



## The Benefits of Home-Schooling

Last weekend, April 28 and 29, 2011, I attended the 22nd annual home-school convention of MassHOPE, at the Worcester, Massachusetts, convention center, where I was able to offer my reading program, Alpha-Phonics, to new home-schoolers. I am well known to older home-schoolers whose children are now adults. Thousands of them taught their children to read with my program and they always thank me whenever they see me.



I had attended MassHOPE's first convention, held in a church basement with an attendance of about 300 parents. This year there were more than 3,000 attendees.

It may surprise the reader to know that MassHOPE is an avowedly Christian state-wide organization in one of the most liberal states in the Union. MassHOPE is short for Massachusetts Home Organization for Parent Education. Their convention attracts Christian parents from all over New England.

About 3,000 parents and children showed up at the Centrum convention center, attending lectures, perusing the vendors' offerings, and purchasing teaching materials for the coming school year. The largest vendors are Abeka Books (Pensacola Christian College), Bob Jones University, Vision Forum, Math-U-See, plus many other vendors exhibiting the products of publishers and home-school families.

Michael Farris, founder of the Home School Legal Defense Association and Chancellor of Patrick Henry College, was the main speaker. He spoke of the attempts by the liberal elite to abolish home-schooling. He is one of the most dynamic leaders of the home-school movement with, at last count, 10 home-schooled children of his own.

Since home-schoolers love children, they tend to have large families. So from a demographic viewpoint, Christian home-schooled children are growing in numbers and are expected to home-school their own children. Why? Because home-schooling has many important benefits, especially for Bible believers. Here are some of those benefits:

The *first* obvious benefit is that home-schooling sets parents right with Biblical religion. It brings parents into obedience with God's word. We read in Proverbs: "Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old, he will not depart from it." We read in Ephesians, 6:4: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Several years ago, on the TV show *20/20*, they had a segment on children and heavy metal music — music full of Satanism, devil worship, violence, and sex. A music journalist was asked if there was anything dangerous about that music. On the contrary, he replied, there wasn't anything wrong with heavy metal music. In fact, it was good because it gave the kids something to believe in.

Yes, children need something to believe in, but if parents send their children to public schools where God is considered irrelevant, and the parents don't care, the children will seek something to believe in that is relevant and very potent — the music of the devil.

Parents who obey God rather than men will serve as lifelong role models for children in a world of



temptation, corruption and deceit.

*Second.* Home-schooling creates a generation bridge instead of a generation gap. The purpose of education is to pass on to the future generation the knowledge, wisdom and values of the past — to create a bridge of generations, so that the children of tomorrow can build on the foundation of the past.

But the public schools create alienation between parents and children. Through values clarification they encourage children to develop values in conflict with those of their parents. They help create child rebellion, which is considered normal in our society.

*Third.* Home-schooling creates mutual respect and mutual love. “Honor thy father and mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” (Exodus 20:12) Children bond with parents more lovingly not only when they are taught what is important to learn, but are corrected when necessary. In Proverbs 29:17 we read: “Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”

Children want to know what is the right thing to do. The schools are giving them condoms so that they can play Russian roulette with their lives. Loving parents teach their children the meaning of the word no. They also teach children the rules of sexual behavior as given in the Bible, so that young males are taught to become gentlemen and girls grow up to be women of virtue.

*Fourth.* Home-schooled children generally do much better academically than their public school counterparts. No parent would deliberately dumb down a child by using teaching methods that create reading problems. Also, home-schooled children are independent in their pursuit of knowledge. They become voracious readers and can exercise their talents without the constraints that public schools place on what children are permitted to do. Learning does not stop at the ringing of a bell. Home-schooling is a continuous process and becomes a way of life, a constant source of family discussion, challenge and inquiry. The result is that home-schooled children do better on standardized tests than their friends in public school.

*Fifth.* The parents actually learn more than the children. This is one of the most interesting and surprising phenomena we’ve observed among home-schoolers. Many parents begin by thinking that because they don’t have a degree from some college of education, they are not qualified to teach their own children. But once they get started, they find out that it is not all that difficult or complicated. As long as they respect the intelligence of their children, pace the work intelligently, and learn along with what the children are learning. Many parents read the Constitution for the first time in teaching it to their children.

Because of this experience, parents become better parents, better citizens, and richer individuals. Their own horizons and interests grow. They become interesting people, willing to share their experiences with friends and relatives. I never tire of listening to home-schooling parents talk about their children and how they’ve gone into so many different professions, including the military.

*Sixth.* Home-schooling parents become more politically aware, and as a result become better Americans. Today’s home-schoolers are on the frontline of the war between individual freedom and government tyranny. The heightened awareness home-schoolers have of the fragility of our rights and freedoms is acting as an alarm to awaken a public unaware of how easily we are losing our freedoms. They are the canary in the coal mine. The home-schooling family becomes over time a patriotic family striving to defend the principles of American freedom as laid down by the Founding Fathers.

Home-schoolers are particularly interested in American history because they know that their continued



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freedom depends on how well they understand that history. And so, they become a repository of Americanism, embodying its greatest and finest virtues.

*Seventh.* For the child, the home-schooling family is a safe haven in a culture awash with drugs, promiscuous and premarital sex, perversion, pornography, blasphemy, foul language, venereal disease, Satanism, devil worship, paganism, nihilism, and violence. Children need all the safety they can get in a culture that seduces children to their own destruction. Of course, home-schoolers have access to the Internet, but their interests lead them to sites that inform and enlighten.

Christian home-schoolers are able to resist the temptations of our over-sexed culture because they know what that culture stands for in its rejection of God and the Bible.

Between 5,000 and 6,000 children kill themselves every year because of cultural influences that turn their minds toward thoughts of self-destruction.

The public schools teach a lethal combination of anti-Biblical subjects: values clarification and death education. In values clarification children play the lifeboat survival game in which they must decide on the basis of social usefulness who can live and who must die. This sort of exercise can indeed depress a child who himself doesn't feel very socially useful. If this is what real life is all about, how can we blame him for growing to hate it?

In death education he is taught that death is a friend not an enemy. He is required to write his own obituary, visit a funeral home, try out a coffin. He draws pictures of death, learns a death vocabulary, plans his own funeral, answers long questionnaires about death and dying. Death education depresses some children, fascinates others, and seduces some. I believe that it has led to this epidemic of teenage suicide, which is unprecedented in American social history.

*Eighth.* Home-schoolers are able to try out all of the new technology available. The home is a limitless learning center. Children learn to make their own videos, documentary films, produce newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and their own books. They can create blogs and join such social networks as Facebook, Twitter, etc. They can socialize with other home-schoolers via the Internet and email.

*Ninth.* Home-schooling saves valuable time. No long bus rides to and from school. No so-called study periods in which time is whittled away making paper airplanes. No artificial break-up of time. A home-schooler can spend as much uninterrupted time absorbed in an interesting subject or book or project. He or she is not stymied by the artificial schedule of a formal school, which is made for the convenience of the school, not the student.

*Tenth.* Family convenience. The home-schooling family can plan its vacations in accordance with Dad's time off. If the family is engaged in creating and running a family business, they can plan their trips to Disney World to fit their own activities. Meanwhile, the home-schooler has limitless access to the world's cultural resources, starting with the museums, zoos, libraries in one's own community.

In short, there are so many benefits to home-schooling that one wonders why more parents haven't tried it. Of course, the most common argument used to persuade parents to put their children in public schools is the need for socialization. The assumption is that home-schoolers lack opportunities to socialize. If this were true then the Founding Fathers would have been very unsocial people.

The fact is that the family is the child's most important source of social experience. Home-schooling enhances the relationship of children with their parents and siblings. It prepares them for further socializing in church, Sunday school, on Little League teams or Scouts. Also, home-schooled children generally socialize with other home-schooled children through their parents' involvement with other



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similar families. Many marriages have taken place among home-schoolers.

Indeed, it can be said that home-schooling is a blessing for America, where parents have forsaken government education for educational freedom. And at a time when our very liberties are at stake, we can use a lot more of it.



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