

Why Home School

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It is now the middle of the summer. Yet, the school year is approaching fast. Students of all ages will be beginning new classes. Yet, aside from all the social interests in every school, does anyone ever stop to question, just what is their school's educational agenda? What will our children actually be learning? What will they be learning from their teachers, from their books and equally important from their peers?

Finding a good school today, religious or otherwise, is proving to be a daunting task. Even the so-called best of schools are manifesting some of the worst kinds of problems. Regardless of how religious a school may be, sometimes some kids, however religious they may appear, nevertheless introduce some of the worst types of non-religious behaviors to their otherwise innocent and naïve classmates. In reality, even the best of religious schools today are filled with students who strip away the sanctity of the religiosity of their spiritual traditions. This problem is true in almost every religious school of almost every religion, type and denomination. Ultimately, bad kids can make even the best schools to be as bad as they are themselves.

The only solution to having bad apples in the bushel is, of course, to get rid of them. Yet, once the first batch of bad apples are gone, others always seem to come to take their place. The problem is not this or that individual student, rather it is an attitude and orientation towards learning that allows these types of problems to be created and then to fester and grow. Unless the leadership in educational institutions take on the mantle of true teachers and to teach their charges the fundamentals of right and proper living, then no parochial education will ever be of much value.

The major problem in schools today is the format of their curriculum. What are the students being taught? How will the education being provided to them actually help them and train them to get along in life? Such questions are usually not asked, especially not by parents, the ones who should have these questions foremost in their minds.

Subjects of study are one thing. How the subjects of study are approached and presented to students is another. Some subjects are appropriate choices and others are honestly a waste of time. This is true with regards to both secular and religious subjects. **Unless parents actively intervene in their children's education, they will find that their children may very well be taught a whole bunch of facts and figures, but rarely, if ever, will they be taught to think!**

Education is not about memorization. Any focus on just memorizing and rehashing the words the teacher has taught in class is not education. That is indoctrination, a system of

learning used by repressive social and political regimes and religious cults. **Teaching the “whats” is usually not as important as teaching the “whys” the “whats” are important.**

School curriculums will rarely change. They are in the hands of people with big money and big agendas. The problem, of course is that we, the little guys, do not have the big monies and we certainly lack the clout to influence the clear-cut agendas of others. If we send our children to their schools, then we are completely under their control and direction. Our children end up being indoctrinated in ways and beliefs that we may find foreign or even outright offensive or hostile to our way of life. This again is true in both secular and religious schools, both public and private.

The only way we can safeguard our children and to ensure that they receive a proper, well-rounded and balanced education is to see to it ourselves. In my opinion, **regardless the subject matter being taught, children need to be taught the relevance of what they are learning, why it is important for them to be learning this and how this information is useful to them on a regular basis, either for now or later.**

With regards to subject matter, children need to learn relevant skills and tools that enable them to properly integrate into the real world in which we live. Abstract subjects that do not have experiential relevance may be left for a later grade or even excluded completely from the educational curriculum. Just what these subject may be differs from place to place and from school to school. Yet, we all know of different classes that, in their present forms, waste a lot of time and teach precious little.

Schools are not meant to be social laboratories of indoctrination. Children are naturally curious and for the most part crave knowledge. What we chose to give them and how we chose to impart it mold the child for the rest of his/her life, and not always for the good. Granted, sometimes indoctrination in childhood can last a lifetime. Then again, depending on what is being indoctrinated, what is being force fed to students often is almost immediacy regurgitated and rejected once the student has the opportunity. We see this in the form of rebellious and often dangerous behaviors. For many, **rote learning leads to rejection, rebellion, a sense of being lost and meaninglessness. This is what motivates self destructive and anti-social behaviors. This can all be avoided.**

Schooling is not supposed to be like this. Schooling should be more about experience, with real-life hand's-on activities. Rather than sitting behind desks all day memorizing boring facts, students instead learn better through experience and relevance. Books can only teach so much. Life experience teaches so much more.

For example, to teach math, take your children shopping. Let them see the prices of items, let them know how much money there is to spend and then let them start making calculation how best the monies can be spent. Mind you, this works best with cash. You can and should leave your credit cards at home.

Expose them to such things as multiplication and division in the same way. Expand on this with computer programs and scenarios with applications to real life. Let them learn the

application of math to real life economics. If they want to buy a toy, computer game or (God forbid) designer clothes, let them assess its cost and how they can earn the monies to acquire that which they desire. Teach them about math by applying its principles to the everyday tasks that life will have them face. This motivates the student to accomplish something real and relevant to their lives.

When it comes to teaching history, there are a good number of fictional and non-fictional subjects that have been made into movies. Show the student some of these in conjunction with what is written in the books, and then explore modern day applications of relevancy. Especially with history is this important, for as the adage goes, one who does not learn from history is destined to repeat it. Teach our children about their past so that they will understand both our present and our future.

Religious studies should never be made boring. Turn a child off to religious studies and you will turn them off to religion all together. Focus on the relevant, explain what we do and why we do it. Rote religious training will indoctrinate your child, but at the same time it will rob your child of their precious talent to think for themselves.

There are numerous other examples that can be given. But I am speaking here in generalities specifically to inspire you to be creative on your own. Discover your own paths in these matters.

Parents! Home schooling needs you! Granted, Mom or Dad may be out of the house working hard to make a living. But! This in and of itself is no excuse. Regardless of expenses, one parent should be at home to educate and supervise the children. If this means less income for the household, then so be it! Change your lifestyle! Move to a more affordable location. Stop trying to "keep up with the neighbors." That is the path to ruin and bankruptcy.

Change your lifestyles and you will change your lives! Yes, it really is that simple. But this requires courage and very very very few of you have the courage or enough love for your children to make these daring, yet necessary changes.

How many care more for money and the lifestyle that it buys and use this as an excuse to justify the neglect of their children. Money driven parents always claims that they do what they do for the sake of the children. Ask the children if they believe that! Parents lie to themselves and thus children learn to lie to them as well.

Stop lying to yourselves and your children will stop lying to you!

Home schooling provides the healthiest environment in which children can learn. Not only will they be free from the unsavory influences brought into school by other children, they will also be free of the social agendas of the curriculum designers, who may not share the moral, social and religious values of the individual student's families.

You gave your children life, now teach them about living!