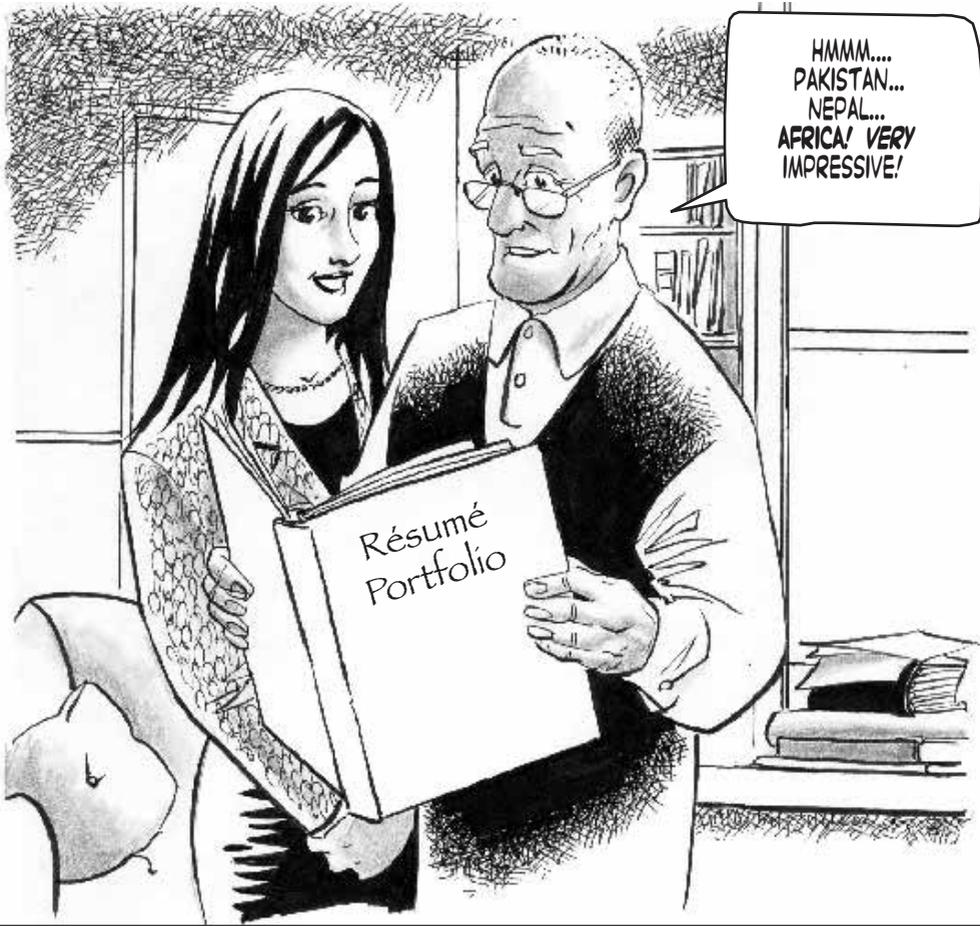


FSM 403
CM/FM
JULY 2003

DISPELLING THE MYTHS ABOUT FAMILY EDUCATION

PART 2



Dear Family,

In the few months since the FSM “Dispelling the Myths about Family Education” (FSM 398) was published, more people have written attesting to the value of Family education and training. To encourage your faith, we’re sharing those testimonies here. We’re sure that there are still many more, so please write if you have something to add.

In addition to these personal accounts, in this FSM there is more information on homeschooling, some updates on the CVC, and comments by education experts. We pray that this information will encourage your faith in Family training and in how the Lord has led and taught us through the years, and continues to do so.

Let’s pray we can avail ourselves of all He has provided for us in the Word and Family publications, so that we can learn all we can and train to be the Endtime witnesses and shepherds He intends for us to be.

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Dispelling the myths about Family education—Part 2

THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

A public school teacher speaks out on Family education

By Lily Harvester (FM), U.S.

I have been a public school teacher here in California for 13 years, and I can attest to the fact that our Family education is superior. I taught kindergarten for one year (1990–1991), middle school for two years, and high school the rest of the time. The kids that the public schools are turning out are becoming dumber and dumber each year. Many teachers are not dedicated, have no conviction or standards, and are bound by ridiculous curricula that do not meet the needs of the students, much less provide them with the tools they need to really function in today's society.

The type of schooling our Family kids get would be considered a very progressive model for the new Charter Schools* springing up all over the U.S., or for large traditional schools that are revamping their system and creating smaller schools. Many educators today are

admitting that large, assembly-line public schools are a failure. They have reached the conclusion that public schools are operating on a system designed in the early 1900s, which is neither adequate nor relevant to students of the 21st century. Many of the kids coming out of high school today are semi-literate and semi-numerate. I am not talking off the top of my head; I am talking from experience! I am also in a master's program and will be getting my master's degree in teacher leadership and administration, so apart from teaching I am doing research on this very subject.

If top educators were to visit our Family Homes and observe our children for a month in the "classroom," they would have to admit that what we have is superior to anything the public school system has to offer. If our parents obey the guidelines in the Love Charter and make sure our children are getting what they need daily, and if they are keeping accurate records of their children's schooling, they will discover that their children are getting a superior education to that received by their System counterparts. So if our children are coming up short, it is not the fault of the education available in the Family.

Our children have the freedom to explore a wide range of subjects and are not locked into curricula mandated by the state. In public schools here in California, many classes have 35 to 38 students per class. A

*Charter Schools are publicly financed but privately run by parents, educators, and companies. They have recently been developed in the U.S. in response to the need for an alternative to public schools there.

teacher is expected to “cover” X amount of material in X amount of time. Because of the training I have received in the Family, I have the conviction to circumvent many of the roadblocks and give the students what they need, as well as witness to them and give them the truth!

My bachelor’s degree, my professional clear single-subject/bilingual credential, and my studies toward my master’s degree did not and are not helping me to be able to give the kids love, guidelines, standards, and high expectations. These kids out here want that, but very few System teachers are able to give it to them! And no other teacher at my school is able to give the students the spirit of David, the spirit of the New Wine, or call upon the power of the keys to change these kids’ lives!

Our kids are years ahead of kids out here. Many of our kids have traveled the world over, are able to adapt to all kinds of situations, can relate to people of different cultures and ethnicities, and can easily converse with people from all walks of life. Talk about multiculturalism! Our kids are experts in this field. Our kids have had experiences that System kids would be envious of. They are not caged in a building from 8:00 AM to 2:56 PM, five days a week. If our kids want to learn about the civilization of the Incas, learn about the Taj Mahal, or learn about the different tribes of Africa and how they live, they have the wonderful opportunity of receiving an authentic education, as many of our children live in these countries. Our children’s education is far beyond anything the System can deliver!

Many of our Family children start learning how to read at the ages of two, three, and four years. When I taught kindergarten in 1990–1991, kids at the age of six didn’t know how to read. Many of our children are also bilingual, trilingual, or polyglots. Here in California, unless a student is Vietnamese, Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Hispanic, from Africa, the Pacific Rim, or Europe, he or she is monolingual. Must I go on?!

I want to encourage our Family children, teens, YAs, and SGAs! As a public high school teacher who has been teaching in California for 13 years, and who was among 14 teachers nominated as teacher of the year, I say your education is tops! You are also receiving a godly, wholesome education that will last for eternity. Most of the mumbo-jumbo taught in the System will pass away! You do not have to feel inferior to anyone!

How God and the Family helped me make it

By Francesca (former Family member), U.S.

How did I make it through college when every semester hundreds of students flunk out or are kicked out due to low grade point averages? I feel a lot of it had to do with discipline, study habits, determination, and keeping my mind on my goals—all good habits that I learned while growing up in the Family.

I constantly compare my upbringing to my peers and initially felt at a disadvantage, as I had not gone to traditional high school. Many of the subjects in college—chemistry, for example—were totally new for me, as I had not been exposed to them before. But after talking more with my high school grad buddies, I found out that high school was not what I had thought. Many of them skipped classes, slept during school, or cheated their way through. High school was all about partying and just getting by. Unfortunately, since they didn’t develop good study skills in high school, some of them found it difficult in college as they tried using the same methods.

When my grandma was in college, a professor told her that they preferred the students who had not taken chemistry in high school, as then they would actually study and not think that they already knew everything. I found this was true for me too. I spent several hours a day studying chemistry, as I knew that I needed to learn it, and ended up getting an A.

My equivalent to high school in the Family was one day out of the week where all day I would study with my sister, and we would try to complete as much of our schoolwork as we could. Although I feel this time was inadequate, it did teach me to use time wisely. I had full responsibility for my studying as well. If I didn't study, it wouldn't get done; there wasn't someone forcing me to study.

What I had to get adjusted to in college was sitting and listening to lectures instead of reading the material myself from a book. I wasn't familiar with this way of studying and found it difficult to follow along at first. It didn't help that I was in southern Texas hearing draws and twangs every other word. I talked with my professors about my difficulties, and they were very happy to work with me. One of my professors would give me the pages that he was going to cover in the textbook the night before, so I could read them by myself and then follow along more easily the next day so that it wouldn't be so foreign to me. I found that many of the teachers and professors were happy to give me extra tutoring if I needed it.

I would venture to say that every Family kid could get scholarships (money awarded you via your school, based on either need, merit, or academic achievement) and grants (money given to you by the government that you don't have to pay back), because of low family income and large family size. It just takes a little work. There are thousands of dollars available to pay for education, but most people don't apply for it because it takes some time and paperwork. I have graduated with my nursing degree fully on scholarships and grants, and don't have a single loan or debt. My parents were such a big help in getting my financial assistance, as they gave me all the information I needed and more.

Most scholarships require that you write some type of letter explaining why you are deserving of the scholarship and why you have

That's life!

I can vouch that although there were some holes to fill, my kids were adequately educated when they went out of the Family. On his GED test, Ian got the third highest grade anyone had ever received in the school where he took it. Sean and Celena also did well. Valiant did well enough and he was the only one who went to [formal] high school. I agree wholeheartedly that the accountability lies with the parents/teachers first to provide the opportunity and with the students next to avail themselves of it. That's life!—Keren Lovingheart, U.S.

a greater need than other students. They also like to hear about how you have helped your community and the volunteer work you are involved in. This was easy for me, as both my parents are missionaries overseas, I come from a family of nine kids, and had no one to pay for my college, so I definitely showed financial need. I also listed and sometimes showed pictures of the various volunteer or missionary activities that I'd been involved in over the years in Pakistan, Nepal, and Africa. I have also worked here in the city where I live as a volunteer for the Assault Victims Awareness Center, raising awareness about date-rape drugs*, and helping victims deal with their losses. This experience not only looks good on résumés and scholarship requests, but it's been a great opportunity to reach out and help others.

Before I even graduated with my nursing degree I already had job offers. I now have a job at the Children's Medical Center in Dallas, and I will be working with children from newborn to two years. The hospital will pay 100% of my tuition so I can continue my education.

I am so excited that I have the knowledge and skills needed to be able to help people in this way, and I thank God for helping me get this far.

*drug used to incapacitate somebody, that causes unconsciousness and memory loss, used in the commission of a date rape

Highly valued

By Marc and Claire, U.S.

(for the North American Regional PR board)

Former member young people have generally had the blessing of first and foremost receiving a spiritual, moral, and religious education, which has provided them with a strong code of ethics and excellent people-handling experience. This can qualify them for a myriad of jobs and professions that require such skills—skills which are usually not taught in mainstream educational institutions. With the spirits of modernity and secularism taking over education, it is rarely a goal of most schools to build character, or moral and spiritual values.

It was interesting to watch the movie *The Emperor's Club*, a recently rated fictional movie about a history teacher in one of the nation's top private boarding schools for the

children of the wealthy and powerful. The teachers ran a totally autocratic institution with very little input from the outside, and attempted to follow the old tradition of shaping morals and building character. It was interesting to see this, as it made it clear that such institutions are rare nowadays, and require a lot of money and social influence to gain admittance to.

So often, the key to success of our former member kids is not necessarily pursuing their education, but it comes when they make the decision to embrace what they have been given and not “throw the baby out with the bathwater.” When they use the spiritual, moral, and religious education they have received in the Family, they find that these values and skills are rare and highly valued outside the Family.

IT'S UP TO YOU!

YOUNG PEOPLE ON FAMILY EDUCATION

What really matters

By Shine (25, of Tim), U.S.

I'd like to share a few thoughts on the subject of Family schooling—from a different side, because I never had any! I joined the Family almost six years ago, when I was already finished with school.

The schools I attended from kindergarten to 6th grade were average public schools. The work was very easy for me and I found myself very bored during those years. I had a few teachers who were aware of that, so they would give me extra reading assignments and projects, just for a fun challenge.

After 6th grade my parents and I moved from the East Coast to Colorado. We moved into a certain neighborhood solely because of the good reputation of the schools. Entering middle school there was a big change. The vast majority of the students were rich and white, which was very different from my



experience on the East Coast. The curriculum of the school was way ahead of the one I had come from, but I liked that. I caught up

with no problem and continued my record of straight As.

Then I was off to high school. The high school I went to was well known in the state, as it was on the grounds of the U.S. Air Force Academy. It had to live up to its name and was high on the charts with some of the best test scores, teachers, etc. During high school I also took four college classes at a local community college.

So as far as an education, I did receive one, and I could have gone on with it. I was in many of the honors classes, which are for students who can move along quickly and want to learn more.

Now I live with many SGAs. They have lived in the Family their entire lives and have never attended System school. They have had a variety of teachers, workbooks, and schooling situations. They haven't even completed all of the grades I have. They have not had the amount of time studying I had or the strict structure or the "highly educated" teachers.

But guess what!?

When I have been stuck with how to teach kids to read or how to explain a math problem to a student of mine that just doesn't get it, I ask an SGA.

When I am writing a testimony or a letter and I am confused about my grammar, I have one of the SGAs check it.

When I want to know something about other countries, words from other languages, ways of other cultures, I consult an SGA.

I have learned how to witness to many other people from some of the SGAs. They have taught me about geography, world history, health, other religions, and many other subjects.

Even the SGAs who are not so academically oriented have experienced so much that I have not. They help me when I'm trying to cook something, sew something, with cleaning, organizing, the care of my babies. I don't know what I'd do without their wealth of knowledge! What an education they have!

As I said, I had pretty good opportunities concerning education, with intelligent teachers and students. I was into art and theater and I was doing well. But when I would sit there in those nice clean classrooms and look around at everyone striving for success, I would get sick to my stomach—but not for any physical reason. I would look at the teacher, or at home I'd look at my parents, and think, *Oh God, I don't want to be like them! I don't want to live in this world of emptiness. There must be something more.*

I knew Jesus in some sort of way. I had been raised in church and it also sickened me, but I did believe that what Jesus taught was cool. Since the age of about 12 I had so many questions and doubts and I would get so depressed sometimes. It didn't matter that my teachers would tell me, "Oh yes, you're really going to make something of yourself." I started to hate it all.

By the time I reached tenth grade (at 15 years old) I went into a totally different world. I dressed in strange, dark clothes. I wanted to look different than the robotic kids I was surrounded with. I started writing poetry about "the darkness of the System," and how I was "searching for the light." I started doing every different drug available and reading all sorts of spiritual handbooks. My grades started to drop drastically, and the teachers who had said that I was really "going somewhere" were now looking down on me and kicking me out of their classes.

The education, the textbooks, the teachers, the grades, the parts in school plays, the solos in concerts—none of it mattered anymore. I wanted to be free. I wanted to find truth, and I knew that as soon as I found it I would follow it forever. I was willing to give up absolutely anything. The last thing on my mind was education. I needed a reason to live.

I found it, thanks to Jesus and Dad.

Don't get me wrong—I am committed to giving the kids in the Home a good education. I will never doubt what the priority is,

though. A good education means nothing when you are lost and have no truth in your life. Those who are intelligent but without the Lord's Spirit are like empty shells that feed their body but starve their souls. When it really comes down to it, and when you look deep into people's hearts, what really matters is Jesus.

Intelligence or desire?

By Rosita (20), U.S.

I want to comment on some of the facts and explanations given in FSM 398, in particular those about the credibility of our Family schooling.

It seems many have the notion that when our young people leave and some of them enter the riff-raff of society, it is a reflection on the poor schooling they received in the Family. However, I personally know of former members who became McDonalds' burger flippers, manual laborers, or even prostitutes or gang members, and they did receive a very good education. These young people did not lack in *intelligence*, but rather in the *desire* to be accomplished in the world.

It seems some leave because they see the glamour of the movies. They long to be like that beautiful girl who all the men adore, or they want to live to play the next video game. They could easily and without much effort *become* somebody in the System, but don't want to.

I have three brothers who left the Family, all of whom received the same education I did. In my mind it was more than adequate, with opportunities to excel in many spheres. My parents and the Homes I lived in provided plenty of excitement, variety, and solid learning experiences. These boys were the same ones who didn't want to learn, skipped half of their books, copied the answers to get it over with, etc.

In spite of this, one, who was at the time 17, was offered full college tuition and a possible partnership in the business by an



established former member who has his own company. The other, who was 16 at the time, took a GED test and scored the highest in the history of the school where he took it. My youngest brother, who left at the age of 15, passed the exams with a high enough average to enter a prestigious local college. He was the youngest member there.

None of them are in college anymore—*not* because they couldn't do it, but because they didn't *want* to. Two got their "higher" education paid for by the Army, and the other got a great job as he worked his way through. They dropped out of these things, because they're looking for something that doesn't exist—a land of fun and games with no work. You have to *want* to learn and succeed or else you'll never be anything.

Perhaps as young people in the Family we've been so spoiled that we feel everything should be offered to us on a silver platter, money included. Well, it doesn't work that way in the System. You've got to be a go-getter, education or no education.

More qualified

By Chandra (23), WS

When I was 19, I had a friend/supporter who was in his mid-twenties. He was working in stocks and bonds, knew his stuff, and was considered fairly successful and intellectual. One evening we stayed up late talking about the Endtime, the state of the world, fact as opposed to fabrications, and on the list went. We talked for several hours, covering more subjects than I could ever remember.

The following morning he called me up to thank me for talking with him, and he commented that he was overwhelmed by how much knowledge I had on such a vast variety of subjects. He then went on to offer me a job in his company, as he felt I was more qualified than some of the people who were actually trained to do the job.

I've never attended public school; I've never enrolled myself in any courses outside of the Family's curriculums. I would not consider myself particularly bright. In fact, as one of my teachers once stated, "She's not an outstanding student, but she applies herself well." And that's really what my "knowledge" came down to—I wanted to learn and I had the perfect opportunity in the Family.

In the Family we're exposed to so much on the education front; we just label it differently. Dad has taught us so much through the Letters. When I studied Russian history as a school project, I based a good portion of my essay on what Dad had written in "World History!—And Russia!" (ML #1767). It was as good as any history book in its details and dates, and even better in the views it gave on history.

Education is what you make it. If you want to learn, then you can—you simply have to put your mind to it. I've never felt intimidated about my education, no matter whom I've spoken with. I've never been told I was under-educated, whether I was speaking to a university student or a professor who held numerous degrees.

My aunt holds a Ph.D. in foreign languages, having studied over 15 languages from Turkish to Medieval English, and never once have I heard her suggest that my brothers and sisters or I were undereducated or inferior due to having been home-schooled.

In my opinion, sometimes education in the Family is chameleon-like; it blends into all the other things we do, so that it doesn't necessarily *look* like education. But through the variety of subjects that we're taught through the Word and through our experiences, we get great supplemental education that others don't. In our witnessing we learn to communicate with all types of people—from intellectuals to the uneducated. Very few people in society have the kind of adaptability we learn in communal living. Family training is of a fuller nature than your average secular education.

To sum it up, I've found that learning requires effort. It doesn't matter *where* you study, but how *eager* you are to learn, and how determined you are to put your focus and effort into reaching your goal. Limitations are very often self-imposed.

So don't stigmatize your ability to learn by blaming the lack of a secular education. If you feel inadequate in your education, take the time to learn. Study in your free time; ask the Lord how you can fit it into your schedule, and then make the effort to follow through.

The defeat of dumbness

By Tamar (22, of Emanuel and Joy), Chile

You could say that I am average, as far as my education. I did *Super Workbooks* and *SkillsBank* here and there, and tried my best to keep up, but other than that, nothing outstanding.

One day something happened that changed my mentality that "I am dumb." A friend of ours is a doctor, and he had some patients coming to our country who would need a translator. He asked me if I would



The crazy thing about it all was that this was the first time I had ever done something like that. I know it's not because I am super smart. But I believe that the best thing that could have happened to me is having been born in the Family, and having parents and teachers who didn't give up on me and who helped me receive the best education I could.

I have an older brother and sister who are not in the Family and who both have very good jobs. My sister is the assistant to an ambassador and is responsible for planning and preparing all the events he is going to hold in the country where she lives. She is responsible to basically run everything that he is going to do there and also travels with him.

My brother also works at an embassy and has a respectable job. The funny thing about it is that both of them never went to System school and don't have anything to show as certificates. But their bosses don't really care, because they both have a good education and people-handling skills—thanks again to the wonderful education that my parents and teachers gave us.

like to do running translations for them. He explained that I would have to go with them to the best clinic in the country.

I was going to refuse then and there, but thank the Lord, I had my dad there to give me the encouragement that I needed. I took the offer and spent the next few days in desperate prayer and claiming the keys. Not only did the Lord help me, but the people and the doctors were very impressed. At the end I received lots of offers to work in the clinic as their translator.

One of the patients that I was translating for was very impressed and asked me at what university I had studied. I told him that I hadn't gone to any university, but I had simply received a good homeschooling education. He asked me why I didn't stop being a missionary and accept the offers that he could see I was receiving. I told him that the offers were very good and probably the best I could receive, but that I was convinced that what I was doing as a missionary was far better than receiving any salary in the world.

Right now I am starting a little school with preschoolers and I feel I'm capable of teaching them. Of course I have a lot to learn, and I haven't attained. But I think we, in the Family, have the best education that anyone could have. I am going to start taking the CVC courses covering all that I have learned, so that when the time comes I have something to show to them that ask of me.

All in all, I believe the Family is the best place for anyone to raise their kids.



It's doable, it's profitable, and you get...

Diplomas, certificates, and accreditation. Read the latest on the CVC, in GV 158, "Our Modern Education" by Sara of NAFED.

AFTER THEY LEFT

Firsthand evidence

By Joy (of Jareb), Dominican Republic

I was a homeschooling mom who felt very inadequate in teaching my children certain subjects, especially the ones I was weak in myself. When we began, we lived in a small Home and I was the one teaching them most of the time.

I enjoyed teaching them and learning right along with them. My kids got used to me saying, “Wow, I didn’t know that!”—although they would look at me as if to say, “Mom, you are supposed to!”

There were times I would feel discouraged, thinking that my kids were behind and that I was a terrible teacher. I remember the tears of frustration when trying to teach them to read, and feeling their hours of schooling weren’t sufficient. Because we were in a small Home, the kids had to help carry the load by going out witnessing as partners, and helping by being a testimony to the many visitors we received. But all of those hours spent outside their formal schooling were molding them into the responsible young adults they are today.

The real test for me came when my 16-year-old daughter, Christy, decided to leave the Family. I knew she would be going to school, and I was holding my breath, wondering how she would do. Was this going to reflect badly on me and my teaching abilities? She went to stay with my sister and her family, and I can remember my sister calling me to say how impressed she was with Christy. She said that we certainly must have done something right in raising someone like her.

Christy ended up taking her last year of high school and she just breezed through it with almost straight As, being on the honor roll. She went to the same Catholic school in the U.S. that I went to when I was young, a school that is quite strict and has a high scholastic standard. I heaved a sigh of relief. It drove the point home that the way we educate our kids is anything but inferior.

To continue my story, Christy ended up getting a job as a secretary, where she also excelled. People at work marveled at what good work habits she had, and how she put her heart into whatever job was given her. Through the years she has gotten various promotions, and is relied on as a vital part of the company she works for.

Another story is about our son, Ben, who also decided to leave the Family at 16. After working for a year or so, he decided that he wanted to further his education and applied for college. He ended up scoring very high on his college entrance exams and is doing very well, getting excellent grades. He’s now 18 and has been given responsibilities in his dorm that are usually given only to the older students. This has resulted in him receiving free room and board.

Ben has been told by young and old alike how mature and responsible he is, and what good work habits he has. People ask him what makes him so different, and he replies that it’s due to the Lord and being raised in a missionary family.

I could go on and on, as there are lots of stories about how impressed people have been seeing these two young people in action. They’ve been amazed at their strength of character; their maturity and wisdom in making decisions; their kindness of heart; and their ability to communicate not just with those of their own age or social status, but with those from all walks of life.

So I can’t fathom how people could say that we don’t prepare our young people for life outside the Family, if they decide to not live the life of a missionary. You may want to call me biased, but I’ve seen the evidence firsthand with my own two kids. In my mind they are the proof of the pudding.

I’m not saying they didn’t have their rough times after leaving, as of course they did. It takes time to adapt, and they made mistakes and sometimes went down the wrong path for a while. But isn’t it the same as when we were young and ventured out after

being under our parents' wing? I remember when I was 18 and left my parents' home to live on my own. That was a very big change and it took me a long time to adapt. I made plenty of bad decisions and mistakes, but through them I learned.

To close, let me not forget the importance of prayer. Prayer (and lots of it) has been the major factor that has helped our two kids make it through all of this as well as they have. They both have been very faithful to ask for prayer and prophecy through the years, and it has helped them so much in the decisions they have to make.

So I would like to make a formal salute to our Family education! God bless all you dear ones who put so much into the pubs, as we have a wealth of training at our fingertips.

Why I believe in Family education

By Lydia (of Santiago), Dominican Republic

I have five children out of the Family, all different ages and personalities. They are all in universities, getting As and Bs, except for one who is just finishing high school. She is on the U.S. National Honor Roll, and has been accepted by three top universities.

Although I was not always directly involved in their education, these young people were all homeschooled and never set foot in a traditional school, except for the one now in high school who has only taken her last year there.

A few years ago my husband and I (later joined by another couple) moved to a new mission field where the education offered is known to be of a good standard. After hearing from the Lord, we decided to enroll our remaining kids in a small Christian school, and three of us adults taught there in the mornings, so we were able to stay informed about the situation.

It was quite an experience and an eye opener, to say the least. Our kids were held up as examples of kids who "know how to study." We were quite proud of them, as our teenagers really tried to stand up for what was

right, but it wasn't easy. It was an expensive bilingual school and many of the kids attending were rich, quite spoiled, with bad attitudes and bad language.

We were there for a year and saw the unhappy teachers, money-hungry administration, demanding parents, and messed-up students. Our kids asked us if they could go back to homeschooling, as they learned to appreciate it even more after this experience.

The story of our four

By Abi Fisherman, Europe

John and I have eight children, six boys and two girls. We just passed the 30-year mark serving the Lord in the Family. Four of our children have remained in the Family, serving the Lord in various capacities, and four have chosen other paths outside the Family. Some, if not all of our children, have questioned their education at one point or another. But our Family education and the training we gave to our children as a result of being in the Family has proven to be more than sufficient, if not better than what the System offers.

Life is not always easy inside or outside of the Family. There are real struggles and we are constantly learning to do better. The results also depend on the child, especially when they get to the age when they must choose how much they want to get out of what is being presented to them. So for sure there is no "ideal schooling" either inside the Family or outside the Family. But if you look into the educational system outside the Family, it is in very big trouble, in the U.S. in particular! We tried our best to follow the Lord's leading and the Word on the education of our children, and it paid off in the long run.

Here is a little background on the educational opportunities my children had over a stretch of 30 years. When we joined in January 1973 with two children, Francis was just turning four and Marianne was just over three months old. Francis had been going to a little Montessori preschool in Santa Cruz, California, for a short while before we

joined. John, with a university degree in math/computer science, had been working in that field for three years before we dropped out.

There were hardly any married couples, let alone kids, in those days in the Family. Francis blended into Family life at four years old as a “little disciple” for the first six months or so, until we joined a Home with two single moms and their three kids, two of whom were around our children’s ages. So Francis had his first schooling then, in a very small Home.

In the very early days, we did have some larger school setups in London and then in Italy, where both Francis and Marianne received good input. Later we were in smaller situations again and more children were added to our family.

I never considered myself a great teacher with tons of ideas, so I tried to school my children with the material the Family had on hand, as well as a few other workbooks. But their curriculum was mostly Word-based, as I used the *Childcare Handbooks*, *Activity Books* and various Letters as a guide.

The first three also went to System school for one to four years while we lived in France and more babies were coming. Then came the “School Vision” Letters, thank the Lord, to help our children further, especially as they were growing older and we needed new challenges. We lived in big combo schools in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and then later in Argentina and Brazil. The older ones, in the meantime, were each in turn growing up and moving on to teen Homes or other responsibilities serving the Lord. “Teens” in those earlier days meant around 12 years old, but they were mature and smart!

I would like to share with you what our four boys faced when leaving the Family and how they are doing one, two, and three years later. Our son Joe, after working in WS for a few years and for a short time on the field of Africa, made the decision at 22 to leave Family life in December 1999 to try out something else. He had had some training in WS and opportunities to use his talents working

on the *Zine*, as well as on other computer-related projects. Another younger son, Peter, then 18, had already left a few months before, and then our youngest son, Tim, then 16, left later that same year. Another son, John D., left a year later at 25.

It was not an easy road for any of them—that first year or so after leaving. Finding their way out there was a huge struggle! They didn’t always do well in their personal lives and sample and still don’t, but that isn’t the fault of their education. They hit bottom after trying to make some money that first year, working on fishing boats in Alaska and living/partying it up in Seattle for a while. They later moved down to southern California and got into community college and then had more direction and goals. All of them at different times were discouraged to the point of depression, but we tried our best to help each of them. We were able to give some financial help, as John received an inheritance that was not to be released to him for ten years. However, the executor (John’s older brother) agreed to give our sons some support if they wanted to go to school full time. That, along with financial aid and part-time jobs, has helped them.

Three of our boys eventually ended up living together in Los Angeles and going to the same community college. Joe was the first to decide to go to school to study art and build a career in that field of study. He had a Family CVC certificate, took the GED, and had no problem starting college and keeping up. He pretty much maintained an A average the two years at the community college. His art teacher one semester was so impressed with his work that he used his art portfolio as an example for the next incoming students.

Last fall he was accepted into the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) in Los Angeles, the nation’s premier art institute. Students are admitted solely on the basis of artistic ability. When he went for an interview last spring, the professor he talked to encouraged him, after viewing his portfolio of the

work he had done, that he would have no problem getting accepted and that he definitely had a future in the field of art. The cost to go there is around \$34,000 a year, so he went on the attack to raise what he needed through grants, financial aid, and working in a part-time accounting job. He has maintained the highest grades in his classes so far this year.

Our sons Peter and John D. didn't take the GED, but had the CVC high school certificates. They were able to start community college without needing to take the GED. Peter was 19 at the time and John 25. In the beginning it was difficult for both of them to keep up with college classes, as even in the Family neither were very gung ho about school or studying. John at 25 felt inferior in his education, but both he and Peter have done very well scholastically, seeking after-class tutors when needed and using the assistance of the school libraries, until they got over the initial hump of getting back to studying. They have maintained good grades.

Our youngest son, Tim, was 16 when he wanted to leave the Family, so in the fall of 2000 I accompanied him back to the States for three months to get him set up in school. A dear FM couple, Rick and Rebecca, took him into their Home in Minnesota for that difficult first year. God bless them. They had a 16-year-old who they had managed to get into the community college.

So instead of considering the junior high school grade level that Tim would normally be in, we went to the Adult Learning Center in the city where they lived and counseled with a nice man about how to get Tim directly into college at 16. All he had was a CVC Junior High certificate. I explained our missionary work and our life living in various countries home schooling, but Tim did most of the talking, explaining his goals. This man could see that Tim was "heading somewhere," and mature compared with the many drop-outs he had to work with who didn't really care so much about where they

were heading in life. He said he was inspired to help someone he could see had a goal and was heading for college.

He said that normally it would not be possible to skip two grades in high school, as Tim was not really eligible to take the GED in that state until 18. But he had him take a couple of pre-GED tests to see how he'd do. He scored high on these initial tests. This also encouraged Tim, as up to this point he was talking very negatively about his educational upbringing in the Family, thinking he was so far behind. A few days later, a trip was arranged to go to the community college with this man, to talk to someone there about allowing Tim to take the college entrance exam. If he did well on this entrance exam, then it would prove that he was able to pass the GED, so that was the loophole this man found to help him get in college there in Minnesota.

Tim studied up for a week or so, using the college computers and library, took the test, and scored high. He then took the GED and scored in the higher levels, with the exception of being a little lower in math. He since has taken extra math courses to bring him up to speed for the math/computer major he is seeking. He completed his first couple of semesters at that college maintaining a 4.0 (A) average and being on the dean's list as an honor student. He since has moved to Palo Alto, California, to live with my sister and her husband, and is an honor student at a community college there.

Here's an update we just received from Tim: "In other news, I was recently selected for The National Dean's List*, which is great since it's apparently a pretty prestigious honor which only one half of one percent of the nation's college students receive. They will also be publishing a short biography I wrote answering some questions they asked, and I am automatically eligible to compete for a \$1,000 scholarship."

*The National Dean's List is the largest recognition program and publication in the U.S. honoring high-achieving college students. See <http://www.eci-whoswho.com/>

John and I are thankful for the Lord's continued encouragement that He will care for our kids and help us be there for them as well. We as parents do not wish to take any credit for their successes, as their training has been a collective effort of Family training. TTL!

This article wouldn't be complete without my describing our four who are in the Family. Two are in WS handling large responsibilities, another has been in a difficult and sensitive country for some years and carries a very big responsibility there, and another is a VS, giving her heart to the people in Africa. They contribute greatly of their gifts and talents, as a result of the training they had over the years, and the personal choices each one has made. John and I would like to add here how proud we are of our four children who have stayed in the Family. They are making a real difference because of the training they have received and we couldn't be prouder!

Quick promotion

By Maggie (of Augustine), Mexico

When our son Philip decided to leave the missionary way of life and try something else, my brother [in the U.S.] invited him to

come and help finish some carpentry work on his house. This was a good beginning to make some money, get a driver's license, etc.

My sister-in-law arranged for him to get into a GED study center. He went for a pre-test, and studied what needed to be reviewed. He took his test and did fine.

Then another one of my brothers helped him get a job at a large hotel chain in the U.S. He started at the bottom as a bell-boy, got good tips, and was soon promoted to the front desk. Then he became the front desk manager and a salaried employee in only one and a half years. He received awards for the best employee of the month seven times.

He took a manager's course with several other men; he was the youngest and the only one with just a GED high school diploma, but the manager of the hotel was totally behind him. Whenever there was a problem in the hotel with foreigners not speaking English or with rowdy guests, they would call on Philip to settle the matter, since he speaks Spanish and Japanese and all his world missionary travels helped him greatly



in personal relations. Since he is comfortable around foreigners and adults in general, the management put a lot of trust in him and gave him quick promotions. He was very sought after, and the hotel manager gave him a glowing recommendation letter when he decided to move on and try another type of employment. We believe that the prayers of many made Philip's adjustment much easier than it would have been otherwise.

Perfect score

By Daniel Servant, U.S.

We've had Angela (of Michael and Debbie, in Canada) stay with us for a while.

While she was here she was able to prepare for her GED. She is presently 18 and had no idea how to measure what she had learned through her Family teachers. She also hadn't had school time for a while, as she was on the mission field of Honduras for two years.

To begin, the testing agency gave her several pre-GED tests to see what level of review she needed. The day after the tests they acted very strange and told her she would have to take the test again. What happened was that she had made a perfect score on some of the tests, so they assumed she had somehow cheated. They then gave her another test, but harder. When she also made a perfect score on the second test, they realized that she wasn't cheating, but that she was just a smart student! They did give her a little review in math and taught her how to write an essay, so now she's ready to take her GED.

A little testimony

By Patrick and Renee, China

Our son JP (17) studied with CLE, as did all our kids. When he was 16, he decided to leave the Family and join our older kids who are out of the Family. He went to live with one of our sons in New York.

When he arrived he enrolled in one of the high schools there. After a few months we started receiving news that he was the best student in his class, and one of the

three best in the whole school as far as qualifications. Not only that, but he was the best in behavior and good attitude in the school. The teachers told our older son (who was taking care of him since we weren't there), "JP is such a good boy. I wish everyone in this school could be like him." She wasn't only referring to his schooling, but most of all to his behavior and attitude. At the end of the year he received honors for the best student.

Before JP left us he wasn't doing so well in his behavior, but sometimes when our kids realize they have to face the world all by themselves, without Dad and Mom, their upbringing comes through, and they learn that we were right in many things we taught them.

Good jobs!

By Michelle (of Michael), India

I have heard the argument that Family education and CVC diplomas don't hold water or are not "good enough." To encourage our parents and young people that this is not the case, I want to share with you a testimony of two of our older kids who have used Family diplomas in securing good jobs after leaving the Family.

Our oldest daughter (24) is a kindergarten teacher in a well-known English daycare center, attended by many diplomats' children. This center has a very high standard and they consider our daughter, with her Family education, a topnotch teacher.

When our daughter applied for this job, she had her résumé of her CVC education and diplomas, as well as a list of all the different experiences during her years as a Family missionary. In the job interview, just the fact that she is the oldest of nine children stood in her favor. Now she is also working towards another teacher's diploma through her job.

Our second oldest daughter (23) is also a teacher. She teaches English at a language institute and has done very well. Her deport-

ment and natural charm have been a definite plus. She also was educated through the CVC program, and its validity was never brought into question. To the contrary, it has been very respected, as the employers see the obvious good fruit.

All this goes to prove yet again that Family education through the CVC is as good, and in many cases, even better than System education.

Advice from a former member

By an FGA woman, U.S.

My youngest daughter is now 22. Her father left the Family when she was very young, taking her with him, and she basically doesn't remember life in the Family, though she has of course had contact throughout the years. She was brought up in a small rural village in Canada.

She recently visited her brother in the States, who did grow up in the Family. There she met another young person who had just left the Family, and who, unfortunately, was very negative. This had quite an effect on my daughter, in that she was shocked to see such a negative and complaining attitude in anyone! She said this boy was so full of himself that it was even hard to listen to him. He blamed the Family for not putting him through higher education, for not supporting him more.

Well, my daughter had a lot to say on the subject! She and her friends (none of whom have ever had anything to do with the Family) graduated from high school and then worked their way through college. They didn't have anyone to support them during the time they were in college. In fact, throughout high school, most of them had to take part-time jobs to pay for their summer vacations, their trendy clothes, and other activities. Their parents just didn't have the money.

Once they started college they moved to the city, shared apartments, and worked long hard hours, weekends, and many evenings to pay their bills. They took out student

loans, and studied very hard to attain high grades to be eligible for scholarships and grants. In other words, they left high school in the same position as many Family young people are leaving the mission field—and with a positive attitude and hard-working resolve, they got the education and training they wanted.

It was no easier for them. So her response to this poor, negative young person was to forget the past, count his blessings, get off his royal fanny, work hard, and just get on with something positive! She and her young friends had been through a lot of experiences growing up, many of them good ones, and many of them of the sort that teaches them to overcome. That's just life!

Proof of a quality education

By Joseph and Ruth, U.S.

We are an FM family in the U.S., and all six of our children are or were homeschooled. We used *ACE*, *Super Workbooks*, and Family materials while we were doing missionary work on a foreign field, and have been using the *A Beka* curriculum for the 13 years since we returned to the U.S. The standardized testing services are quite pleased with the education our children have received, and so are we.

Our oldest, a girl who now has a family of her own, took the GED at 18 and passed with some of the highest possible scores. She went on to serve the Lord, got married, had kids, and after several years on the mission field, returned. After brushing up on her math, she entered college to become a highly trained medical technician and is doing very well.

The second oldest, a boy, received his GED, learned carpentry, and went to work for a construction company. Although he was very good at this, it wasn't challenging enough for him, so he applied for and was accepted for a job as the person who, in simple terms, makes sure a building goes up straight. He had to study math some more, but he already had

the foundation. It also helped that because of his time on the field he had the language skills to speak with foreign laborers on the job site. His attention to detail, hard work ethic, general knowledge, multi-linguistic skill, and prayer has helped him receive promotions in this international company.

The third child, a girl, decided when she was 15 that she wanted to go to a university and then into the field of medicine. She enrolled in the local high school halfway through grade ten, got a score as low as a B for a semester only twice, and graduated with honors. In most of her classes she was tutoring other students. She has a scholarship at her university, where she is now on the dean's list.

The other three, all boys, have been tested every two to three years with standardized testing, as required by the state where we live, and each is at least one or two years ahead of his age and grade level on a national scale.

Homeschooling, like so many things, will give results according to what you put into it. If you make a quality effort, you can get a quality education.

My daughters' continued education

By an FGA, U.S.

I wanted to share a bit about my daughters' education since they left the Family.

We didn't have the funds to help our older daughter financially once she made her decision to pursue a career outside the Family, so she held night jobs. She studied in her free time in order to make top grades. It hasn't been easy at times, and she has had to sacrifice a lot of partying and vacations, in order to stay focused on her goals.

She was always a smart girl, but I would say she was about average in her groups growing up in the Family. While growing up, her interest was people, and she loved to learn.

Her schooling was normal homeschooling—sometimes more structured and other times not. She loved to read and was excellent in language skills—but cried every day while learning her times tables! She just deplored math her whole life, but she's made straight As in college math.

When she decided to go to a community college, she first took a GED (very easily) and then took her SATs*. She scored amazingly high on her SAT language scores, in the top percentile range in the country. In her sophomore (second) year, she was invited to join Phi Beta Kappa, the honor roll society for undergraduates, as her grade average is 3.9 out of 4.0. She has had papers published in the college newspaper, and last year one of her papers was published in a college textbook. She breezed through her foreign language courses, because of growing up in foreign countries.

With community college behind her, she is now moving on to university. Although she has made a different choice in life than what we had "planned" for her as a child, I see the training invested in her coming out in so many ways.

My other daughter left when she was 14 and she never missed a beat going straight from her homeschooling to making straight As in public high school. She is an excellent student and has also been invited to join the high school honor society. Her teachers have commended her over and over.

Our kids have incredible potential that they don't recognize themselves, but that people who teach them are in awe over! In both schools she has been to, there are no others who have traveled to different continents, speak other languages, and have the range of experience and maturity she has. She has set her goals and works hard at them, which says a lot about her character and training.

*SAT: Scholastic Aptitude Test. A test of performance given to high school students, used to determine eligibility for admission to a college or university.

Evidence from our eleven

By Arnon (FM), U.S.

I find it interesting to note that all our eleven children who received good, Family homeschooling on an elementary level went on to excel at higher levels of education. Our kids 18 years or older have all successfully pursued training after high school degrees; three are college graduates and going to med and law schools. Though they have chosen to live lives outside the Family domain, they all benefited greatly from Family homeschooling. Our three girls currently in middle school and high school also received good solid homeschooling as YCs and MCs in the Family, and also excel at System/public education. The ones who have the most difficulty are the two youngest, who had the least Family homeschooling and training.

What is education anyway?

By Gideon (of Lamb), Norway

I have three sons who made the decision to leave the Family. The oldest turned 30 this year, the next are 29 and soon to be 28. As they were some of the first children born in the Family, we didn't have a lot to go on as far as a reference point for their homeschooling and what we should strive for. We did have school, and their mother was very faithful to research and do all she could to give them as well rounded an education as we could at that time.

Our main emphasis was the Word, and we memorized with them as soon as they were old enough to talk. Reading was the next in importance, then math. We didn't have any set system available, as we were pioneering in Latin America when the first two were born. Although we were in the U.S. for about two years, where the third one was born, we left for Europe shortly after he turned two.

It was about that time that the Family started producing the kind of childcare material that later evolved into the *Childcare Handbooks*. Like most families, we were just thrilled to see the Letters about Davidito's

schooling come out, as that helped to set a uniform standard and goal to strive for in our children's training and education.

Later, in the late '80s when the school vision came out, we moved into one of the newly set up locations and started using the ESP books (*Super Workbooks*) for our children. Before this we used a series of English and math books that we had provisioned from a school in the U.S.

I would say we were pretty typical for the time, in our schooling of our kids. Before we moved into the new Family school, we did have to have the children checked periodically by a teacher from the local school. I must say, however, that he was very laid back. He would look through the children's schoolwork and talk with them individually to assess their general knowledge and attention span. We never had any difficulties.

A few years later, all three of my sons made the decision to leave the Family. It was difficult for us, as they were some of the first older kids to leave the Family and we went through a mixture of emotions, as did they. The first two were 18 when they left and one was 20. They went different ways and some did better at adjusting than others. One thing they all had in common was a lack of papers for their schooling. Thankfully in the U.S. there is the GED test, which tens of thousands take every year to gain the equivalent of a high school diploma.

The oldest took it and then worked as a salesman for a nationwide company. It seems this is an area where Family young people do very well, as they are used to interaction with people and are very personable. He later decided to join the U.S. Army. In doing so he was hoping to pay off some debts he had acquired and further his education.

When he took the aptitude test the Army gives to determine your capabilities, they told him, "We rarely see these kind of good results," and they told him he could choose whatever field of training he wanted. He later told me this story and said that he

knows it was because of the good overall education he had in the Family.

He went on to join an engineer's battalion and did get a lot of good and useful training. However, in the Army you are also "bought with a price" and "are not your own." He was sent to Kuwait after the first Gulf War and spent several months digging up landmines in the desert. He was doing well and was soon to go to Bosnia with the peacekeeping troops there, but his transport truck hit a landmine, and he ended up 40% disabled.

He got an early out from the Army and, because of his disability, he got a full scholarship for further education. He is now in his fourth-year studies in university studying psychology.

My second son took his GED and passed it with no problems. He went on to college, but didn't like it and quit after his first year. He has talked about going back, but has been working as a manager of different restaurants, which is a business he seems to like.

My third son left at 20. Facing the same problem of not having any papers, he took the GED test. He told me that he was placed in a classroom supervised by a teacher and given six hours to do the tests. He finished in two and a half hours, and was taking his papers up to the supervisor when he noticed that most people were only about a third finished. He thought to himself, *Boy, I must have really blown it.* Most of the people taking the test were older, and most had had several years of high school before they quit, so he thought he must have flunked. It turns out that he had the best grades of the class and passed with no problems.

He went on to become an accomplished plumber, married, had children, and bought his own house.

I have other children who have since left the Family, but thankfully both they and we were better prepared, at least as far as their education was concerned.

Admittedly it is difficult for young people who leave the Family to feel they have had an education if they can't show the papers to prove it. However, through the CVC they can, with a little effort and study, get all sorts of documentation to validate their education. If they haven't done this then I think they should be encouraged to get that documentation either through a CVC diploma or a GED-type test where they can.

For our Family young people to think that they didn't get an education is absurd! Most have had a superior education by far. Helping them to see that and encouraging them to hold their head up high is the challenge we face. They can better do so if they keep a positive attitude and don't throw out the baby with the bathwater. Sadly, it seems a number have chosen the bitter road of complaining about having been brought up "different." Thank God they were brought up different! Even the System has begun to recognize the value of "alternative" education, and companies see this as an advantage, as people with such education have the ability to think outside the box and bring up new ideas and initiatives.

I know of several "success" stories of young people who have left the Family who at first had a hard time adjusting. (So did I when I left home to go to college out of state, and later when I dropped out in my second year.) They made the breakthrough when they stopped blaming others and took responsibility for their own decisions, used what they had, and built on it.

I also know a lot of people in the System who have college degrees, and some have several of them, but they can't hold a job or lead a meaningful life. I also know many people in the System who have graduated from school, but who can't count, can't spell, and have no idea what is going on in the world.

Personally, I think education is a process that continues as long as you live.

WHAT ABOUT COLLEGE?

Can a homeschooled student go to college?

By Ginny, SEA regional FED board

The question is sometimes asked, “How will a homeschooled student get into college? Will homeschooling hinder my chances of getting in?”

Although nationals of other countries need to research the procedures for their particular country, in the U.S., homeschooled students go through the same procedures in applying for college or university as any other high school graduate. Depending on the policy of the particular college or university they are applying for, the student may or may not need to produce a high school diploma or SAT scores. If these are required, it is not a problem, as it’s a simple matter firstly to arrange to take the SAT. Secondly, high school diplomas issued either from the CVC, other distance-education programs, or even “home issued” by the parents of the student are legal and acceptable evidence of a high school education.

To quote author and educator Cathy Cohen, “When it comes to homeschooling, high school accreditation does not matter to college admissions officers” (*And What About College?*, pg. 20). It’s interesting to note that some of the most elite and progressive colleges and universities don’t even require a high school diploma. If necessary and required by the institution, students in the U.S. can also show proof of their high school level education by taking the GED test.

Homeschooled students actually have some advantages over traditionally schooled students when it comes to applying to college. Family students, with their uncommon educational backgrounds and wide range of extra-curricular classes and accomplishments, are good candidates to catch the eye of admission officers.

Check it out!

Many people are attesting to the good education that’s available in the Family, but affirm that it depends on the diligence and perseverance of those involved. For a good article on availing yourself of the education offered in our Family, read “The importance of adequate and documented schooling” by Rosey, Middle East, in GV #149.

Colleges seek students with depth of character, commitment, and leadership abilities—not just good grades and the standard list of high school activities. Homeschooled teenagers in the United States have gained admission, with scholarships, to institutions such as Harvard, Yale, the United States Naval and Air Force Academies.

As of November 2002, the U.S. Department of Education has also spoken in plain words on this issue:

Colleges need not fear losing federal funding by admitting homeschooled students. They are free to admit homeschooled students at any age, and those homeschooled students are eligible for personal financial aid as well.

Eligible for a Master’s*

By Christine (of Patrick), U.S.

Patrick joined the Family in 1975 just before he turned 17. At that time he was a high school dropout, had not gone further than ninth grade, and was living on the streets. Even several years later, as we were filling out our clearance forms, he mentioned how he had no gifts or talents, as he felt he didn’t know how to do anything.

Now thirty years later, after having lived in several different countries, teaching kids, witnessing to people of different languages

*Colleges grant a Bachelor’s degree first, usually for four years of study, then a Master’s, usually after one or two years of postgraduate study. A doctorate follows, usually for a lengthy piece of original research but sometimes for other outstanding achievements.

and cultures, learning to run a kitchen for a large Home, doing finances, taking care of all the various Home duties, not to mention the most important thing—faithfully and diligently studying the MO Letters and the Bible—things have really changed.

Patrick recently met with the Professor of Religions at a prestigious private university here that gives diplomas for “experience.” He had a two-hour interview with Patrick, and was impressed and awed at what Patrick knew in terms of the Word, world religions, and interactions with people. This professor told Patrick that he could easily apply for this program and come out with his Master’s degree. Of course you have to pay for each credit and we don’t know that we would do that, but it was very interesting to know that this professor, who has his doctorate, was sure that Patrick could have his Master’s degree based on the knowledge that he had obtained just through reading Family materials over the years, and living the life of a disciple and missionary.

Did Cervantes go to university?

By Tiago (of Leah), ASCRO FED

It’s quite interesting that some people are awed at the “great advantages” of higher education, when the reality is that scholars in all fields study the works of achievers who never got a degree.

Recently I was watching a documentary about the book *Don Quixote*, a classic by Miguel de Cervantes that is required reading in many university literature courses. The funny thing is that scholars in the U.S. and England extol the virtues of Cervantes’ works, and yet from all that is known of his youth, Cervantes himself didn’t have much formal education at all. There is no record of him attending a university, unlike most writers of his time. Academically, if he were alive today he could run circles around university scholars with his knowledge of Latin, history, and literature.

So it is not the school you attend that matters, but what you do with your education, whether you receive it at home or at an institution.

A related point is that many of our Family teachers are very proficient at their job—so proficient, in fact, that they give seminars to professionals who have university degrees. Such is the case with Leah, my wife, and other FGAs I know who are invited to give seminars to professionals in the fields of education, business, and communications. Sometimes we forget how well trained our Family teachers are. Normally people who give seminars need to have a master’s degree or a doctorate, which automatically puts them above those studying under them. But without having to suffer through the years necessary to obtain these degrees, our folks do exactly the same job, or an even better job of training professionals who do have degrees.



NEWS BRIEFS

Understanding Homeschooling

Excerpts of articles by Christopher Klicka, lawyer and president of the Homeschool Legal Defense Association
(<http://www.hsllda.org/docs/nche/000002/00000214.asp>)

The myth of teacher accreditation

(October 31, 2002 <http://www.hsllda.org/docs/nche/000002/00000214.asp>)

One of the most significant studies in this area was performed by Dr. Eric Hanushek of the University of Rochester, who surveyed the results of 113 studies on the impact of teachers' qualifications on their students' academic achievement. Eighty-five percent of the studies found *no positive correlation* between the educational performance of the students and the teacher's educational background. Although 7% of the studies did find a positive correlation, 5% found a *negative impact*. Higher teacher qualification does not make better students.

Another expert, Dr. Donald Ericksen, professor of education for the University of California at Los Angeles, stated in a recent interview:

Some of the worst teachers I've ever seen are highly certified. Look at our public schools. They're full of certified teachers. What kind of magic is that accomplishing? But I can take you to the best teachers I've ever seen, and most of them are uncertified. ... We don't have evidence at all that what we do in schools of education makes much difference in teacher competence.

Four other education researchers, L. D. Freeman, R. E. Flodan, R. Howsan, and D. C. Corrigan, did separate studies in the effectiveness of teacher certification requirements. They all concluded that there is no significant relation between teacher certification and student performance in the classroom.

All the studies demonstrate that parents' "hands-on" degree in homeschooling their own children is much more effective than spending all that time for a BA in education.

Yes, research and practical experience show that it is dedication and hard work, not special training, which produce outstanding educational results in a home-school setting.

Socialization: Homeschoolers are in the real world

(October 12, 1999 <http://www.hsllda.org/docs/nche/000000/00000068.asp>)

Academically, homeschoolers have generally excelled, but some critics have continued to challenge them on an apparent "lack of socialization" or "isolation from the world." Often there is a charge that homeschoolers are not learning how to live in the "real world." However, a closer look at public school training shows that it is actually those public school children who are not living in the real world.

For instance, public school children are confined to a classroom for at least 180 days each year with little opportunity to be exposed to the workplace or to go on field trips. The children are trapped with a group

of children their own age with little chance to relate to children of other ages or adults. They learn in a vacuum where there are no absolute standards. They are given little to no responsibility, and everything is provided for them. The opportunity to pursue their interests and to apply their unique talents is stifled. Actions by public students rarely have consequences, as discipline is lax and passing from grade to grade is automatic. The students are not really prepared to operate in the home (family) or the workplace, which comprise a major part of the “real world” after graduation.

Homeschoolers, on the other hand, do not have the above problems. They are completely prepared for the “real world” of the workplace and the home. They relate regularly with adults and follow their examples rather than the examples of foolish peers. They learn, based on hands-on experiences and early apprenticeship training. In fact, the only “socialization” or aspect of the “real world” which they miss out on by not attending the public school is unhealthy peer pressure, crime, and immorality. Of course, the average homeschooler wisely learns about these things from afar instead of being per-

On the advantages children of missionaries enjoy

By Zig Ziglar (from his book, *Staying Up, Up, Up in a Down, Down, Down World*)

Several years ago the people listed in *Who's Who in America* were analyzed. Researchers discovered that it took 25,000 laboring families to produce one child who would be listed in *Who's Who*. It required 10,000 families in which the father was a skilled craftsman, 6,000 Baptist preachers, 5,000 lawyers, 5,000 Presbyterian preachers, 25,000 dentists, and 12,000 Episcopalian priests to produce someone listed in *Who's Who*.

However, every seven Christian missionary families produced a member of *Who's Who*. I can only speculate on the reasons for the remarkable difference. Surely most of the preachers from the various denominations were men and women of faith, but I believe the missionaries, in most cases, demonstrated a stronger commitment. Their example demonstrated their faith and courage to their children.

Also, they probably did not have many things to give to their children, but the mother and father, with fewer distractions such as daily newspapers and televi-

sion, were probably spending an unusual amount of time with them. The kids had a day-to-day example and a chance to study what real success was all about. Needless to say, the parents were teaching and preaching the Bible every day and felt a unique relationship with God through the person of Jesus Christ. Undoubtedly the role modeling and demonstration of their faith played a significant part in the development of the children.

All of us have heard that we teach what we know, but we reproduce what we are, which is exactly what God tells us in Luke 6:40 (NKJV): “A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is perfectly trained will be like his teacher.” My mother repeatedly said to me as a young father,

*Son, your children more attention pay
To what you do than what you say.*

In many cases, the missionary family had to learn to communicate in a different language from their native language and get along with people of different cultures, which brought about a maturing of the youngsters. Then when the kids returned to America to live, they had a chance to view the difference in the opportunities in America, and they capitalized on those opportunities.

sonally involved in crime or immorality or perhaps being a victim.



The Why of Homeschool

By Isabel Lyman, Mises.org, February 23, 2003

How does the education a home-schooled child receives compare with that of conventionally schooled children? One measure is how well they perform on standardized tests, like the Stanford Achievement Test or the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. The National Home Education Research Institute notes, “Repeatedly, across the nation, the home educated score as well as or better than those in conventional schools.”

The National Merit Scholarship Corporation selected more than 70 home-schooled high school students as semifinalists in its 1998 competition. There were 137 homeschooled semifinalists chosen in 1999, and 150 in 2000.

Rebecca Sealfon, a 13-year-old homeschooler from Brooklyn, New York, won the 1997 Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee. [Homeschooled] David Beihl, also 13, of Saluda, South Carolina, won the 1999 National Geographic Bee. George Thampy, a 12-year-old homeschooler from Maryland Heights, Missouri, won the National Spelling Bee in 2000. Calvin McCarter, a 10-year-old homeschooler from near Grand Rapids, Michigan, won the 2002 National Geographic Bee and became the youngest competitor to do so.

Homeschoolers have graduated from such prestigious institutions as Yale University Law School, the United States Naval Academy, and Mount Holyoke College. Barnaby Marsh, who was homeschooled in the Alaskan wilderness, went

on to graduate from Cornell University and was one of 32 Rhodes Scholars selected in 1996.

What type of young adults does homeschooling produce? Small business owner Tim Martin, 29, and his wife, Amy, 28, live in Whitehall, Montana, with their four children. Both the Martins have a homeschooling background and are now teaching their brood at home.

“Education just works better one-on-one,” says Tim. “Why do we think the ‘right’ way to do education is to put 20 or 30 children in a classroom with one teacher? That model is more fit for manufacturing than education.”

No kidding. By using their liberties wisely, homeschooling parents have graduated scores upon scores of literate, well-adjusted students with minimal government interference and at a fraction of the cost of any government program. Now a second generation is following in those footsteps.



Schools “Failing to Teach Pupils Basic Message of Christianity”

By Fiona Govan, *Electronic Telegraph*, December 16, 2002

Almost half of Britain’s 12-year-olds are so ignorant of basic Christian teaching that they are unaware that Easter celebrates the Resurrection, according to a new study.

Many of those questioned thought that “The Boy Who Cried Wolf” was a story from the New Testament. Others knew little or nothing about Christ’s miracles, while some wondered why Jesus could not “fly like Superman.”

The research, by academics at Exeter University, will compound fears that many schools are failing to ensure that pupils get a basic religious education.

Adrift on an Ocean of Geographic Ignorance

By Tim Radford, *The Guardian*, November 21, 2002

Three in 10 young people cannot find the Pacific Ocean. Hint: it covers one third of the planet on a world map.

Despite the coverage of September 11, a survey found that 83% of young American adults could not locate Afghanistan on a blank world map. Less than half could point to Israel on a map of the Middle East, and fewer than two in three could find China.

The National Geographic-Roper Global Literacy Survey questioned more than 3,000 18- to 24-year-olds, in Canada, France, Germany, Britain, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Sweden and the U.S., in June and July. The survey showed that, when it comes to geography, nobody deserves to be top of the class.

British and Canadian interviewees did almost as badly as those in the U.S. on population, nuclear weapons, and locating nations or oceans. Fewer than 25% of young adults in France, Canada, Italy, Britain or the U.S. could name four countries that officially acknowledge possession of nuclear weapons. The Swedes aside—Swedish young people consistently scored better—only two in five could identify China and India as the two countries with populations of a billion or more.

“If young people can’t find places on a map and lack awareness of current events,

how can they understand the world’s cultural, economic and natural resource issues that confront us?” said John Fahey, president of the National Geographic Society. “This is a cultural crisis. It will take all our efforts to reverse the alarming trend of geographic apathy.”



College Seniors No More Knowledgeable Than 1950s High School Grads

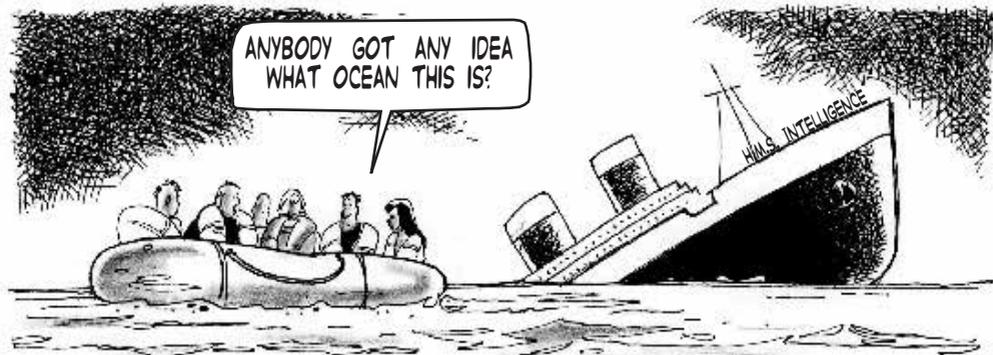
By Scott Hogenson, CNSNews.com Executive Editor, December 18, 2002

The college seniors of today have no better grasp of general knowledge than the high school graduates of almost half a century ago, according to the results of a new study.

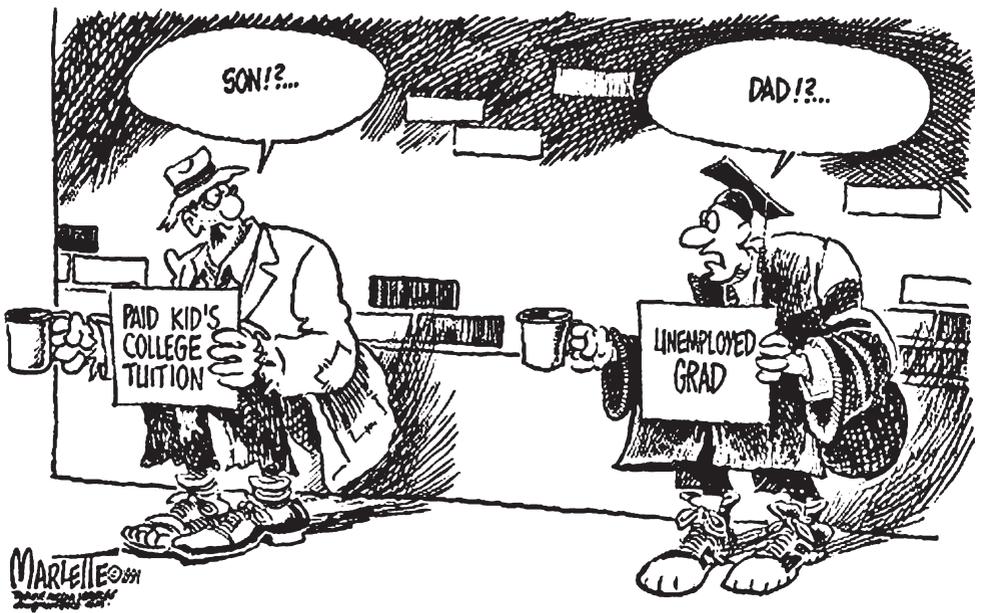
The average of correct responses for modern college seniors on a series of questions assessing “general cultural knowledge” was 53.5 percent compared with 54.5 percent of high school graduates in 1955, according to a survey by Zogby International.

“The average amount of knowledge that college seniors had was just about the same as the average amount of knowledge that high school graduates had back in the 1950s,” said NAS President Stephen H. Balch.

The questions asked in the April poll by Zogby were virtually the same as



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questions asked by the Gallup Organization in 1955, with a few questions being slightly modified to reflect history.

“I think it probably has a lot to do with the dumbing down of curriculum, both at the college and high school level,” said Balch. “It looks good, certainly, to say ‘more people are graduating from college,’ but is there any real intellectual yield from it?”

(Dad speaking): In my day you learned something in school! Even by the time you had graduated from sixth grade, you were fairly knowledgeable about the world, not to speak of graduating from high school. Nowadays, a sixth-grade education in secular, public schools often doesn’t amount to a hill of beans. You get a much better education at home with your parents or teachers, than you do in those institutions with their sameness and regulations and lack of attention to the individual. You’ve got a great blessing in being able to pursue the studies that you like and feel suited for, so go to it!

Socialization of Homeschoolers

By Kyle Williams (14), WorldNetDaily.com, March 15, 2003

There is a joke that goes something like this: “I used to be worried about the socialization of my homeschooled child, but now I don’t worry. Every day I take my eight-year-old to the bathroom, beat him up, cuss him out and offer him drugs.”

It may sound preposterous, but seriously, that joke is not far from reality. In contrast with government education, homeschooling offers a safe environment, is physically safe, spiritually safe and morally safe.

That creates a foundation which will stay with the person their entire life and keep him or her anchored. Most homeschoolers I have encountered know right from wrong and are not afraid to express it.

A final point in favor of homeschooled socialization—and perhaps one of the greatest—is that it closely knits together a loyal and loving family. You

cannot compare the loyalty and kinship found in homeschooled families to families schooled in government institutions their entire life.

Socialization is not only a non-issue for homeschoolers, socialization at home is morally superior to government socialization. A child is the responsibility of their parents, and they require care, comfort, education and love, and all these things wrap into the issue of socialization.

Furthermore, because of that, socialization is better done at home with parents who know them, love them and have their best interests at heart.

To leave the life of a child in the hands of the government and strangers almost their entire childhood life is not only a mistake, but immoral.

Kyle Williams is a weekly columnist with WorldNetDaily, has just had his first book published (*Seen and Heard*), and yes, he's 14 years old. And yes, he is homeschooled.

His publisher, John Farah, writes about Kyle, "Week after week, he has turned in very professional work. He meets his deadlines. He writes provocatively and persuasively. I find him to be inspirational—redefining our expectations of just what young teen-agers are capable of doing."



ON HIGHER EDUCATION

By Michael Piano, Mideast

Recently after rereading the “Conviction vs. Compromise” series, I felt led to relate some of my personal testimony. I realize that a lot of young people probably aren’t too interested in FGAs’ “traumatic testimonies” about how wicked “The Whore,” “The System,” and “The Pit” are. Nevertheless maybe there’s something in what I’m going to write that will be helpful to someone, and if so then it’s worth it.

Ever since I was a teen I wanted to be a musician. I had taken classical piano lessons since I was young but didn’t do particularly well. I didn’t feel that I was cut out to be a concert pianist. But at age 15 I started getting very interested in pop and jazz music. I started writing songs, particularly to a certain young lady who I was madly in love with, who didn’t return my affections. Oh, well. ...

I took some jazz lessons for a few months from a talented young musician actually only a few years older than me, and began to learn jazz and blues improvisation. Most of it was self-taught, though, through listening to records, practicing, and studying books. In my last year of high school one of Australia’s top jazz players did a concert at my school. By that time I had a little trio together with some friends (bass, drums, piano) and we played a few songs for him and his band after their concert. He told my bass player friend not to tell me this, but I was one of the best under-twenty piano players he’d seen. I guess he didn’t want me to get proud. Well, my friend told me, and sure enough I got proud!

For some reason, however, I got bored with jazz, and after I finished high school I took a year off and studied classical piano



again, hoping to get accepted into the National Music Conservatory in Sydney, as by that time I wanted to be a composer.

I studied quite hard on my own, composed a fair bit, and eventually, to my great excitement, was accepted into “the Con” as we students called it, to study composition. I don’t have time to relate to you everything that happened, but the whole experience was a terrible letdown. I truly felt at the time that about five percent of what they taught us was useful; the rest was nonsense. The things that I felt were helpful were the practical things such as piano lessons and fine-tuning our audio skills, learning how to write scores, etc. But most of the useful things I learned were still through private study and practice.

Visiting composers gave us long and senseless lectures about abstract avant-garde theories of composition that had little or no bearing on actual music. There were also the things that were downright detrimental, such as “Civilization” classes, so-called, where we were faithfully indoctrinated in atheistic and humanistic dogma, as promulgated in our main textbook,

The Ascent of Man by Joseph Bronowski, as dedicated an atheist/humanist as ever walked the earth.

Then little seemingly insignificant things began happening that were turning points for me. At the time I was an atheist, but was interested in spiritual things. Once I went to a concert of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, a musical setting of the crucifixion and resurrection story from the Gospel of Matthew. I remember being incredibly moved, not just by the music but also by the words, and coming away from the concert saying, "I believe."

My composition teacher was a man named Ross Edwards, who is now a leading classical composer in Australia. (For movie buffs, he composed the music score for the film *Paradise Road*.) Shortly after my Bach experience I asked him, "Why is it that in the days of Bach they composed beautiful, harmonic, melodic music, but these days everything is so ugly, disharmonic, and unmelodic?" I was referring to the modern classical avant-garde music that the Con promoted.

He looked at me almost sadly and replied, "Well, I suppose they had God in those days, but we don't have God anymore."

That answer echoed in my mind for days, and I began to wonder why we *couldn't* have God? I certainly couldn't find Him at the Con!

I also became much more aware of the spiritual power of music. Once after listening to Wagner for five hours straight before bed, I went to sleep and had the most awful demonic dream I have ever had in my life. At other times after listening to music by Christian composers I had beautiful, heavenly dreams. One particularly significant one was about an aged prophet on a pilgrimage accompanied by a humble scribe and

watched over by the Angel Gabrielle (female, ha!) who I would meet and was supposed to follow.

And for the record, if anyone wonders after reading the prophecies about Pan whether he is just a figment of someone's imagination, I can testify otherwise. Once after a prolonged season of listening to some heavy, depressing classical music I was sitting in my room doodling abstractly on a piece of paper. Suddenly I felt as if I was being influenced by a spirit and began to draw and write. I looked down at what I had written and there was a picture of this weird, bearded, half-goat, half-human head and the words, "The god Pan is in my head, the god Pan is in my head." I was quite troubled, as I didn't know what it meant.

After I joined the Family and read John Todd's testimony in which he describes the various principalities, I had desperate prayer to be cleansed from Pan's influence. The Lord confirmed to me in prophecy recently that He had delivered me, although I still needed to stay on guard against pride, intellectuality, and the spiritual power of music that isn't dedicated to Him.

After one and a half years of study I was at the end of my rope. We were required for our course to compose music and I spent hours doing everything I could think of to get inspired—sitting on the beach staring at the sea, lying in the middle of a field at night gazing at the sky for hours, starving myself for days to "get inspired," attempting to live a genuinely bohemian lifestyle in modern suburban Sydney.

Nothing worked. I found myself utterly devoid of inspiration, and no one could tell me where I could get any. It had been easier when I was 16 and writing pop songs for a girl who couldn't care less about me! At one point I managed to force myself

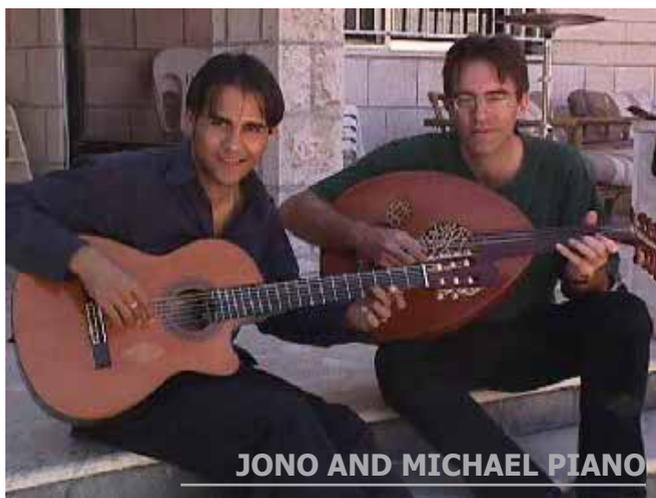
to produce some music and had it performed by the student orchestra. I was shocked and discouraged by what I heard coming back at me as I conducted it. It was a gray, bleak reflection of the sad, pointless world I lived in.

I looked at the depressed, empty 40- to 50-year-old teachers and composers who were successful in their careers, but who had no answers, and thought, *I never want to end up like that.*

I considered leaving the Con and going it on my own, just composing and playing and making my own way. I felt like the place was draining the very life out of me. Of course, there was always the pressure to “get the piece of paper,” the diploma, but at that point I really couldn’t have cared less about it.

It was shortly afterwards that Peter Puppet, my dear school friend who had just joined the Family, wrote to me and told me about his new life in Jesus and the Family. The day I got his letter, I walked out of the Conservatory and never went back. It was a week before final exams for that semester. I had been doing my homework and was all set to pass, but I knew that I had to follow the truth and the voice of conviction right away or I would lose it. So I went to visit Peter in Adelaide, over a thousand miles away, received Jesus into my heart the next day, and three weeks later I was in the Family.

It was quite a big change. One day I was conducting an orchestra; the next I was passing out “Gotta Be a Baby” tracts on the streets. One day I was analyzing the harmonic structure of Beethoven symphonies; the next I was getting eight miles high



in the spirit while a sweet sister who knew about three guitar chords sang “Whither Shall I Go?” at evening inspiration on an out-of-tune nylon-stringed guitar.

A month later the Con contacted me and said that even though I hadn’t sat for the exams, I had passed, and would I please come back and continue my studies? I told them I wasn’t interested.

Shortly afterwards I went back to Sydney and witnessed to my best friend, an ever-so-slightly eccentric artist who also joined a little later, and took the Bible name David Komic. But that’s a story in itself.

After about six months in the Family, the Lord told me in prophecy one night (as I lay in my sleeping bag in the back of a station wagon in a caravan park) that He would use all the musical gifts He’d given me if I’d stay faithful to Him. I guess I could say He’s fulfilled that wonderfully over the years, although of course there have been many lessons and breakings along the way.

I was recently reflecting on the fact that it took about ten or twelve years before anything I’d composed or written started to get used by the Family. I was

mainly doing local language work on the Thai MWM and DTD tapes. I tried to send in songs, but nothing really clicked until I started writing kids' songs for the *Treasure Attics*, etc. I believe in retrospect that it took that long for the Lord to teach me more about being a channel for Him.

In the flesh it would seem that someone who was on their way to earning a degree in music should be able to turn out some pretty good stuff. But it wasn't the case. It took those years of breakings and humblings and cleansing to make me realize that all my so-called talent and know-how was nothing without His Spirit and inspiration.

I remember once after going through a pile of "uninspired songs" that I'd written, I really cried out to the Lord and asked Him to help me just be a channel for what He wanted to give, and to help me not to write anything that wasn't given by Him. That is why I can truly say that anything good that comes out is only from Him. It's not a result of my education, especially not my college education. I am reminded of that quote from Dad about an "education in the spirit unparalleled in any of man's institutions." I feel that I have learned much more about music from being in the Family, seeing the Lord work, and learning from others who have consecrated all their talents to Him.

For the last four years I have been working in very close teamwork with an exclusively Family-trained musician, SGA Jono. He's a very good guitarist, a talented producer, and I wouldn't swap working with him for any of the very educated musicians I used to play with in the System. I can honestly say I've learned a tremendous amount from him, and continue to do so. He's a testimony to me of a young person who has really applied himself to learning within the framework of the Family, and supplementing it with outside

available resources such as books, videos, and computer programs, without having to waste valuable time in a System college.

Having worked extensively with our SGA singers such as Joy, Christy, and Angelina, I can also say that they have a very high degree of musicality, which can't be learned in a college course.

When I forsook all, I realized that I would not be able to continue to practice the way I had before, and that my piano skills would suffer. There's no way that I could be a full-time missionary and still practice four to five hours a day, which is a minimum requirement for classical pianists. That was a decision I made, because I decided that I had something more important to do with my life—that was to serve Jesus and tell others about Him. But I also want to testify that the Lord has kept my skills alive, and when I've needed them for His service, He has given them to me.

I played for both my childhood piano teachers over the years, who were surprised that I could still play that well, as many of their students just give it up as they grow older and stop practicing. Over the last few years the Lord has worked it out for me to practice a little more, sort of a free day afternoon project, and even compose some piano music, most of which I receive in prophecy. DV, I will soon make a CD of it. I count it as a sweet blessing, one of those little extras He sometimes gives us in the course of our service to Him.

It's not that I'm never tempted to consider what would have happened if I'd gone on, finished my degree, and chosen a different path, maybe one more successful musician in the eyes of the world. But the day I left music college to follow Jesus I heard His voice telling me that I'd never regret it. And 22 years of love, breakings, mistakes, forgiveness, songs, souls, and service later, I can honestly say I haven't. ■