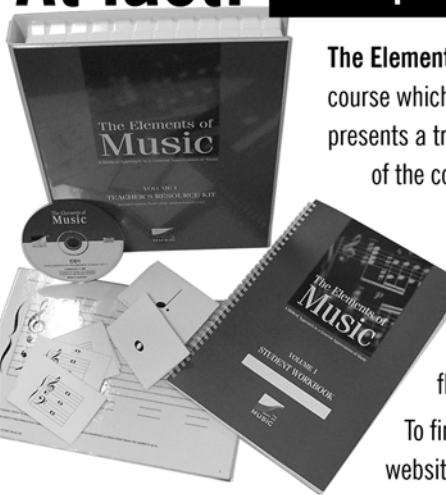
Our second son has such an engaging smile that most folks can’t help smiling back. He is a no-nonsense fellow that prefers how-to books instead of make believe stories.

The fall he turned seven, as a newer homeschooling mom, I’d done such a good job pumping him up about learning how to read, that every week since August he’d been asking, “Is it time for school yet????” The day finally arrived one sunny September day. We sat down to read and had a wonderful day of reading about letters, making the alphabet sounds, counting and listening.

Long about dinner time my usually sunny son’s countenance was cloudy and concerned. In fact, all evening he looked, well, disappointed. As we tucked him into bed he looked up imploringly saying, “I thought you said I was going to learn to read today?” Sigh. As a homeschooling mom I got an “A” for building up an exciting base for his reading career. I got an “F” for helping him understand reality. We talked for a while, and by the time he was nodding off, his sweet smile was back again.

We’d purposely delayed formal learning until age

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seven because we felt, as Raymond and Dorothy Moore feel, it is “better late than early.” But little did we know how long it really would take our son to read.

A great proponent of phonics, Mommy was armed to the teeth with phonics games, an inexpensive but excellent program, phonics books and videos (teaching almost anyone to read, they claimed). By the end of our school year after months of spending ½ hour each day, we finally mastered the letters.

Over the next summer we decided it was the fault of the phonics program and acquired a new phonics program (*Hooked On Phonics*). On the first day of school that year, our son listened to the program for 10 minutes, and I knew it wasn’t going to work for him. The voice on the tape grated him, and he was totally closed to learning to read if she was going to teach him.

Not giving up, we purchased another phonics program. By the end of the next year, we had mastered the letters, sounds and even a few small words!

By the time he was 10, we had gone through more phonics programs than we want to remember. He was reading only short vowel words. Handwriting and spelling were torture.

When Josh was 10, we used Samuel Blumenfeld’s *Alpha Phonics*. We felt we were finally making some progress. He was getting older and found most phonics programs babyish. This one he liked. That same year he found a book that went along with his interest in log homes. It was an expensive book and we couldn’t see buying it, especially since he really wasn’t reading yet. He promised he would learn to read if only we would buy it for him. We compromised. If he could read half the book, borrowed from the library, we’d buy the book for him. He earnestly kept at that book, learning to sight read. All day, all evening, anyone that could read was his target. “And what does this word say???” This word now? And what does this word say? In six weeks he was reading at a sixth grade level and comprehending everything.

We were blown away. All those phonics programs, all those hours of patient instruction. What happened? Once again, mommy got an “A” for enthusiasm, but an “F” for observation. We were busy conquering a reading program and not learning to read.

Ah yes, a little more about Josh. He is good in math; that is solving problems in his head. Worksheets were (and still are) pure torture. Does he spell? Enough to get by. He uses the spell checker when he has to write a letter. His hard time with academics is just a very small part of Josh. We saw that in order to complete Josh’s preparation for service for the Lord, something was going to have to change. Working with his hands is his gift, not academics.

This article is all about learning. No, it’s not about molding a child into a scholastic wonder or “how to succeed in a curriculum.” It’s about shaping a unique learner for a life of loving to learn. It’s not about fitting a square peg into a round hole, it’s about finding the

right spot to fit comfortably.

When Josh was 10 and Jake was 12, we put the desks away. For good. We used the kitchen table. We made academics a small part of our day as a family, not the major focus. We spent one hour a day doing school after breakfast, Bible and chores.

Our whole concept about meeting educational goals changed when we sat down organizing long term goals for our older sons. Education means different things to different people. For Josh it means teaching him to teach himself. It means fostering in his heart a love for learning and preparing him in a trade (or a variety of trades), so he can support his family if God blesses him so.

We decided to take a new approach with Josh in particular, but we jumped in with both older boys. We wanted our experiment to be as real-to-life as possible.

This is what we did. Being self-employed, we saw the benefits of teaching our sons to run their own business. For each one, we created a checking account (complete with checks) on the computer. We ordered all the forms (for real) from the state for starting a small business. Each of our sons thoughtfully created a name for his business. Josh’s was Lincoln Log Homes and Jake’s was Bushnell’s Welding Company. They made business cards, ads and we studied the whole realm of advertising, including how to sell your product. This took us months and we delved deeply, reading books and manuals. Some of the subjects we covered were: starting your own business, designing ads and business art, how to treat customers, sales, business ethics, banking and loans vs. paying cash, budgeting, and the intricacies of how accounting works plus a whole lot more. This covered pretty much the first year. These businesses became VERY real to Jake and Josh. We discussed these subjects impromptu and at great length sometimes into the evening.

Josh’s purpose for education and learning had great meaning for him. He had tremendous personal motivation for remembering these important facts about owning his own log home business.

By next fall, Josh (11) had built a miniature log home from straight tree branches, peeling each “log” carefully and fitting them together, learning the basics of the different notches and styles of how to build log homes. He ate, played and dreamt building with logs. His far away looks no longer meant, “I wish I was a million miles away,” it meant, “I am building with logs in my brain, rehearsing how I am going to do this later.”

Later came much earlier than Mom had anticipated. Soon Daddy taught Josh how to use a chainsaw. It was love at first sight. After several cords of firewood, cut up with record speed, as now there were 3 chainsaws going that fall, we started talking about finding some real logs to practice carving notches.

By God’s providence, Daddy came in contact with some good-sized pole ends left over at a pole yard. A

ence and holy fear during worship. Then our children can learn from our example. We do not want to be self-consciously wondering what others are thinking of the children’s behaviour nor full of resentment and frustration at having to control these unruly children when, before they were born, we could look forward to an hour of peace and quiet in the pew. Such activities of the mind are called “stinking thinking”, and are not a pleasant odour to bring before the altar of God. We cannot expect our children to worship, we cannot train them to do so, if we are having difficulty worshipping ourselves. Work at it!

Too many adults are simply being quiet in church, just as they were taught, but tragically remaining unmoved by the holy presence of God....and passing that on to their children. Training children to worship while there in the pew can help parents pay more attention to the worship service as well. Pastors of even the quietest congregations love it when to the rhetorical questions of Isaiah 6:8, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?”, a wee five year old will answer, “I’ll go if mum will let me!” The little one was paying attention as well keen to be involved. Active listening may include a judiciously placed and clearly audible, “Amen!” in response to a point made by the preacher, as well as the usual positive body language and facial expressions.

Work at Our Worship

Though “worship” in the dictionary follows “worn-out”, “worry” and “worse”, let not your Sunday morn-

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ing follow a similar sequence. The noticeable drop-out rate of older children is clear evidence that we need to do more than just get them to the church on time. Let us follow the fourth commandment: “*Six days you shall labour and do all your work*,” but the seventh is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.”

During the week

- \*Talk about preparations for worship
- \*Memorise and review scripture relating to the sermon
- \*Memorise the creeds, 10 commandments, prayers, etc.
- \*Teach children world geography and current events so they’ll recognise those items during the congregational prayers.
- \*Use family devotions as a time of training for worship (more on this later)
- \*Teach youth the meanings behind Psalms and hymns
- \*Plan big parties for Friday nights rather than for Saturday nights.

Saturday

- \*Clean our homes
- \*Cook for Sunday
- \*Prepare clothes for Sunday (1 Samuel 16:7)
- \*Dress for worshipping God, not impressing others
- \*Wear comfortable clothes that will not be a distraction
- \*Wear modest clothes that will not be a distraction
- \*Prepare the tithes and offerings of yourself and your children. Train the children to be cheerful givers of their own money -- 10% of \$1.00 earned is important to God
- \*Prepare attitudes for Sunday - build a joyous expectation for worship
- \*Have an early night

Sunday morning

- \*Don’t sleep in, causing Sunday morning to be rushed
- \*Have Psalms and hymns playing in the background
- \*Have a good breakfast so children are not hungry during Church
- \*Make something special for breakfast
- \*Restrict liquid so children won’t need to visit the toilet during service
- \*Allow plenty of time to arrive and settle in at Church unrushed
- \*Ensure conversation in the car leads into the worship of God
- \*Before going into worship take children to the toilet

During Worship Service

- \*Family sit together
- \*Older women and older childless couples can help younger families in training by temporarily having certain children sit with them
- \*Children sitting with other children doesn’t help with training but only winds them all up.
- \*Aim to have no toys or colour-ins to keep them quiet and occupied. Try starting by making them wait for 10 minutes with no toys or colouring-in, then each Sunday extend the wait time longer until they don’t



as we prepared for her birth. The leader there made a comment that has influenced us ever since. She said, “Your children will grow up in spite of you.” We looked at each other and decided right there and then that we did not want our children growing up in spite of us. The comment reflected a nonChristian worldview wherein you just sort of take what comes and hope for the best. No, we would be involved a great deal in the training of our children. We would claim God’s promise in Proverbs 22:6.

As this promise indicates, we need to be training up our children in every area of their lives. Training them implies discipline and methodology, goals and objective standards. This needs to take place in every area, not just in some and hoping they’ll “turn out” (a baking term used in kitchens) ok in the other areas. And among all the areas of training, what greater one exists than training children in the worship of God? It is an activity with everlasting consequences. It is to be our all consuming vocation in this life as well as in the life to come. Psalm 111:10 tells us, “His praise endures forever.” Revelation 4:8-11 indicates that in heaven they do not cease to sing, praise and worship God, for ever and ever, Amen!

### God Values the Praise of Children

We know this from passages like Matthew 19:13-15 or Mark 10:13-16, but we often have quite a sanitised and idealistic picture of Jesus blessing the little children, all standing orderly before Him, each in his or her own national costume....why the disciples would object to this is somewhat problematic, but we like the scenario nevertheless. Karl A. Hubenthal in *Children & Worship* says that this scene was possibly far from tranquil. These women and children may have walked a long way. The children were probably hungry, thirsty, tired, needing a change, one or two infants even screaming their lungs out. Yes, this raises implications for an orderly and reverent church service, which is why older folks need to be patient with parents as they train their children to worship. Maybe they could reserve the pews at the back or near the door especially for such families. Some churches have a sound-proofed room with speakers and a large window so little ones in training and their parents can still be part of the worship without unduly distracting others.

### The Challenge of Worship

Think about it for a moment....exactly how are we training our children when it comes to worship? “Sssshhhhhh!!!! Be still!!!!” For many, that about sums it up. It perfectly describes the training Craig had. And Barbara hardly went to church. So we two are only just now starting to understand what it means to train our children to worship. Robbie Castleman’s book *Parenting in the Pew* showed us the vast difference between “going to church” and “going to worship”. When children are not trained to worship, “going to church” is about your only option. Castleman writes, “For many

parents, sixty minutes in a pew with a squirmy toddler or a sulky teen can seem like forever! Worship can be the farthest thing from our minds when children are distracting.”

Wasn’t it Loyola of the Jesuits who said, “Give me the child until he is seven and I’ll give you the man”? James Dobson in *Dr Dobson Answers Your Questions* also says that these first seven years are “prime time” for accomplishing the most important aspects of child training. We Christians must be doing something wrong in our training to worship, for we know exactly what

Robbie Castleman means when she mentions squirmy toddlers and sulky teens. And haven’t most of us seen the heartache of teens who just plain refuse to come to church anymore? Sunday morning with children in the pew can be the longest hour of the week, or it can provide the very best preparation for eternal joy. To ensure it is the latter, we must actively train our children to *worship*, not just lessen the stress of that hour in the pew.

Castleman says, “Worship is not a refueling to get us through another week. Worship is not a system of traditions built up over many years of congregational life until everyone feels comfortable. Worship is not a time to unwind, relax, tune out or take a mental vacation. Worship is not an hour of Christian entertainment. It is not what makes us good people, faithful Christians or successful parents. Worship is the surrender of our souls to a God who is jealous for our attention, time and love. Worship is a challenge. With children it is a bigger challenge.”

We need to get our thinking right. Is going to worship primarily for our benefit or God’s? Romans 12:1 says, “Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” or “your reasonable service.” Worship is our reasonable service....that’s why it is called a worship *service*. But as living sacrifices, everything we do is to be an act of worship, our vocation being our calling from God, whether we eat or whether we drink, we are to do all to the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31). Castleman says, “Worship is the exercise of our souls in blessing God. In the Pslams we read or sing, ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul!’ However, our chief concern is usually ‘Bless my soul, O Lord!’” We need to change this kind of thinking. Worship is for God’s glory, not our benefit!

It is a true saying that today people worship their work, work at their play and play at their worship. Christians, we need to work at our worship. With children we will need to work harder. It is just like excelling at anything, says Castleman. “Great baseball players are not made in the bleachers. Ballet dancing is not learned by remote control. Children learn to worship by worshipping — through participation, practice and patience.”

We parents must personally be full of anticipation before worship and full of joy and celebration and rever-

ence when we worship. Our children must be full of joy when the dump truck full was delivered to our shop.

These logs were a dream come true for Josh. He stopped day dreaming and went to work. His textbooks that fall consisted of his Bible and Monty Birch’s *Log Home Manual*. We also acquired B. Alan Mackie’s books, plus catalogs, videos and manuals that supported this interest.

Over the spring and summer, Josh built a 10 by 8 log building from huge logs. (We brought the building with us to Idaho and have it standing today as Mommy’s chicken coop!)

Now almost 15, Josh much prefers the building part of creating with logs and not the business end such as doing taxes and keeping track of his expenses. He’s learning to save receipts carefully. Each tool is important to him as he earns it with his own money.

He has diversified in interest somewhat. Over the winter he really got into draft horses and farming with these huge critters. He does plan to get a team some day.

We have found that for our family, using real life to meet educational needs, surrounding our children with learning opportunities and immersing them in a steady diet of character building and real life application has worked for us.

We shudder to think what would have become of our sunny-dispositioned Josh if we had majored on scholastic academics instead of fanning to life his talents. The public school was definitely not the place for our family, but now we can really see why, as the years have unfolded.

Our experiment in the school of real life has now formed into our way of life. We do not separate school, play and work. Even our play has become real, as we encourage our younger children to practice what they want to become when they are grown. We do not play kill, steal or cheat games. Our older boys grew up so fast. We can clearly see that we have only a few small years to impart wisdom and good habits. These habits include getting along with our brothers and sisters, working together, keeping on when it gets tough, being a man or woman of God now (not later when we grow up). What about our special needs children? Jordan is 12 years old and has Down syndrome, Sheela 11, blind from birth, and Sherlynn 7, with autism and cerebral palsy, are just as much a part of this lifestyle as the rest of our crew. In fact they benefit the most from this style of learning.

Our family philosophy of putting others first (which we do not always do, unfortunately), along with a “self-feeding” attitude towards learning instead of “spoon-feeding” information has been a good combination for us.

So in light of this, are learning disability labels necessary? We feel that in order to secure government funds or to go to college they would be.

BUT, if a family chooses to disengage from the system and feels comfortable coping with learning differences, labels are not necessary.

We don’t make a big deal about our learning differences. Sometimes our lack of prowess in the scholastic level becomes plainly apparent to others.

Sometimes we still find ourselves cringing inside when discussing the best spelling program, math levels, and preparing for college. Because we have not conquered textbooks of information and workbooks by the dozen, by the world’s standards, perhaps we might be lacking in meeting the generally high homeschooling standard, but homeschooling failures we are not. After years of real struggle, seeing the good attitude in our son toward learning, and watching him enjoy the happy feeling of success that being proficient in a skill brings, assures us that the path the Lord has led on is right for us.

The word unschooling seems to bring such negative connotations, even evoking strange reactions from some homeschoolers. Those who have fought for homeschooling rights in the early 70s and 80s have carved a high standard for homeschooling, patterning it after education in general.

From our observation through NATHHAN, the idea of academic excellence can leave parents further frustrated after they pull out of the system. Are the same academics at home the answer? Perhaps a totally new approach toward education is necessary.

What do we say to eager proponents of high standards in home education?

Nothing. Most of them cannot comprehend why we would not try harder. “He just needs to work more!” “You’re not giving him the right motivation.” “Without X standard in education, he will be a social and educational misfit.” “A new approach will work.” “Don’t give up, he’ll get it someday.”

These and many more are common statements heard by “homeschooling failures” like us. Happily, the Bible does not give a standard for education, except in character development.

The Lord gives parents the command not to provoke their children to anger (Ephesians 6:4). This combined with our Heavenly Father lovingly creating our children individually with different talents and gifts gives us the responsibility of finding the best way to develop a loving heart and working knowledge in our children.

We want to share with you hope. If you were your child and needed a different approach to life to succeed, would you want your parents to come up with a plan to help you? Of course. (To be continued.)

(From <http://www.nathhan.com/busy.htm>, NATional cHallenged Homeschoolers Associated Network, a Christian non-profit organisation dedicated to providing encouragement to families homeschooling special needs children in ways that glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Used by permission.)

# Home Education Research



## The Learning Styles (or Learning Preferences) of New Zealand Adolescents

by Andrea Honigsfeld and Alan Cooper<sup>1</sup>

No previous similar research studies have been conducted on the learning styles of New Zealand adolescents. This is a pioneering study, undertaken in two secondary schools, one an urban city school, the other a rural small town/country school. Data collection took place in the 1999-2000 school year. Students were asked to fill out a 104-item questionnaire, the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) (Dunn, Dunn, & Price, 1996). Each LSI was computer scored by Price Systems, Incorporated, and individual Learning Style Profiles were computer generated for each student. Valid LSIs with consistency scores of 70 or above were received from 292 out of 306 students, who comprised the final sample for this investigation.

### Age Differences

Comparisons demonstrated that on average, 13-year-olds from New Zealand

- (a) preferred to learn with peers more than either 15- or 17-year-olds,
- (b) needed the presence of an authority figure more than the older groups,
- (c) needed more sociological variety than 15-year-olds,
- (d) were less kinesthetic than 17-year-olds,
- (e) needed more intake than 17-year-olds,
- (f) preferred to learn in the afternoon more than either 15- or 17-year-olds, and
- (g) were more teacher-motivated than 17-year-olds.

15-year-olds

- (a) required more intake and
- (b) preferred to learn in the afternoon more than 17-year-olds.

17-year-olds

- (a) preferred a more formal design than 13-year-olds, and in comparison to the two younger groups, they
- (b) were less tactual and
- (c) preferred late morning hours.

Learning styles change as the students grow older (Dunn & Griggs, 1995; Price, 1980). Such changes tend to be unique to the individual, with some changing hardly at all and others undergoing rapid and multi-change. This is a clear sign for teachers, parents and others to beware of labeling. One of these areas is the sociological element of working with peers. Therefore, the change from more to less preference for peer learning between the 13-year-olds and the 15- and 17-year-

olds in this study is in keeping with the mainstream of Learning Styles research. The finding that the 13 year olds had more sociological variety than the 15 year olds is also in keeping with this as by 15 the change process is starting to settle down, and routines and patterns once again are becoming more fixed (Dunn & Griggs, 1995; Thies, 1979).

Likewise, the 17-year-olds being less tactual is also in keeping with the change associated with learning style and getting older. Dunn and Griggs (2000) stated that "the older the children become, the more their auditory and visual modalities develop."

### Gender Differences

It was established that five learning-style elements significantly differentiated between male and female students' learning-style preferences in New Zealand. On average, male adolescents preferred kinesthetic experiences; in comparison, females (a) needed a brighter illumination, (b) preferred warmer temperatures, (c) were more responsible, and (d) enjoyed learning through a variety of ways more than their male counterparts did.

Male adolescents' preference for kinesthetic experiences is in line with international research in English-speaking countries. Generally, adolescent males are not just physically but also emotionally immature when compared to adolescent girls. As one result, there is an insecurity in males, which means that they are constantly scanning for an identity, part of which is manifested in physical movement.

### Academic Achievement Differences

The students in this study were tested then placed in one of three groups: Gifted, High or Average Achievers, Low Achievers.

Comparisons demonstrated that on average, gifted students in New Zealand were more persistent and more visual than low achievers, and preferred to learn alone and with patterns and routines more than either of the other two groups. Low achievers needed the presence of an authority figure more than the gifted and were more auditory than the other two groups.

Low achievers tend to be more anxious; thus, they are much more easily distracted. Their stronger preference for an authority figure might compensate for this difficulty. They are also most likely to have a low reading level, possibly beneath the level of the written materials they are given. Textbooks are used which are written to deliver the subject content at the grade level rather than to cater for various levels of reading ability. With this in mind, low achievers' preference for more auditory learning could well be a reaction against texts which they cannot read.

### Conclusion

This study clearly shows the changing needs of adolescents and the real need to treat them as individuals – to be learner-centred, not teacher- or subject-centred. A one-size-fits-all model simply will not

suffice. Not only do the needs change but they vary within each group, and within each individual as well. In this respect New Zealand education has much to learn from this study. It is also important not to be blinded, important though they may be, by the patterns that appear. Thus while the age group comparisons show not only areas of marked commonality within groups as well as marked differences, this is only the tip of the iceberg. Beneath the water, each individual has Learning Styles peculiar to him or her. Sometimes there may be up to 16 or so of these Learning Styles that are important to the individual student but other students may have as few as two Learning Styles that are important to them. The uniqueness of each individual is what is important. Finally, the New Zealand study nestles easily within other international studies on Learning Styles. Thus, it is an important contribution to what is developing as a global solution to the task of teaching and learning.

### References:

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### Note (1):

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Take note that these learning preferences were measured in children who we may assume were immersed in institutional school settings for nine years and more before taking part in this survey. Consequently they may have little relevance in predicting learning preferences in children wholly educated at home.

The study's conclusions will cause all home educators to echo with a loud "Amen!", for these scholars have discovered what home educators have been saying for years. It all seems fairly obvious, really, and no more than common sense to virtually any observant parent.

# In Line With Scripture



**Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.**

— Proverbs 22:6

## Training Our Children to Worship

by Craig & Barbara Smith

This verse is a promise for us to claim. It is not a "probability", that our children "might" not depart from the faith when they get older: it says they "will not depart from it." Neither is it a verse to comfort us because our children have gone astray, saying that one day they will come back, as in: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will come back to it."

No, if we train up our children in the way they are to go (the condition God lays on us before He will fulfill His promise), then God promises that they will not depart from it, even when the child is old! When we were expecting Genevieve (22 now), we went to Parent Centre

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