

And What You Should Know about Homeschooling!

By Marc and Claire, U.S. (for the North American PR Board)

Required reading for age 16 and up. Recommended for age 14 and up.

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Dispelling the myths about Family education

And what you should know about homeschooling!

By Marc and Claire, U.S. (for the North American PR Board)

After having worked in Family public relations for the past ten years, we've often been called upon to explain our Family's educational system to people outside of our movement. We've also replied to allegations by some detractors who claim that Family schooling does not provide an adequate education, due to usually not being in a traditional nine-to-three institutional classroom.

Such questioning often reflects ignorance of the effectiveness of homeschooling, its policies, its requirements, and researchers' findings about it. Nor do these claims take into account the unique aspects of Family education and Family-acquired skills, aspects that would only be available to students of higher education in System institutions. We have also encountered a number of CM/FM young people who have been somewhat affected by these negative comments and conclusions, while being unaware of the facts.

Throughout our Family history, the Lord and Dad and Mama have repeatedly emphasized the importance of giving our children and teens a godly upbringing. To encourage your faith about how

we're doing in fulfilling this responsibility, we have compiled some facts and figures that may help dispel some of the myths that have been circulating about Family education.

These facts and our answers reflect the fact that we live in the U.S. While quite a number of our second generation are are Americans, and thus some of the specifics relating to the States may apply more, we pray that this information is a blessing to our Family young people of all nationalities, highlighting the blessing it is to be raised, trained, and educated in the Family, and helping us all to be "ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you" (1 Pet.3:15).

Thank the Lord for the wonderful education He has provided for our Family—for the second generation as well as new disciples who have benefited from the CVC and Word studies available. Along with godly training from study of the Word, there are the many treasures of the Spirit He has given us! As spokespeople who interact regularly with many university professors and professionals, and who are called upon often to speak about our beliefs to reporters and former members, we can only say that we have come to treasure the blessings the Lord has given us in His education plan, when carried out faithfully according to the requirements in the Charter.

Of course, as in every aspect of our lives for the Lord, if we as parents or young people don't do our part to live up to those requirements and make the needed efforts to ensure that our children (or we) receive an adequate education, it won't bear the fruit it could. We must carry the responsibility for this. However, we have seen that if we are faithful to follow and avail ourselves of the wealth of counsel, materials, Word, and experience at our fingertips in the Family, Family young people from a wide variety of backgrounds have no problem excelling in high school testing, college entrance exams, etc. The vast majority of Family young people, despite the many changes inherent in missionary life, have nevertheless received a very good education, and in many cases, an outstanding one that far surpasses a "normal" education.

In order to be able to effectively explain our Family education and reply to queries or allegations with conviction, it is important to know some facts about home-schooling, Family education, high school diplomas, the GED (General Educational Development) test, and more.

We pray this compilation of facts and findings will be helpful to you in standing up with conviction for the truth and the freedoms we hold dear in the Family, such as the right to raise our children with godly education and training. We also pray this helps to dispel any myths about Family education, homeschooling, accreditation, and so forth, so that you can boldly take a stand for His truth and for our right to educate our children according to our religious convictions.

Let your speech be always with grace,
seasoned with salt, that ye may know
how ye ought to answer every man.
(Colossians 4:6)

Interacting with Ph.D.'s, lawyers, and intellectuals

When interacting with some of society's great minds and leaders, whether Ph.D.s, law enforcement officials, lawyers, etc., we can only say that we are so proud to be "professional" Christians, having chosen a fulfilling career that we believe in, and within which we have so much room to expand and grow. Our service for the Lord with the Family offers us so many fields of interest and study, if we will just avail ourselves of them. We are able to learn about world politics and current events, economics, world history, culture, various religions (check out how much Dad and Mama have written about different world religions—not to mention what you can study on your own), such as languages, computer science, and on and on it goes. The Family is incredibly versatile!

Recently some academics from the Ukraine stayed at our Home. Can you imagine the look of awe on their faces when an 18-year-old member of our Home conversed with them in Russian and spoke with them about the current political situation in Eastern Europe?

It's been interesting to observe that professionals, educators, and academics rarely make an attempt to be experts outside their field. A lawyer is not an expert in computer science, nor is a political scientist an expert in sociology or law. There are so many fields to specialize in that they choose one (or two if they're very brilliant), and they focus on growing and learning and applying themselves in their field of choice. We have heard academics, educators, and lawyers state time and again that they are not qualified to answer something, as their field of expertise does not cover that. They are not expected to be experts in many fields; there would not be time, energy, resources, or possibilities to do that.

It seems that a lesson can be gleaned about applying ourselves to our professional calling. Our goal is solid education in academic subjects as well as vocational ones, to train us to be experts in the field of mission work for Jesus. We shouldn't feel we have to be experts in other areas, those outside our area of expertise. As Peter and the Lord challenged us to do in "The Professionals" (ML #3399, GN 993), we can be proud to be professional missionaries and Christians and strive to be the best we can be at our field, rather than allowing ourselves to be put on the defensive about other fields that we have not specialized in. Just as a lawyer is not expected to be an expert in computer science, we as missionaries would not be expected to be experts in law, business, or other professions not related to ours.

If you've ever met a lawyer who specializes in a human rights cause, like the rights of Native American Indians, for example, you'll find that he is full to the brim with his cause and field, but probably knows little or nothing (unless he's outstanding) about other fields of law. As a matter of fact, some fields, like law, are so specialized that you can't discuss a criminal case with a civil lawyer; he's not well-versed enough to discuss that issue. So it seems we can apply this principle to ourselves, as we "study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth," using the gifts and knowledge the Lord has gifted us with in our particular field of serving the Lord. We are professional Christians!

The best at the field we have chosen

By Leah (of Tiago), SEA FED

The point Marc and Claire mention about "not allowing ourselves to be put on the defensive" (see previous pages) in areas

we do not specialize in is important. When it comes to education and homeschooling our children, we shine and are doing a great job. However, more often than not we don't know how to present this to outsiders, and thus we are put on the defensive. We need to learn how to describe what we do in ways that are socially acceptable and understandable.

One such question might be, "But isn't what you are doing in homeschooling your children illegal?" If you are in the States you could answer by saying, "Homeschooling is allowed under the compulsory attendance laws of all 50 states as an alternative to conventional classroom education."

But if we are residing in a foreign country, then it behooves those who are being homeschooled, and us who want to homeschool our children to be sure we know the laws of the land when it comes to schooling at home. If we do, then we can proceed to answer with conviction and in a way that is socially acceptable to those who may question our methods or want to understand the reasoning behind them.

Of course, our sample speaks louder than words, so it's important to be consistent in our children's education and keep it up to par academically. We need to educate ourselves in how to answer and give explanations on our methods of teaching and all the whys and wherefores.

In my recent interaction with teens and parents, some expressed that they felt their Family education and schooling was substandard or inadequate, because the Family doesn't only use one curriculum but we pick and choose, using a variety of sources. I feel that our schooling can be and is more than adequate, because we have the freedom to choose from the best there is to offer and what fits our way of life and beliefs.

As a teacher, you need to have a working knowledge of what should be included for each grade level.¹ If you are residing in a foreign country, then you need to have an idea of what is being covered academically in the country in which you reside, and from there you can customize your curriculum using many sources of both secular and Christian materials. You may find that, as some say, a “good secular textbook is better than a lousy Christian textbook.”

The definition of curriculum is “a course of study or a program of studies” leading to a particular degree or certificate. A state or country may have general learning goals with a minimum competency standard for graduation or promotion to the next grade. But within those guidelines a teacher is usually free to plan the kinds of activities he or she thinks will help students meet the goals determined. So a curriculum is made up of courses that help you teach a subject, build self-esteem in your students, and encourage improved academic performance. Having the option of creating your own curriculum helps you to be able to screen out any evolutionary or atheistic doctrines.

One thing the secular school system wants you to believe is that they create and spread knowledge. In a way it would be closer to the truth to say that they collect and hoard knowledge and try to corner the market on it, so that they can “sell” it at the highest possible price. That’s why they want everyone to believe that only what is learned in school is worth anything. But the truth is, when you believe this you limit your access to only certain kinds of learning and work.

We do use ready-made curriculums from such schools as *CLE*, *A Beka*, etc.,

which are consistent and in sync with usual compulsory requirements. They don’t require much planning and make it easy for busy parents. Yet they are open and allow you to use alternative materials and special studies to add to their curriculum.

Therefore having a flexible curriculum can in many ways enhance a student’s education because it does not conform to a set or rigid course of study. As many a homeschooler or homeschooling family can testify, with this method you can cover so much more in less time than you would in a secular school situation, where things have to be far more regimented to work. Plus there is so much good material at our fingertips just waiting for us to use, so why not use it?

Lord, help us not be put on the defensive, but be on the attack in the areas we are good at, and know and learn to always be ready to give an answer to everyone who asks you. *(End of comments by Leah)*

Interacting in academic and professional spheres, we feel that as Family members we have something very special and unique to offer that others don’t. Our entire lives and all that we have learned along the way about spiritual truths and principles such as prophecy, prayer, human interaction, cultures, and so much more, is very valuable and something that others can learn from too. Dr. William Bainbridge stated the following in his book, *The End-time Family: Children of God*:

If we approach the Family without a strict scientific or policy agenda, we see that it is an extremely fascinat-

¹ For an outline of what is generally taught from K through 12th grade, the World Book Encyclopedia Web site gives general curriculum requirements for those grades in the U.S. http://www2.worldbook.com/students/course_study_index.asp

ing part of the contemporary religious world. In an era when business and government leaders urge themselves to 'think outside the box,' here is a group that lives its entire life outside the formal structures that constrain most people. Yet it has found a coherent and apparently satisfying way of life for its members. More than a mere counter-culture, the Family is an alternative society. Even if we are unprepared to embrace the faith of the Family, we can be inspired by it.

(William Sims Bainbridge, *The Endtime Family: Children of God* [Albany, University of New York Press, 2001] p. xiii.)

William Sims Bainbridge earned his doctorate in sociology from Harvard University in 1975. He has published 14 books and more than 100 essays in such journals as *American Sociological Review*, *American Journal of Sociology*, *Social Forces*, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Sociology of Religion*, and *Review of Religious Research*. He currently is Director of the Management and Planning Division of Social and Economic Sciences at the National Science Foundation. "Bainbridge is unquestionably among the most able scholars in the sociology of religion today," writes Jeffrey K. Hadden, co-editor of "Religion on the Internet: Research Prospects and Promises."

One academic met with Peter many years back and asked an interesting question. He asked if Peter foresaw the second

generation becoming college-educated. Peter answered in a noncommittal fashion that some might end up going to college. The academic exclaimed strongly, "Don't ever send your kids to college or university, or they'll end up talking like me!" This academic has continually shared with us how important and unique we are in our beliefs and faith.

On another occasion, we were discussing Ph.D. students with a professor.¹ We have heard of several Ph.D. students along the way who have had nervous breakdowns. They have literally cracked up during their graduate years and never returned to their studies, deciding to pursue an entirely different path in life. The stress involved seemed pretty alarming (one such student literally went insane, poor fellow), and we wondered why this happens. The professor's reply was unforgettable. "We holders of Ph.D.s are the 'survivors.' We are the very few that make it through the entire program and receive our degrees." The difficulties and dangers involved in going this route confirmed the truth of the pitfalls of higher education explained so clearly in the Letters. (See "*Conviction vs. Compromise, Pt. 5*," ML #3365, GN 963. *There are many other MLs on this topic; check 'em out!*)

It also reminded us that, like Ph.D. students, being professional Family members takes investing all, forsaking all other aspirations, and focusing all our energies on the goal. And in our case the goal is to follow the Lord all the way and be the best professional missionaries we can be.

¹ Ph.D. is the abbreviation for "Doctor of Philosophy." In the U.S., college or university students first study for a bachelor's degree, which usually takes about four years of solid study; during that time they are referred to as "undergraduates." As graduates or post-graduates, they go on to studying for a master's degree that usually takes one or two years more. After a master's comes study for a doctorate, which can take three, four, or many more years, depending on the requirements of the field of study.

Explaining our beliefs at university classes

Along the lines of being professional missionaries, we have regularly been invited to speak at university classes that study religion, whether sociology or anthropology, religious history or theology. In these classes we are able to explain our beliefs and practices, giving the students an opportunity to hear about our radical way of life, dropped out of the System. This is always interesting and stirring for these students.

Following are a few testimonies of these exciting class experiences, as well as the lessons we've learned through them.

A secular university class visit

The alarm clock rings at 5 AM and it's time to roll if we're going to make it on time to Professor J.'s university classes. We're slotted to make a presentation and be open to debate at three of his classes, ranging from first-year university students to graduate students working for their master's degree or Ph.D. We have spoken at these classes for the past six or seven years, so we feel prepared, come what may! We're two FGAs and four SGAs ranging from 17 to 24 years old.

A few of the young people feel a little nervous, wondering if they're going to feel intimidated speaking before a university class. What if they look dumb? What if they don't know what to say? After all, these students have been in these "hallowed halls of learning" for years!

We arrive with our tongues hanging out, as it's a standard joke that no matter how early we leave, we just barely make it running through the campus to arrive in time. Professor J. can be a bit hard to please, so we want to get there 15 minutes early to wow him. But it's a bit of a journey, and things come up like traffic, heavy

rain, etc. Thank the Lord, though—we're on time!

Professor J. has been teaching for 40 years. He lives and breathes to teach and share knowledge; he's a wonderful prof! He pulls us all in for a powwow to tell us how he wants our presentation to go. To start, he wants us to put some "rad" clips on from *Acts of the Revolution* and a song from the Endtime video, and then he wants to open the floor. He tells us that if things get too mundane, he'll step in to spice it up. (Some eyebrows go up, wondering what his idea of "spicing it up" is!)

Then he turns to the four SGAs. Here's his speech (believe it or not!): "I want each one of you to tell these young people [the students] what countries you have lived in, what languages you speak, and how old you are. I want them to realize how limited they are, how little they know. These guys think they know something. You ask them where Dublin is and they'll tell you it's a country in Africa. They've never left the States, they've never learned another language, and they don't have a clue about the world they live in. I want them to see all the opportunities you have had. Some of them hardly know how to read. They just turn them out dumber every year from high schools."

Professor J. is obviously frustrated. He gets even more frustrated before going into his graduate class, as he says they are so asleep and dull that there is not a glimmer of awareness or brightness. He's obviously discouraged. Meanwhile, he's been holding lively conversations with our young people about a large range of topics. We're all feeling pretty stunned at these positive statements about us, as Professor J. doesn't exactly dish out the compliments. In fact, he's known to be bluntly outspoken and insistent on things being exactly right.

During our presentation, we speak about communal living, home education, and the young people share, at Professor J.'s request, all about their alternative lifestyle, upbringing, and schooling. Naturally there are a few prim folks in the crowd who look down on this. There are other young people who think this is just so far out, and hang out for a long time after the class, asking question after question, wanting to know everything.

Some students know the Bible quite well and as we discuss the Law of Love, word "swords" are raised and battle is waged. At the end of the discussion, we have to agree to disagree, as the students concede that we do have a Biblical foundation for our belief. And some are wondering how they can partake of all that freedom, ha!

Professor J. gives the class a little lecture at the end, stating that he wanted us to come to the class so they could know us as people, as stereotypes run deep and the "cult hysteria" gives an entirely wrong impression. He says, "I want you to see that these are intelligent people, with deeply held beliefs, and these are intelligent young people. This runs contrary to the brain-washing model and the idea of thoughtless, mindless robots. As you can see, these folks are individuals with clearly thought-out beliefs and a well-planned lifestyle."

After the classes are done, Professor J. treats us all to lunch and thanks us profusely for coming. He needs some help with computer tech work, so our high-school-aged young person will provide the needed help. Professor J. keeps commenting how he can't count on his graduate students, who even earn credits for helping him, yet he can count on us, who do it for free. Guess our reply? You got it! "'Cause we love you, Professor J.!" (By the way, Professor J. is saved and going to Heaven.)

A presentation at a theological seminary

Okay, now that we passed that hurdle, let's try something more challenging. Professor K.'s class is no little league. We're talking about a theological seminary now, and students that are studying to be preachers or missionaries—definitely chaste ones at that. Seems like we're worlds apart with our radical beliefs and their ultra-conservative ones. But Professor K. wants his class to learn, as future pastors and missionaries, that there are people with deeply held religious beliefs, who love the Lord and serve Him and witness.

So, off to the challenge! We've made sure to brush up on the Biblical foundation of the Law of Love, as that's bound to be a topic of discussion. We've also taken the time to review the Statements, Scriptures, etc., and now we're ready to go.

Our presentation begins with our introducing ourselves, presenting our basic beliefs as per the Statement of Faith, and talking briefly about the different ministries and work the Family is involved in around the world. Because some of the students are fairly young (19 to 27 years old), we play a few songs from the FTTs as well as watch a couple of video clips from *The Final Stand*. After this we open the floor for questions and answers. The first questions are about our communal lifestyle, how it works, schedules, and so forth. Then we move into more theological questions about the End-time, our beliefs on salvation, etc.

But it doesn't take long for one of the Web-savvy students to raise his hand and ask the question, "What are your beliefs regarding sexual conduct and marriage?" This opens that door for a full Scriptural explanation of the Law of Love. As we are explaining the spiritual as well as practical side to the Law of Love, you can see that it's causing no small stir in the minds of the

students who are trying to understand this particular aspect of our theology. This leads to other questions such as, "Let me see if I'm understanding what you're saying. Are you saying...?"

We answer yes. What ensues is an even more in-depth and Scriptural discussion regarding the Law of Love. After a lively, animated discussion of this controversial topic and the Scriptures about it, Professor K. chimes in and says, "Maybe we should change the subject and move on to other aspects of the Family's lifestyle." Thank you, Professor K.! We then move on to other topics.

After the presentation, we are able to discuss some of the issues further with several of the students and one of them says, "I understand your theology now, and although I don't agree with your interpretation of the scriptures, I can see that you do have a Scriptural foundation for your beliefs."

One pastor-to-be, a graduate student with many years of seminary, asks how many years we study and ground ourselves in our theology before going overseas. We explain to him that as far as we're concerned, once you know John 3:16, you're ready and able to start witnessing, especially with an older brother or sister, though we do continue studying and growing in our faith all the time. He responds by asking, "Aren't you afraid that if you're not well grounded in your own beliefs and you go to India or Africa, these people might de-convert you from your faith?" We found that pretty funny, to imagine someone in a Family Home worrying about converting to Hinduism!

Professor K. explains later that most of these students study for some six to eight years to be missionaries, and then go overseas for an average of two years, after which time they come



home, settle down, get a local church or other business, and that's how far the missionary work goes. After visiting this type of class, we're always so thankful for the freedom of the Spirit and all the many gifts of the Spirit the Lord has blessed us with.

We can honestly say that we never feel that those before us in these university classes are more knowledgeable than we are or have an advantage due to their institutionalized schooling. After eight years, seminary students know much less of their Bibles than we do. We have received a very special theological education through the Letters from dear Dad and Mama, who have been so faithful to teach us the Word for so many years, and thanks to the many teachers, parents, and shepherds who have helped to provide our Family education.

Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord. (Jer.9:23–24)

Homeschooling: an innovative challenge to public school education

Being part of the homeschooling movement is certainly an aspect of our lives that we can be proud of. Not only have we taken part in it, but in several countries we have paved the way for others by lobbying legislative bodies for permission to homeschool, in countries such as in Brazil, Sweden, Argentina, Spain, and others.

Court rulings in our favor in these countries deemed homeschooling legal—and these decisions set a precedent that others then benefited from. We have presented the facts regarding the effectiveness of homeschooling to school board officials, so that they could consider alternate ways of permitting schooling, and this has shown others by our sample how it can be done.

Family members who live in the States [as well as those in other Western countries] are more used to the fact that homeschooling is an official movement of like-minded parents, determined to seek the best possible options for their kids in their education and moral upbringing. We feel great pride at being able to tell people that we have homeschooled our children for nearly 30 years. It causes no small stir and creates respect, as people marvel that we have been willing to devote such time and energy to the task. Thank the Lord that Dad has taught us to drop out of the accepted norm and be willing to step out and pioneer radical new things!

Recently, homeschooling trends in the United States were explored in an Education Policy Analysis paper sponsored by the U.S. Census Bureau. It is interesting and enlightening to see the findings and how homeschooling is actually being seen as a challenge to public schooling standards, motivating change, and innovation. Following are some excerpts from this paper, which, although quite technical, express an official attitude toward homeschooling (underlining added for emphasis):

Home schooling is a more radical departure from education as it is currently practiced, it affects more schools, and it has the potential to force numerous adjustments to current curricular practices.

If home schooling continues to grow ... a result will be pressure on schools to design school curricula that allow students and parents to pick and choose what they like. ...

The period of institutional flux now reigning in education may be the start of a departure from the 20th-century model of regimented instruction for students entering an industrialized world. Schools seem to have lost some of their legitimacy as they have lost a clear functional role in preparing youth for their role in the larger economic system. Rather than representing a definite trend towards “individualizing” instruction, however, home schooling may represent an attempt by parents to reclaim the schooling process—to make schooling valuable in ways that are understandable to them through the cultural means at their disposal. ...

The 1996 and 1999 NHES (National Household Education Survey) asked parents their reasons for undertaking home schooling, with 16 possible responses. Several themes emerge from these responses. First is the issue of educational quality. The parents of one-half the home schoolers in these surveys were motivated by the idea that home education is better education. A large share also viewed the issue in terms of shortcomings of regular schools; the parents of 30 percent of home schoolers felt the regular school had a poor learning environment, 14 percent objected to what the school teaches, and another 11 percent felt their children weren't being challenged at school. Another theme had to do with religion and morality. Religion was cited by 33 percent of parents and morality by 9 percent.

We have just begun to see the emergence of home schooling as an

important national phenomenon. Unless the needs of parents are met in different ways, it is likely that home schooling will have a large impact on the school as an institution in coming decades. (“Home Schooling in the United States: Trends and Characteristics” by Kurt J. Bauman, U.S. Census Bureau, May 16, 2002. <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v10n26.html>.)

Thank the Lord, He has placed us on the cutting edge of modern schooling, along with others who have dared to be different and defy the status quo to find a better way for their children. As Dr. Bainbridge observed in his book: “The Family has enthusiastically embraced the homeschooling movement, both to protect their children from the secularism of public schools and to fit education into the rigors of missionary life” (p. 150).

What is the truth?

There are popular misconceptions regarding education, GED diplomas, university attendance, and educational funding. We'd like to discuss some of the myths that circulate relating to Family education, accrediting homeschooling, university attendance and more, followed by facts as per public survey statistics and other research.

Some of the points below cover statistics regarding the GED test, which is a widely recognized high school diploma equivalency test. (GED stands for General Educational Development, and the GED test, administered by the American Council of Education, is the internationally recognized equivalent of a U.S./Canadian high school diploma. These tests are available to students of any nationality.)

In discussing this, we do not mean to encourage people to look to the GED as the

source of accreditation of their education. We have been blessed with the CVC course with its tremendous Christian, academic, and vocational courses, which is really IT for professional missionaries! However, the GED is a useful tool for those desiring to have accreditation with the public school system. This does not replace or override the CVC courses and the CVC diplomas and/or certificates available. Dr. Bainbridge wrote an analysis of the CVC course, which coming from an academic is very positive. It certainly makes us all thankful for the folks who invested so much in providing a Family alternative to System education and accreditation.

The Family uses some existing Christian homeschooling material for younger children and has established its own homeschooling program for the high school and junior-college levels, called Christian Vocational College. ... CVC helps students obtain high school equivalency ... as well as issuing its own certificates and diplomas. (p. 152)

We pray the following points and statistics will be helpful in dispelling any misconceptions and in explaining these points to outsiders, former members, or others who question Family schooling.

1. Myth: The majority of young people in the System go through college and get a higher education. People who don't are very disadvantaged and can only work at McDonald's or other fast-food places, construction work, or stripping. (Don't tell Bill Gates of Microsoft this one, since he never earned a college degree, ha!)

A common misconception is that "everyone" goes to college and that without a college education you are "handicapped"

for life. Let's see what the real breakdowns are on what percentage of young people complete high school, and how many of those who go to college actually complete college.

Based on the March 2000 Current Population Survey:

	<u>Completed High School</u>	<u>Completed College</u>
Adults (25 and over)	88%	26%
Young adults (25 to 29)	88%	29%
Women (25 and over)	84%	24%
White non- Hispanics (25 and over)	88%	28%

(Courtesy of National Home School Legal Defense Fund [www.hslda.org])

Fact: As you can see here, about 88% of those who attended high school completed it. Of those who go to college, roughly 28% complete it. As such, it is clear that a minority graduate from college and not "everyone."

Since it is obvious that much more than 28% of the population needs to find a job, it becomes clear that of the great variety of jobs, vocations, and professions in the world, a small number require higher education.

2. Myth: Young people who leave the Family are stuck, as no one pays for their college and university education. Everybody's parents in the System pay for their education, so former member young people are at a disadvantage if they don't have their education subsidized.

A popular myth that circulates amongst former member young people is that college and university educations are

the obligation of parents to finance, and it is somehow outside of the norm if their parents are missionaries on a Third World field that are unable to finance their schooling. Following are some interesting facts from a study published in 1999:

This report, using data collected in the [U.S. Census Bureau] Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), examines the characteristics of post-secondary students, their schooling costs, and avenues of financing education for the academic year 1993-1994.

Economically, many full-time students (47%) were still dependent on their parents. Almost all of these dependent students (91%) were enrolled in the first four years of college. Most of the students enrolled in their fifth year of college or higher were classified as independent (88%), compared with 42% of undergraduates. More than three-fourths of full-time students had a job at some point during the year. These arrangements include working during the year, either full time or part time, or just working during the summer months. Almost one-tenth of full-time students worked full-time throughout the year. About 69% of full-time students worked part-time. The remainder did not work at all during the year. ("Financing the Future: Post-secondary Students, Costs, and Financial Aid" by Jennifer Cheeseman Day and Kristine Witkowski, 1999. <http://www.census.gov/prod/99pubs/p70-60.pdf>)

Fact: As you can see by these statistics, less than half of students' parents support their children through college. 69% of students work at least part time or fulltime in the summer, and 10% work full time while going to college/university. So it is slightly less common for a young person's par-

ents to fund his or her education through college than not. Slightly over half of the young people in the System have to work to put themselves through college, whether through a part-time job all year, a full-time job in summer, or working full time and studying part time. This is not unusual or negligent; it is slightly above the norm. The only difference is that most parents who don't pay their kids' higher education are not full-time missionaries devoting their lives to helping others and changing the world with His Word!

3. About the GED test and certification

a. Myth: A GED certificate is not worth as much as a public high school diploma. If a student doesn't attend a public school for six or seven hours a day for 13 years, he won't have a valid high school diploma.

Following is a recent article from *USA Today* that shows that the GED is becoming more commonly used to accredit a high school education.

More than 1 million adults take GED test

By Julie Snider, *USA Today*,
July 31, 2002

The number of adults taking General Educational Development tests shot up 24% to more than 1 million in 2001, the last year the 1988 series of five tests was used to award a high school diploma. Of the 1,069,899 test takers, the vast majority (945,131) were from the U.S., the American Council on Education reports. Overall, 669,403 candidates passed all five tests, a 30.7% increase from 2000.

Fact: An interesting statistic, from our knowledge of Family members who have taken the GED test, is that most have rated in what

is known as the over “300” score, which is considered the top ten percent of all students. Of the scores of young people that we have personally known who have worked on GEDs, none have failed. Not only that, but all passed on the first try, scoring well above average. We’re so thankful for the good education the Lord has supplied us with, as well as skills of concentration, memorization, focus, and self-discipline.

Facts About the GED

From the American Council on Education’s Web page (<http://www.acenet.edu/calec/ged>)

- More than 860,000 adults worldwide take the GED tests each year.
- Those who obtain scores high enough to earn a GED credential outperform at least 40 percent of today’s high school seniors.
- GED graduates include comedian Bill Cosby, actor Christian Slater, (U.S.) Delaware Governor Ruth Ann Minner, and U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell of Colorado.
- More than 95 percent of U.S. employers consider GED graduates the same as traditional high school graduates in regard to hiring, salary, and opportunity for advancement.

b. Myth: Because my homeschooling was sporadic and not so well planned, I don’t really have an education and wouldn’t pass a high school exam.

Again, often we can be led to believe that due to the unconventional setting of our schooling, somehow it lacked. Most young people are surprised at how easy it is to pass a high school test and how well they score! Some felt they had had very inadequate

schooling, so spent a couple of months brushing up with a prep book for GEDs, and ended up attaining above-average scores.

Of those parents who have had to use the California Achievement Tests (CAT) for their homeschooling programs, many have often found that their kids score several years above their expected grade level, due to the superior quality of the schooling received via homeschooling. Following are some statistics along these lines.

How do home schoolers fare in achievement tests:

The complete batteries of The Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) and the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) were used to assess student achievement in basic skills. The ITBS was used for home school students in Grades Kindergarten to 8; the TAP for students in grades 9-12.

Average Home School Test Scores

Grade	Number of students studied	PERCENTILE RANK		
		Reading	Language	Math
1	1,504	88	82	81
2	2,153	89	80	85
3	2,878	83	82	78
4	2,625	83	67	76
5	2,584	83	69	78
6	2,420	82	73	76
7	2,087	87	77	79
8	1,801	96	79	76
9	1,164	82	77	68
10	775	89	84	72
11	317	84	83	68
12	66	92	85	66

(Journal of Labor Economics, Manhattan Institute)

Fact: As you can see by the scores, home-schoolers rank high in these achievement

tests, particularly in reading and language arts, though math tends to be a bit lower. Note: A percentile rank of 69, for example, means that students did as well as or better on the tests than 69% of all the students in the nationwide norm group. Fifty percent would represent average performance.

Another common myth is that due to not following the same format and curriculum as secular public schools, somehow homeschooled kids are at a disadvantage when it comes to college/university entry exams.

The National Home School Legal Defense Fund compiled statistics regarding entrance exam scores and compared homeschooled averages with the national average. Following are their findings:

	<u>ACT</u>	<u>SAT</u>
Home-schooled average	22.7	1093
National average	21	1020
Highest score possible	36	1600

(ACT is the American College Test. SAT is the Scholastic Aptitude Test.)

(Courtesy of National Home School Legal Defense Fund)

c. Myth: A GED test doesn't really show anything. What is required for a public high school education is much tougher, and a GED test would be a snap for anyone graduating from high school. Everyone knows that the GED test is at a much lower level than tests in public school.

Fact: This is a common misconception that has been addressed by different organizations, as the following statistics indicate.

From a *Boston Globe* article: Each year, to ensure their difficulty, GED tests are administered to a national sample of thousands of graduating high school seniors; 30 percent fail. (<http://alamo.nmsu.edu/~abe/gedfacts.html>)

Excerpt from a *Washington Post* article: To set a passing score, the ACE (American Council of Education) periodically gives the exam to graduating high school seniors and then norms it at the point at which 70 percent of them would pass. (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/edureview/aedu079901.html>)

National Guard Recruiting Center site: Those who obtain scores high enough to earn a GED credential outperform at least one-third of today's high school seniors. (<http://www.1800goguard.com/index.asp>)

d. Myth: You can't get into a college or university with just a GED test. A GED test isn't the same as a public high school diploma.

Fact: The National Home School Legal Defense Fund found that 69% of homeschooled students go on to college or other post-secondary education. In 1998, about 200,000 of the 14.5 million undergraduate students in the United States had been homeschooled (Detroit Free Press. <http://www.free-market.net/features/list-archives/insiderupdate/msg00043.html>).

The *Washington Post* states, "An astonishing one in seven high school degrees awarded is a GED credential" (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/local/edureview/aedu079901.html>).

Once they graduate from high school, homeschoolers closely parallel their public school counterparts, whether they pursue

Study: Homeschooled Students Excel

PURCELLVILLE, Va. (EP) (<http://www.mcjonline.com/news/news3059.htm>)

The largest study ever conducted on home schooling in the United States, released March 23 [1999], shows that in the drive for scholastic excellence, the typical home school student does exceptionally well at every grade level.

“Young home school students test one grade level ahead of their counterparts in public and private schools. As they progress, the study shows that home schoolers pull further away from the pack, typically testing four grade levels above the national average by the eighth grade,” said Michael Farris, founder and president of the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA).

The study was commissioned by HSLDA and conducted by Dr. Lawrence M. Rudner, director of the ERIC [Educational Resources Information Center] Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation at the University of Maryland.

The research, which assesses the scholastic achievement and demographic characteristics of more than 20,000 home school students, is also published in the March issue of the refereed journal, *Educational Policy Analysis Archives*.

Families in the study chose to participate before they knew their children’s test scores, and all students took the same nationally normed tests: the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) for grades K-8, and the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP) for grades 9-12, both published by the Riverside Publishing

Company. The ITBS is used extensively in public and private schools.

No meaningful difference was found related to whether or not a parent was certified to teach. Though some critics of home schooling have argued that only certified teachers should be allowed to teach their children at home, the study suggests that such a requirement would not meaningfully affect student achievement.

“Home school students and their families are very serious about education,” said Farris. “We have always known that home school students excel academically. We now have independent verification of that fact.”

Homeschooled Score Better

WASHINGTON (AP, 1997)

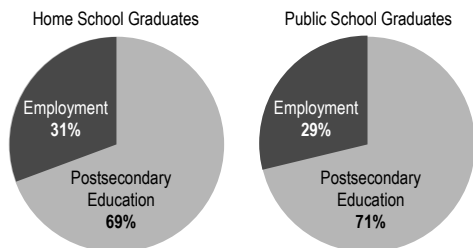
Home-schooled students perform significantly better than their public-school counterparts on standard achievement tests, according to a national study.

The study by Dr. Brian Ray, whose doctorate from Oregon State University is in science education, collected test scores from 5,402 home-schooled students in 1,657 families nationwide. Ray reports home-schooled students had average test scores in the 87th percentile. That means their average score was higher than 87 percent of all students taking the test.

I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts. (Psa.119:99–100)

more formal education or enter the job market. The following graphs indicate this.

What Happens After Graduation?



Courtesy of National Home School Legal Defense Fund
(www.hslda.org)

e. Myth: There are no scholarships or grants available to people who enter college or university on a GED diploma. If you didn't go to public school, you won't be eligible for scholarships and grants.

Fact: Contrary to this misconception, if you do research on the Web regarding scholarships available to GED grads, you will find there are over 15,000 hits. Some are only for GED grads. Many former-member young people have received grants or scholarships due to the fact that their parents don't have an income history in the country, making them immediately eligible for government support. We have heard of a number of young people who were such outstanding students that they won scholarships for their entire education. Of course, obtaining such grants and scholarships requires an investment of time and energy on the part of the individual, who must work hard at his studies, apply for grants, prove himself to be an asset, etc.

f. Myth: I would like to get a high school diploma such as the GED, but I can't because I'm not an American and I don't live in the U.S. Living overseas all my life deprived me of that opportunity.

Fact: You do not have to be an American or live in the U.S. or Canada to take your GED test and obtain high-school equivalency certification.

Following is a testimony from a Spanish SGA who got her GED in Argentina, while pregnant with her first baby. (Please contact your local FED board for information on taking your GED exam without leaving your field, or refer to the information given by below for how to find the testing locations near you. For example, there are 11 testing sites in India.)

A Spanish national excels in the GED

By Estrella (20, of Steven), Argentina

From as early as I can remember, I always had someone pouring into me, starting with my parents, whose main focus was feeding us kids the Word, making it come alive, as well as teaching us scholastically. I am so thankful to have had faithful teachers who enjoyed childcare and teaching. We didn't feel like we were "a job" to them, and because of this, we did our best and learned quickly.

School wasn't about seeing how many math pages we could get done each morning. It involved experiments, field trips, videos, active teaching—props and all. We could tell that our teachers were really putting their heart into teaching us, which made us want to learn. We had school inside, outside, upstairs, downstairs, in the attic, on the balcony, on trips, etc. Changes and moves didn't discontinue our school, because the only necessary ingredients for teaching were open minds and willing teachers. I only have the Family to thank for this excellent heritage.

Now that I'm older, I look at my parents—who are still having kids and pouring

into them, like they did the rest of us—and all I can do is marvel at their dedication and willingness to forsake so much in order to train their little ones. They would take advantage of mealtimes to explore a new subject with interested students, or forsake their movie night in order to spend some extra time with one of us. The love, care, training, and input that we received went a long way in making me and my brothers and sisters the sold-out missionaries that we are today.

Instead of getting frustrated with inquisitive minds, they encouraged questions and were always faithful to answer in as complete a way as possible, even looking things up in encyclopedias and dictionaries so as to be able to answer more thoroughly. They made sure that each of us—we're nine in total—stayed up to date with our schooling, and encouraged us to keep at it when we left home.

The result is that without ever having had formal schooling—and even having skipped a few months or years here and there, depending on circumstances—I have always felt confident around other young people my age out of the Family, as I feel like I've learned the most important and necessary facts for carrying on a wholesome life. When asked while witnessing if I studied as a teen or if I'm planning on going to college, I simply answer, "Yes, I studied at home, finished high school, and am now dedicating my life to something I feel is a lot more worthwhile than head-stuffing at university." Most people that I've told this to actually respected me for this point of view, and saw the truth in it.

When I was 14, I took an 8th-grade exam in Spanish in a public school and passed with flying colors. Last year the opportunity arose for me to take the GED tests. The testing dates were December

How I took the GED outside the U.S.

By Estrella

My parents found out where to take the GED by looking it up in the *CVC Handbook 2000*, which explains getting tested for the GED outside the U.S. On page 525, it gives the following Internet address: <http://www.prometric.com>. There my parents found out about the institute in Argentina where I took the test.

At this site you can find the contact info for Prometric in the States, which is where you have to make all the arrangements for taking the GED out of the States. Prometric then lets you know where in your country you have to go to take the actual tests. At this site, there is also a test locator, which shows where the different Prometric Testing Centers are around the world, so that you can see if there is one near where you're living.

26th and 27th, right after the Christmas push. I had been going out practically every day and since the details were worked out very quickly, I had no time to study. I knew that the Lord was going to have to help me pass, as taking the tests here in Argentina is quite costly (around US\$400). My grandparents were willing to pay for my exams, but I didn't want to disappoint them or be a bad reflection on Family education.

Well, I needn't have worried, as when I went in to take the tests, I realized how easy they actually were. Most of the questions I zipped through and finished the tests long before time was up. In fact, I got 100% on three of the five tests. I couldn't believe it! I hadn't even studied! This showed me how thorough my home

education had been, even with all the holes and gaps I thought I'd had in my schooling. I also found out that I could validate these exams in Spain (my home country), which showed my relatives that even according to their standards, I had passed.

Apart from actual scholastics, I also speak English, Spanish, and some Portuguese. (I learned quite a bit of Portuguese grammar, vocabulary, and Brazilian history as a kid growing up in Brazil.) I've gotten to know several different cultures and have lived in six countries. Because witnessing is such an integral part of Family life, I've grown accustomed to approaching strangers and striking up conversations, or getting them interested in our fascinating tools. I've also had lots of experience in childcare, so that when I had my own baby, I felt comfortable with the idea and wasn't at a loss, as I know most girls my age are in the System. I am also grateful for having received lots of training in office skills such as graphics, typing, word processing, and secretarial work, which I love.

Recently coming to the field of Argentina, which was just reopening, I can see more clearly than ever how all of these skills are so needed in our missionary life. If I had spent my time listening to lectures at college, or hours each day sitting at McDonald's studying monotonous books (like I see so many young people here doing), I wouldn't have been as prepared as I presently am for the life that I'm living. The excellent scholastic training I had, plus all the vocational input I received, has been such a blessing for me in this pioneer situation.

All I can do is hope that I'll be able to impart to my son the same wonderful Word-based training that my parents and teachers gave me. (*End of comments by Estrella*)

You will only get out of it what you put into it

We have found the rule of thumb concerning education to be that you will only get out of it what you put in. We recently received a note from a former member lamenting that his younger teen brothers who had recently left the Family were behind in their education. He felt this was the Family's fault somehow. However, these teens had literally "dropped out" of Family school, refusing to do any schooling and being unwilling to invest time and energy in learning. Is this a problem that is unusual in the System?

Absolutely not. High school dropouts do exist. Of course, the Charter requires that our children receive "an adequate education that allows them to become competent in a manner appropriate to their age." The responsibility of ensuring that their children are properly and sufficiently educated lies with the parents and the Home.

However, once children become teens, more of the responsibility naturally shifts to them to put forth the effort to learn and study. While the parents remain responsible to see that their teenage children receive schooling enabling them to reach the Charter education requirements, their teens also carry the responsibility of applying themselves.

The Charter requires the Home to provide sufficient time and opportunity for the education of its resident children. The primary responsibility for the children's education lies with the parents, next with the Home, and as the children grow into their teen years, they bear some of the responsibility as well.

Any young person who is behind in his schooling, as Peter pointed out in "The Professionals," can and should work towards bringing his education up to par

with the Charter requirements.—And the parents and Homes should do what they can to help and encourage the young people to do so.

On the other hand, since 1995, seven years ago, it's been in the Charter that any young person has the right, with their parents' agreement, to work toward a high school diploma or obtain other academic credentials through testing, and with Home approval, participate in any suitable educational program. ... Something that I find kind of odd is that some of our young people really gripe when they leave the Family that they don't have any diploma and that the Family is at fault; however, when they were in the Family they made no effort nor even showed interest in getting their diplomas or certification of any kind. ("The Professionals," ML #3399:174, GN 993)

Whose job is it?

By Leah (of Tiago), SEA FED

As the following quotes explain, we as parents (as well as our children and teens themselves) have to be willing to put in the time it takes to provide our children with the education they should receive. If our children don't receive adequate schooling, then we are to blame, not the Family at large.

(Jesus speaking:) Next, if you are going to homeschool, you must do it correctly to make sure your kids are learning. You can't just sit them down with a workbook and say, "Student, teach thyself." Any parent who received an education is in turn capable of teaching school. If someone is desperate enough—and I don't mean hysterically desperate; I mean really, really concerned—then that person

is capable. It might take you studying yourself in an accelerated refresher course to flush out the cobwebs and recall all that you've learned in the past, but you are capable, and even more capable now that you have Heavenly thought power via the mind of Christ available to you in a much greater degree than in the past.

You can meet the System's standards. In fact, your children can even surpass them, as many of the Family's children have. ... You may find it easier than you expect to teach your kids, but be prepared to put in the hours. (ML #3398: 40–41; GN991)

(Jesus:) There is also help closer at hand [in home schooling] than before with the boards being available to you. While they can't solve all your problems, because you are responsible for your own children and must seek Me for the specific answers and solutions needed for your family and Home, the boards will be a wonderful source of support, counsel and ideas. You will be able to take advantage of the help of specialists, and then you can apply their suggestions and ideas, as you feel led, in counsel with your Home.

As you listen, try to implement the ideas put forth by the boards; you'll find your burdens will be lighter and you'll be blessed with a multitude of counselors. Counsel with your local boards; see that your plan is in line with My Word; plan your attack, and then do it! (ML #3398: 40a,44,48b)
(End of comments by Leah)

It is clear that an element of self-determination is very important in teen schooling in order for the Charter requirements to be fulfilled and for the young

person to receive the needed education. The rule of thumb for education is the same everywhere: You will only get out of it what you invest in it.

Facts about Family education

A lot of the education second-generation members receive in the Family cannot be measured by “pencil pusher” standards, such as learning foreign languages, performing arts, office skills and computer science, personnel management, teaching, counseling, as well as vocational skills such as auto mechanics, electrical engineering, carpentry, construction, culinary arts, home management, and more. It’s sad when folks aren’t able to appreciate all the educational and vocational skills that they have learned in the Family. Of course, many of those who have left have taken those skills and used them professionally, from hi-tech computer programming, to working with film studios using Family-learned filming skills, to professional performing, acting, management. ... The list is endless.

Many former members of the second generation have opted for higher education, availing themselves of the multitude of scholarships and grants available to them. Many have excelled in university and ended up at the top of their class as valedictorians or honor students. Some have become lawyers, nurses, teachers, and managers. Others have started their own companies.

There are also some former-member young folks that move into manual labor, flipping burgers, and even stripping. The question then arises as to why, if they had received a good education, would they not be able to secure what are considered better jobs?

As the statistics above show, actually only a small percentage of people in the System attend college or university. Only 88% graduate from high school, and of that 88%, less than 30% will complete college. As such, it would be very unrealistic to expect that each young person who leaves the Family must either become a college graduate or be deemed a failure.

Once young folks opt for a career other than that of a Family missionary, they face the same obstacles to success any other person in the world does, and will discover that it is not an easy route for any, regardless of their upbringing. It is unrealistic to expect that every young person who leaves the Family will secure a high paying and prestigious job; surveys will show that this is not the norm even in the world.

It is to be expected that every parent who sees his or her children move on to another lifestyle would like to see them succeed and be outstanding in some way. The choices, however, depend on the individual. Just as it requires a measure of self-sacrifice and dedication to be a professional missionary, the same is required of those who wish to “succeed” in the secular realm. So the fact that some young people do leave and start off with such seemingly low-level jobs (albeit high paying—which is another part of their attraction) is not surprising, as a person’s success will depend in a great measure on their own efforts and goals.

It is also true that according to the Charter, it is the responsibility of the parents to assist their children as much as possible when they leave the Family. In line with this, Family parents have taken action to help their children get set up and established on a new path in life. We can thank the Lord also for the power of prayer invested on behalf of those moving on.

There are a number of former-member young people who are success-

Check It Out!

FSMs on Home Schooling

FSM 122, "Home Schooling—Tried and Proven!"

FSM 123, "Home Schooling, #2"

FSM 132, "Special Edition for Family Schools!"

FSM 133, "Home Schooling, #3"

FSM 231, "Home School Advisory, #3"

FSM 263, "Educating Our Children!"

FSM 277, Home Schooling Advisory, #4

FSM 288, "Christian Vocational College Series—Part 1"

FSM 291, "Christian Vocational College Series—Part 2"

FSM 312, "Home Schooling Advisory, #5"

fully going through university and earning degrees. Were they exceptional? In most cases, no. Most have taken a GED test, a college-entrance examination, and entered on the same footing as any other student, except with the added blessing that they have acquired a lot of skills, poise, languages, and experience that most young people have not had the opportunity of acquiring with a public school education.

Accrediting Family education

Following are some testimonies of those who have accredited their Family education in different ways. This is a very small sampling, and we're sure there are many more out there! Our own CVC diplomas are also a wonderful way to accredit Family schooling.

Thank the Lord for all He's done to provide our Family with education—an education that keeps developing and progressing, and keeps us learning as we serve Him.

Love, Marc and Claire

Is Family education adequate?

By Ginna (24), U.S.

I have never considered myself to be particularly intelligent. My mom, God bless her, was very faithful to teach my sister and me all through our childhood. We never used much in the way of conventional study books, being in poor field situations with limited supplies, money, etc., but she was thorough, stuck close to the *Childcare Handbooks* and *Activity Books*, and at age 10 I had a grade 8 equivalent education.

During my JETT years, I was involved a bit more in school situations and did my fair share of *Superworkbooks*, *Uncle Dan's Math*, and ESP publications, as well as a smattering of *A Beka* books. I enjoyed learning all my life, although I don't think I am the only one who found the *Superworkbooks* more amusing than interesting, but they served their purpose.

By the age of 14, I was involved in childcare, teaching others to teach others, and the main schooling that I had from that point onwards was a computer/school course known as Skill-Bank.

Then at the age of 19, after coming to the States, I decided with the counsel of my shepherds that it would be a good idea to take my GED. I have to admit I was pretty freaked out and worried that my education would not suffice and I even attempted for a while to study and brush up on some of my long-forgotten math skills, math never being my strong point. But time being limited, I finally resigned myself to trusting in the Lord ... and what do you know? I passed, and passed quite well too, much to my surprise.

All this to say, the Family education, no matter in what form it is given, is the best. It is complete, in my opinion, and more than adequate. Not once have I regretted missing out on conventional education. Thank You, Jesus, for the Family!

What do I do now, you may ask. I am a secretary at the North America Media Home where, believe me, I put all those English skills to use, ha! I am still learning, and enjoying every minute of it. I have completed several CVC courses and I am working on more.

From high school to college in one simple step

By Charity (28), India

Education has always been a big deal for me, ever since I was young. My parents and a couple that lived with us during most of my primary education years were faithful to teach us, but our education was quite unconventional, with very little “class time” and workbook work. All four of them were great at turning every opportunity into a learning experience, whether it was spelling words as we drove along in the car, or writing an essay or short story on the latest new village or city we’d visited.

I did attend System school for close to three years, but it was in another language (Turkish), and I was still receiving English education while at home. The main thing that Dad and Mom instilled in me as a child was a love for learning.

As I grew into my teens I spent a lot of time educating myself via reading Family publications, watching documentaries, and studying any resource material I could get my hands on. The amount of this resource material depended on which country we were in at the time, because we moved a lot.

Once I turned 16 I stopped having any kind of bookwork at all, as I was a full-time teacher of toddlers, and then moved into doing office work. I did continue to read a fair amount, though, and if I didn’t know something I made an effort to ask or research and learn about it.

Then I went back to the U.S. at the age of 21. I was anxious to get my GED, but honestly was a little unsure whether I’d pass or not, as I wasn’t sure if what I’d learned was actually what I needed to know for this test. GED provides testing centers where you can go in for a pretest. This test is the equivalent of one third of the final GED test, but they test you in the same atmosphere, with the same rules, etc. So I went in for this test (this was before I even took a look at a GED prep book) and scored very, very high. The officials told me I could go ahead and immediately take the GED, but I ended up waiting a couple more months, as I wanted to brush up on math. But taking the pre-test encouraged me to see that what I’d been taught was more than sufficient to meet the GED requirements and even the SAT/ACT requirements (which were tests I took privately later on).

After taking my GED and scoring in the top 10 percent in Maryland’s GED scores, I was offered a limited-funding scholarship to be used at any university I wanted to study at within the state. I ended up not availing myself of this offer, as it applied only to Maryland universities, and I was accepted into a Massachusetts distance-learning institution, as it was offering the courses I wanted at the most reasonable price with a flexible study schedule.

I spent some time considering schooling options, as I wanted to receive more academic training and certification, but also needed it to fit into my rather tight schedule. At the time I was quite involved in helping our Media and Public Relations Office in the U.S. doing office work and research, so I decided to study something along those lines. Since I’m a single mother and my job was of course full-time, I chose a distance-learning center called “Harcourt Learning Center” and took a course in legal studies. *(continued on page 26)*

Youth Apprenticeship

By Chloe, WS

It can appear to be a distinctly Family phenomenon to begin working in a ministry at 14 or 15, yet this is the educational program chosen in several European countries, used to start people on work as part of their education. I spent several years in Europe before joining WS, and met quite a few people who had trained as apprentices in their current trade.

At this age, students choose the “pathway” they wish to pursue, and in some careers this involves apprenticeship. The manager of a publishing company I worked with was in his early 20s, having started early at the company as an apprentice and gaining much experience and responsibility along the way. With this approach, young people can assume much responsibility in their late teens or early 20s, as many of our Family young people have done. Educators outside Europe are considering adding apprenticeship to their program, as the article below explains.

Youth Apprenticeship

By “On Purpose Associates,”

Funderstanding Web site (http://www.funderstanding.com/youth_apprenticeship.cfm)

Youth apprenticeship is a learning system that prepares students for work by giving them a combination of classroom instruction and paid on-the-job training. In this education model, students obtain a set of well-defined occupational abilities by learning concepts in the

classroom and applications in a work setting.

Youth apprenticeship systems in the U.S. have been influenced by successful apprenticeship models in Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, and Austria. About 66% of the youth in these European countries use an apprenticeship system to prepare for the workforce.

Programs begin accepting youth at age 15 or 16 (once they have finished their requisite education), and run for three to four years. Assessment in the academic classrooms has traditionally relied on tests and grades. In the occupational laboratories, however, assessment includes a combination of traditional testing and project completion. At the workplace, assessment is generally authentic and includes feedback from supervisors, mentors, and co-workers. Since students are working while learning, there is continual feedback on the quality of their efforts.

(Note from WS CVC department: On-the-job practical vocational training programs similar in approach to the CVC program that boast of combining hands-on experience and training leading to vocational qualifications are becoming common in the UK and U.S. They commonly appear associated with all sorts of catchy labels and promotional phrases like “cooperative education,” “learning in the workplace,” “modern apprenticeships,” “earn while you learn,” “learn by doing,” “living classrooms,” “work-based training,” “life skills development,” etc.)

(continued from page 24)

I had no problem applying and being accepted, and completed and passed the course with honors in about half the allotted time. This course gave me a number of CECs (Continuing Education Credits), which go towards any degree I might want to receive in the future. I received a lot of encouragement and support from my Home members who helped to plan a payment program and encouraged me in my studies.

Overall, it's quite simple to apply for and pass your GED, as well as to continue your education if you're interested in going past high school. It just takes a bit of determination and stick-to-itiveness, as well as willingness to work hard and study.

Many of us may not have had the most conventional education, but when you take the time to evaluate and certificate your accomplishments and studies, you'll realize just how blessed we've been to experience the learning opportunities we have. Our education is well rounded and covers more aspects than most kids who've studied in a classroom setting all their lives.

I thought my education was average—testing showed otherwise

By Steve (20), Argentina

I was born and raised in the Family, for which I am very grateful. The Family is what I love and it is where I plan to raise my children (I already have one child of my own), at least until the time when they are old enough to choose for themselves.

It's a bit difficult for me to compare our education with society's in general terms, because I haven't been in every place or situation. I can speak of what I've lived and seen to be true. However, statistically speaking and judging by what I've

heard, the vast majority of children who have been raised in the Family have had absolutely no difficulty measuring up to, if not surpassing society's educational standards. I have had many friends who have taken high school exams and passed with flying colors. Many of these were surprised at how easily they passed, as they were truly convinced that they were below par.

Scholastically the Family has made available all the material necessary for giving a child a proper education. There have been so many publications, and so much emphasis has been placed on child raising, that it's hard to imagine how anyone could complain. And then there are the home-schooling programs like *CLE*, *A Beka*, etc., which are usually fairly easy to get ahold of. It must be remembered that whether this material is properly put to use is as much dependent on the parent's will to teach as it is on the child's will to learn.

I went through a stage where I fell behind in my schooling, but again it was because I had absolutely no desire to study. When I realized the importance of having a basic education, I caught up quickly. I have never thought of myself as brilliant, but I took the GED high school exam and not only passed it, but made the highest GED score in Canada listed for the past five years. I received a scholarship offer with my diploma, and many other possibilities for scholarships if that had been what I wanted to do with my life.

I personally spent most of my childhood at school. My life was a school, as aside from the hours of actual "school," we were constantly being taught all sorts of practical things, which is more than I can say for a great many people I've met out there. I've come into contact with many people my age who couldn't sweep a floor if you paid them! Heck, some of 'em don't even know what a broom looks like! I think

The reason for it all

(Jesus speaking:) Family education is a matter of religious conviction. It is not simply how to get the best schooling; it is how to get the best schooling that prepares you for your life as a missionary.

You can get a good education in the System if you apply yourself and diligently search out good schools and good teaching methods. You can get an even better education if homeschooled by dedicated parents and teachers. But the point of Family education is not just head knowledge, or book knowledge. You are also being trained in the Word and as missionaries—as world changers! And this reaches far beyond and covers a much more widespread area than simple book learning. Family education trains the whole person, and doesn't stop with only the mind.

What I have ordained and what I wish is for you to prepare yourselves as missionaries, as those who will not only change the world with My love, but who will be leaders of many, many of My children during the Endtime. Through not just your studies, but your experiences, your environment, your interac-

tions, your personal time with Me in the Word and prayer, I am teaching you and preparing you for taking a role of leadership on a worldwide scale in the years to come.

This is not fantasy! This is coming! And I need you to be prepared all around—morally, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally.—All this is part of your education, as you learn wisdom and not just knowledge. I need for you to have the experiences to fall back on of trying and proving My Word. I need you to be practiced in hearing from Me and being led by Me. I need for you to be willing, adaptable, flexible, loving disciples. I need for you to learn My ways above all.

So the decision to follow the path of Family education is a personal and religious one. It has to do with your convictions, your calling, and your desire to follow Me. Your training as My servants, My tools, My missionaries, My representatives, and My ambassadors is vital, for I wish for you to be prepared for the mighty deeds and great works and big responsibilities that await you in the future. *(End of message.)*

people tend to underestimate this sort of practical training, which is also key in the building of character. Having a slight sense of responsibility at a young age sure did me a lot of good, as it helped teach me patience and perseverance.

Another great advantage in our homeschooling is the peaceful and stable environment of our Homes, which gives the children a peace of mind, in turn making it easier for them to concentrate on what they are being taught. As a child I was never made to deal with problems such as argu-

ing and fighting between parents, excessive drinking, a poor relationship with the rest of my family, or the fear that I could get shot dead in the classroom. And even though I am an only child, I was never alone, as there were always plenty of other children living with us. I was blessed with the love of not only my parents, but also of many others who cared for me as if I was their own. Schooling was always given in a very personal way and I always felt that the teacher was actually concerned that I was learning properly.

Due to the variety of people and personalities that we learn to relate to and deal with, most children raised in the Family have well-developed people skills. We also lead a very healthy life, both physically and spiritually, which is conducive to healthy and strong minds.

Last of all, I would like to say that the key to the success of our education is due to our faith in the Lord, Who cares for us, gives us strength when we're weak, gives us answers when we're clueless, gives us the faith to believe that we can make it, provides us with a positive outlook on life, and gives us a reason for living.

The value of a Family education

By Joseph (FGA), U.S.

There are some who question the value of the homeschooling we give our children, implying that our standards do not equal a System education. I can tell you that this is true. Our education exceeds the standards of those in the System!

Let me give some background on my situation. I was imprisoned, along with Simon (also an FGA U.S. national), for five months in Mexico during the persecution in 2000. The Lord used this for many victories. I believe one of these is to show the value of our educational policies.

While I was in prison, my daughter Ruth (11 at the time) was placed in the custodial care of my sister who is not in the Family. My sister worried that Ruth's education was lacking because of homeschooling. Ruth took a placement test for the Memphis school system [in Tennessee, U.S.] and was rated as having the equivalent of an 11th-grade education. There was talk of putting her in 7th or 8th grade rather than the 6th grade she was due to enter (the normal grade for her age, as well as the next grade in her homeschooling progression).

My sister took custody of Ruth and entered her in school in September. Simon and I were not released until November 2000. I then had to go through the court system to regain custody of Ruth, even though my sister was not opposed to her returning to me. Thus, Ruth had to remain in the Memphis school system until the legalities were resolved. She did exceptionally well, thank the Lord! Her grade averages for the school year were all above 93%. Here are the teacher comments from her report cards:

"Veronica [Ruth's birth name] is a very responsible, hard worker. She's a delightful addition to my class!"

"Veronica continues to be a dedicated student."

"Veronica, you are a wonderful student—a great asset to our class!"

At the end of March of 2001, we were to be joined as father and daughter once again. The courts returned custody of Ruth to me. We were then able to re-enter a Family Home here in the States, and Ruth is presently using the *CLE* program.

Ruth is proof that our children are well educated. Our homeschooling ranks with System education. As a matter of fact, it surpasses System education! The children receive more personal instruction; the greater personal attention serves as a motivator to learn. Finally, we have Jesus in the midst of the classroom. What could make for a greater education?

God called us a new nation! That means a whole new culture, a whole new way of life, a brand new people! We're a totally new nation spiritually, in faith and practice, and really in method and message too, although the message has have been preached to some extent, but never practiced as radically as we are doing! ("We Are It!" ML #2222:40)

Another route possible?

My siblings' success stories

By *Amanda, WS*

The temptation to think that our Family education isn't sufficient or that it doesn't prepare us for the "real world" is one of the Devil's favorites, but I believe that it just isn't true! Everything I've seen has proven to me the complete opposite.

Almost all of my brothers and sisters have chosen to leave the Family, and have pursued various careers or courses of study. None of them received funding from my parents, who had spent the majority of their lives in the Family and therefore didn't have that kind of money to give their children. But that hasn't hindered my siblings from getting their education and pursuing worthwhile careers.

To give you a little glimpse of what I'm talking about, here's a rundown on all of my brothers and sisters who are no longer in the Family and what they're doing.

They're each as successful in their careers as they have chosen to be, and none have had trouble adjusting to secular life or being accepted into the workplace, high school, college, or other educational programs they have pursued.

When my oldest brother (29) left the Family a number of years ago, he took a five-year architectural design course, while at the same time working as a chef to pay for his studies. He is now an architectural engineer.

My stepsister (24) paid her own way through school by working on the side as well. She studied law, and graduated a few months ago from her university with honors. She received a scholarship to a very prestigious college for post-graduate studies.

My younger sister (19) recently got her first job as a secretary in a large real estate firm in Sydney.

My younger brother (21) went straight from his Family education into the secular school system, and fit right in with no problems. He's in university now, studying criminal justice, and is well on his way to becoming a member of the Australian Federal Police, Australia's equivalent of the FBI in the United States.

My older brother (26) has held well-paying jobs since he left the Family. He quickly discovered that his leadership, communication abilities, and people-handling skills were highly sought after in the workplace. He never got a high school diploma or the equivalent, but he has never had trouble finding lucrative jobs. Each boss he has worked for has insisted on promoting him and giving him more responsibility, but this has often caused him to quit his jobs, because he didn't want the pressure of responsibility and management that his bosses always wanted to give him.

My second oldest brother (28), while presently working as second-chef at a classy à la carte restaurant by the beach (he never received secular chef training), is studying professional landscape photography. After just one year of training, his photographs are selling for AUD\$700 or more apiece—and that's with no advertising or promotion, simply after becoming known by word of mouth.

When I was 16, I held a job in sales at a home décor store in Australia in order to raise funds to go overseas. I didn't have accreditation for my education at the time, but it didn't stop the store management from giving me the job, glowing references, and an offer of promotion when I chose to quit.

No one can convince me that Family education isn't sufficient. Those who leave the Family, who choose to learn a profession and to diligently apply themselves to their

goals can become a success. The good training received while in the Family assists them.

* * *

(Mama:) As I'm sure you've discovered in your witnessing, you young people in particular are miles ahead of your System peers when it comes to communication skills, being able to relate to people and understand them, etc. Some of the most sought-after skills by many employers in the System are being able to relate well to others and communicate well. There's hardly anywhere you can get better training for that than in the Family, because of our communal lifestyle and our outreach ministries. Not only do we have all the good training and advice in the Word, but we get to practice and learn and grow in this area on a daily basis in our interaction with each other in our Homes, and in our witnessing" (ML #3172: 81; GN 777).

* * *

It happened to me

Far from inadequate

By Nick (24, of Sherry), ABM, NACRO

(Editor's note: Following is a reprint of Nick's testimony written in 1995, with updates added by him throughout.)

I've heard it is being said that there are young people in the Family battling with the thought that the education we've received in the Family is inadequate. From my viewpoint and from what I have personally experienced, I would have to say that this is far from the truth.

I was born into the Family in 1978. Like many others in the Family, my parents moved around a lot, and we found ourselves in many new and different situations every year. The one thing that we always had in every situation, though, was the

Word and all the materials for learning supplied by the Family.

The Word played an important role in the course of our schooling, and my mom placed the greatest emphasis on strong reading skills so that we would be able to feed ourselves from the Word. Like most Family kids, my sister and I were reading well at the ages of four and five.

A head start, I would say, on your average school kid. Most kids in the public education system don't really start to read well until the first or second grade (age six or seven), and nowadays they are having a problem with kids graduating from high school not reading proficiently or some not at all. This is not farfetched; I actually met a few people who could barely read in the high school I wound up attending.

It was from the Word and using Family publications and schooling materials that I received all the education I needed to prepare me for what lay ahead.

Of the ten years of schooling required by some countries' educational standards, my sister and I have only attended a total of two years of secular school. Even at that, those two years were scattered over a ten-year period. We spent a month or two in kindergarten, a couple of months in first grade, a month or two in third grade, and a few months in fifth grade, and so forth. Due to our family's travels as missionaries, we would drop in to a local school system for a short time and then drop right back out when we needed to move on. But each time we were temporarily placed in secular school, we were always way ahead of the other kids, academically and socially.

Why was that? Was it because we were extraordinary, gifted, highly intelligent, mega-smart kids with enlarged brains? No! To the contrary, we were just your normal, average Family kids, raised with a Family education.

In 1990 my parents became Fellow members, and we began living on our own rather than full time in a [CM] Family Home. While this did not necessarily change our day-to-day living, it was still a time of adjustment for us. After years of homeschooling, we decided to try the local public high school.

So in September of 1992, my parents enrolled my older sister and me in a high school in California. When we first started school there, they gave us a hard time because we had no school records from secular schools. They didn't quite know how to handle our "files"! Ha! The high school counselor who helped us schedule our classes was "very concerned" that since we had been homeschooled our whole lives, we wouldn't be able to adapt "socially." He also wondered if we were capable of coping with schoolwork at the high school level, since in his eyes we had no "formal education."

Throughout the school year they continued to hassle us about the fact we had been homeschooled. At one point they even threatened that we wouldn't be able to officially graduate because of the lack of necessary credits from attending public schools.

The Lord got a real victory out of this whole situation, though, and proved that what they were saying about our previous education was untrue. This was the first time we had attended a full year of secular school, and in the end we came out with straight A's—a grade point average of 4.0—which in the States are the highest marks you can get. Every semester there was an honor roll and students had to have good "attitudes and behavior" as well as good grades to be placed on it. My sister and I were consistently on the honor roll. There is also a ranking for all the students in each class at the end of the year, and I ranked number one out of all my freshman

class (9th grade, usually age 14) of 467 kids. Overall, it was a great testimony and victory!

Am I boasting? Yes, for sure, about our supposedly inadequate Family education! Am I exaggerating? No, I still have the high school report cards and student transcript to prove it.

Shortly after my high school experience, the Lord opened the door for me to rejoin the CM Family and I've had the blessing and privilege of serving Him full time in this wonderful Family for the past several years. I am now 24 years old, married, have a child, and am working at the NA Activated desk as well as doing the Home's finances and the ABM work for the west of the U.S.

Through my opportunity to experience formal education firsthand, I know and can say with full conviction that the education we have received in the Family is truly one of the best you could get. I have confidence that for either serving the Lord in the Family or living a secular life, our education is more than adequate. If you, too, find yourself enrolled in one of the schools of the world or attending some form of the public education system, you will find that they have nothing more to offer than to prove this point! I honestly feel you couldn't pay enough to receive the type of education we have received in the Family.

It's all in your presentation

*By Christy (24, of Isaac and Ruth), Thailand
(Editor's note: Christy and Jonas have received a lot of media attention as a result of their lukthoong singing ministry. Here Christy explains how they answer questions about their education.)*

With both local and foreign media, as well as individuals of the educated or upper class, a question that often comes up is, "What kind of an education do you

have?” or “What kind of college degree do you have?” This isn’t always the easiest question to deal with, especially if you’re an SGA who, out of necessity (and with a cheerful heart, of course), was involved full time helping in the Home or out singing and witnessing.

Mama and Peter have shared with us that they feel that we have a wonderful education and nothing to be ashamed of or feel intimidated about. That’s so true and I feel the same way. But you’ve got to know how to explain that wonderful education to the general public, and especially to upper-class people, in a way that they can relate to and understand so that they will be better able to receive and accept you and what you have to say to them.

I’m not so familiar with the way it is in the West, but I know that here in Asia, education is a big deal—and I mean a really big deal! It’s what people hinge their lives, their success, and their future on. In many cases, whether they’re going to listen to you or accept you and what you have to say hinges on the impression they have about your education. A lot of us in the Family are very successful, even by System standards, and we certainly have a lot to say that people need to listen to and accept, but the education issue can be an easy one to get stuck on, and in some cases, our answers—or lack thereof—can have a negative effect.

When Jonas and I first started to go more public with our singing ministry, we had to actually stop, sit down, talk out, and list the different aspects of our education—what we’ve done and learned—and then translate it into understandable terms for the general public. As I said, we have learned lots of things and can do lots of things, but we just don’t know how to properly explain that to someone in GP terms. You can’t really say, “Praise the Lord, I had a wonderful education. I traveled constantly

my entire childhood from place to place and I was able to meet lots of people and learn about different cultures and foods and people and I feel that was my education. Anyway, it was super duper fun!” That might in fact be part of your answer, but perhaps a slight alteration in presentation would be helpful.

In my case, my parents now run their own international kindergarten, hold seminars, and advise parents on their children’s education and care. When you think about it, a lot of our parents are similar to us SGAs in that they too dropped out of school to serve the Lord (or to become hippies and then serve the Lord). I read testimonies all the time about our Family FGAs who are running this or that major project and are considered experts in this or that field, just like my parents. They’re far more qualified than a lot of non-Family members their age who have received a formal education and all sorts of degrees, because they have *experience* (and the Lord’s anointing!).

Jonas and I listed all the different things we know how to do or have learned or have CVC diplomas in—which have been a real help and blessing, even in just being able to answer this question with conviction. Everyone has different things they’ve done and learned, and thus the answers would vary accordingly. But for my part, when I’m asked what my education was like, here’s what I say:

My parents were teachers and are educational consultants and experts in the field of education, which made for a wonderful education for me. So even though my family traveled a fair bit and I grew up in countries where the local languages were not my first language, I was able to keep up with my education using courses

that I could follow with private tutoring at home. I feel very privileged, also, as I feel that my education was enriched by being able to partake of and learn about so many different countries and beautiful cultures and peoples, as well as come in contact with people from many different walks of life. In addition to my education, my parents also gave us children a great gift in allowing us to be involved in their volunteer projects and to join them in helping and encouraging others, whether it was the underprivileged, or the elderly, or other children our own age, or anyone. This made a huge impression on me, and is one of the things that influenced my life and caused me—when it came time for me to choose my own profession and way of life—to follow in their footsteps and do what I am doing today.

This is a lengthier answer that may not be necessary, but something like this may be what you'd choose to say if you're being interviewed or are in a situation where you have the opportunity to get in a bit of a witness or sample. But for the short version, you could consider using just the first part of the answer, however you choose to word it.

When asked about my college education, I simply state the following:

These are the subjects that I took, and I have diplomas in this, this and this field (and you could list the subjects that you have CVC diplomas in, whether it's performing arts, public relations, teaching English as a second language, etc.). I chose these subjects because I

felt that they best suited my chosen line of work. They were subjects that I thought would be the most useful to me, as they have proved to be (and I try to give examples of this point).

Another point is that I know of many colleges that rate you on a point basis, not just by your classroom or "on paper" work. With this rating system, you get your diploma based also on actual points and quality of and time in fieldwork, etc. This is where our vocational training and experience is a very big plus, because you can get a very decent education just from that. This is another approach we've found helpful in explaining our education.

When you talk about it that way, people don't question your education and it is easy for them to understand and relate to. A large part of your presentation is personally having faith and confidence and being very matter of fact in the way that you explain it, as it helps people to accept it when they see that you really believe in what you're saying and are full of your subject.

In going over your answers, it helps to try to relate them to the upper class and think about how they would think and see things. We really don't have to feel intimidated or inferior. We can have faith and confidence in what we know and have learned and can do, and that what Mama and Peter have said about the education of our Family young people is true of us as well. But if we're not very convinced ourselves and are somewhat namby-pamby about it, then we're certainly not going to convince anyone else or give a very good impression to the general public or to those who are interested and asking us about it.

I wasn't always very convinced myself, but I've seen more and more how true it is that our Family education has value. I

heard the testimony of one of the SGAs in Indonesia (Rejoice, of John M.) who had gone to a school to set up an educational seminar or activity of some kind. As she was doing so, the school psychologist came and started questioning her about her qualifications. He said he was responsible to make sure that no one came into the school who would cause harm to the children or who wasn't competent in that field or who didn't know what they were talking about. He wanted to know what her authority was and why she felt she was qualified to be there. She very politely but matter-of-factly and with conviction told him that she felt she was very qualified to be there, as she had this and this and this and this—six different college diplomas in the field of education and early learning, all of which were the CVC diplomas she had received. The man was speechless; he had nothing more to say. Rejoice went on to organize and lead her seminar, and proved that she had the abilities and the experience to back up her qualifications.

Not long ago on a trip to the U.S., we were eating dinner with a young but very wealthy, influential couple and one of their friends, all of whom have bachelor's degrees and more than one also have master's degrees. They are considered real intellectuals—your typical educated, successful types. We had been staying with this couple for a few days and had had lengthy conversations on all sorts of subjects, from world politics to the financial markets to child training to Asian culture to spiritual well-being, and so on and so forth.

In the course of our dinner conversation, the friend said to me, "We were discussing last night how your intelligence and education level is way above that of an average 24-year-old (and they were probably thinking, "and especially for a singer," ha!), and how incredibly well versed and

knowledgeable you are on so many subjects. We realized that you've never said anything about your education. (Ha! Like I was gonna bring it up!) So we were wondering about your bachelor's and master's. What subjects did you take and where?"

Well, guess what I thought just then? *Oh, wow! Mama and Peter were right about our Family education!* Yeah, I know I was a bit slow in figuring that one out (just shows how intelligent I really am), but honestly, that dinner conversation was a major breakthrough for me. Compared to the average 24-year-old, or even 20-year-old in the Family, I'm very, very average (yes, you're right, probably even below average). And the comments of these people were proof to me that we in the Family—no matter what preconceived or tainted ideas some of us may have about ourselves—have received a very good education, in fact, above average. We ought not to feel intimidated or inferior or worried about having to talk about or explain it. Rather, we ought to be proud of it, and then build on it, and use it to the best of our ability for the Lord and the furtherance of His work.



We would like to gather more evidence in favor of the education the Lord has given us in the Family, so if YOU have a testimony about how your education has been accredited, recognized, or used in an official sense when needed, please send it in. You may also know of young people who have left the Family whose training or education helped them get a good start in the professions they chose—this would be helpful to hear as well. Let's spread the good news! Tx!

NEWS BRIEFS

On the Value of Homeschooling

(For the complete articles that these quotes and excerpts were taken from, and for more news articles on the GED and the value of homeschooling, see the complete compilation of "News Articles on the Value of Homeschooling" on the MO site.)

According to *The Wall Street Journal*, "Evidence is mounting that home-schooling, once confined to the political and religious fringe, has achieved results not only on par with public education, but in some ways surpassing it" ("School's Out" by Daniel H. Pink, *Reason* magazine, 2001).



Albert Einstein, winner of the 1921 Nobel Prize in physics: "It is, in fact, nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry."



New York State 1991 teacher of the year John Taylor Gatto said in Philadelphia, "The WORST homeschoolers are doing better than I ever did in all my years of teaching."



The trump card the educational establishment used to play against homeschooling is socialization, but the notion that home-schoolers are misfits has been struck a death blow by a young man named Larry Shyers. Dr. Shyers recently completed a doctoral dissertation in which he challenged the myth that youngsters schooled at home "lag" in social development. In his study, eight- to ten-year-old children were videotaped at play. Their behavior was observed by trained counselors who did not know which children went to reg-

ular schools and which were homeschooled. Their conclusion: "The study found no big difference between the two groups of children in self-concept or assertiveness, which was measured by their social development tests. But the videotapes showed that youngsters who were taught at home by their parents had consistently fewer behavioral problems."
(AP, 1994)



In 1992 psychotherapist Larry Shyers did a study while at the University of Florida in which he closely examined the behavior of 35 home schoolers and 35 public schoolers. He found that home schoolers were generally more patient and less competitive. They tended to introduce themselves to one another more; they didn't fight as much. And the home schoolers were much more prone to exchange addresses and phone numbers. In short, they behaved like miniature adults.
("Home Sweet School," John Cloud and Jodie Morse, *Time* magazine, August 2001)



In a 1998 study by Dr. Lawrence Rudner of the University of Maryland, over 20,000 home-schooled students took standardized tests and completed other questionnaires. The study concluded that "in every subject and at every grade level of the [tests], home-schooled students scored significantly higher than their public and private school

counterparts.” Furthermore, the study shows that home-schooled children had average scores that fell between the 82nd and the 92nd percentile in reading and reached the 85th percentile in math. By the eighth grade, the average home-schooled student is performing four grade levels above the national average.

(Dr. Isabel Lyman, *Cato Commentaries*)



“Home schoolers bring certain skills—motivation, curiosity, the capacity to be responsible for their education—that high schools don’t induce very well,” a Stanford University admissions officer told *The Wall Street Journal* (“An A for Home Schooling,” Brian C. Anderson, *City Journal*, Summer 2000)



More than two-thirds of American colleges now accept [home schoolers’] transcripts, though some require home-schooled applicants to submit a GED or additional subject exams, and home schoolers now attend 900 colleges of all descriptions. Harvard accepts approximately ten every year. Oglethorpe in Atlanta actively recruits home schoolers.

(Brian C. Anderson, *City Journal*, Summer 2000)



This year, home-schooled kids swept the top three places on the National Spelling Bee, and Stanford accepted 27 percent of its home-schooled applicants, nearly twice its average acceptance rate (Brian C. Anderson, *City Journal*, Summer 2000)



William Bennett used to be the U.S. Secretary of Education, but today he travels the nation to preach the home-school gospel. Working himself up to promote K12, his slick, new, for-profit online school for home schoolers, Bennett even suggested that “maybe we

should subcontract all of public education to home schoolers.” It was strange to watch a man once responsible for federal aid to public schools urge people to desert them.

(“Home Sweet School,” John Cloud and Jodie Morse, *Time* magazine, August 2001)



Leo Damrosch, a Harvard English professor began home schooling his sons, 10 and 13, in part because “the two writers I’ve studied most intensively for many years, William Blake and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, were both geniuses of astounding originality, and neither of them went to school for a single day.”

(“Home Sweet School,” John Cloud and Jodie Morse, *Time* magazine, August 2001)



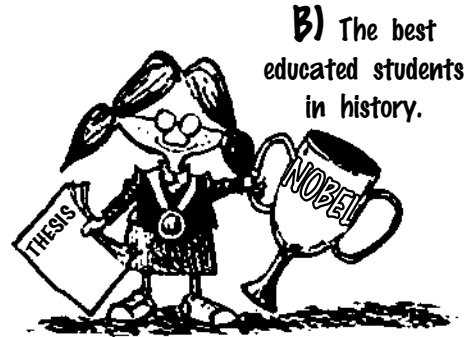
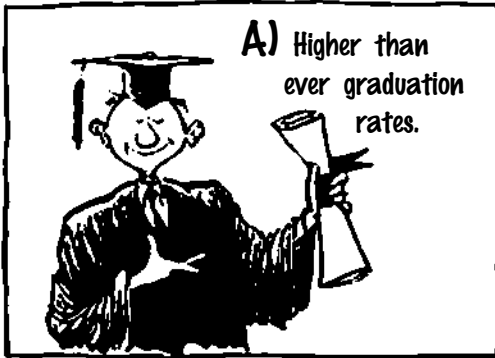
John Taylor Gatto was an award-winning junior high school teacher for 30 years in Manhattan’s public schools, and yet he gave it all up abruptly in 1991, resigning very publicly on the op-ed page of *the Wall Street Journal*. He said he could no longer remain in a system that trained children merely to obey orders, where curiosity was stamped out, and where attempts at reform were fruitless.

“Government schooling is the most radical adventure in history. It kills the family by monopolizing the best times of childhood and by teaching disrespect for home and parents.”—From John Taylor Gatto’s resignation statement (*Wall Street Journal*, July 25, 1991)

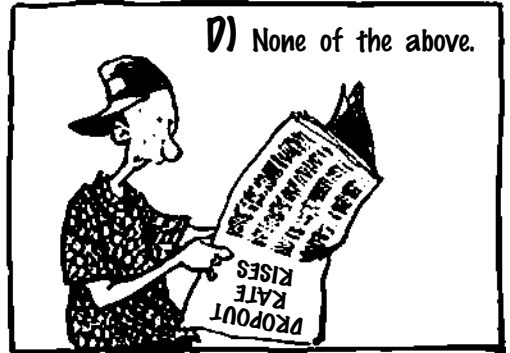


By the time my high school class graduates, I will have my Associate of Arts degree and be on my way to a university as a junior. And it is hard to imagine all the life experiences I will have by then. I can do anything and there are no words to describe how

Q: HIGHER ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND TOUGHER TESTS HAVE RESULTED IN:



C) A high-tech revolution fueling another economic boom



great that feels.—PNS Commentator Megan Moss, 15. Megan is currently homeschooling and attending Chabot Community College in Hayward, CA.

(“Home Schooling: A Happy Exit from High School,” Megan Moss, *Pacific News Service*, 2001)



“I think one of the obvious benefits of a home-school education versus any other trend is you can focus on specific needs and interests in your education,” said Paige Kimble, director of the Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee. “Children in other types of schooling follow a set program regardless of whether they are interested or need that program.”

(“Home-schoolers find vindication in

contests,” Noreen S. Ahmed-Ullah, *Chicago Tribune*, 2001)



What effect does homeschooling have on the kids themselves? Are they less social or more social? Do they become misfits in society? Barb Lundgren, who homeschooled her three children in the “Unschooling” manner advocated by educational philosopher John Holt, states, “I have found that homeschooled kids are quite different from ‘normal’ kids. All ages and abilities can play and work together without prejudice. The degree of natural compatibility, the ability to cooperate and share that homeschooled children show is remarkable. There are no words in our language to describe such children. ... It’s through their interactions with

other people that you really step back and say, ‘Wow, these are really different kids.’” If I had to describe them, I guess ‘extraordinary’ is the most useful nutshell sort of word. Extremely mature, responsible. Passionate, sensitive, careful, respectful.”

(Samuel L. Blumenfeld, *WorldNetDaily.com*)



“Our home-schoolers often have a lot of initiative,” said Anne Sjostrom, assistant director of undergraduate admissions at Duke University. “They’re operating on a high level that makes them comparable with people from a background of high-level classes.”

(“Home-schoolers find their options abundant,” Yonat Shimron, *Charlotte News and Observer*, 2000)



College Admissions Adapts to Students Taught at Home

By Julie Blair, *Education Weekly*

Many colleges and universities that once viewed home-schooled applicants with skepticism have recently begun to change that outlook, a new survey suggests, with some even going so far as to craft special admissions policies to simplify the assessment process for students who have been taught at home.

In the past, many colleges required that home-schooled students take a barrage of standardized tests and earn the General Educational Development credential in lieu of a high school diploma before applying for admission.

A majority of institutions responding to the survey now consider the use of portfolios, a parent’s transcript, and SAT and ACT results as legitimate methods of assessing such students’ preparation, the report says.

College-admissions counselors are generally supportive of home-schooled students and want to find ways to help them apply to college, said Irene M. Prue, the assistant director of admissions at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Ga., who has studied the issue.

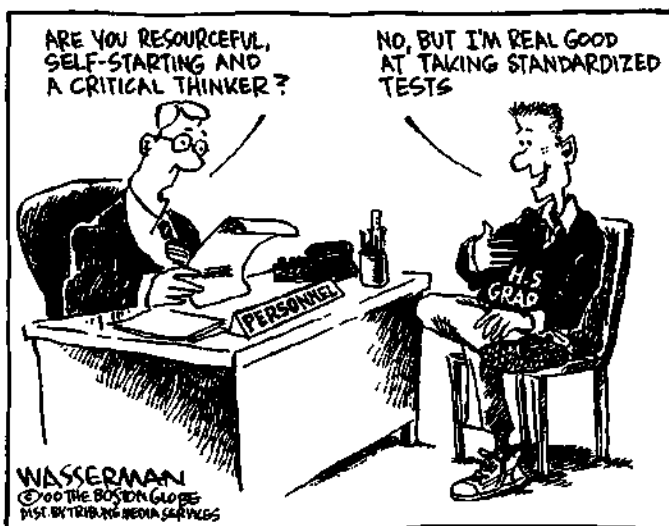


What’s Going on Behind School Walls?

Or, perhaps more important, what is not going on?

Graeme Hunter, *National Post* (Canada)

I teach at the top end of the public system, in the university. Every year I have students who come to talk to me about a terrible discovery they have made. It is always the same discovery. They find they have wasted the first 20 years of their lives. They are angry at a school system that relentlessly told them



they were banqueting, but left them empty; that praised their beauty, while disfiguring their souls; that told them of their rights, while disregarding its own responsibilities.

By the time I meet them there is no perfect remedy. But I tell them to be thankful that at least they were not among those who ran amok on a shooting rampage. And I suggest they consider homeschooling their children.

Graeme Hunter homeschools in Ottawa and is a professor of philosophy at the University of Ottawa.



School's Out Forever

By Kathy Evans, *The Age*, Melbourne

Jeff Richardson, a lecturer in education at Monash University who has spent the last seven years researching home education, says: "The evidence shows overwhelmingly that these children perform extremely well, above average, when they re-enter formal education. "That appears to be across the board, whether they sat at home and had formal lessons from the Oral Roberts School of Fundamental Christians or whether they were up-a-tree hippies who had no formal learning pattern. On any measure you like, socially or academically, they will do better.

"Anybody who cares enough about the education of their children, who turns around and says I don't trust the authorities to do as good a job as I can, is virtually guaranteed to succeed."



The New Trivial Pursuit

By John Leo, *US News & World Report* magazine.

Colleges are unsure of their mission, buffeted by consumer pressures and ideological forces, and unwilling to say what a sound education might consist of.

Pancakes 101. Hot subjects on the modern campus include witchcraft, magic, and extraterrestrial life. An even hotter craze is "food studies," which appeal strongly to students who like to eat and chat about it in classes that are hard to flunk.

Another hot subject is "porn studies." At colleges great and small, students now read pornography and watch porn movies for credit.

"We are being cheated," Amherst College student Yelena Malcolm wrote about her school last year. "We do not emerge from this college with the best education possible. We certainly do not emerge with anything remotely resembling a liberal arts education in the traditional sense of the word."

The junk courses creep in because much of the professoriate now believes that nothing can truly be known, so nothing truly matters.



"People don't need to fear that if they do something off the beaten track during the high school years that they're ruling out college," says Susannah Sheffer, editor of *Growing Without Schooling* magazine.

Ms. Sheffer explains that when people hear about homeschooled teens, their first question is, "Can they get into college?"

"It's no longer an issue," she says. "Public universities, private colleges, Ivy League schools—homeschoolers are everywhere."

"Homeschoolers can take the same steps as other students," Sheffer says. They fill out applications, write essays, and take tests. Some homeschoolers create a transcript with the help of a school. Others don't bother with a transcript at all.

"The part that's different is where you describe what you've been doing the last four years," Sheffer says. Homeschoolers often include writing samples, examples of internships and travel experiences, and descriptions of books they have read.

OPTIONAL READING

Dear Family, following are previously pubbed articles about Family education and the value of CVC diplomas, compiled here for your reference.

Legality of our schooling proven

By Andrew, Mercy and Aaron, Italy (GV 76)

Our daughter recently left the Family, as she wanted to pursue higher education in university. She had completed the academic program with CLE and therefore was accredited a high school diploma. Upon requesting admission in the university, she was asked to show her high school credits. Since she studied with a foreign school, the credits and diploma had to be verified with the Italian embassy in the U.S. The CLE supplied us with all the documentation, which we sent off to the embassy. We just received the package back from the embassy confirming the legality of the documents we submitted, as well as the high school curriculum, etc., which included the *Good Thots*, *Memory Book* and other Family-based materials. Our daughter then went to the university and submitted these documents, and they were accepted without any problems. We thought to send in this testimony as at times the “legality” of our homeschooling is questioned—but it is very much legal.

With CVC, passed as “brain child”

By Anonymous Russian (GV 73)

Although I’ve been a good student all my life and never had to struggle with learning, I did drop out of high school to join the Family, which left me with no valid proof of education besides my junior high school records.—Not very impressive for a 23-year-old girl!

When I arrived in Europe with the intention of getting a EU passport (try to get anywhere with a Russian one!) I was a bit worried. Here you are required to show your proof of education among other papers, and all I had was CVC certificates. I wasn’t sure if those would do. If they wouldn’t accept that, I would end up in the “second-class” group of foreigners, which would mean being put back into local high school and other courses “to catch up on missed education” before I could even dream of getting my papers done.

Well, guess what? I just prayed and tried my best to come across official and sure of myself, and the Lord did it! The people that were interviewing me were very impressed by my “two high educations” [diplomas in two fields of study]. When they asked why the papers looked the same, I explained that I went for the “business pack” that included management, computer applications, etc., and they were perfectly fine with that.

They also wanted to know why I, being a Russian, went to American college, so I told them that since Russia only “went into business” from the Communist regime a few years ago, there are really no schools or colleges where you can learn much about business. Since I wanted to work with foreign companies and be a translator, I enrolled in the Christian Vocational College. That was also accepted and I passed as your average “brain child,” instead of a high school dropout! I was assigned to take a short language course, after which I can apply for my new passport and hopeful leave for hungrier fields!

Family education got her in

By Joy (of Paul), Australia (GV 91)

Joyanne (Kannika) of John and Promise returned from India. She wanted to go FM as she was worried about her education. She wanted to do her HSC (high school certificate) and then go on to university.

After visiting with some counselors at the school, they wanted more information from her. She gathered her qualifications and they were very impressed. She has her CLE marks listed in her CLE transcript, a lot of which are Family courses (Word, etc.), her CAT scores, along with a St. John's Senior Certificate in First Aid and her work with the poor in both India and Thailand. They said that she qualified to go straight into university. This is pretty good going, as here in New South Wales your HSC (high school certificate) is highly regarded. Not only is she now doing her Bachelor of Science

in nursing, but the counselors even suggested medicine for her.

CVC education worth \$15,000

By a Home in Italy (GV 120)

Michael began studying with the CVC four years ago to qualify for an exemption to compulsory military service in his country. During that time, he has earned four certificates; Christian Service, Christian Leadership, English-Croatian Proficiency, and Ordination. These certificates and other CVC documents were all accepted by the military and he is starting his fifth year in the program with official exemption from military service.

He and his wife, while on the field in Hungary, were witnessing to and became close to some American military support personnel. When they showed them his certificates, these “highly educated” Americans asked how much his studies cost, and he replied that this program was completely free for Family members. They were flabbergasted and told him that in the U.S. they'd have to spend around \$15,000 for such a program. They asked if they could sign up right away.

Michael was the first EE national to be granted a military exemption with the CVC, and we understand that there are now others in the EE doing the same. Michael is understandably very turned on to the CVC and his enthusiasm has sparked the others in our Home. Now *everyone* is enrolling!

Offers from top universities

By Jodie and Joy, Brazil (GV 120)

Lisa (17) has left the Family, went to an American school and has hit the honor roll, has the best grades in her class, and already has offers from top universities (Johns Hopkins, Yale, etc.), and I keep receiving congratulations on our homeschooling. It's quite a testimony, which is remarkable for that school, which is nicknamed the "millionaire's school." Her sample has been a testimony for the Family and our children's education. They are even asking me what methods we use, which books, etc.

City office says our curriculum is "excellent"

By Jonathan, Claire, and Lydia, Japan (GV 125)

The Board of Education from our City Office came over to check on our homeschooling and to make sure that the children were all receiving a good education. I have to say that there was a real satisfaction in seeing these officials marvel at how well the kids are doing studying at home. They right away said that they would be sending us written approval from the City Office to teach our own kids and that our curriculum was excellent.

Family education lauded by military

By Ginny, USA (GV 125)

Although it is no victory that my son left the Family to join the Navy, in looking on the bright side, the Lord showed me that helping him to leave would provide me with information and experiences that I can help other parents with.

I would say my son had a very typical Family education: Like many of our teens, he was schooled through the 8th-grade level using CLE materials and a little CVC. Then he went to a field Home where he spent a year and a half without anything really structured educationally, and no solid plan except to perhaps take the GED. When he had time he would study a GED study guide and math book that I sent him. I also found some math CDs, since he wanted to learn algebra, and he used those as well. Of course he did plenty of vocational-type work in the Home and learned different skills, as well as spending a little bit of time learning the local language and a lot of time being exposed to it.

In order to join the military or go to college, a high school diploma with transcripts and course descriptions was needed. After researching it and talking with a high school counselor, I knew my son was easily on par with graduating USA high school students, so we set out to prove it by documenting it.

It was pretty inspiring for my son to see all that he had accomplished, because at the beginning of this project, he felt because he hadn't followed a set curriculum that it meant he hadn't really done high school level work. A lot of everyday-type work or Family experiences translate into credits for academic or elective courses. We followed guidelines from the CVC and a book I found about documenting homeschooled kids educations (*And What About College?* by Cafi Cohen). Once I got my son started, he worked on it for nearly two

weeks, translating his academic and vocational experiences into “educationese” with the help of “scope and sequences” from System publishers and the CVC book. When it was done, he was so inspired to see that his education, which had seemed to him to be unorthodox compared to mainstream schooling and therefore inferior, was actually superior—and that he had done much more than the average USA public-schooled student. We gave him credits and a grade-point average, then issued him a beautiful “homeschool” high school diploma (from our computer!).

When a Federal government educational reviewer called me a few days later to quiz me about his education, I felt a little bit nervous, knowing that they look down their noses at homeschooled students. But the first thing the lady said was, “These are the best transcripts and course descriptions I have ever received or looked at in my career. We are so impressed. Your son has had an excellent education.”

(Editor’s note: If you’re interested in obtaining information on how to make transcripts and course descriptions, you can contact Ginny in Indonesia. Following is the continuation of this story.)

Family-schooled young person wins Navy academic excellence award

By Ginny, USA (GV 132)

My son did very well at boot camp and graduated as one of the best recruits out of the nearly 700 boys there. He won the academic excellence award for his division

and nearly for the whole boot camp. Because of this, the HSLDA (Home School Legal Defense Association) and the Navy contacted us, wanting to publish an article on how a homeschooled guy did so well, since generally speaking the military looks down on homeschooled kids.

CVC tested in Russian regional court

By DJ (of Davida), Russia (GV 138)

I met an American couple in our city that needed the help of an independent translator. They came to adopt two children from a local orphanage and ran into a network of corrupt officials and translators.

After getting the okay from the Lord, and with my Home’s consent, I accepted the job. But I wasn’t sure about one thing—I’d joined the Family 11 years ago and thanks to the Lord, I learned to speak English, but I don’t have any official diplomas. In school I studied French. When I was 17, I dropped out of university to join the Family and never received any further [formal] education. I even lost all my school and university documents in a raid during persecution seven years ago. The only papers I have are various CVC diplomas that I’ve earned in the last few years. But would my CVC “Oral and Written Translations Russian-English” diploma hold water with the Russian legal system?

In Russia the red tape is very red! The officials take pleasure in giving people the maximum amount of hassle. To help this couple I would have to translate legal documents, have my translations approved by local notaries, and represent the

American couple in the regional court. I told the couple that with my “little” diploma I probably would be turned down. But they insisted on trying it anyway.

We went to two public notaries, I showed my CVC diploma, and both accepted it! The day of the court hearing came and the same thing happened—I was admitted right in, with only CVC credentials.

Russian regional court officials are not stupid; it’s one of the most legalistic systems in the world. They had my background and education checked and verified. I had to sign and bear legal and criminal responsibility if any of my translating was false.

The end result is that this couple was able to adopt two neglected Russian toddlers. Now these children are happy, healthy, and safe, living in a nice home with caring parents. I believe that CVC played an important part in helping their lives be saved from a very dark future.

So, please, don’t tell me that my CVC diplomas aren’t worth anything. I’ve used them and I’ve tried them and they’re great. I don’t need anything else!

Educational authority’s recognition of our homeschooling

By Ben and Faithy, Russia (GV 138)

Our daughter Fleur was home-schooled all her life, first with the help of *SuperWork books*, and then, from grade 8 through high school she was enrolled in the CLE full program. She obtained a CLE General High School Diploma, as well as

four CVC Diplomas in childcare and computer skills. She finished high school shortly before she turned 18, and then she decided to leave the Family.

She settled in Holland and the first step she had to take was to enroll in a school to learn Dutch, as she never lived in the Netherlands, and knew very little Dutch. She also had to have her diplomas evaluated, so the Dutch educational authorities could give her a Dutch equivalent of her diplomas, as the Dutch schooling system is much different and more sophisticated and demanding than the American school system. She submitted all her diplomas, both CVC and CLE, and the CLE Office also has sent a record of her grades directly to her school counselor. And in their stead she obtained the highest Dutch high school diploma she could possibly obtain! As you can imagine, both she and we were very happy with that, and it helped her to have confidence in her education. Besides that, she has been the top student in her Dutch language school.

After almost a year of learning Dutch, she took entrance exams to a well-known hotel management college. There were over 200 students vying for 90 places. After the exams, which included written tests, group discussion, and interview, she thought she had little chance of passing, since she felt nervous during the exams and her Dutch wasn’t completely fluent. Well, to her surprise, she passed the exams and got accepted! Once again, her Family homeschooling education proved to be excellent!