



## Do You Have the Credentials to Home School?

By Carlynn McCormick

When it comes to teaching children, the most important credential to have comes naturally to most parents. It is that *deep love and care* mothers and fathers feel for their own children. But can love alone teach a child to read, write and do math?

Well, in a way “yes.”

When a teacher dearly loves “Johnny” she has a strong interest in his welfare; when “Johnny” loves his teacher back, he is likely to do his very best. Look it over. *Really* look it over: an atmosphere permeated by a loving attitude cannot help but make for an ideal learning environment.

Indeed, it is far better than the one-shoe-fits-all learning environment usually found in school. Even though most teachers *do* care deeply about their students, traditional grade levels are often unworkable. Why? Because they overlook that children are unique; they learn at various rates and levels. Not every child ties his shoes at the age of five. It is no different with writing, counting or reading.

I give my two youngest home schooled children as an example. I sang to them, recited rhymes and told them stories from the very start. My daughter began reading at four; my son began reading at seven. If they had been in a traditional learning environment, she may have been labeled gifted, while he might have been labeled remedial. But at home, there was no pressure to “catch up.” And yet by the time he was 12 his interest in reading was as high as his sister’s, and today they remain avid readers. In truth, there is probably no one **more qualified** than parents when it comes to knowing the uniqueness of their own children.

One powerful teacher requisite that is often missing from a child’s schooling is “*the reason why*” he should study a particular subject. Here again, parents have that requisite satisfied over any assigned teacher. For they know their child’s interests and

can easily help their child find a good reason for learning something. *“Let’s count dinosaurs; oh look, Spiderman is reading a story; you’ll be able to sign autographs . . .”*

Designing a school program around your child’s individualized interests, activities and attributes is probably easier for **you** to do than anyone else. With such a program, you give your child a purpose for studying. When children have a good reason to study something, they **want** to study it. Without such willingness, not much is accomplished; with it, **anything** can be achieved.

Traditional schooling often does all the “thinking” for you. But life requires us to figure things out for ourselves; we must be able to evaluate data as to importance. Simple logic and practical skills are built-in to the home environment. If children are to use the kitchen table for their classroom desk, for example, they must first clear away the breakfast dishes. Home schooled children are often required to solve the practical problems of living. Parents are especially good at helping their children develop such reasoning skills.

The final requisite is to know state requirements for home schooling. Fortunately there are numerous home school organizations ready to help parents meet Department of Education mandates and legalities for their particular state. Most states accept the idea of alternative education with open arms. Parents usually find this an easy requisite to meet.

Therefore, on all fronts, it is my contention that parents have the **best credentials in the world** for being teachers — for they recognize and rejoice in the individuality of their own children.

No one fulfills the **“love your child”** requisite better than you!

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