

What I Learned By Homeschooling

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- University Professor From 1990 - 1995
- Helped Develop Indiana's Only Residential High School for Gifted and Talented Students
- NSF-Sponsored Scientist with More Than \$200,000 In Research Grants
- Became Interested in Homeschooling Because of Excellent University Students Who Were Homeschooled
- Currently writes Christian apologetics materials and science courses for homeschooled students

Introduction

- Became interested in homeschooling because my best university students were homeschooled
- Started writing homeschooling curriculum BEFORE I had any children.
- Became Dawn's guardians when she was 14 and adopted her at 15.
- Started homeschooling her once we had adopted her.

Home Educating Family Magazine recently published a story I wrote about the challenges and blessings related to adopting her.

<http://blog.drwile.com/?p=10663>

I Learned That Homeschooling is NOT Bringing School Home

1. My daughter did best if she could nap in the middle of the day. We made the schedule so she could do that.

Research Indicates This is a Benefit of Homeschooling

Researchers at National Jewish Health in the U.S. studied 2,612 teens, almost 500 of whom were homeschooled.

55% of teens who were homeschooled got the optimal amount of sleep per week, while only 24.5% of publicly- and privately-schooled teens did. 44.5% of publicly- and privately-schooled teens got insufficient sleep, compared to only 16.3% of homeschooled teens

<http://njhealth.multimedianeewsroom.tv/story.php?id=549&enter=2#downloadsarea>.

2. My daughter did not do well with textbooks, so I had her do internet research for most of her courses.

I Learned I Should NOT Compare My Child to Other Children

My little girl has some amazing talents, but she has some serious weaknesses as well.

Many of the things I valued in students are weaknesses for her, but her talents are actually more useful in the real world!

We **worked** on her weaknesses but did not **obsess** over them!

I Learned All Sorts of Things I Never Learned in School

I had never learned about the Magna Carta or its importance to Constitutional law and representative government.

After 12 years of public school, 4 years of university, and 3.5 years of graduate school, I had never read the U.S. Constitution.

I knew almost no geography (even U.S. geography) before I homeschooled Dawn.

I Learned Who Dawn Really Is

In nearly every way, I learned:

1. How she deals with failure.
2. How she deals with victory.
3. How she learns.
4. How she thinks.

This made me a better counselor to her.

I Learned A LOT About Grace

Our homeschool wasn't filled with a lot of "precious moments."

She and I are both strong-willed, and we clashed all the time.

But we were forced to forgive each other and move on.

I Learned the Importance of Focusing on the Long-Term

Dawn was never happy about being homeschooled while it was happening.

There were times I thought about quitting.

Shortly after going to university, she *thanked us* for homeschooling her!

Here's What Dawn Has To Say

When mom and dad first offered me the option of homeschooling, I thought they had gone crazy...I found that I was able to get a lot more done in a lot less time. So this left me with a lot of extra free time. I was able to do cool things like take tennis lessons during the day.... I found that it was a lot easier to 'juggle' all of my interests and responsibilities because I could do it on my timetable.

In public school every subject is boiled down to a gelatinous goo that is force fed to every student. The only time you get special attention is if you excel or you fall miserably behind in a subject. With the exception of chemistry, I had become a middle of the pack student. Chemistry was a special level of ick for me.

Homeschooling was a lot different. Don't get me wrong. I still had to do all of the core stuff. Even when I cried about it. Parents are so mean.

But if I wasn't getting it, they would try a different way to teach me the material. And they knew what I loved, so whenever possible they would give me assignments that would highlight my strengths. It was an extremely tailored and personalized curriculum aimed at me.

Now for the blah blah blah portion. I got so many valuable tools from being homeschooled. I learned how to think critically. And how to think outside of the box. My parents showed me that just because it's not traditional, doesn't mean it's wrong. I learned how to be educated. I learned how to learn. And the nerdiest thing I'll ever say: I learned to love learning.

The Most Important Thing I Learned

Homeschooling is **NOT** primarily about academics.

1. It's about your child learning what is important and what is not.
2. It's about strengthening your relationship with your child.
3. It's about helping your child learn God's plan for her, which might not be your plan for her!

Dawn Isn't Doing What I Wanted Her to Do With Her Life

And I Couldn't Be Happier!