

“Children’s own perspective on home education”

by Willemien Krüger © March 2014

We as parents have a perspective on home education, and so do our children. This article is a short compilation of just a few children’s own perspective in their own honest words. May it serve as inspiration to keep on doing what we are doing.

I am 11 years old. Now that I am homeschooled I have more time for my sport. I can now practice tennis every morning for 2 hours. I have seven subjects (English, Mathematics, Natural Science, French, Art, Computer Science and computer programming, Project work). If I were to compare home schooling with normal schooling, I would definitely choose home schooling for these reasons:

- No more school clothes
- No more waking up at 5am in the morning to get ready for school
- No more home work

Home schooling is fun for these reasons:

- You stay at home and do it
- It will some times take not even 3 hours if you work hard
- You can do it any time of the day

(JJ Brazer)

I am 12 years old. I started homeschooling last year. I have made lots of new friends over this period, homeschooling is cool even if we don’t have the same school holidays as the government schools do, we can go on holiday any time we want! We also go on some very interesting and educational homeschooling trips. One of our trips was to a pottery factory, we learned about different kinds of clay and then we had to make our own pots, which was cool but very messy. Just last month we also went on a trip to a telescope, we learnt some cool things there, trust me it was very interesting and not many children get to have such a wonderful opportunity. If I compare normal school to homeschooling, I would say they are very different from each other. The teachers are your mum or dad, you do lots of activities and lots of fun things. I do rhythmic gymnastics. My school subjects are: English, French, Natural Science, Math, Computer Science and Art. I also do cooking with my dad and baking with my mum. So home schooling is still hard work, but it gives me the option of how much work I must do by when, I can play when I want and do things I enjoy, I don’t have to put school clothes on, so it’s always casual day. I wish other people would see how much better home schooling is than normal school.

(Alex Brazer)

Homeschooling is...by a 13 year old. If you ask me homeschooling is different for everyone. For me it is good to have the privilege of choosing what I want to be, what I want to do, what I want to learn. My day starts with me and my sister waking up at 6 am to get ready for a busy day, but I also know a few homeschool friends who only get up around 8am. This shows we live differently. When I started with homeschooling all of my books came from different places. Some were my parents’ textbooks from when they went to school, some were books the library threw out. And some of my friends use a curriculum – again it shows differences in style. Most homeschoolers who come from school panic about what to do their first year. Then they manage to relax all through their second year and decide what they want to do by their third year. Therefore eventually they start taking responsibility for their own lives. For me homeschooling is about getting to choose what I want to be, how I will achieve it and how hard I will work to make it happen, and while I work I take great pride in knowing I am me, and I don’t have to be someone else to live my life to its fullest.

(Enette Venter)

A 6 year old says “Homeschooling is so nice because I have more time to play and it is nice to learn to read.” A 10 year old states, “We have a lot of play time, and we love that we only have two months school and then one month holiday. I have lots of subjects like Afrikaans, Mathematics, Science, Biology, History, Art, Technology, English and Geography and also Bible. I also read other things at

night. We have animals to care for and a vegetable garden to maintain. There are lots of time for me to practice gymnastics.”

After 7 years of public school, I now enjoy being homeschooled and love every minute of it. I can just be myself, there isn't group pressure anymore. I have more time for other activities which I can also enjoy more now that I don't have to worry about homework which must still be done. I am a very social person and that has not changed at all, in fact it is even better now that I can enjoy friends visiting for longer periods of time and we have so much more to talk about since we are not seeing each other every day in the same setup of school anymore. I struggled with concentration in school and learning was a real burden, this is so different now. I do not do a formal curriculum yet, but has a lot of time for my art work and reading – these always had to wait as there was not enough time to do these things when I was in school. I feel much more relaxed and calm, I really feel better now. The time we spend together as a family is also priceless, in fact I feel as if I am getting to know them only now ! Home education – the best thing that could have happened to me ! (14 year old)
(Teegan Els)

I am 13 and have been homeschooled my entire life. I think homeschooling is often thought wrongly to be a lonely, nerd way of education and the people who are homeschooled are shy and weird. Today I will share how homeschooling is for me, and what I like and dislike about it.

Being homeschooled for me is not only my education, it's the way I live and determines how I behave and react in different situations. I love to learn, and often when my friends who are in public schools complain about how much homework they have and how they get no time for other things I wonder, do they ever like school? They only seem to like the socializing part of school, the chitchat and hanging out with friends. They never seem to like the classes themselves for the work and the learning. I was sad when I realized that these people have unlearned their natural love for learning. I am so excited about my next year's work while other children live for holidays. Of course, not all subjects are equally interesting for me, and my mother has to push me with some things (ex. maths!), but we all have different interests and no one wants to study something that doesn't interest them! I am not saying holidays are unnecessary ! There is a time for everything.

I like homeschooling a lot for more than one reason. Here are some of them:

- ~I don't have to get up early (we arrange our schedule to fit our family routine)
- ~I don't need to wear specific clothing
- ~I have a say in my work (I can talk with my parents and tell them what interests me and what books I like more etc)
- ~I can plan how I want to work (I can work out my own schedule)
- ~I learn many things that I would never have learned in public school
- ~I can get direct help and attention with something I struggle with from my mother
- ~I know my family better because I see them more often
- ~I am under less pressure when I need to take time off and there are work left (when I get sick etc)
- ~I don't get homework since I do all my work in the morning (in school time)
- ~I have more free time
- ~I go on interesting outings with our homeschool group
- ~When I discover something that interests me I have time to research it
- ~I associate more things with education/learning than sitting at my desk (ex working in the vegetable garden, caring for animals, going to the library, reading books, listening to music, surfing the web)
- ~I can have an interesting conversation about more things than the latest fashion or newest class leader

Things I dislike about homeschooling are less, but here are some of them:

- ~Because my mother is my teacher, there are some misunderstandings
- ~I have to actively seek out friends, instead of being surrounded by them (which is effort but usually worth it)
- ~Sometimes people give me a funny look when I tell them I am homeschooled and won't be going to a public high school (then I can't help but feel odd and out of place)
- ~I haven't yet had opportunity to attend school dances, farewells or other social functions my friends talk about which I know I will probably enjoy.

But overall I am glad to have such an awesome mother who was brave enough to swim upstream and homeschool me and my brothers. I am learning much and look forward to my future!
(Elna Kruger)

The following encouraging paragraph was written by a 20 year old honors student who was homeschooled since grade 3.

The first time I heard about homeschooling I got really excited and thought, of this is going to be new adventure ! In the beginning things sometimes felt confusing. Everybody had to get into a new routine and way of doing things. To follow a set curriculum helped a bit in getting structure in the home. It was however sometimes demotivating to keep on struggling with the same problem and not be able to finish work. Sometimes I had to battle with rejection if adults make negative comments on homeschooling. And sometimes I wondered if I will ever finish school if there seems to be little progress. So it was not always easy, but it is definitely worth it ! It has taught me responsibilities and to be able to plan and do my work on my own. It has taught me endurance to keep on doing something until you get it right. It has also taught me to solve problems and work independently. One also get the opportunity to take time to really understand something before moving on to another concept in different subjects. The values I have learnt in homeschooling is benefitting me immensely now that I am at university. I can see now that in homeschooling I was not spoon-fed, but given a spade and an axe to enable me to search for information on my own. I can proudly state that I am in the top 10 academically every year in the 3 years of study so far. If you are a homeschooler or homeschool mom, don't give up and don't give in! *(Frianke van der Velde)*