

**Questions and Answers about home schooling:**  
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**INTERVIEWER: DJ Elain Marais**

**INTERVIEWEE: Samantha Langford, Chairman:KZNHSA (KwaZulu Natal Home**  
**Schooling Association)**

**1) What is home schooling?**

In terms of South African Law, parents have three options for educating their children, namely: home schooling, private schooling and state schooling. Home schooling is a method of education through which a parent, usually a mother, undertakes sole responsibility to teach their child from the child's own home. This means that the parent personally and directly teaches their children under their 'own roof'. It is a one-on-one method of education where the parent is the teacher.

**2) Can any parent home school? Don't you need a teaching degree or special qualification?**

A parent does not have to be a qualified teacher to home school their own children. Curriculum providers supply schooling material for home school parents to use. Mothers are uniquely qualified to be able to teach their children. A mom instinctively knows what is best for her child. According to extensive research done on the topic, the qualifications of the parent in home schooling do not have any influence on the performance of the home learner. In fact, I have a Master's degree and I would say it that if anything it has counted against me because I then had to face the challenge of learning to bring teaching down to a grade 0 level for my daughter. I had this huge database of knowledge but I was struggling to teach because I couldn't interpret how simply she needed the information. So being a walking encyclopaedia will not help in the least. It is also impossible for a single individual to possess all the knowledge in the world. So at some point you are guaranteed to encounter a situation or problem that you do not know the answer for. Which is a fantastic opportunity because the most important thing to teach your child is problem solving capabilities. So your first step is to pray, "Lord, I need help and guidance!" for example. Then you are teaching your child to find solutions in life that are in line with the Holy Spirit's leading. Then you teach your child HOW to find the answer - in a book that you have or perhaps one the library has; or maybe Dad the physics boffin will know the answer, or a friend who is a science teacher, or teach them to use the Internet. That is reality. So a mom who doesn't know it all can actually have the most to offer a child because then the child is stimulated to lean on the Lord, to think for him or herself and to find the answers. I always tell my kids, "Think in terms of solutions!" That way they are geared for the reality of life throwing its challenges and curved balls, and when that happens they will not be afraid because they will be familiar with the

strategy to beat the situation, namely: Ask the Lord for help, let Him lead you, and look for possible solutions - a vital life skill. For who is our Shepherd, our teacher? It is the Lord. If He promised the Israelites that He would teach their children, how much more will he teach us, we who have the privilege of the Lord's own Spirit in us? We are UNITED with Him, one with Him in Spirit!

### 3) Why do people home school? What is their motivation?

Some people have children who cannot attend state or private schools - due to disability, or due to special educational needs. They could live in remote areas. They may have problems with their child being bullied at school. Some may have financial restrictions or be unable to get into their school of choice. Some may have different values and ideals for their children than the schools available have. Many are God-fearing Christians who want to uphold Biblical truth and the Lord's commandments specified in:

Deut. 6:6-7 - These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Prov. 1:8 - Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching.

Prov. 22:6 - Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

Eph. 6:4 - Fathers do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

So for many, obedience to the Lord is the motivation, and interestingly, He is the teacher and principal of all Christian home schools as well! You see teaching is part of our lives and so the Lord is our Shepherd in our lives and in what we teach our children. He is vitally interested in what we teach our children because they will carry the banner of Christ to the next generation. For example, the Lord directed me to teach my children from *Genesis*, revealing knowledge bit by bit as each verse unfolds. So I am writing a Creation Science curriculum especially for my kids that maybe the Lord will use for other kids as well.

### 4) Can one be incorrectly motivated or misdirected?

I would humbly suggest that is a bad idea to home school being motivated by the search for 'ultimate knowledge'. Our human tendency is to spend endless hours unravelling the intricacies and details of knowledge in mathematics, physics, science, and so on, but the conclusion reached will always be the same - that perfection exists and that we can't attain it because it is God who is perfect and we who are hopelessly imperfect! The message is programmed into the entire Creation, no matter where you look - whether it's into subatomic particles with a scanning electron microscope or dissecting the ratios of the Golden mean in

advanced mathematics. This entire dimension is screaming out the message that God is Holy. His Laws are perfect. Man is not perfect. He is a sinner to the core until he is saved, and after that he is a saint who may sin on occasion in error. The only way of salvation is by the blood of the lamb, Jesus Christ. He washes us clean. He is the only Superhero and the battle is His. He will bring us to perfection as no amount of self-effort will achieve anything. I have tried. I have been into that Tower of Babel of learning 'all knowledge' and it is dust. So for the Christian home schoolers listening, be motivated by Christ. Pray into the content that you are teaching. You have the mind of Christ and thus you are equipped to manage. You can do it. Just remember that not every child is destined to graduate with 6 A's in order to go and work in a science laboratory. The most important thing that a parent can do is to teach their children to have a living relationship with the Lord. That is the start. Don't focus on the World - let it go - focus on Jesus - He is the cornerstone, our Rock. Don't compare your kids with everyone else's kids. Comparisons are so pointless. Each child has a gift and is a unique puzzle piece in the Lord's Creation. Each one is valuable and precious, just as they are. So home schoolers would learn a really helpful thing if they submitted to Him like a paraplegic in a wheelchair depends on the person pushing them, and let Him take control of their home schooling and lives. He will do something truly remarkable in your house and your life if you do. If you make a mistake, just re-focus on Him, repent, renounce the mistake and wait on Him. The Lord Jesus commanded His disciples to repent daily in the Lord's Prayer. So if they had to repent daily, I recommend people like me repent hourly! I make mistakes even now. Once I woke up at 05H00 in a cold sweat, totally fearful that I was not doing enough academically with my kids. I was totally freaked out and didn't recognize the attack of the enemy (fear and the impulse to conform to the world is an attack from the enemy). I got out info on normal schools and was doubting what the Lord had called me to. I was obedient in that I got on my knees and prayed and submitted the terror to the Lord, and He reminded me that He is the teacher. But I was in such a state I could not receive it. So I prayed and I said to the Lord. I know what you are directing me here. You are telling me to give up the ways of the world and not to conform to it, but I am in such a state I am not making any decisions, I am just going wait until you defeat this fear for me. It took a day and a half and then my thinking changed. The Lord defeated my fear and I could then recognize that I had been under attack. I was then really indignant with myself for not having my sword in my hand, for falling prey to such stupid delusions, and so on, which is such wasted time. When you make a mistake, repent and move on. It's dealt with.

#### 5) What are the benefits of home schooling?

According to research home schooled children have a better academic performance than their peers in schools do. You see, home schooling offers the ideal learning environment, in which there is one teacher to one pupil ratio. Even if

the parent has six or seven children, the children will get far more attention than even the most dedicated teacher will be able to provide.

Furthermore, stronger and more trusting relationships are built between parents and children and parental advice is more readily sought by children. Children have the freedom of learning creatively within their own framework. They are taught to explore their own solutions for problems and how to access information themselves. Children are also able to learn at their own pace without the pressure of school deadlines, strikes, absent teachers, riots, etc. School times for lessons, activities and extra murals revolve around what suits each family. Children are taught business skills and 'entrepreneurship'. Education choices include NHS or Cambridge qualifications. A Cambridge qualification is recognized internationally. Some American universities actively canvass home schooled children because they have been taught to be independent learners and have not been 'spoon fed' by the 'system'.

I would also have to say, a major benefit is less anxiety and psychological stress for the child. I sometimes get calls from parents with children in school saying that they cannot cope and want to kill themselves. There is a major problem in this country right now with children being forced into schools they do not want to attend and being unable to get into the school of their choice due to government demographic policies. It can really be devastating to some kids and they can become angry and depressed as a result. Home schooling is a beacon of hope to such children and their families.

6) What about kids who have been diagnosed with ADD/ ADHD and those with 'special needs'? Can they be home schooled?

Home schooling is a popular and successful choice for many parents of children struggling to 'fit in' at schools, those with ADD/ADHD and 'special needs'. Many parents with ADD/ADHD - labeled children choose to protect the fragile, highly intelligent fabric of their children's minds from drugs with negative side effects and home school instead. Yet these decisions require serious consideration of one's own value systems and availability. Are you, as a parent, really prepared to give your child all they need? Well what if that need is YOU? Each child has different needs, and the parental commitment required is different for each child and family. Home schooling is particularly suited to 'special needs' children - those with either a very high or a very low IQ, those who are gifted in some way, like music or sports, and those with academic challenges.

Most parents will organise their home schooling to suit their child's particular needs and abilities. The child may move ahead with certain subjects and redo others that have not been mastered without any pressure.

7) Some people think that a child will 'miss out' on having friends and miss out on sports if they are home schooled. Is this true?

No. Uninformed outsiders may think that a home schooled child is 'deprived' of peer group interaction, but this is not true. Even in a large class, a child can only be good friends with up to three or four class mates. Interactions with the remaining class mates can range from indifference to overt violence. Home schooled children, however, tend to have plenty of opportunities for healthy, positive interaction in a smaller group without 'peripheral problem peers' causing stress and tension in their learning and interaction. In fact, home schooled children generally get to enjoy exposure to a wider range of interests and people than those in schools do, and they get to spend 'quality time' with various professionals in their fields of interest - something that is logistically impossible for large school groups to do. Interacting with people of different age groups assists them in learning the social graces of getting on with all kinds of people, which is more reality based from a career viewpoint. One does not exit school and enter the walk of life with all 30 school peers in tow, going from adventure to adventure in an age-identical group!

Home school parents also can enjoy regular 'get - togethers' for sports, outings and field trips. Some even join school groups for sports and extra murals. Many young, talented sports kids do home schooling in order to focus on their talent. You see, the focus of home schooling is that you are gearing your children for life. As adults we learn from home all the time! Home schooling involves a different mind set from state or private schools, and this is hard for some people to understand when first starting home schooling because the focus changes from how much you can cram into that tiny head, to one where you are listening to your child and focusing on his or her needs, where they are actually at academically, and working from there. You take the learning opportunities where you find them. For example, going into the garden and seeing bees. Thus begins a lively discussion on bees, bee-hives, pollination, the structure of a plant. The knowledge is given as the questions are asked and explained in a way that they will understand. Home schooling is geared around life as it unfolds around you. So the weaver's building nests becomes a lesson in biology combined with great excitement because the event is happening practically before your eyes and the lessons are never forgotten. So the child is learning whilst experiencing the joys and moments of his or her life. This last week it was raining like anything and Erin was still in her jammies at 10H00. Then she saw the rain and she went out in it. I went outside to reprimand her and bring her back inside, but then I saw what she was doing. She had various shapes of containers and was filling them up from the roof run-off. I immediately siezed the opportunity, put a raincoat on her, and gave her my measuring cups to play with, to help her fill in the conceptual building blocks for learning about liquids and volumes. Her memory will re-inforce that experience because she was blissfully happy.

## 8) How does one go about finding materials for home schooling?

There are many curriculum providers in SA who provide learning material for home schooling. Some are local, some international. Some offer NHS qualifications, some Cambridge. Some are computerized, some are textbook based, some are unit studies based. There are many different kinds of curriculum depending on the learning style of the child and what will suit him or her. The materials are easy to use as they have been written by teachers/ educational experts. They can be contacted via the Internet, or at Expo's like the one we are having on Saturday, or via telephone.

Some extra resources that I recommend in addition are as follows:

Andrew Murray wrote a phenomenal book called 'Absolute Surrender' which I highly recommend and I recently watched a DVD by Joseph Prince called 'You are God's Beloved' - children, everyone needs to see that, to understand God's total acceptance of us as we are. If children can learn that they are totally accepted by the Lord just as they are and that their salvation is not dependent upon their behaviour, then they will not be disobedient and rebellious. Neil Anderson has written two books that have been invaluable to me in helping my children stand in their power as Christian's: The Bondage Breaker and Who I am in Christ. I would also suggest everyone views the DVD 'The Search for the Real Mount Sinai' by Bob Cornuke and Larry Williams. It is an incredible faith building too as there is the visual proof that Mount Sinai is real. That Moses was real. Really. Train your children up in the ways of the Lord and to seek him. He will help you do the rest.

## 9) What is on offer at the Expo?

Firstly, curriculum providers - we have Brainline, The Learning Channel, CIE, CL Education, Jade Education, Equal zeal, Ant Books, Remedy Kids, Love2Learn Curriculum and Delta Education (Impak Onderwys). There will be kiddie entrepreneur stands, Acorn Kids, educational toys, refreshments for sale and the following speakers:

We have Henk Koekemoer from CashCow speaking on "Learning the Language of business"; Taryn Negus from CIE speaking on "UK Qualifications and their advantages"; Chris Forster (CL Education) speaking on "CLEducation, Cambridge, HESA and the Two Sitting Rule"; Mark Ries from Love2learn speaking on "The Father's Mandate in Home Schooling Families" and Missy and Sonja Wood (Oikos) - a mom and daughter share a testimony of their 22 years in their home educating journey". We shall also have plenty of home schoolers for people to chat to and network with. They can come and speak to experienced and knowledgeable curriculum providers. Home schoolers can also join up for exciting activities, outings and extra murals.

10) How can people get started or get more information about home schooling?

Firstly, pray! Find out how the Lord wants you to proceed. Secondly, either come to the Expo and join the Association (it's free) and it's support groups or contact me on 0824109938 or [mikelang17@gmail.com](mailto:mikelang17@gmail.com) and I shall help where I can because I am here to serve. If there are enough people interested, I am even prepared to travel to outlying areas in KZN to do a home school information day, and if there is a demand for it, I am even prepared to do a regular questions and answers session on the radio.