

The Evolution of a Home School Mom by Terri Camp

In the beginning was a married woman. The married woman gave birth and began educating her child at home. She taught the child to crawl, to walk, and to say "please and thank you." Each day she would take the child in her lap and read to her, sing to her, and play with her. The child grew in wisdom and stature. The mother had more children, whom she educated at home as well.

The mother then decided to home school the child. Knowing only that which she had seen modeled for herself, she bought a house with an extra room in which to home school her children. She purchased desks, a big white board for the wall, and a set of bookshelves to house all the textbooks. She put posters on the walls that she bought from a teacher's supply store.

Each day the children would march into the little room at the end of the house. A playpen was set up for the toddler, and a car seat was placed beneath the globe for the new infant. The children would begin with prayer. Then they would say the Pledge of Allegiance. The mommy even purchased a nice denim jumper with cute appliques.

The first week the mommy thought all was well. Into the second week she noticed that she longed to hold her toddler. She found it difficult to nurse the infant while pointing to the wall chart with numbers from 1-100. She bought a Snuggli to house the infant while she taught her other children. She bought her toddler a stuffed animal.

As the days wore on, the home-school mom began to call her friends seeking their advice on making her children sit at their desks and do their work. She would lament to her friends, "I don't understand it. The children used to love when I read to them. Now they wiggle and squirm at their desks, groaning while asking when I will finish reading time."

The home-school mom began reading books on child training. Obviously her children weren't trained well enough, she reasoned. She began them on a strict diet of discipline and proper nutrition. Still something seemed amiss.

Suddenly, out of the blue a flood appears. The home-school mom discovers she is once again pregnant, as evidenced by exhaustion and nausea. Unable to perform her schoolmarm duties, she sits on the couch feeling like a failure.

The children, who get a flashback and remember what it was like to curl up on the couch reading a story, whirl into action. The oldest child makes a cup of hot chocolate for Mom. She cuts some apples, cheese, and gets out crackers. Bringing the plate into the living room she says, "Mom, could you read us a story while we have a snack?"

Naturally the home-school mom perks up a bit. The oldest child picks an old favorite, "Little House on the Prairie." The baby begins nursing; the toddler cuddles up next to Mom, as the older children gather at Mom's feet sharing their snack.

After three chapters, the baby has fallen asleep and is placed in her crib. The toddler is playing quietly with Legos in the corner of the room. And the older children are all drawing pictures.

Over time, the desks in the schoolroom are removed to various locations around the house. All wall space is replaced by bookshelves and lots of books. The home-educating mom now has a home-based, Internet business selling her favorite books to others educating their children at home. The children have all developed a deep love for learning and shout for joy when they hear Mom say, "Time to read!"

The beautiful wallpaper in the dining room has been replaced by maps of various locations. The living room now houses big plastic containers with "quiet" toys for the younger children.

The mom is frequently found curled up on the couch in her sweat pants and T-shirt reading a classic aloud, while the children play contently or sit on the lap of the mom who educates her children at home.