

SOCIALIZATION PRACTICES
OF CHRISTIAN HOME SCHOOL EDUCATORS IN THE
STATE OF VIRGINIA

A Dissertation
Presented to
The Faculty of the Curry School of Education
University of Virginia

In Partial fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by
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January 1991

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Curriculum and Instruction

Curry School of Education

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Charlottesville, Virginia

APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation, Socialization Practices of Christian Home School Educators in the State of Virginia, has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine what practices home school educators in Virginia were using to meet the socialization needs of their middle school age students. The researcher interviewed parents from ten home schooling families that were in the process of educating a middle school age child (11-14 years old). All parent respondents were from rural localities, encompassing five Virginia counties.

Previous research of socialization within the home school population has concentrated on general personal adjustment and self-esteem. In contrast, this study focused on seven areas of socialization: 1) personal identity, 2) personal destiny, 3) values and moral development, 4) autonomy, 5) relationships (peer and adult), 6) sexuality, and 7) social skills. These seven areas were used in a guided interview format to elicit information from the parents on practices that they had made a part of their instruction. Emergent issues related to socialization are included. Case studies were constructed on each of the ten families. A content analysis of the parent interviews, using the seven previously mentioned areas of socialization as categories was completed.

The case studies, findings, conclusions and researcher remarks were limited to the study

population. The researcher concluded from the data gathered that while home school educators were using many nontraditional methods, along with traditional methods, to address the socialization needs of their students, each area was being addressed. Findings indicated that the most important practices of these home school educators were those of: (1) parental modeling; (2) allowing the student to assume specific amounts of responsibility and to participate in situations usually reserved for much older students or adults; and, (3) instilling those values related to their Christian beliefs.

Acknowledgments

On the completion of a long term goal, reflection is inevitable. I realise the debt I owe to those that have helped me in this process. I wish to thank especially, Dr. William C. Berry who has been my guide and encourager throughout the years of work on my Master's Degree and Doctorate. He has become a dear friend and mentor. I also wish to thank Dr. Carolyn M. Callahan, Dr. R. Lynn Canady, Dr. Robert W. Covert, and Dr. Charles M. Heuchert for their honesty, help, and encouragement. Dr. Christine (Tee) Garrison was my morale booster; she had so many valuable suggestions. This study would not have been possible without the assistance of the home schooling families, I would like to thank them for their willingness to be part of the study. Lastly, I wish to thank all my family for their support and help over the past years in making this dream a reality.

Dedication

This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to my best friend, kindred spirit, supporter, and husband, Wendell; and to my own two home schooled daughters, Heather Alicia and Rachael Kathryn, who make me proud to be their mother.

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Chapter 1

Home schooling has been frequently debated during the last ten years, although families in the United States have practiced learning at home since this country began. With the passage of compulsory education laws, fifty or sixty years ago, fewer and fewer families chose to teach their own children. Then, during the late 1970's, the number of people who decided to home school began to increase. The number of children presently being taught at home has been estimated to be somewhere between 120,000 (Lines, 1987) and 1,000,000 (Naisbitt, 1982).

In the years before public education, children were taught either at home by their parents or a tutor or, in the case of wealthy families, were sent away to be educated in private educational institutions. In the latter part of the 19th century a commonly educated public became a national goal, and states began to pass laws making school attendance compulsory. By the early 20th century public school education became the accepted practice. Home schooling faded from view except in those locations where a family lived in an area too remote to have access to a public school. In the last two decades, there emerged a few who chose to go it alone and teach their children themselves. The numbers have continued to grow each year. Recent

profile studies (Gustavsen, 1981; Green, 1984; Knowles, 1988; Taylor, 1986; Wartes, 1987) show that while the number of home school families continue to increase they are a fairly representative slice of our society.

Home Schooling in Virginia

In the State of Virginia, the General Assembly passed a law in 1984 that gave parents several options for teaching their children at home. The parents could choose one of the conditions, meet it, and under the state law, they could legally home school their children. These conditions are that:

(1) Parent holds a baccalaureate degree in any subject from an accredited institution of higher education.

(2) Parent meets the qualifications for a teacher prescribed by the Board of Education.

(3) Parent enrolls the child or children in a correspondence course approved by the Board of Education.

(4) Parent provides program of study or curriculum which, in the judgment of the division superintendent, includes the Standards of Learning (SOL) objectives adopted by the Board of Education for language arts and mathematics, and provides evidence that the parent is able to provide an adequate education for the child.

Since the state began to keep records in 1984, the number of children involved in home schooling grew from 504 (1984-85) to 2,126 (1988-89), an increase of 418% (Virginia Department of Education, 1984-1989). There have been studies that have provided a demographic profile of the home school family (Gustavesen, 1981), studies of academic achievement (Wartes, 1987; Mayberry, 1988), and studies that compare the self-concept and socialization skills of home schooled students to those of traditionally schooled students (Taylor, 1986; Delahooke, 1986; Wartes, 1987). However, there has not been a study to actually document what home educators are doing to provide for the development of socialization skills for their children. Selected studies have found that home schooled students score above the national average on tests measuring self-concept and certain aspects of personality using the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale and the Roberts Apperception Test for Children (Taylor, 1986; Delahooke, 1986).

Purpose

The focus of this study was to identify and describe methods and practices which home school educators were using to meet the socialization needs of their children. In one research study (Taylor, 1986)

home school students were found to have high self-concept scores, with scores in the "well-adjusted" range of Piers-Harris Personality Test. This evidence supports the claim that parents are providing the necessary ingredients to foster socialization growth in some areas. There have been no studies, however, to document what is actually being done by parents, and no other study has focused on other areas of social growth. This study focused on the question: "What are parents of home schooled students in Virginia doing to meet the socialization needs of their students?"

The following question has been formulated for this study:

What are the practices home school educators are using to meet the socialization needs of their middle school aged students?

Knowing what practices and methods home school educators employ will help place other research on socialization (Montgomery, 1986; Taylor, 1986, Delahooke, 1986) in perspective. This study will provide educators and curriculum writers with information on areas of concern to home school educators, as well as highlight areas that may need attention.

This study will provide home school educators with information on how some home school parents provide instruction in the various areas of socialization. It

will alert home school educators to possible weaknesses in the instruction for fostering socialization. Parents within the home school community could use this information to evaluate their own methods and to improve the quality of their instruction.

Limitations

In an ideal situation this study would sample all home schooling families in the state of Virginia, and their responses would present complete, accurate data about their practices involving socialization. Conducted within the constraints of the real world, this study faced the problem of finding home school families that would be open to study and relying on their truthfulness in revealing just what they were doing.

This study was done using qualitative research methods. Using this approach, the data were gathered from ten rural families that were home schooling middle school-aged students. These families were obtained by referral from home school families and self disclosure. Home schoolers have been very cautious about revealing information because they have feared legal prosecution (from the state) and public misunderstanding. Therefore, it has been very difficult to get names and addresses of those engaged in home schooling. However,

because of the researcher's own involvement in the home school movement, the informants showed a willness to be interviewed.

Because of the nature of this study, data were gathered from the participants by interview. While this study did not have the advantage of long engagement with individual informants, an attempt to overcome this has been made by including detailed informational sketches on each of the ten families so that the reader can judge applicability in each situation. A final discussion of the findings has been included to compare and contrast the approaches of the families to socialization.

Because of the nature of the subject, information was gathered through open ended questions and discussions with informants. While the general areas of socialization addressed by the Virginia Department of Education for middle schools were used as a framework, the discussions allowed for emergent issues to be covered. When discussions did not address one of the seven areas considered by the state to encompass the goals of socialization for the middle school, questions directly relating to those areas were asked. These seven areas or categories within the construct of socialization served as referents for an analysis of the findings.

Reliability (consistency and auditability) were

addressed by keeping thorough notes, audio tapes of the interviews, and records of each step in the study.

Definition of Terms

In order to establish clarity and understanding the following terms are defined as they were used throughout this study.

Home school, home schooling.....education that is conducted in the home; that is, school with the parent as the primary educator.

Socialization.....that process that instills a member of a society with the behaviors, and social ways of their culture. For the purpose of this study those areas of focus in the construct of socialization adopted by the Virginia Department of Education for the middle school grades (6-8) were used as a framework for interviews.

These areas are:

1. Personal Identity
2. Personal Destiny
3. Values, Moral Development
4. Autonomy
5. Relationships
6. Sexuality
7. Social Skills

Organization for the Remainder of this Paper

Chapter Two presents a review of pertinent literature relating to home schooling and the area of socialization.

Chapter Three presents the methods and procedures that were used to research the question, as well as a description of the sample used and a discussion of the case studies, a discussion of data analysis, and significance of the study.

Chapter Four contains the brief case studies of the ten families interviewed on socialization practices and findings from the content analysis.

Chapter Five presents a summary and conclusions drawn from the findings, recommendations regarding further research, and a summation statement.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Background

Home schooling in the United States has continued growing, and by 1986, every state permitted some form of home instruction. In Virginia, the number of children receiving home schooling increased from 504 in 1984-85, to 2126 in 1988-89. Frost and Morris (1988) noted:

The estimates of the number of home-educated students in the United States now ranges from a low of 60,000 (Holt & Richoux, (n.d), #32) to the figure 1,000,000. Naisbitt, in his book, Megatrends, believes the number to be closer to one million and a "true trend of the future" (1982). (p. 223)

Lines (1987) estimated that the number of home schooled children may be as high as 260,000, an increase from approximately 15,000 in the early seventies. His estimate is based on reports from organizations and institutions across the country that produce curriculum and provide materials to home school families, as well as on interviews and questionnaires.

This number is still indefinite because, "many home-schooling families are reluctant to share addresses and phone numbers or to respond to questionnaires" (Frost and Morris, 1988, p. 225), because of a fear that local school officials may harass them.

Several studies have been done on the demographics of the home schooling movement. In a research project, Gustavsen (1981) set out to determine those characteristics that represent home schools and the people using them. He designed a 63-item survey and mailed it to home schooling families in 44 states. With a response rate of 70.8% (N=221), Gustavsen reached the following conclusions about home schooling families:

1. The female parent was mother/housewife/home-maker.
2. The male parent was a professional or skilled worker.
3. The parents had 1 to 3 years of college education, and 46% attended 4 years of college or had done graduate work.
4. The median household income was \$15,000-\$20,000.
5. Various religious backgrounds were represented, including some very nontraditional ones; with 64% regularly attending religious

services.

6. Parents were average socializers.

7. It was a family enterprise, usually operated by both parents.

8. An average of two children and two adults were in each household.

9. They [home schools] were most common (53%) in rural and small town situations.

10. Informal, child-centered, and relatively flexible programs for learning were used.

11. The programs were effective and interesting to children (as perceived by parents).

12. For the minority who used standardized achievement tests, children rated above average.

13. The school formally convened for 3-4 hours per day.

14. Children studied on their own an average of 2.7 hours per day.

15. The home school was approved by local authorities.

16. Most often instructional materials prepared by the parents were used.

17. They [home schoolers] had access to learning resources.

18. The curriculum covered a wide range of conventional course offerings (with math, reading and science as the three most often stressed).

19. The home school was operated for more than 2 years.

20. Families decided to home school for various reasons, which follow in order of their importance: (a) concern for moral health of children, (b) concern over character development of their children, (c) "...excess rivalry and ridicule in conventional schools" (p. 162) (d) overall poor quality education in public schools and (e) desire to enjoy children at home in early years of their lives. (Ray, 1986, pp. 4-6)

A research project on home schooling in the state of Washington began in 1986 as a means of providing objective data to the public and policy makers in the state (Wartes, 1988). Data were obtained from the six testing services in the state that offered the Stanford Achievement Test series to home schoolers. Using a questionnaire which was included with the test, information was sought on reasons for home schooling, styles of teaching, and the demographic profile of home schooling families.

The typical home school family is a two-parent family (93%) that earns a little more than \$25,000 per year. The mother is the primary teacher (89%) and the parents are somewhat above

average in their level of education (26% have a Bachelor's Degree and only 5% have less than a high school diploma). The family typically has two or three children (60%). Few families use the services of a certified teacher more than 1 hour per month (18%). A majority (62%) of the parents attend home school support group meetings or activities at least once every two months and 85% utilize community resources in the education of their children at least twice a month. The typical home school student is White (96%), age 8-11 (57%), has been home schooled 1-3 years (87%), was previously in a public school (51%), and is now making better academic progress as perceived by the parents (73%). The student spends a median of 11-15 hours per week involved in "formal schooling." The home education program tends to be slightly toward the more structured side of middle on a "very unstructured" to "very structured" continuum. (Wartes, 1987; pp. 44-45)

Criticisms of Home Schooling

Home schooling parents are experienced at citing the reasons that others oppose their method of instruction. Often, the critics are other family members and friends. Knowles (1988) expressed the

general sentiments of the public in the following excerpt:

Fueled in the late 1960s by liberal educational reformers such as John Holt, Ivan Illich, Jonathon Kozol, Allan Graubard, and Herbert Kohl, dissatisfaction with the public school system initiated a period of contention with public schools and experiments with alternative education. The public viewed home schooling as a subversive educational activity carried out as an expression against society at large. (p. 7)

Gorder (1985) commented on the criticism of many educators:

One of the most frequent criticisms of home schools by people who have pre-conceived notions about the subject is that they believe that these children are missing out socially. Over 80% of the educators I surveyed felt that home schools were at a disadvantage in the social development of the child and 59% felt that a disadvantage of home schools was the lack of competition in the child's academic and social world. (p. 43)

Kilgore (1987) stated that "critics and public officials find two major faults with home schooling

(supposed deficiencies in equivalent education and socialization)" (pp. 2-3). In research on home schooling families in South Carolina, Rose (1985) documented Kilgore's statement when he found that public school superintendents and their designates usually assert "public schools meet needs better than home schooling" and "home schoolers receive less education than at public schools" (p. 377A). Nelson (1986) concluded that "antagonists point out the lack of opportunity for socialization in home education and the inability of parents to cover all academic areas" (p. 3).

Wallace (1982) encountered a school board's reluctance to allow home schooling in their district.

What really surprised us though, was that when we finally sat down and talked with the school board and the superintendent at their meeting, no one ever expressed any doubt that we could teach Ishmael (her son) successfully ourselves. Instead, their primary concern was what they called "socialization." How would Ishmael ever learn to adjust to society, they wanted to know, or hold a job if he wasn't exposed to the hard knocks of life throughout his childhood? What they seemed to suggest was that perhaps it was really okay for Ishmael to suffer in school because then he'd be

prepared for suffering later on. John Holt, a well-known advocate of home-schooling, described our superintendent and school board perfectly when he wrote in his latest book, Teach Your Own, "People who feel themselves in chains, with no hope of getting them off, want to put chains on everyone else" (1981, p. 4). (p. 18)

Reasons for Opposition to Home Schooling

Cole (1983) made the following comment on the negative reaction that most educators have to home schooling:

The new wave of interest in home schooling seems threatening, I think, because it comes at a time when the public schools are being forced to justify their worth. Any defections from the ranks are viewed as ominous (p. 386).

In a study of the development of home schools as an alternative, Wynn (1989) drew almost the same conclusions as Cole:

Educators who oppose home schools do so not because they hate parents and are against children learning at home, but partly because they don't

believe children schooled out of the regular school program are being treated fairly. Too often children suffer from their parent's selfish interest.

While school authorities are concerned that home schooled children might be missing something, their primary motivation probably comes from the feeling that to allow greater freedom in the establishment of home schools might weaken the confidences or faith parents have in public schools in general. (p. 14)

The claim by some states that they are responsible for the education and socialization of the children of that state was argued in the case of "Duro v. District Attorney". Devins (1986) contended that the "decision too strongly emphasized the state's interest" (pp. 4,5), however, many people support this position.

Van Galen (1986) stated in her research that while new home schoolers are being socialized by home-school organizations, the amount of practical or technical information (about teaching) that is shared among home schooling families is limited because of "strong norms of family privacy and a belief in the inherent qualification of parents to teach" (p. 1683A).

While there are many who criticise the practice of home schooling, there are some like Frost and Morris

(1988) who see the need for cooperation:

Public school administrators need to cooperate wholeheartedly and help home-schooled children and parents. In the areas of curriculum and resource development, library and materials usage, testing and diagnostic work, and even extracurricular involvement, there must be extended efforts made for involvement. A growing cooperation can only enhance the academic achievement of home schoolers and can help many students in the areas of socialization and culturalization. (p. 226)

Reasons Parents Give for Choosing Home Schooling

Parents give many reasons for home schooling their children. Mayberry's (1988b) findings in a study of the home schooling families in Oregon suggested three common desires of these parents:

...the desire for family unity, the desire to protect children from the ideologies of social influences in public schools and the desire to reclaim control of their children's education. The findings also demonstrate that many home schoolers maintain a peripheral relationship to mainstream society and don't embrace contemporary social institutions. (p. 3875A)

Mayberry (1988a) identified four distinct groups of home schooling parents. The largest category was comprised of those motivated by their religious beliefs (65%). The second category included the parents whose focus of concern was academic achievement (22%). The third category represented those parents who question the ability of the public schools to provide adequate learning environments that will foster good social development for their children (11%). The last category was that of parents who wished their children to have a New Age orientation (2%).

This study found several similarities between the four groups of home school parents. All seemed to have had a lack of confidence in social institutions; held a belief that public officials were not interested in helping the average citizen; and believed that morals were all but gone [from society]; and were both liberal and conservative politically. Mayberry (1988a) also found that: (1) parents of home schooled children tended to be better educated and more economically secure than average; (2) the families tended to reside in small residential areas; (3) the parents were more likely than average to work in professional or technical fields; (4) a greater percentage of the parents were either self-employed or employed in small-scale organizations that offered a relative degree of job autonomy; (5) home school families tended

to have stronger religious commitments (often to nondenominational Protestant churches); (6) political affiliations tended to be more conservative than the national population; and, (7) home school parents had less confidence in public education, desired less federal and state government control of public schools, and wished to return schools to either local or parental control. (pp. 33-37)

Nelson (1986) concluded that the basis for home schooling is parental desire for greater security, increased morality, and improved educational quality. Further, Dibara (1987) concluded that differing priorities about school curriculum, values, peer pressure, methodology, skill development, and concerns about the future of their children led parents to home school. Van Galen (1986) concluded that parents are attracted to home schooling because they believe that it will strengthen their families.

In a qualitative study study (1987) conducted over an 18 month period, Van Galen researched the explanations parents gave for choosing home schooling. What the parents perceived as negative socialization in the public schools figured in the decision to educate at home. She concluded that many of the parents believe that modernization and secularization are eroding the strength and importance of the family as an institution. These parents believed that home schooling

enabled them to resist the trend by placing them in a more active and influential position in their children's lives. They believed that they were reclaiming parental functions that had been unjustly assumed by schools and other social institutions. Parents with children who had attended traditional schools were particularly concerned with what they saw as the declining role of the family. These parents expressed the feeling that they had been forced into competition with their children's teachers and friends. As school became the focal point of a child's attention, the parents expressed the feeling of having little more than custodial responsibility. Van Galen concluded that these parents believed that schools are populated with children from families that are unlike their own, and they fear that these children will influence their own to compromise their morals and values. She stated that these parents are vigilant in their efforts to protect their children from peer pressure. The parents of young children believe that they are even more susceptible to the influence of others. Van Galen stated that this was a reason for the popularity of home schooling in the primary grades. These parents believe that they should ground the child in the family's beliefs and protect them from competing value systems until the child is able to more firmly and rationally resist the temptation of

conflicting values.

The parents in Van Galen's study intervene more directly in the social lives of their children. The children were involved in lessons, special classes, and activities in the community; and many were active in Sunday school and church programs where they interacted with other children. Van Galen found that the parents continued to monitor the influence of other children over their own children. She stated:

They are not afraid that their children will find other values and beliefs to be superior to their own. Instead, they greatly fear that their children will be swayed by their peers to settle for less than the best before they are mature enough to make such judgments. (pp. 170-171)

Williams (1984), in a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, listed major concerns of parents already using the home schooling method of education. Among these concerns were parental social isolation, children's socialization, and the teaching of independence. Parents' responses as to why they had chosen home schooling were categorized into the following six groups: "unsuitability of children for school, desire of parents for control, socialization,

conceptualization of the learning process, ideas about content, and personal interest." (pp. 22-26)

Green (1984) studied Alaskan home school students and their families and concluded that "reasons other than necessity for enrollment range from the belief that home study provides more opportunity for learning life skills and spiritual values, to the need or desire of the family to continue schooling while traveling" (pp. 38-39).

After a review of the literature on home schooling, Griffiths (1988) stated that reasons parents give for choosing this option include religious beliefs, secularism in public school, and fear of negative peer pressures.

Based on conclusions made by several researchers (Gustavsen, 1981; Gustavsen, 1987; Reynolds, 1986; Van Galen, 1986), Knowles (1988b) made the following list of categories of reasons that parents choose to home school: (1) dissatisfaction with the academic standards of the school; (2) dissatisfaction with standards of discipline and morality in public schools; (3) opposition to the socialization process in school; (4) desire for family unity; (5) desire to provide for spiritual needs of their children; and (6) a desire to provide a holistic approach to education emphasizing direct and experiential learning. (p. 73)

In a Washington State study (Wartes, 1988),

parents were questioned about their reasons for choosing home schooling. The parents were given a list of 22 reasons for choosing home schooling and asked to rate each reason independently from 1 (high) to 5 (low) and to indicate the three reasons that most represented their own situation. The top seven reasons were: (1) religion or philosophy; (2) to avoid peer pressure; (3) greater parent-child contact; (4) enables better self concept; (5) to avoid peer competition; (6) more personalized learning; and, (7) to accomplish more academically. (p. 45)

White (1987), in research on home schooling in the state of Virginia, concluded that reasons for home schooling were: (1) lack of good moral and character development; (2) poor quality of public school education; and, (3) a desire to extend parent-child contact." White stated:

As participants in home schooling, parents believe that public/private schools are a threat to their children's moral character. Also, that home schooling provides a better learning environment since parents are able to give more time (individual attention) and love to their children while learning (p. 1113A).

Ray (1988) stated that the primary reason home

schooling parents give for their decision is related to values, morals, or philosophy.

Divoky (1983) concluded:

In spite of the diverse reasons that draw parents to home schooling, they share a profound belief that the public schools are not providing a healthy environment for their children. They also share a need to have some control over their children's learning and development. And they are all willing to be different, to take a socially unorthodox route to rearing the kind of children they want. (p. 397)

A parent, in Divoky's study, made the following comment: "Home schooling requires enormous personal confidence, enterprise, and tenacity. It is not a step taken lightly--or done as an ego trip." (p.397)

From the research studies that have been done on the reasons for choosing to home school, it is safe to say that the primary reasons relate to affective socialization goals.

Objections to the Traditional System

Holt (1982) commented on the social life of traditional classrooms:

I assert that with very few exceptions, the social life of schools and classrooms is mean-spirited, competitive, snobbish, status-oriented, cruel, and violent. I have said exactly the same thing face-to-face to more than 5,000 educators. Not one has ever contradicted me, even after I point out that no one has ever contradicted me. What they say, without exception, is, "That's what the real world is like." I have been told over the years more times than I could count that the schools had to do this or that to get the children ready for "reality". Not one person who has ever said said that to me has spoken of this reality, this "real world", as if it were a good place or could be made good, or even better. (I suspect this was not true fifty years ago, when many teachers thought part of their mission was to prepare children to make a better world. (p. 28)

Holt (1981) responded to the question, "If children are taught at home, won't they miss the valuable social life of the school?":

If there were no other reason for wanting to keep kids out of school, the social life would be reason enough. In all but a very few of the schools I have taught in, visited, or know anything about, the social life of the children is

mean-spirited, competitive, exclusive, status-seeking, snobbish, full of talk about who went to whose birthday party and who got what Christmas presents and who got how many Valentine cards and who is talking to so-and-so and who is not. Even in the first grade, classes soon divide up into their bands of followers, and other outsiders who are pointedly excluded from these groups.

When school people hear about people teaching their children at home, they almost always say, "But aren't you afraid that your children are going to grow up to be different, outsiders, misfits, unable to adjust to society?" They take it for granted that in order to live reasonably happily, usefully, and successfully in the world you have to be mostly like most other people. (p. 45)

Home schooling advocate and expert Raymond Moore (1985), in an article on early admission to grade school, made the following comments:

The studies of Urie Bronfenbrenner, a professor at Cornell University, suggest that, at least until grade 5 or 6, children who spend more time with their peers than with their parents become peer dependent. To the extent that children younger

than 10 rely on age-mates for their values, they lose their sense of self-worth, their optimism, their respect for parents, and even their trust in peers. Bronfenbrenner warns of "the age-segregated, and thereby often amoral or antisocial, world in which our children live and grow." He adds, "Central among the institutions which...have encouraged these socially disruptive developments have been our schools."

How much more involved can parents be than when they participate in the home-schooling renaissance which causes children to average 30% above the national mean on standardized tests and to demonstrate above-average behavior and sociability. (p. 64)

Moore (1984b), stated his belief that early admission into public school has led to:

- (1) a poorer education, as shown by the decline in literacy since the beginning of public education;
- (2) the creation of a generation gap, as a result of keeping children in institutions and away from parents;
- (3) peer dependency and poor self-worth attitudes, because children spend more time with peers than with parents.

Research and example have proved the theses that the home is the best

educational nest, that parents are the best educators, and that parents are educable. (p. 1)

Rich (1988) suggested that home schooling may be useful in the elimination of unhealthy forms of competition. He referred to home schooling as an alternative socialization process. Kilgore (1987) stated: "Some research finds that home-schooled children are better educated and socialized than their public school counterparts" (p. 1). Huffman (1986) concluded, after a review of literature on the subject: "The socialization value of public school education has not been determined" (p. 257A).

In the United Kingdom, home schooling has attracted growing numbers of families. Meighan (1984) quoted several home schooling parents on the benefits which they perceived to be the results of schooling at home:

Children learn to work independently and adopt a detached attitude to school indoctrination. They develop a genuine enjoyment of learning--even under school conditions. (Home school parent speaking on the autonomy experienced by home schooled students on returning to a school or college.)

I am beginning to think that they are an actual good influence on the neighborhood's children. They are sociable in a positive way.

[Here is a child]..who is interested in all around her, able to be spontaneous and think imaginatively, able to carry out instructions and hold sensible conversations, able to be logical and play with others in a non-aggressive, non-competitive way, and who most of the time seems happy."

We feel the benefits of practicing E.O. [Education Otherwise, a home schoolers organization in the United Kingdom] are enormous. We have one child in school and one at home. The difference in their attitudes both socially and to work are marked, the one at school has less friends. The one at home enjoys every moment of every day unlike the one at school. (pp. 171-172)

Socialization

Socialization skills that are addressed by the public middle schools in Virginia have been drawn from developmental theory of early adolescence. Several theories of the developmental characteristics of middle school aged children have been incorporated into the

goals that Virginia has addressed in an attempt to meet the socialization needs of these students.

In a Draft of Guidelines for Middle Schools in Virginia (1987) the characteristics and needs of early adolescents were discussed. These characteristics included: increased influence of peers, decline in the influence of family, and consolidation of personality. Needs included: self-esteem, understanding of self and feelings, autonomy and independence, becoming a co-operating and contributing member of society, positive relationships with peers and adults, interaction with adults outside of teacher/learner relationship, appropriate social behaviors, developing values, and developing respect for different people and cultures (pp. 3-5). This document stated that "the most important functions of school are the delivery of social and cultural learning, and preparation of students to emerge successfully into their own culture and society" (p. 6). Further, this document stated that middle school students should:

...learn behaviors and values which will help them be accepted by society and will provide a basis for success as they continue their education and begin a career. The character qualities of honesty, industry, cooperation, citizenship, diligence, value of self and respect for others

need to be learned at home and at school, since they are the basis our society is built upon. Discipline for the middle school child is a process of learning responsibility, self control, and correct behavior. (pp. 7,9)

Another aspect in the process of socialization dealt with in this draft of guidelines was the area of social growth and service. The draft stated that students should be involved in activities which allow them to experience success, social growth, and to be of service to others. Educators should provide activities that allow each student to experience positive social interaction and personal success. Every student should be involved, each year, in an activity or project that would require cooperation and service to others. (pp.14-15) In addition, each student should be well known by at least one adult in the school system, and the middle school students and their parents should be helped to look ahead and prepare for the future. (pp. 22,29)

On June 18, 1989, the Carnegie Corporation of New York's Task Force on the Education of Early Adolescents made recommendations for changes in the practices used to teach early adolescents. Among the recommendations made were several that directly addressed socialization. These were:

1. Creation of small communities for learning, where stable, close, mutually respectful relationships with adults and peers are for intellectual development and growth.
2. Teaching a core academic program which results in literate students who can think critically, lead healthy lives, behave ethically, and become responsible citizens. Youth service to promote values for citizenship is an essential part of the core academic program.
3. Ensure success for all students through the elimination of tracking by achievement level, and through promotion of cooperative learning, flexibility of instructional time, and providing adequate materials.
4. Improving the connection of families with education of their young adolescents, and of schools with their communities. (Va. Dept. of Ed., 1989, p. 39)

In the process of restructuring Virginia's middle schools, the state has adopted as its goal a focus on 1) positive self-esteem, 2) meaningful learning, 3) achievement, and 4) successful transition to further education and productive adulthood (Va. Dept. of Ed., 1989, p. 1).

Socialization goals are not specifically listed or

separated into a distinct group in the goals of Virginia's middle schools; however, they are included in broader goals. The goals of socialization may be gleaned from the guidelines and various publications that the Virginia Department of Education has produced for use in the middle school. The areas of socialization addressed fall into distinct categories which include:

- 1) Personal Identity - self-esteem, solving the "Who am I?" dilemma
- 2) Personal Destiny - goals, achievement, career
- 3) Values, moral development - accepting rules and mores of society, self-discipline, problem solving
- 4) Autonomy - learning independence
- 5) Relationships - peer attachment and adult friendships
- 6) Sexuality - awareness of sex roles and physical changes
- 7) Social Skills - social rules, developing adult roles, acceptance of other's differences.

Gorder (1985) presented a list of those skills which are associated with social development:

1. Forming personal attachments--learning to like other people and having them like you.

2. Expression--learning to communicate not just about the physical world, but also about feelings.
3. Self control.
4. Knowledge of types of dispositions and personalities--knowing the difference between Grumpy, Sleepy, and Happy.
5. Knowledge of different types of social situations--how to act in church, how to act at a party.
6. Knowledge of different types of social interactions--how to introduce yourself to someone, what to do if you're embarrassed.
7. Knowledge of different types of social relationships--the difference between a mother--child relationship and a storekeeper--child relationship.
8. Learning social roles--how to be a parent, how to be a friend. (pp. 52-53)

Gorder added that the parent-child relationship is crucial to the development of good social skills. Parents are the primary role models in a child's life and, by imitating them, the child learns the social patterns that will be used the rest of his life. She stated:

These parents wish to be the most important people

in their children's lives. They wish to be the role models for their children to learn values. However, kids in schools are learning values and behavior from strangers. That's why normally well-behaved kids come home from school and act in ways that their parents do not approve. (pp. 55-56)

In his research, Johnson (1981) listed nine areas of vital peer interaction. He stated that peer relationships influence educational aspirations and goals; contribute to the socialization of values, attitudes, and ways of perceiving the world; and, are indicators of future psychological health. Johnson stated that it is within peer relationships that students learn the social competencies necessary to reduce social isolation. These relationships influence the occurrence or nonoccurrence of potential problem behaviors in adolescence such as the use of drugs and provide a context in which the child learns to master aggressive tendencies. In addition, these relationships contribute to the development of sex role identity, contribute to the emergence of perspective-taking abilities, and influence attitudes toward school. (pp.5-6)

Johnson added that these relationships should encourage feelings of belonging, acceptance, support,

and caring, instead of feelings of hostility and rejection. Given this apparent need for peer interaction, and the research results that seem to show that home schooled students do exhibit good self-concepts, one must assume that home school families are meeting at least some of the socialization needs of their children very well. The question is, what are they doing?

Probably every parent who has home-schooled a child has been questioned about that child's socialization, and, in particular, about the child's interaction with other children. Moore and Moore (1984) stated that socialization is not just associating with people of one's own age. Rarely do people stay exclusively with their age mates or peers for any length of time. Yet, this is what is expected of children from the time they enter kindergarten until they graduate from high school or college. When socialization is discussed in any other context, it is generally assumed that this means how one responds to all the social contacts in one's life.

The Moores stressed the difference between positive socialization, calling it "the sum of mutual trust, cooperation, kindness, social responsibility, and altruism" or "concern for others"; and negative socialization, "ridicule, rivalry, antagonism, alienation, and narcissism" or a "'me first' attitude"

(p. 155), Many parents believe that they are better equipped to provide positive socialization than anyone else.

Dr. R. Moore (1985) concluded, with the support of 8,000 studies reviewed by his Hewitt Research Foundation, the following:

Whether the focus is on achievement, on behavior, on sociability, or on such other aspects of a child's development as the brain, the senses, cognition, coordination, or socialization, available evidence overwhelmingly suggests that, unless the child is handicapped or acutely deprived (a condition not necessarily linked to socioeconomic status), he or she should be allowed to develop physically and to explore personal fantasies and intuitions until somewhere between ages 8 and 12. (p. 63)

It is expected, by the very mention of socialization, that children are going to learn from the peer group. However, the Moores (Moore, R. & Moore, D., 1984) expressed the sentiments of many parents in regard to this issue:

Unfortunately, since their young peers are generally not carriers of sound ethical values,

the children learn bad habits and manners, but not the difference of right and wrong, the reason for rules, or the value of work (p. 157)

In their discussion of the negative aspects of too much peer interaction, the Moores mentioned a study done at The University of North Carolina and reported by Farran (1982) of day care children and their interaction with peers. In this study children were found to be involved in 15 times more acts of negative aggression than children in a home situation. These acts tended to be physical or verbal attacks rather than just defending their own rights. The children were reported to be more active, distractible, egocentric, demanding of immediate gratification, less task oriented, less cooperative, easily frustrated, more child-oriented and less adult-oriented. (p. 81)

Parents and home-schooled students have strong feelings about the issue themselves. Charvoz (1988) interviewed a German instructor from the University of Utah, who has home schooled her own children. The instructor's comment on socialization follows:

In home schooling, a child has a better chance to be socialized [in ways acceptable to the parents]. I find the foundation stone to socialization is good self-esteem. It is difficult to control the feedback a child receives in the public school because of [the large numbers of] students in the class. [The students] get as much feedback from their peers as [from] the adults. Even if a teacher is doing a good job of giving [positive] feedback the majority [of the feedback] is from their peers who are possibly insecure and tend to say, "What a crummy idea," if anyone does anything unusual. (p. 87)

In an interview with a college student who had been home schooled for a year and a half during high school, Charvoz (1988) recorded these remarks about social growth and the student's perception of his home schooled sisters' social maturity.

Dana [the student]: Before I was taken out [of

public public school], there was a lot of peer pressure to belong to a group and to succumb to what everyone else wanted to do. When I was pulled out, a lot of those pressures were released. When I got back in high school I still felt I could think for myself and do what I wanted to do. It was nice to not have peer pressures in high school. It was one of the nicest things to come from my home schooling experience. And it has continued into college.

Roger [his father]: How do you think your sisters are doing socially?

Dana: I think they're great. They're able to make decisions on their own that I was never able to make.

Roger: Do you think this lack of peer dependency is evident in their [enhanced] self-esteem?

Dana: I think that is probably the biggest thing I see coming out of home schooling. Learning to make your own decisions is a big part [of education] because [it] is something that really helps you later in life. (p. 88-89)

Kearney (1984) interviewed two gifted home schooled students and their parents on the subject of socialization. An excerpt follows:

Interviewer: Probably the major concern people have about educating children at home is the issue of socialization. Aren't homeschooled children missing out on the interaction with other children that school provides?

Roger: (the father) That view of socialization implies that up until the institution of compulsory education no one was properly socialized. Home-schooling allows our children to cope with society in general, not just their own peers in a controlled environment. It's real-life socialization rather than an institutionalized program.

Tom: (gifted student) I do not miss school socialization at all. I go to the private school one day a week, and on their trips, and attend more days if I want. I go to the spa to swim, and meet with friends and we plan visits back and forth.

Linda: (gifted student) There's not much time in public school to socialize anyway.

Sally: (Linda's mother) I asked the school officials what they meant by socialization, as there was very little interaction between children within the classroom. Our kids now are out in the world--we don't shelter them in the house, and they interact with many different age groups. It

provides a more realistic picture of what life is about, and it is a community based program and part of our curriculum. Linda attends ballet class, Pioneer Girls, and a biology class. She's been in a 4-H Club and was trained to be a library aide at the public library where she met many children after school. We also have neighborhood friends and people of all ages at our house a lot. How many times are adults exposed to large groups of people all the same age, in the same room and building for seven to eight hours a day? Almost never." (p. 17)

Contrary to popular opinion, home-schooled children are not being deprived of contact with the outside world. Wartes (1987) concluded that 52% of the home schooled students were spending 20 to more than 30 hours a month in organized community activities. Wartes also found that 40% of these students spent more than 30 hours each month with age peers not in their own family. His conclusions were that home schooled children were not socially deprived.

The studies on home schooling that concern the area of socialization have concentrated on the area of personal identity by using personality and self-esteem measures. There has been little research attention given to the other areas of socialization, especially

using the general guidelines of the Virginia Department of Education for middle schools. Critics claim that home schooled students are deficient in the area of socialization, but in reality this has not been documented by research.

One area in the construct of socialization that has been studied is the area of self-concept. An extensive national study of home schoolers was done by Taylor (1986). This study sought to provide an empirical base upon which to formulate viable decisions regarding home-schooled children. It also sought to address the issue of socialization and self-concept in home-schooled children.

This study considered home schoolers in grades four through twelve. Instruments included a demographic form and the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept scale (PHSCS). The randomized sample, drawn from the mailing lists of the two largest national home schooling agencies, Holt Associates, Inc. and Hewitt Research Foundation, yielded 224 qualified participants. The conclusions included the following:

1. The self-concept of the home schooling children was significantly higher ($p < .001$) than that of the conventionally schooled population on the global scale and all six subscales of the PHSCS. On the global scale, half of the home

schoolers scored at or above the 91st percentile. This condition may be due to higher achievement and mastery levels, independent study characteristics, or one-on-one tutoring situations in the home school environment. It could also be due, perhaps, to higher levels of parental interest and communication, peer independence, a sense of responsibility, and lowered anxiety levels.

2. Insofar as self-concept is a reflector of socialization, it would appear that few home schooling children are socially deprived. Critics of the home school should not urge self-concept and socialization rationales. These factors apparently favor home schoolers over the conventionally schooled population.

3. The self-concept of the home schooling children decreases significantly ($p < .01$) as age and grade level rise. This, however, is not likely due to increasing number of years of home schooling, as this factor had a significantly positive effect ($p < .001$) when a part of the best predictive model for self-concept. It could be due to a higher age and grade level at that time when a child entered the home schooling environment from that of the conventional school.

4. The factors of gender, number of siblings,

locale of residence, prior conventional schooling, educational level of home school operators, and geographical region were not significantly related to the self-concept of home schooling children neither when considered in isolation nor as a part of the best predictive model of self-concept.

5. While not significantly related to self-concept when in isolation, the factors or the number of years of home schooling and the beginning school age did become, when in the presence of certain other demographic variables, significant predictors ($p < .001$) in the best predictive model of self-concept in home schooling children.

6. Higher socioeconomic status and an increase in the total number of home schooling children in a family, within the limits of one to seven children examined by this study, is significantly related ($p < .05$) to a more positive level of self-concept in home schoolers.

7. The best predictive model of self-concept in home schooling children ($p < .001$) is related to lower grade-equivalence, higher years of home schooling, higher socioeconomic status, higher number of home schooling children in the family, and higher beginning school age. The model is statistically stable and accounts for over 12% of

the variance in the self-concept.

8. Home schoolers are apparently concentrated towards lower grade levels and tend to commence formal instruction at a somewhat later age than the national average.

9. There is an approximately balanced [equal] distribution of home schoolers in terms gender and geographical region.

10. It appears that home schooling families frequently have more children than the national average and usually have more than a single child in the home school.

11. Very few of the children are in their first year of home schooling and most have previously attended a conventional school.

12. The educational level and socioeconomic status attained by home school operators seems to be considerably higher and their locale more rural than that of the comparable general population.

(pp. 1-2)

Another aspect of the construct of socialization is that of leadership. Montgomery (1989) studied home-schooled students to determine how leadership qualities were developed and the extent to which those conditions that encourage leadership in children exist in the home school experience. A summary of her study

follows:

We can conclude that it is not IQ scores, socio-economic status, or grade point average that are most predictive of a student's taking on leadership roles in adulthood, but rather his or her leadership experiences while in school. If, leadership is, in the words of Gardner (1988), "a performing art," a skill and an approach to life better developed through participation in extracurricular activities than through academic studies, what effect does home schooling have on the potential leadership of home schooled students? After all, there is no student council at home, is there? There is no pep club, debate team, honor society, athletic team, cheer squad, chess club--none of the activities comparable to the extracurricular programs students experience in middle and high schools. Or are there?

The condition that was the focus of the study was the environment of the home school: Is there something occurring in that environment that adequately compensates for the extracurricular program and leadership experiences of a conventional school setting? (p. 3)

Montgomery found that home school educators

exhibited traits that were related to leadership. These parents were loving, nurturing, and had taken on the job, with its risks, out of a belief that their children were not well-served by the traditional system, academically or socially. These parents considered their children to have above average ability and potential. They expected their children to achieve, academically and socially, at above average performance levels. (p. 5)

Students cited 242 experiences as unique to the home school situation. Differences between home school and traditional school, as perceived by home-schooled students, were grouped into five major categories: (1) control of one's schedule (often stated as learning more because of having greater flexibility, less rigidity, more freedom in determining the schedule, or having responsibility for one's own learning); (2) control of one's time; (3) better academic progress/learning environment; (4) greater frequency and variety of activities/field trips/travel; and, (5) no worry about "being cool" or wearing the "right things" (p. 6). Montgomery concluded that the most outstanding difference, as perceived by the students, was the value placed on time and having control of their time and learning. She stated that this was significant because it is a value that is recognized in the literature as a characteristic of leadership (p.6).

Montgomery stated:

From the results of this study it would appear that home schooling is not generally repressive to a student's potential leadership, and may in fact, nurture leadership at least as well as does the conventional system. In addition to the findings about student perceptions of and value of time, three other patterns stand out as characteristics of this state's home schooling population. First, home schooling students have as their models parents who are leaders and who demonstrate on an ongoing basis those traits that stand out in the literature as important leader traits. Second, the message that home schooling children receive from their parents, both explicitly and implicitly, is that they are special people, valued and capable members of the family, cut from extraordinary cloth. When given a list of changes that many people feel need to take place in our schools and asked if they would return to the system if these changes took place, parents typically replied that frankly, the conditions in the schools are no longer relevant to their decision to home school. Third, home schooled adolescents are not isolated from social interaction with their peers group nor denied participation in a variety of at-home and

out-of-home organized group activities. The perception of home schooled students as being isolated, uninvolved, and protected from peer contact is simply not supported by this data. To the contrary, there were a number of students who reported having increased social contact and group participation because school required less of their time. (pp. 8-9)

Delahooke (1986) used a causal comparative design to compare traditionally-schooled students with home-schooled students. In this study, reported by Ray, (1987), Delahooke set up fairly equivalent groups of students, 32 from a private school and 28 from home schools. These children averaged 9.1 years of age. Delahooke found the two groups showed no difference on reading, math, or intelligence testing. Both groups were in the "well-adjusted" range on the Roberts Apperception Test for Children, a personality measure. She stated that the two groups displayed differences in their perceived social sphere of influence; the private school students appeared to be more influenced by peers than home-schooled students (Delahooke, 1986, p.87). She stated: "This finding suggests that children in the private school exhibited a greater focus on peer interaction, while the home educated children's primary focus was in the family arena" (p.83).

Ray (1988) concluded the following:

The available empirical data (Delahooke, 1986; Taylor, 1986; Wartes, 1987) suggest that home school students are doing at least as well as those in conventional schools in terms of affective outcomes. Previously mentioned studies suggest that home school children have a strong self concept, they regularly interact with both age peers and others, and they are socially well adjusted. Furthermore, there is an indication that they are less peer dependent than conventional school youth. Most home school parents would applaud this characteristic; they consider peer dependency to be a form of negative socialization (Bolick, 1987; Moore, 1982). (p.27)

After his review of the literature on the subject of home schooling, Ray (1986) speculated on the reasons home schooling might produce positive results. Among the explanations were three that directly related to the socialization of these children: (1) home school provides an extremely low student-teacher ratio, allowing for a tremendous amount of child-adult interaction, feedback, and behavior reinforcement; (2) parents are extremely involved in the child's learning, and what happens at home is clearly related to learning

success; and, (3) parents are "significant others" to the child, and the parent's behavior is valued enough for the child to imitate it. Ray stated that the extra attention these parents give may raise the self-concept of the child, and this has been associated with improved learning. (pp. 44-45)

Opportunities

Wilson (1988) discussed various ways a parent can provide for the socialization needs of children that are home-schooled. She listed organized classes, youth groups, sports organizations, religious-education activities, and field trips with other home-schooled children. Wallace (1982) commented on the opportunities her children enjoy in and around their home:

The quality and variety of the resources here for children are incredible. As soon as we moved I found myself racking my brains over which of four ballet schools to send the kids to. We had a choice of two music schools and three or four different types of drama and art classes, plus a gymnastics center, a fine city library, and the university library where Ishmael [her son] wandered around in the stacks practically in

ecstasy. Then there are two state parks within bicycling distance, and a shopping district that the kids can walk to by themselves, complete with bookstores, record stores, a bagal shop, and a Greek pizza place. And when Ishmael wants to earn money, he has three elderly neighbors to work for, shoveling their snow, raking leaves, and mowing lawns. Vita [her daughter], a competent businesswoman in her own right, has already made 75 cents by setting up a used-doll stand right across the street from the school-bus stop. To us, it seems that school would be more of a hindrance than anything else. After all, there are just so many hours in a day, and you can't do everything.

When Ishmael wanted to learn French...a neighbor down the street offered to give him French lessons. Another neighbor offered to give the kids pottery lessons, and they began taking art, drama, and piano lessons in town. In every case the teaching worked because Vita and Ishmael had decided that they wanted to learn what the teacher wanted to teach."

In reaching out to our community for support, we discovered to our surprise that there were four other families in our county who were teaching their children at home. All of them were eager,

like me, to talk about what they were doing. What a gold mine, especially since Ishmael and Vita now had children to play with during school hours.

(pp. 16,19)

Probably very few home-schooling families are fortunate enough to have access to this kind of variety in their communities. The majority of home-schooling families are living in rural areas. These rural families are striving to meet their children's needs in their communities. Marshall (1980), in writing a review of her family's home school experience, commented on efforts she and her husband have made to accommodate the social needs of their child:

Since [he] has been learning at home we have made a special effort to make sure that he sees kids his own age as often as possible. Fortunately, we have become become friendly with three other families in the area that are home schooling, and [he] enjoys visiting and doing special projects with them. He has also taken advantage of a variety of after-school classes for children offered in two nearby towns. Last year he took art classes, and this year he is taking a drama class and a mime and American Sign Language class, all of which give him a chance to mix with other

children. (p. 92)

Kearney (1984) offered the following advice to parents considering home schooling.

Provide for appropriate socialization for your child. Your child needs social experiences with people of all ages. Give him or her opportunities to associate with other children in such activities as 4-H, Scouts, Sunday School, and dance or music classes, as well as opportunities to play informally with others. Your child can learn social skills with adults of all ages by participating in mentorships, part-time work, volunteer work, adopting a grandparent or spending time with elderly people at a nursing home, and activities throughout the community. (p. 19)

The Colfax family received national attention when their sons were admitted to Harvard after being home-schooled on a ranch in California. These home schooling parents wrote about their experience in the book Homeschooling For Excellence (1988). When asked about the socialization of home schooled children, they responded:

In the first place, homeschooled children are

seldom, if ever, socially isolated. Indeed, precisely because they have more opportunities to interact with a wide range of people, they tend to become socially competent and socially responsible at an earlier age than most of their conventionally schooled peers. The argument that socialization is the primary function of the schools--and educators are increasingly claiming just that as their failure to develop the intellect becomes more and more obvious--ignores evidence that peer pressure in the schools, except in some very special contexts, does little to foster intellectual growth or the acquisition of desirable social goals. (pp. 101-102)

McMillan (1985) discussed some of the opportunities for the home-schooled child:

There are opportunities for community involvement through mentorships, special interest classes, service projects, and extensive use of community resources. Although these options are open to traditionally schooled children, the sheer volume of time spent at school prohibits extensive involvement in extra-curriculars. What is extra for the school child may become core subject for the homeschooler as he pursues topics of interest

in great depth.

To be sure, the homeschooled child will face his share of hard knocks in both his learning at home and his community involvement, but these will be the hard knocks of real life, not contrived punishments designed to make an issue of learning. The freedom that comes with home education presupposes responsible commitment on the parents' part to meet the needs of their child with sensitivity. (pp. 55,56)

Holt (1983) wrote about the relationship of home schoolers to one another:

When home schoolers have problems, they ask other home schoolers for help; when they solve their own problems, they share their solutions. If they live near enough to each other, they usually meet informally, sometimes as often as once a month. At these gatherings, home schoolers and their children get acquainted, share ideas and experiences, and often plan and carry out group projects. Since the bond between them is a strong one, many home schoolers become close friends; indeed, many people in the home-schooling movement liken it to being a member of a very large but close family. (p. 394)

This literature review presents research that has been done regarding home schooling and the socialization process. The studies concentrate on the areas of personal identity, and largely leave untouched the other six areas of socialization (personal destiny, values and moral development, autonomy, relationships, sexuality, and social skills) that the public schools of Virginia are attempting to address. What parents, as home school educators, are doing to address these areas has not been studied, nor has anyone attempted to look at the broader goals of socialization using the framework of Virginia's public schools as a basis of comparison. However, this review has also reported what some parents said they were doing in each of the seven areas of socialization, as defined by the state.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Methods and Procedures Overview

The purpose of this study was to determine practices and behaviors parents are implementing to provide learning in the area of socialization for their home-schooled children of middle school age. A qualitative study with an emergent design (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) was chosen to provide a perspective on home schooling. An interview guide (see Appendix A) with a list of specific topics was used in order to elicit information from the parents on the areas of socialization.

As appropriate areas of emphasis, the researcher elected to address those areas of socialization that have been specified in the literature from the state of Virginia and from a survey of the literature on the development of middle school students. Each family involved was asked in open-ended questions what they were doing, if anything, that addressed those areas. It was determined from a review of the existing literature on home school socialization that only the area of personal identity among home schoolers had been studied. There had been, up to this time, no research that focused on other areas of concern within the wider

scope of the construct called socialization. Further, there had been no study done in the state of Virginia that addressed socialization. In order to provide a framework for responses, it was decided to use those socialization areas recommended by the Virginia State Department of Instruction for implementation in middle schools. These seven areas of focus served as points of reference for interview topics of discussion and became the interview guide. The guided interview with open-ended questions allowed the researcher to understand and capture the perspective of home school educators, while providing a framework within which the participants could respond in a way that accurately and thoroughly portrayed their point of view about the program. (Patton, 1987)

The researcher chose qualitative research methods for this study for the following reasons:

1. The desire to describe the individualized nature of each family's approach to socialization and to describe individualized participant outcomes.
2. The need to determine if there are generalities or widely diverse practices in socializing students among the home schooling community.
3. The need to use an approach which is sensitive to the differences of participants and open to their descriptive data and allows for a more personalized evaluation.

4. A need to add depth, detail and meaning to very limited statistical research.

Theoretical Perspective

The naturalistic paradigm long has been an accepted method of research in the areas of sociology, anthropology and in the area of historical research. Research in education has been associated with natural science and its methods of research. However, in the recent past, qualitative methods have been successfully applied to studies in education. This method, in the words of Michael Quinn Patton (1987, p. 9), permits "the evaluator to study selected issues, cases, or events in depth and detail." Patton states that data in qualitative studies are not constrained by predetermined response categories or limited by a set of responses. He further states:

...qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases. Qualitative data provide depth and detail through direct quotation and careful description of program situations, events, people, interactions, and observed behaviors (p. 9).

Qualitative approaches emphasize the importance of getting close to the people and

situations being studied in order to understand personally the realities and minutiae of daily program life (p. 16).

The qualitative approach to research strives to attach meaning and understanding to human behavior. This qualitative study sought to picture what a select group of home schooling parents are doing to provide for the socialization needs of their children.

Description of Sample

Because of the inaccessability of names for those who are home schooling in the state, the sample was developed by referral, starting with a known home schooling family. Patton (1987) stated: "The power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the evaluation" (pp. 50-51).

Typical case sampling was done within the context of the study design. The cases were chosen to describe and illustrate what is typical to those unfamiliar with home schooling. The sample included ten families in rural counties (Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Rockingham and Ronoake) of Virginia that were home

schooling a middle school-aged child. Four families had 2 children; two families had 3; one family had 4; and another had 5; another 6; and one family had 10 children. Educational background among the fathers included six with Master's Degrees (three of them P.E., engineering degrees); one with a Bachelor's Degree; two with two years of college; and, one with a High School Diploma. Educational background among the mothers included one with a Master's Degree; six with Bachelor's Degrees; one with 2 years of college; and two with High School Diplomas.

During the analysis phase of the study, it became apparent that these ten families shared many attributes. All the parental couples were in their original marriage and all were still together. One striking commonality was the strong influence of the father in the families. While the father did not often participate in the actual teaching he exerted much influence on the teaching situation, and had strong positive feelings on the subject of home schooling. The mothers in the study were all primarily responsible for the actual teaching. The mothers as a group seemed to be emotionally strong, capable women, and appeared to be very independent in thought.

All the families were Protestant and very involved in their faiths. Among the ten families there were three families that were Wesleyan; three in

non-denominational churches; two, Baptist; one, Reformed Baptist; and one, Presbyterian. All the families were Caucasian and middle-to upper-middle class. All families exhibited strong Judao-Christian work ethics and values. These families were representative of the demographic profiles (see Background, Chapter 2 Literature Review) that have been done on home schooling families.

Three other areas of similarity that the researcher found interesting and surprising were unrelated to any studies known to the researcher. Six of the families interviewed lived very near extended family. One other family indicated very strong ties with extended family and had actually considered relocation to be close to family members. Another similarity involved the preparation for home schooling. In seven of the families, at least one parent had taught in a traditional school situation (six mothers and two fathers). The third similarity was that of reading material used by the ten families. The researcher asked what books and magazines the parents had read relating to home schooling. All ten families gave books by Raymond Moore; five families mentioned the writings of John Holt; and five cited Mary Pride. Other authors included Benjamin Bloom, Greg Harris, Nancy Wallace, John Whitehead, Bill Gothard, James Dobson, and D. and M. Colfax.

Each family was described in a case study of that particular home school situation. A detailed description of their practices, as related to the researcher by the participants, was the basis of each case study. Initial contact was made through a telephone inquiry where the researcher briefly described the study and asked for their participation in the study. Names in the case studies were changed to insure confidentiality.

Procedure

Data were gathered through interview questions and discussions that allowed the participants to elaborate on the activities that related to socialization. The interview format allowed the participants to freely provide information, while allowing the researcher to elicit data on the seven areas of focus. While there was no interview questionnaire, the researcher did use the seven areas of socialization established by the State of Virginia as a framework for asking questions and for analysis of data after the ten families had been interviewed. The guided interview format is included in Appendix A. In the majority of cases (six) both parents were interviewed. All interviews were taped with the permission of the informants, and each family was described in an individual case study.

Once the interviews were completed, respondents were provided with a copy of their interview transcript in order to verify what the researcher had written. None of the participants requested that material be deleted from the transcript. This practice also provided member checks of the data gathered.

The seven areas of socialization addressed in each interview have been included here for reference.

1. Personal Identity - self-esteem, solving the "Who am I?" dilemma
2. Personal Destiny - goals, achievement, career
3. Values, Moral Development - accepting the rules and mores of society, self-discipline, and learning problem solving strategies
4. Autonomy - learning independence
5. Relationships - peer attachment and adult friendships
6. Sexuality - awareness of sex roles and physical changes
7. Social Skills - social rules, developing adult roles, acceptance of other's differences

Qualitative Analysis

Standard qualitative methods were employed in this study to ensure trustworthiness of the findings.

The guided interview format, focusing on specific

areas of discussion, limited the interviews to the seven predetermined areas of socialization addressed by the middle schools of Virginia. The researcher had no preconcieved list of responses, and open-ended questions (Appendix A) were asked. The study was emergent, areas of interest were pursued by the researcher, as they were presented in the interviews, by the participants.

There are areas of concern which the naturalistic researcher must address. The focus of the study having been determined (practices of home school educators in addressing the socialization needs of their children), it was decided that the scope of the study would be those parents with middle school aged children in rural areas of Virginia (Bedford, Botetourt, Campbell, Rockingham, and Roanoke), and limited to ten families.

While the terms-validity, reliability, and objectivity, generally applied to trustworthiness in quantitative research, are not used in naturalistic research, there are similar concerns that must be addressed. These areas are credibility, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) may be guarded by: a) prolonged engagement, persistent observation, and triangulation, b) peer debriefing, c) negative case studies, d) referential adequacy, and e) member checking (p. 301). The methods appropriate to

this study included triangulation, peer debriefing and member checking. Design decisions had specified that the study would include ten families from rural areas of the state. Data were gathered over an eight week period. Ten interviews were conducted over a period of five weeks. The researcher triangulated collected data by having each interview serve as a point of reference in the study (Denzin, 1978). Triangulation was also achieved during the interviews when parents showed the researcher documents that substantiated claims of their child's involvement in outside activities. When information was lacking or unclear, the researcher made a second contact for clarification.

Selected members of the dissertation committee, as well as another educator/administrator from the public school arena, served as peer debriefers throughout the study. Committee members offered design suggestions and asked pertinent questions related to the findings for consideration. The outside peer debriefer read case study reports, looked at content analysis findings and conclusions of the researcher, then discussed questionable areas. Member checks were done orally during the interviews by asking if the interviewer correctly understood the statements that were made by parents. After the interviews, informants were mailed copies of the case studies so that the researcher could be sure that the information included in each was

a correct interpretation of what she had been told.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest ten indicators of dependability. These are: a) appropriate inquiry decisions and methodological shifts, b) inquirer resistance to early closure, c) comprehensiveness of categorical scheme and exploration of relevant areas, d) resistance to undue practical pressure, e) inquirer responsiveness to positive as well as negative data, f) inquirer resistance to cooptation, g) absence of Pygmalion Effect, h) absence of Hawthorne Effect, i) sound sampling decisions, and j) extent of triangulation.

Dependability was achieved through the following methods. Inquiry decisions were made as individual interviews progressed and responded to the emergent design of the study. Early closure was avoided by beginning the study with a clear scope of the project design; that being ten families with a middle school-aged, home-schooled child. The concern for comprehensiveness of the categorical scheme was addressed by the seven areas of socialization (predetermined from a review of the literature on the subject and information from the Virginia Department of Education). The emergent design of the individual interviews also allowed exploration of relevant areas.

Data from the interview tapes and notes were analyzed, and both positive and negative responses were

included in the case study reports. Case studies were drawn directly from the data and reflect the responses of informants in the interviews, often incorporating the actual quotations in order to correctly interpret a parental comment. There was no evidence of the Pygmalion Effect: conclusions of the researcher were defended to the outside peer debriefer.

There was no evidence of the Hawthorne Effect. The interviews were related to practices that the home school parents stated they were presently involved in or that they had used during their child's middle school years. There was no evidence of practices that had not been used or that were included just to impress the researcher.

Researcher cooptation was addressed by thorough categorization of parental responses and extensive use of parents' responses in the case studies. Sampling decisions were made to meet the middle school age, and rural area requirements of the design, as well as availability of willing participants.

There was no formulation of hypotheses prior to the analysis of data. All categories, findings and conclusions were grounded in the initial literature review (categories) and in the interview data.

Confirmability checks for the study included audio-recordings of the interviews, partial transcriptions, notes and a methodological log.

Sufficient notes, log entries, and data were preserved to substantiate findings should the research be subject to an audit check. All findings were grounded in the rich data base.

The Interview as Research Tool

The interview guide format (Patton, 1987, p.111) was chosen as the preferred method of inquiry. The guide consisted of those seven areas of socialization addressed by the middle schools in the State of Virginia. The guide served as a point of reference for the researcher to ensure that all areas were discussed with each respondent. This guide also kept interviews systematic and comprehensive by establishing boundaries for the discussion. The general guided interview format is included for reference in Appendix A.

Self as Instrument

Perhaps the most obvious characteristic of any person as an instrument is the physical. The researcher is a woman and that has influenced the way in which she looks at the world as well as the things she chooses to observe. The researcher considers any information that she brings to this study that is related to gender to be a strength. The researcher

believes that she is, perhaps, less threatening to informants because she is a woman. The political orientation (conservative) and religious beliefs (Christian) of the researcher also affect the way she views the world around her and influence her interpretations of data. The researcher's work experience as a teacher at the middle school level in the public schools of Virginia and as a private school teacher provides some insight and first-hand experience in those areas of socialization that are addressed in this study. Perhaps the most significant experience brought to this study is the researcher's experience as a home school educator for the past seven years. The researcher has home schooled two children, the eldest since fifth grade (now a junior in high school), and a five year old who is just beginning formal instruction (but has been home schooled, never-the-less, since birth).

For the families involved in the study, the fact that the researcher was a home school parent seemed to make talking "safer." Once the informants learned of her involvement in home schooling they seemed more open and relaxed. As the study emerged it became obvious to the researcher that those families in the study shared values that were, in many cases, the same as her own. The researcher was not coopted within the study, but was surprised to find that she shared many

commonalities with the home school families.

At the time of this study, the researcher was a fourth year doctoral student at the University of Virginia majoring in curriculum and instruction, with colateral areas in gifted education and school administration. Her responsibilities included those of teacher, supervisor for her home school students, and the other related behaviors of a wife and mother. In preparation for this study the researcher had studied both quantitative and qualitative methodology, and had done a case study using the interview and observation format.

The Case Study

The case study was chosen as the method of choice in reporting this research project. Patton (1987) stated:

Case studies become particularly useful where one needs to understand some particular problem or situation in great depth, and where one can identify cases rich in information--rich in the sense that a great deal can be learned from a few exemplars of the phenomenon in question (p. 19).

The researcher wished to document what individual families were doing within the unique "school" situation that they had created. Home schooling is a somewhat unusual mode of education and each case is unique in itself. Since the practice of home schooling is not well understood by the public, the researcher felt that each case represented a somewhat "extreme case" and was worthy of individual attention. Each set of parents had something to say; each family provided an in-depth and involved description of the things they were doing regarding socialization; and the case study allowed their individual voices to be heard.

Data Interpretation and Analysis

After the interviews were completed with the ten families, the researcher used the seven areas of socialization as a framework for analysis. Each family was one unit of analysis, presented in a short narrative-style case study. "The primary focus of data collection will be on what is happening to individuals in the program." (Patton, 1987, p. 50)

Using the seven areas of socialization (personal identity, personal destiny, values and moral development, autonomy, relationships, sexuality, and social skills) as units of analysis, a content analysis was done on the ten case studies. This analysis

elaborated on the patterns of similarity and differences noted from the data.

Significance and Long Range Consequences

Because the practices used by families to meet students' socialization needs are so involved and elusive, the qualitative method of research was the method of choice. By questioning parents about what they were doing, the researcher was able to gather new data. This research filled a void of information on home schooling situations and provides additional information on Virginia's home school families, a very large population (see Chapter 1) that has had little research attention.

The study gives the home school community information on socialization that has not previously been available. There has been limited research on the socialization of home-schooled students. However, the research that has been done used personality and self-concept (Taylor, 1986) as indicators of how students relate to others and how they see themselves in their world. No study of what parents are doing to provide socialization for their students in other areas had been done. This study will therefore have benefits for educators at home as well as those in traditional school situations.

Because such a small group of unique families has been studied, no claim is made for generalization. This study has been done to illustrate and describe the practices of a special group of home schooling families and does not intend to make general claims about all home school families.

Chapter 4

Case Study Reports

The purpose of this study is to document practices of home school educators in their efforts to address the socialization needs of their middle school-aged children. While limited research has been done on selected aspects of the area of socialization (Taylor, 1986; Delahooke, 1986; Wartes, 1987), there has not been research that addresses a broader range of those skills generally associated with socialization. From the literature on socialization of the middle school-aged child and material from the Department of Education for the State of Virginia, a list of areas for study was made. These areas included the following: personal identity, personal destiny, values and moral development, autonomy, relationships, sexuality, and social skills. These areas formed the framework for a guided interview, that was done with ten families currently home schooling a middle school-aged child in rural Virginia.

Each family is presented in a case study that describes the practices and efforts and, in some cases, the concerns about the aforementioned areas. The investigator allowed the families to tell their own stories by presenting the information in the actual words of the informants whenever possible. Some

information has been condensed by the investigator for clarity and brevity; however, in the case studies there has been no effort on the part of the investigator to interpret or comment on the information. The case studies only chronicle (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) the information supplied by the participants.

The second section in Chapter 4 includes findings from a content analysis of the data. The seven areas of socialization are each addressed individually as units of analysis. Categories are noted as they emerge in each interview.

After analysis of the interview tapes and transcripts, the researcher categorized the responses in each area of socialization. All categories were grounded in the data provided by participants. Each of the seven areas of socialization is presented in a separate section with a summary of the data collected from the 10 interviews and some researcher comment on commonalities and differences among the respondents' practices.

Case Study 1

The Ellis family lives in Rockingham County, in the village of Mount Crawford. They live just outside of the actual village in a new home at the top of a hill. From their house two other houses are visible in the subdivision. The family has home schooled for seven years and the children have never attended a traditional school.

Sara, the mother, is teacher in the home school and she has a degree in Elementary Education. She taught in a traditional school situation before the children were born. Ben, the father, is an evangelist; he travels internationally and is frequently away from home. The two children, Carla, 12, and Josh, 9, are taught in a room off the kitchen that has been furnished as a traditional school room. There is a teacher's desk and there are desks for the students. The walls have posters and displays of schoolwork.

The interview took place in the family "great room," at the dining table. In the room there are books, comfortable chairs, a fireplace and piano. Behind the dining table, there are sliding-glass doors that lead to a deck and a big backyard.

The investigator began the discussion with the two parents by asking about the area of personal identity (see Appendix A) in the education of their middle school child, Carla. Ben began by saying that this has

been an area of concern and commitment for the two of them since Carla's conception. He commented, "We've tried to instill in Carla and Josh, since infancy through the middle years and beyond, the fact that they are a unique creation of God...no one is exactly like them and that God has a plan for their lives. When I am here, in the evening, usually my last statement to them is, 'You are a special creation'...it's been a way of life for us more than just a set curriculum."

Ben went on to name other ways used to build self-esteem. One way mentioned was with a special plate used at dinnertime to honor a special achievement or just whenever one of the family needed an extra boost. The plate says, "You Are Special, You Are Loved," and has the Biblical reference to Psalm 139. Ben talked about their family heritage and the fact that Carla and Josh know about their grandparents and great-grandparents and that this heritage has helped them establish who they are and build self-esteem.

Ben also added that Carla and Josh are not expected to be what their parents are, but are expected to be who they really are. Their talents and gifts are encouraged; Carla is showing talent in art and music. She was recently asked to represent her music teacher at an honor's recital held at a local college. Ben did say that encouraging the children to establish who they are was just a way of life for them.

Autonomy was mentioned by Sara: "We try to encourage their own independent thinking, too." She went on to say that they discuss everything and that mealtimes are their time for talk. Ben added that meals last around an hour and Sara said, "Sometimes, we have to just cut it off." Ben and Sara mentioned an occasion when another adult had commented on Carla's reasoning ability and willingness to state her opinions and defend them while discussing a political candidate. The adult had been impressed with Carla's knowledge of current events and her grasp of material, but most of all, with her willingness to say, "I disagree with you and this is why I disagree." This adult had been so surprised, she had made a point to tell Sara and Ben about the discussion.

Ben commented, "It's exciting to see them developing their [Carla and Josh] own personality and stating their own values." When asked if this reaction was because the children were exhibiting the values he espoused, Ben explained he was pleased, as any parent would be, that, at this point in time, the children were accepting of the family values. He said that both children had been given the freedom to see other values and he did not think they had been sheltered from them.

In the area of personal destiny, Sara mentioned that on New Year's Day Carla had written out some

yearly goals such as writing a book. When asked about long term goals, Sara went on to say, "Because we're home schooling, high school doesn't seem to be that big a deal...so we're looking beyond that already." Carla has picked out a college in Chicago. Sara said Carla had been around missionaries when they had lived in Chicago and that Carla is now interested in possibly becoming a missionary herself.

Sara also mentioned Carla's interest in music. Since her father is involved often with professional musicians, Carla has had opportunities to be around them and to talk to them about her interest. They have also found a professional artist for Carla to spend time with, as a possible mentor. Because of Carla's interest in the arts, the family tries to attend plays in the area.

Ben added, "Because of the ministry that I am in, we have a fairly significant number of people in our home that are very gifted in various ways. So, they [the children] have exposure to people that have been used by the Lord in various capacities. I'll be happy whatever they do...we're not trying to steer them into who we think they should be, but helping them to discover who they are and what the Lord wants them to do. Whatever we as parents can do to expose them to people who have been extremely successful or to encourage them in areas where we recognize a particular

gift...we want to do that. Regardless of what they choose to be, we're going to love them."

Sara described Carla's curriculum goals and explained that both she and Carla write out the plans and lesson goals. One of Carla's goals this year has been to write a mystery.

When discussing values and morals, Ben said, "It's more of a way of life than a set curriculum." He stated their goals for Carla as: developing into her own personhood; being exposed to a range of social interactions; and encouraged to work on those areas that might be weak. Acknowledging the importance of lifestyle, Sara stated that they used curriculum that covered character studies and built principles of life through studying individual people, their lives, and their values. Another curriculum approach they were using taught values through teaching a theme each week. They stated that they felt they were teaching values and morals through family conversation and actually talking about how things should be handled or how they could have been handled in a better way. The family also has regular family devotions together.

Sara commented, "One thing [about home schooling] is that there is more time for immediate feedback on things." Then Ben added, "I really value our meal times; we may be a rare exception in the American culture, I think. Because of home schooling we're able

to take advantage of those times." Because the children are at home more than students in a traditional school situation, Ben and Sara believe they share more time and talk to their children more than most people.

Carla has responsibilities and chores around the house; she is told at the beginning of each week which areas of the house she will be responsible for cleaning each day [something like one room]. Sara said that she doesn't have to remind Carla to do it. Carla does her own laundry; she does her own piano practicing without being reminded. When Sara talked about problem-solving, she said, "Time is a little different [in a home-schooling situation]; they are responsible to get their work done but they don't always have the negatives of going to class and getting an "F"-taking the consequences of not turning the work in and I know, sometimes, we have to work on that." She explained that by taking away their privileges, like visiting friends or going somewhere, she has to share in the punishment because she also loses her free time. Sara explained that she had to think of other ways to discipline, such as withholding free time until all the work was done.

Critical thinking was an area Ben felt was well-covered by the curriculum [Bob Jones University Press] they have chosen. One of their main goals was to

teach both children how to think and reason in various situations. "Their conversation is not limited to a peer group; they have exposure to...well, just in the past few weeks, here, three people from Romania have been in our home, [and] our friend from Nigeria...so we're not only teaching them how we think as a culture but how our cultures [are]...when I come back from a foreign trip, we talk about how other cultures deal with various situations."

Sara mentioned that Carla often did baby-sitting. Ben laughed and added, "She could probably be full-time." They have had to limit the number of times Carla can baby-sit each week since she gets so many calls. She averages once a week. She has been involved in various volunteer projects, like visiting the nursing home, picking up trash along the roadway (a home school project), and performing in programs at a retirement home. She has helped the Crisis Pregnancy Center by fund-raising, passing out literature, preparing food, and, occasionally, cleaning. Carla has also made food and taken it to local families during a time of need.

In the area of relationships, Ben mentioned the artist friend as someone that Carla holds in high esteem. Carla also has great respect for her piano teacher, as well as her Sunday School teacher. He continued, "She is very conversational; she will talk

to anybody! They've [Carla and her brother] seen some very significant, very articulate, very well educated people. She's been in that environment almost all her life. There have been a lot of those kinds of influences from a varying group of people, rather than one specific person." Ben did go on to say Carla's music teacher, whom she sees each week, was close to being a mentor.

On Tuesdays, Carla spends the afternoon with special friends; on Thursdays, she is with other home-schoolers for recreation time; and she usually has another activity, like skating, on one night during the week.

Carla is allowed to invite friends home after church, which the family attends regularly, and she is also active in the youth group there. Sara commented on all the activity, "With the busyness of our society, there are just so many opportunities to be with your neighbors, church and family friends...we don't think about trying to get more interaction." And Ben added, "Maybe a little less!"

When discussing the ways they have used to teach sexuality and sex roles, Sara mentioned several curriculum sources [materials from Bob Jones University, a biology text, and an invisible man] and their study of human anatomy. Ben added that whatever the children wanted to discuss, they would discuss and

would give them as much information as they wanted at that time. Sexuality, he said, had never been a taboo subject for discussion. He added that even though Carla was entering adolescence, he tried to have an affectionate relationship with her, which he knew was important for her. Carla's parents also noted another aspect of their teaching in sexuality was that they treated the subject with respect and never allowed the use of derogatory terms for body parts.

Sara mentioned practicing social skills at home and encouraging the children to use the things they had learned. Ben mentioned taking Carla into one of the Senator's offices in Washington, D.C. during the preceding week. He stated his belief that having the opportunity to be in situations like that were providing Carla with learning-by-experience.

When the area of teaching adult behavior was mentioned, Ben said, "We're trying to raise individual thinkers. I don't want Carla to just accept our values because they are our values; she needs to take ownership to those." One of the main things that Ben thinks they do is to bring good positive role models before both children.

According to Sara and Ben, home schooling has been Carla's choice since third grade. She is making this choice one year at a time and the contract is "signed" in April for each new year.

Case Study 2

The Bakers are an unusual family in that they have ten children. They live in Campbell County in a ranch style house. Their yard was full of bikes and various toys the night the interview took place. A van was parked in the carport and a pickup truck in the driveway. The door was answered quite graciously by a small girl who looked about five years old. Mary, the mother, entered and introduced herself. Mary is small with dark hair and a welcoming smile. The investigator felt a little like an intruder in Mary's busy life and determined to get in and out as quickly as possible.

We sat in the small but neat living room. There was a fireplace and the usual living room furniture, all sturdy but well worn, apparently by lots of little people. Children wandered in and out of the room as the interview progressed.

Mary began the interview by describing the family. Ron and Mary are the parents of ten children ranging from 15 years to 8 weeks old. All the children are still at home. They have three boys that are middle-school age.

Ron, the father, is a dry-wall contractor, as well as pastor of a church he started recently. Mary said Ron takes the boys with him to work quite often and they are learning the trade. When Mary started college she was interested in elementary education; she got two

years' credit in one year but did not finish. She supervises the house and school work. The children are on a schedule of household duties and these are done "before school." Mary starts school at 10:00 A.M. and all school work that requires her presence is done before 12:00. After lunch the older children work on projects or individual assignments while the babies nap.

Both Ron and Mary conduct seminars on home schooling and Mary has written booklets and materials which are sold at the seminars.

When the investigator asked what they were doing in the area of personal identity, Mary deferred to Ron, saying that it was one of his favorite topics. Ron began by saying, "The first thing we're doing to help them know who they are is to keep them out of an age peer group. Research [When asked about this later, Raymond Moore's books and What Works, U.S. Dept. of Ed., 1986, were cited] is very clear that that is the most destructive group that a child can be put into as far as self-image is concerned. Children who grow up in an age-peer group tend to have a negative attitude toward themselves and toward their peers. They are more challenged and confused about who they are than children who don't...and the reason for that is that the peer group is not natural. No place in the normal world do you see people grouped together with their

peers. You don't take a job in a factory and they put you with the 32-year olds. That's foolish, and only the American education system fails to understand that."

Ron continued, "We are teaching them from God's Word who they are. They are a special creation of God. He chose to create them. That's what makes a person's identity...his relationship to God."

"In addition to that, they are learning their identity in the family, the authority structure of the family. They are responsible to obey their parents, [and] they have to learn it [personal identity] by their place in the age order. The older children have more responsibilities and more privileges. And they are learning it through the relationships in the family group."

Ron went on to explain that all the children have responsibilities or jobs to perform. When one fails to do his job problems result for the others. Ron stated that even through this failure they learn they are important to their family.

Mary has written a manual called "Spiritual Training Projects." This manual specifically deals with areas of personal growth. One of the areas covered in the manual is self-esteem. The projects in the manual are crafts and art projects stressing a specific character trait. The researcher was shown two examples

of the finished projects. One was a decoupage plaque of Jesus looking into the face of a child while other children crowded around. In this picture the face of the child was that of one of the Baker children. Mary said that she did profile photography shots of each child and they put the child's picture into the illustration. Then the child did the decoupage. Another of the projects was a tee-shirt that had been painted with an "I'm special" slogan. These are examples of a regular part of their curriculum.

When talking about the area of personal destiny, Ron said that the main thing they were doing was to make sure that the boys had a trade. According to Ron, regardless of what the boys' futures hold, whether farming or brain surgery, they would have the trade and be able to support themselves with it. At the present time the middle school-aged boys are employed by the father. Ron praised his 14 year-old son who was standing in the room by saying, he is a "better dry-wall finisher than most men." The boys have been involved in hanging dry-wall unsupervised on several jobs and have even finished the office of a local orthodontist in exchange for his professional services. Ron plans to have the boys all working full time by the age of 16, and they have worked out a financial plan in which the boys can save 80 to 100 thousand dollars by the age of 20. When they turn 16, they will be on

salary and contracting on their own, he says.

Ron added that they are trying to teach the children to have a "servant's heart." He wants them to look at their chosen career as a way to serve others.

Mary assigns work daily, but goals are taught through meeting deadlines in the dry wall business. Ron continued, "The whole point is to have your children in the real world, not isolated off in an unnatural age group where everything they do is basically...jump through the hoop and get an artificial dog biscuit...instead of putting the child in a box, called the classroom, and trying to bring little bits of the real world into it...you take the child out of the box and lo and behold...there's the real world! To put a child into a classroom and try to teach them how to live is like putting them in a sandbox and trying to teach them to swim: the material is just not there, it's just not the same thing."

When the area of values and moral development was discussed, Ron said that because their basis for moral values was the Bible, the children were required to read Scripture each day, and they are memorizing passages. The Spiritual Training Projects also deal with values and moral development, so it is covered within the curriculum.

Another way Mary and Ron mentioned they are teaching self-discipline and accepting rules is through

their family life. Being a member of a large family involves acting in a responsible way and doing what you know you should do even when there isn't an authority figure there to make you do it, Ron stated.

Conversation family discussion is a regular part of their life as a family. Ron mentioned that the boys have a particular interest in current affairs. The oldest son wants to be a senator and politics is a favorite subject for conversation, especially as it relates to what they think should be done or how they think some politician will ultimately resolve an issue.

When learning independence was discussed, the first thing mentioned was that the boys have been kept out of age-peer groups so they could learn to think responsibly and not just follow the crowd. Ron said that he finds the "peer group" stifling [to independent thinking].

The boys have responsibilities in their work (on dry-wall jobs they are doing alone) and are forced to make independent decisions. The boys all have house chores and laundry to do and are responsible for some child care. Mary described a recent event (the birth of the tenth child) when she was away for several days. She stated that the boys ran the house, fixed meals, kept the laundry up to date and managed the younger children. In short, they existed on their own, according to Mary.

When the investigator asked about relationships, both parents commented the boys had a lot of adult friends, and basically the adult friends of the parents were also the friends of the boys. Sunday School teachers, people at church, and their piano teacher next door were those mentioned. The boys are not involved in any organized activity and basically constitute their own peer group (there are four boys in the family aged 11 to 15). When the boys are with other children it usually involves whole families getting together. Ron did state that he didn't think a lot of peer interaction was critical.

Sexuality is being covered in the curriculum from A Beka Publishing and Advanced Training Institute of America, and the curriculum also covers physical development. According to Ron, the subject is talked about in their discussions of current events, too.

When the investigator asked about social skills, Ron laughingly said the curriculum program [ATIA] they were using had a lot dealing with manners; in fact, the children learn more about manners than they would have ever have learned from him. Ron felt they were learning the adult roles through work and family responsibility.

When asked about teaching the boys about accepting differences in others, both parents commented on all the different personalities and natures of the members of their family and how they each had to learn to

appreciate the strengths and weaknesses of each other. At church, they are exposed to a few handicapped people. Since the family is so large, the parents seemed to feel that just the interaction among themselves was enough or perhaps all they could accomodate. The family seemed to the researcher to be very self-contained.

The family plans to continue home schooling. They state their area of focus is to teach the children to seek God and develop a godly character.

Case Study 3

The Connelly family lives in Bedford County, near the New London community. The family lives in a new split level home that was built in the woods off a country road. There are trees all around the house and from the road the house is barely visible. The family dogs met the investigator as she got out of her car.

The door was answered by Ruth, the mother, and she led the way into the family room for the interview. She laughed and said she had never been interviewed before. The family room was large and joined the kitchen, making a large "great room." There was a sofa, chairs, lots of books, a computer, table, and sliding doors at the far wall that led to the back yard.

Ruth began by telling about her family. She said that she and her husband, Paul, have five children: Mick, 11th grade; Candy, 8th grade; Carrie, 7th grade [the home-schooled child]; Tommy, 2nd grade; and Rachel, a kindergarten student. All the children except Carrie attend a private school this year; however, last year they were all home-schooled. Paul, the father, owns and manages nine fast food establishments with his own father, and he also owns two Sylvan Learning Centers. Paul has a Master's Degree in psychology and teaches part-time at the community college. Ruth is a registered nurse, although she has not worked as a nurse for some time.

She is trying to breed dogs as a profitable hobby and she owns and manages 10 apartment units. She is the teacher in the home school. Ruth laughed and said, "I do all my own housework!" as a cleaning woman moved around in the room.

Ruth explained they had gotten into home schooling more for academic reasons than for anything else. The program in the traditional school where the children had been attending had not met specific academic needs of the children. She went on to say the thing she liked best about home schooling was being able to individualize the curriculum and the rate at which that curriculum was presented. She also mentioned they wanted to fill the gaps they had discovered in the children's education.

Carrie, who is 12, elected home-schooling. All the children had been home schooled the previous year and all but Carrie had decided this year to return to school in order to enjoy the social aspects of traditional schooling. Ruth said she respected their [the other children's] wishes, but having the education "split" between home schooling and traditional schooling made things much harder than having everyone doing the same thing.

Ruth is using a "curriculum provider" company called Clonlara. This company keeps records, provides guidelines, and makes recommendations on curriculum

choices. If a family uses the company, following the guidelines and meeting requirements, a diploma is awarded at the end of the high school years.

Ruth described Carrie as a kinesthetic learner because Carrie's visual and auditory modes of learning are both weak. Ruth said she could adjust teaching to Carrie's style, but at school it had become a problem. Carrie, Ruth stated, was just unable to "regurgitate facts on a night's notice." While she was able to grasp concepts and cause and effect, she was not able to do it very quickly or in one night. Carrie had been very involved in her church youth group and had memory work to do for that, but she was able to prepare for this a week in advance.

When Ruth talked about the area of personal identity she said, "I don't suppose I've ever sat down and said, 'I'm going to work on self-esteem today,' but it is something I've thought about a whole lot, with her [Carrie] particularly. I've found a child's self-esteem is supported by successful experiences, which is one reason I let her quit piano!"

Ruth went on to describe Carrie's positive experience in sixth grade as a Candy Striper at a nursing home. She described Carrie's feelings of being useful, needed, and wanted. She described the experience as a real ego booster for Carrie. Aside from wanting Carrie to have those positive experiences, Ruth

had wanted her to be around aging people as a learning experience as well.

Carrie also baby-sits three children once a week and earns money of her own which she can either save or spend. Carrie has saved quite a large amount in her savings account, and according to Ruth, this has given her a feeling of self-confidence and accomplishment.

Ruth stated, "She knows I depend on her quite a bit." Ruth occasionally leaves the kindergartener in Carrie's care when she has to go out. Learning childcare and being able to do things for herself, Ruth felt, was a direct result of being at home. She stated, "Some of those things could have been done after school, but probably wouldn't have been, especially with her and the homework load that she had. One of the reasons I took her out of school was...the damage that was being done to her self-esteem, mostly from an academic standpoint, feeling she couldn't do an assignment, when in fact, she could learn very well."

Ruth felt Carrie needed a different time frame for learning, but her concern, as Carrie's mother, was that she actually learn the material without focusing on the grade all the time. Ruth stated, "Home schooling supports her self-esteem, as far as being able to do the task that is set before her."

When discussing the area of personal destiny, Ruth stated, "Whatever they were interested in, I jumped on.

Carrie is interested, this year, in being a wife and mother, and she'd make somebody a wonderful one! We're doing sewing this year...she looks through college catalogs, looking for home economics. Of course, that may change; last year she wanted to be a florist."

Ruth took all the children to a florist shop for a tour and talk with a florist. They have been to a real estate office, talked to social workers, visited a home for unwed mothers, talked to a nurse and even visited the Army Recruiting Office in their exploration of various careers.

Cooking and sewing are long-term goals and while Ruth felt Carrie was excellent in childcare, she would like her to have experience with a newborn baby. Ruth described an occasion during the summer in which Carrie taught the "Happiness Club," a group of 10 to 15 children aged 2-5 years for five Sundays. Carrie, herself, led the singing, told the story, planned and carried out the crafts. Ruth noted that Carrie had really developed storytelling skills and was in high demand at church as a helper. In fact, Ruth said she had had to limit the amount of work Carrie could do at church or she would be asked to do it at every service.

Every Saturday, along with another teenager and an adult, Carrie is visiting the homes of children who need a way to church. Then on Sunday, she rides with the adult on a bus to pick up those children. She helps

with the younger children and Ruth said, "Carrie will take her coat and put it on one of them that [sic] doesn't have one. She's forever doing that. I feel like sending her three coats sometimes. She has a real giving heart toward children, and I think that will be part of her career."

Carrie is accomplishing her goals weekly with school work, doing what she can alone, then doing a lot of discussion with Ruth about the work. She spends about 4-5 hours each day working on some aspect of schoolwork.

When the investigator mentioned values and moral development, Ruth said that she felt these things were "absorbed" through family life, but she thought that was true even for those children who are in a classroom every day. Ruth added that they attended church regularly and Carrie attended a youth Bible study every Saturday evening. On Tuesdays, Ruth attends a ladies' Bible study during which time Carrie helps keep the nursery. Ruth said that openness and discussion with the children about her own failures as a person was a part of their training. She gave as an example a recent speeding ticket that the oldest son had gotten. Ruth commented that she had gotten tickets, too, and she wants the children to know that she is not perfect.

Ruth remarked that Carrie had made her own decision not to participate in basketball this year

because the practices would interfere with her visiting children on Saturday morning. Although the whole family is involved in sports, Ruth felt that they didn't let sports it take precedence over church attendance. She stated, "I'm hoping that it will be an example to them someday, of how important it is to us." Another aspect of teaching values Ruth mentioned involved a personal stand they had decided to make. Involvement with the various sports teams usually placed them in situations where they would be asked to sell raffle tickets for the teams. Ruth and Paul have decided, that as innocuous as that activity seemed to be, they were not going to have their children sell tickets.

Ruth stated her belief that Carrie had already assimilated many of the family values and was, in some ways, more conservative than her parents.

In the area of problem-solving, the researcher asked if Ruth was specifically providing opportunities for Carrie in this area. Ruth laughed and said, "Nope, when I see a problem, I dive right in with exactly what you ought to do! I probably fail to let the kids do that." However, to the investigator it seemed that Carrie's ability to teach a large class of 2-5 year-olds involved immense problem-solving strategies, and this was pointed out to Ruth.

In the area of learning independence, Ruth

commented that she was very pleased with Carrie's responsibility and dependability. The savings account, opportunities for working (baby-sitting) and teaching at church were again mentioned.

When discussing peer relationships, Ruth judged their involvement in church activities, Wednesday night Awana (a club similar to Scouts but church-related) and Saturday night Bible study, to be enough. Then Ruth added that Carrie has friends over to spend the night on weekends. Carrie has been involved in gymnastics and she is very involved in several sports (swimming, soccer, softball, and basketball). She is with other children about twice a week for team practice and games.

Carrie has developed several adult friends, including ladies from the church and older ladies at the nursing home. Once a week Carrie has been running, in preparation for the Virginia Ten-Miler, with a lady from the church. Ruth commented on the close friendship Carrie has with that particular woman.

When the investigator asked about the area of sexuality, Ruth reported using her nurse's maternity book to teach conception-to-birth. The family has purchased audio-tapes dealing with adolescence and has used them with all the older children. Ruth said the tapes had covered everything from psycho-social aspects to physical changes related to adolescence. She went

on to add that she had taught contraception to all five children as a group, covering various methods from the pill to condoms. Ruth said the teaching of sex roles was covered more from example than in any formal way. While Ruth likes to be at home, she felt the kids see her doing things in the business world, not just being at home cooking and cleaning.

The area of social skills and accepting the differences of others, Ruth feels, is addressed through the work Carrie has done with the elderly and handicapped at the nursing home. Carrie has also taken a sign language class and been around the deaf. The family has been involved with others with different lifestyles through sports activities and they have a family friend who is a Hindu from India. Ruth also mentioned that they regularly open their home to missionary families visiting the church from other cultures, and this has given the children the opportunity to learn about other ways of life.

Ruth summed up her focus in the following comment. "The thing I think about the most is to fill their little head [sic] with the amount of knowledge they need, appropriate to their grade. I want to make sure they get as much as any other kid gets."

Ruth stated she plans to continue home schooling Carrie through high school. However, because Carrie loves sports so much, they may enroll her on a

part-time basis, so that she can participate in a school sports program.

Case Study 4

The Kellys live in Bedford, a small rural town. They have three sons, all being home schooled. They are an extremely busy family. John, the father is a nuclear engineer; Cindy, the mother, is director for the Bedford Main Street businesses, as well as the teacher in the home school. Because they have found it more convenient to have school away from the house, they have rented the upstairs space in a building in downtown Bedford.

John and Cindy's teenage sons, Rob (16), Zach (14), and Dave (13) have been home-schooled for the last 6 years. They explained that home schooling was something they had not planned to do. When they discovered that Zach was learning-disabled, he had been enrolled in a special school in another city. Since this meant Cindy would have to drive him to school every day (about 40 miles one way), they enrolled the other two boys in a private school in the same city. Eventually, the private school was forced to cut back on grade levels and the older two boys were left without a school. At this time Cindy, who had been a teacher, decided to teach the boys herself. Cindy began to teach Rob and Dave in a rented property in the city, while Zach was at his special school. This went on for 2 years. When Zach finished at his school and the

family no longer had the long drive every day, a decision as to whether or not to continue home schooling had to be made. Cindy and John had wanted the boys to attend the public high school in order to take advantage of the many opportunities that a large school could offer, but after talking to several people (students and teachers) they decided to continue home schooling.

Each day they have school from 8:15 A.M. until 1:00 P.M. with a 30 minute break.

When John and Cindy were asked about their motivation for home schooling, John replied, "When you leave school, the environment for the rest of your life is very little like school. You don't sit in desks in rows. A lot of people, 'nowdays' end up in an office of some kind. In an office you are responsible for your own work load, so we're trying to educate them to be adults, not students all their life."

Cindy added that they were trying to teach things like responsibility, organization and perseverance. She stated that she wanted them to know that, in life, sometimes things are just hard work, and you go ahead and do it.

When discussing the area of personal identity, John said, "We know who they are...they are made in the image of God and we teach them that, so once you've got that basic framework, the rest of it sort of falls

together. We've worked with them and we're trying to find their gifts. Gifts, God has given them, skills and talents...find and develop those...[so] that they might be able to find a vocation or calling."

John said that practically speaking there were several things they were doing to further this goal, like joining the Civil Air Patrol (John and two of the sons belong) because one son expressed an interest in a career in the army, or being on the YMCA swim team. John said they encourage community civic involvement. The family had worked the polls during elections and the boys had volunteered their services in the town as well. According to Cindy, because the boys are so visible (going to school in the center of town), local people do call on them for help and realize they are dependable. She added that home schooling had allowed them to do these activities, build a good reputation, and had actually helped them get part-time jobs.

Zach, the LD student, is also involved in a local Boy Scout troop and has participated in many volunteer services. John added they have had to work a little harder with Zach in the area of self-confidence and self-worth than with the other two boys, but little by little they have found areas where he is able to excel. Zach is taking art lessons from a college art instructor and Cindy and John proudly display his work in their home. According to John, success in art has

helped Zach to know who he is and what he is good at. Zach is also learning to ride horses and Cindy noted that this skill had been a tremendous ego boost for him. He has learned to do something the other two boys cannot do.

This interest in riding has had other benefits, Cindy added. Zach is reading more and researching horses and related subjects to increase his knowledge on the area. Cindy went on to say Zach was not an outgoing child and if he had not had the "safe" environment of parents who love him and friends who encourage (the home school situation), he would never have taken riding. She continued, "In a public school environment he would do nothing except sit and be mortified, and I think he would have become so reclusive that we would have never had the Zach that we have today."

Dave (13) is involved in Civil Air Patrol, but John and Cindy found him a unit in another city so he would not have to compete with his brother. Last summer he was allowed to take part in a week-long encampment and was the youngest member.

Cindy stated, "As far as finding out who they are, the home school environment has not been a hindrance to them, because they know that we are actively seeking to find their gifts and let them have an environment where they can pursue interests and find out if they really

enjoy those things or if they are suitable." They tell the boys they should use this time to find out what they are good at, while they have the support of parents. If they fall on their faces, it's OK to try something else.

Cindy continued, "I'm certain they wouldn't be as responsible, especially in the adult world, as they are if they'd been in public schools. They handle themselves extremely well with grown ups, yet they are very comfortable with peers. The security of home and their understanding of being made in God's image and being part of a family, even the governing body of the church...knowing that there is church discipline..., all of that, has fostered children that are more mature than children in the public schools [who are] the same age. They are more serious, in that they contemplate what is worthwhile. I don't mean they're not still kids, they still get caught up in fads and things, but I think they are much more able to deal with the real world."

Cindy and John had discussed the area of personal destiny along with the personal identity. John mentioned that one of the boys had expressed a desire to be in the military and wanted to attend the Citadel. For this reason they have been conscious, for several years, of the importance of having specific areas of success, in order to even be considered by a school

like the Naval Academy or Citadel. Since this son has a gift for languages, Cindy began driving him to an area college once a week to study Russian with a professor, hoping this skill would give him an added edge when it came time for admission.

Zach, who is artistic, will receive testing in Washington, D.C. this spring to help determine his strengths and to get ideas for possible career opportunities. Cindy added they are already seeking out colleges that work with learning disabled students and that by being home-schooled the boys receive much more individual attention. She said as parents they are much more aware of what their boys' needs and strengths are than any guidance counselor could be.

Cindy did add that while they were aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each boy, they didn't try to keep them from trying things she suspected they wouldn't be good at and she wanted them to be able to deal with failure as well.

John and Cindy are encouraging the boys to try to find jobs at the library, radio station, and florist shop. By considering many different areas of interest, the boys are exposed to career opportunities.

When discussing the area of values and moral development, Cindy laughed and said, "The mores of society, that's probably one we try to stay clear of. We wouldn't want them to be taught the mores of

society." John added, "It's the character traits [self-discipline, ethics, morals] that schools have a hard time with...we try to teach that in all areas." Cindy continued, "I'm not sure that's what the schools ought to be doing...families ought to be teaching their children these things."

Cindy and John stated they believe that values and morals are passed down, and they make a conscious effort to include this instruction in all areas. Cindy gave as examples the daily devotions with the three boys, discussion of history and current events in relation to the values and morals of that particular time and their own Christian life view. Cindy also noted their regular church attendance and the reinforcement of family values from that as a way of teaching values and morals. John added, "We expect them to be the moral leaders; we talk about things like that."

In the curriculum, Cindy and John stated they do relate all aspects of life to biblical principles and use the Bible as a source. While current events and curriculum are related through discussion back to their own value system, both parents stated this area was mainly taught through life experiences.

John added that another way they have used to teach values and morals is memorization of the Catechism and scripture. This has been done through

church involvement; they attend twice weekly and have a Bible study group that meets at their home each week.

Cindy stated they have devotions at school daily and she tries to help them see that their values and morals are not just "for Sunday, but affect everything they do."

When asked about problem solving, Cindy laughed and replied, "They help me run the house...that's a big problem." John stated he encourages the boys to all help work on the cars.

According to Cindy, the curriculum specifically deals with the area of problem-solving, but they see this area as more of an area of application which directly relates to their lives. She recounted an incident during the past week in which Zach had been faced with conflicting engagements and he had wanted to do both activities. Zach had been invited to an overnight birthday party for a friend and at the same time he was scheduled to participate in a Boy Scout overnight trip and games. Cindy explained they had talked for a long time about the problem and left it to Zach to solve. When he arrived at a workable solution (attend the party and sleep over, then go to the Boy Scout activity early the next morning), he had been pleased with himself. Cindy saw Zach's ability to solve this dilemma as a real accomplishment for him, since one of his learning disabilities is sequencing.

She felt this was a major breakthrough for Zach and really had elevated his self-esteem.

While John and Cindy laughed over the complications of their full schedules and busy lives, they stated that problem-solving for the boys involved real-life events in the home. Critical thinking for the boys involves dealing with day-to-day emergencies and happenings around the home and figuring out solutions to those things.

John addressed the area of autonomy and stated that while the boys were close in age and together a lot, they tried to make sure that each child had his own interest and time alone with each parent. Cindy added, "I just don't know many other children that function as well as they do; we're talking about independence and carrying out things...they do that very well. If my kids have to make a decision and I'm not there, I feel good about their ability to deal with it...they're not going to come unglued."

When the subjects of relationships was introduced, Cindy stated the boys didn't have an abundance of acquaintances but they did have a small group of closer friends they do things with. John added they had not lacked opportunity to be with their peers since they were in Civil Air patrol, swim team, church, and Scouts. According to Cindy their real friends seemed to be drawn from those families that shared similar

values and life styles. There are adults in the town who have grown close to the boys and have a real interest in them, especially since they are downtown in the business section for school everyday, Cindy added.

In the area of sexuality, the boys are close to several girls as friends and these girls treat them in a very matter-of-fact way, according to Cindy. She and John have stressed friendship rather than encouraging the "boyfriend/girlfriend" aspect at this age. Cindy claims she has done everything from going through books to having informal conversations to actually teach the physical aspects of sexuality and growth changes. She did add they are careful about what is watched on TV, because she felt some programs give the wrong information on what sexuality should be like. Cindy again stated that in this area, too, they use a Biblical approach and they teach that approach exclusively. Cindy's perception is that they have been very forthright with the boys and they in return are open and often ask questions. By Cindy's account, affection is openly expressed among them all. She wants her boys to know it is all right to hug their dad, to be able to cry and express emotion. Another example of their teaching she cited was seeing the good relationship between their mother and father and how a good marriage is supposed to be.

Social skills and manners, Cindy indicated, mostly

come from having real-life experiences. She asserted she had done things like getting out "Emily Post" to review manners and developing a mini-course on telephone manners. In her assessment, if the boys are weak in any area, this is probably it.

Zach and Dave are often around people from different cultures, and they have close home-schooled friends who live in the inner city of a nearby town. Cindy said that they have all been forced to deal with other people's differences within their own home. The other two boys had to make sacrifices in order for Zach to get the early school help he had to have and this had made them very understanding and less critical of others' differences.

When asked about the future, Cindy admitted that if the right school were available she would send the boys because home schooling is so hard. But, she added, the benefits of home schooling-having control over the values and morals instruction, developing an exceptional relationship with her children, being able to work at each child's interest and ability level and having them actively involved in the life of their community-were there and she would continue to teach them herself.

Case Study 5

The Ford family was referred to the investigator by another home-school family. The mother in the family was described as "a mover and a shaker" in the home-school community. This family lives in rural Roanoke County in a large brick home surrounded by fields, trees, and evidence of children. In the yard there is a rabbit hutch, a big trampoline, and a huge tree with a treehouse.

The door was answered by the middle school-aged daughter and the mother entered the hall with a baby as the investigator entered. Introductions were made and Ellen, the mother, led the way back to a family room. The house is very large and decorated in a country style. In the family room the interview began.

Ellen seemed to be a very calm, relaxed person; she is very soft-spoken.

The investigator began the interview by asking Ellen to talk about her family and her motivation for home schooling. Ellen responded with the following information about her family.

Ellen's husband is a general contractor. He owns rental properties, an investment company and he is a realtor. He is a graduate of Virginia Tech. Ellen's background is in education; she graduated from another Virginia college with a degree in elementary education

and taught for several years. The only work that Ellen does outside of the home now is volunteer work at a crisis pregnancy center in the area. All her other activities revolve around the home and what she referred to as a hospitality ministry (entertaining) in their home and their church. The Fords have six children Renee (14), Sue (12), Larry (9), Betsy (7), Meg (4), and Josh (1). All the school-aged children are home schooled and have been since birth. Ellen commented that she often says they have been home schooling for 14 years, all of Renee's life because that is when they really began. "We don't regret it, we really love it," was her next comment.

It was during the time Ellen was teaching she determined if she ever had children of her own they would not go to kindergarten. She said, "It was during that time, I did a lot of thinking about my children, and I really realized that I spent more time with the children [in her classroom] than the parents did, six or seven hours a day, and the parents just couldn't be there that much and that bothered me. And, also at that age [kindergarten] they believed everything I said. My teacher said this...and it seemed to be more important than what the parent said. That bothered me more than the peer interaction, because the peer pressure wasn't so great then [in kindergarten or first grade]. I wanted to be the prime influence."

Ellen is using a variety of materials to home school and has not purchased a program from any one curriculum supplier. She is, in fact, using material from at least five different companies, picking and choosing the best for their situation. When asked if she was using curricular material dealing specifically with self-concept or other areas of socialization she said they are not.

When "personal identity" was mentioned, Ellen's response was, "I don't really relate to "personal identity." The term "personal identity" was restated to "Helping Sue establish who she is." At this point, Ellen seemed to understand what the researcher was looking for. She responded, "We do deal with that, I'm not sure we just sit down and say now we're going to work on our self-esteem. In our own home life the basis of our self-esteem comes from the scriptural principal of who we are and who we are in God's sight and that we are creatures made in His image and that we are fallen because of Adam's sin. I think they understand that and I can give you an example. Just the other day Sue [the middle school child] was upset because she had made 92 on a spelling test and she wanted a 100. She cried so we talked about who she is as a person and the implications of all those things...it's not being perfect but doing your best before the Lord and, basically, that's what we're to

do...our best. He [God] has given us gifts and our gifts may not be what someone else's may be."

The next area talked about was of personal destiny. Ellen responded, "We talk about different careers and things like that, but I don't know that she is really heading in one direction. She will change from one goal to another. Our own personal goal for our girls is that they (if the Lord should choose that they should be married) would be that they [sic] would be homemakers and stay at home and care for their families. We don't have any great ambitions that they become doctors or lawyers or famous people...but they would do the thing that God has prepared them to do."

When asked if they anticipated the children (specifically Sue) would go to college, Ellen's response was, "If they want to, that is real fine. My husband especially desires that they be able to support themselves should they not become wives." The investigator asked if Sue had specific goals in her schoolwork that she was responsible for. Ellen replied, "Of course, there are yearly goals but we break them down now. I have found that once they reach Sue's age, she knows how much she needs to cover in order to get through the month, and she sets her own goals and she accomplishes them pretty much, and that's exactly what Renee did, too, at this age." Ellen explained that Sue was responsible for the amount of

work she covered in a textbook and knew it had to be finished by the end of the year. The investigator asked if Ellen felt Sue was self-directed and Ellen answered, "Yes, and she's highly motivated...very responsible. I make sure that they are on target and they are getting it...check up on them. Every other week she has kitchen responsibility which includes doing the lunch and dinner clean-up. And then the alternate weeks she has the laundry, which is washing and folding. And once a week she prepares dinner and every other week she prepares a special treat for my husband, bakes a batch of cookies so he can have cookies in his lunch. She has a small business with rabbits. She raises rabbits so she has to care for those. And we have horses so she has two stalls to clean. And she has total care of her room and then whatever is asked of her.

When asked if Sue were advertising her rabbit business, Ellen stated that Sue had, to a degree. "They needed signs up here. Usually just a sign does it. They have never advertised in the paper. They have called Quickline [a radio sales program] and advertised that way. I think they have advertised in our home schooling letter."

Discussing morals and value development, Ellen made the following remarks: "It's not just a set curriculum; it's a living kind of thing. I'm not sure

I want them to accept the values of society, but I do want them to accept God's values and His morals. We do a lot of talking around the table. My husband does current events with the children, so I'm sure we do a lot of commentaries on what is going on. And we do a lot of 'brainwashing.' I'm sure they pick up a lot [of] things...the way we dress. We talk about why we shouldn't dress a certain way or why we shouldn't do certain things. We tell them from God's point of view, as much as we can, and try not to have it just our [personall] convictions but because of what God has said. They respond very well. And it is also good to hear it again from the pulpit, Christian friends and others. We try to make sure that their friends have parents who have morals similar to our own. Now, we do have people over who are contrary to that, but a lot of times we'll discuss that. Or if we have children in who might cheat on a game, we talk about those things...why it's wrong. We have a family worship time in the morning, we read through the scriptures, and learn a song. The children are learning the catechism, and we pray. Then in the evening my husband leads the family worship. We also listen to Rush Limbaugh, although he is not a Christian and they know he's not. And they hear a lot that's going on. My husband is on the board of CPC [Crisis Pregnancy Center]."

When asked about the area of self-discipline,

Ellen said, "If they have a task that is set before them, we expect them to do it and they do it." The investigator asked, "What about problem solving? Do you give them an opportunity to figure out what they are going to do or do you sit down as a family and involve them in dealing with a problem, that kind of thing?"

Ellen responded, "Probably both. If the children are having an argument between themselves, well, we've given them building blocks or whatever you want to call it, guidelines so that they know how to solve a problem. To go [to] the person and talk to them first, and if there is still a problem then they have to come to...['an arbitrator?']...right, and I try to listen to both sides without the other one interrupting, so I can find out what's going on. Then, if we have a family problem we'll have a family council where everybody can share his complaints or input. Then we work out the problem that way."

When the investigator asked about autonomy, those things already described (fixing meals, cleaning up) were mentioned and Ellen was asked to talk about any other things that might be related to learning independence. Ellen responded, "By this age [12] and usually by the age 8, each of the children could operate the house if it were necessary. The other Saturday, my husband was away and Josh [the baby] was

running a very high fever and he had been for a couple of days. I felt that I needed to get him to the doctor quickly. Since I had to drive, I asked [the oldest daughter] to go with me. Sue had total responsibility for the household and she does once a week when I take Renee to piano lessons. She is in charge. I told Sue, 'It is so wonderful to leave and know that I don't have to worry about what is happening at the house because you're able to handle whatever comes about.' She's been doing that for a little over a year."

When asked about peer relationships and adult friendships, Ellen replied, "Sue relates really well to people. There's my sister. They have a really good relationship. Everybody likes Sue though. Her Sunday school teacher...she [Sue] really cares for her a lot. She does little things for her teacher...like on holidays. Probably my sister is the closest. She lives right here [the house next door]."

The investigator asked, "Would you say she has a mentor relationship? She looks up to your sister?"

Ellen responded that all the children looked up to her sister, who took a real interest in them. This sister has two sons, both older than Ellen's children, and she is a widow. Ellen said her own parents were very close to Sue and they lived close enough to see each other weekly. They also planned to build a house on the property. Ellen went on to explain her whole

family is very close. She also has brothers who live in the area and they all get together often.

When asked about involvement in the community and interaction with others outside of family, Ellen commented that Sue and her older sister Renee had been able to work the polls during the last election and had been involved politically. Ellen had given them credit in their school work for that, since the public school had also given credit for such work. Ellen said that Sue also keeps the nursery at church as a volunteer service and she babysits in the community and has done some volunteer babysitting.

When asked about peer involvement, Ellen responded: "She probably gets most of her involvement with her family. I don't plan to every week have someone over, although she does have close friends at church, and in the home schooling group there are two little girls that she is real close with." The family's attendance at the home school group activities depended on what was going on and they probably attend about once a month, according to Ellen.

Ellen is tutoring another child once a week and this child's sister is a good friend of Sue's; Sue, therefore, is able to see her on a weekly basis. The home school group also sponsors a 4-H club in the spring and fall. There is a child who comes and spends the night with Sue during these times so that she can

participate in the 4-H activity.

"Most of the people in our church home school," Ellen said. "We go to a Reformed Baptist and almost all the children there have been home taught at some point in time." She said Sue was involved in church activities twice each week.

The next category discussed was the area of sexuality. Ellen said she and Sue have had their "little girl talks" and the children learned a lot just being on the land and having the animals. She went on to elaborate, "We don't talk a lot about sex before puberty...to the girls about what is going to happen to them and their body is changing. We talk about those things, but I feel it needs to be at the perfect time."

The last area discussed was that of social skills. Ellen started with the approach she uses to instill proper behavior outside of the home. If the family is going somewhere, she will first tell the children what she expects of them and what they are not to do. She added they usually do what is expected of them. "At church, they know what to do because we explain to them what they're to do. At home, around the table, we try to teach them to use good manners."

When the investigator mentioned adult roles and teaching Sue about those, Ellen said, "We do stress that the children work. I can't do it all. Summer is not a time of leisure around here because we have a

huge garden and the children do raise vegetables. Last summer we canned 1,000 quarts of food, which is not a small task! So they help gather the vegetables. They help hoe, [and] pick potato bugs. They help cultivate the land, [and] plant it, so they understand that what we eat wasn't gained lightly. They know where it came from. I think this has made them more careful to clean up their plate, because it was hard to get it [the food] there."

Ellen was asked if Sue was ever around people who were different culturally or racially. Ellen told of a child with a genetic disorder in their church that all the children were around. She went on to say that their church was pretty much just a representation of white American culture, as are most churches in this area, and the children did not have a lot of interaction with people who were very different. Ellen mentioned that because of her husband's business in rental properties and just living in this culture, the children were very aware of people with differences and they had as a family talked about people with alternate lifestyles such as the homosexual community. She said they had been involved in helping a young man who was trying to change from that lifestyle, but she wasn't sure she would get involved again at this time because of the children.

When asked about her future plans regarding home

schooling, Ellen quipped, "We're quitting today!" She then laughed and added, "No, we'll keep on, we just love it!" As to the main focus of Sue's education, Ellen stated, "The thing that I am most concerned about for Sue is that she develop a relationship with Christ. Her relationship with the Lord is of eternal value. Our eternal destination is Heaven and everything else revolves around that."

Case Study 6

The Carter family lives in Botetourt County off a dirt country road, in a new brick home. The house is surrounded by fields and there are two other houses within sight; one of the houses is the home of one set of grandparents.

Gary and Rose live with their three sons, two of whom are middle-school aged, 11 and 13. The boys had all been in a traditional school situation before home schooling. The oldest boy, now 16, finished high school while being home schooled and is now working for Gary and going to a local college. Rose's mother also lives with them. Gary is a builder and Rose does the books and some of the legwork for Gary's company. Rose referred to herself as "basically a homemaker." Neither Rose nor Gary has a background in education.

When asked about the area of Personal Identity, Rose mentioned she had used material by psychologist James Dobson called Preparing for Adolescence and she liked it. She also referred to a book she was reading that helps parents discover a child's special gifts. She said she was reading to the boys and discussing with them the things in the books as a part of their curriculum. Rose went on to explain that the boys know they have value because God created them and He has a plan for their lives. She uses the Bible as a

reference point for all teaching in the area of personal identity and self-esteem.

Gary said both parents "compliment the things that they do. I may not like, exactly, what they have done but as long as it's not wrong...I try to give them praise."

Rose responded to a question about whether the boys had individual activities. "Very definitely. The middle one is very much into art and anything related to it. And the youngest one likes to build. He built me a picnic table. So they do have their little areas of expertise."

When discussing the area of personal destiny and career opportunities, Rose mentioned that the boys were involved in 4-H, but they had not been very interested in earning awards. The awards were not a high motivator for them. If they did a project, it was because they were interested in the project itself.

According to Gary the boys do work with him building houses on a fairly regular basis. He went on to list the jobs they do, such as clean-up at a site, for which they are paid. Gary said, "They are exposed to different people and other trades, plumbing, electrical...and I've encouraged them to learn as much as they can about anything that pertains to building, although I don't personally care if they don't go into it, they'll still have that as a basis.

Rose went on to say she liked to be with the boys while they did their school work. Although she wanted them to be able to work independently, one of the reasons she home schooled was so she would know what they knew.

When asked about specific goals the boys were responsible for on their own, Gary responded they all do their own laundry. The boys, the investigator was told, are responsible for keeping their own rooms and maintaining the yard. Rose continued, "They each fix their own breakfast and lunch, and at times fix supper for the family."

Next, the area of values and moral development was discussed. Rose stated, "First of all, the thing that I have tried to base it all on is Scriptures. I want them to know the difference between something that I want them to do and God's law. Ultimately, I want them to abide by God's laws." Then Gary added, "If there is any problem, which there is very seldom, we just try to talk it out, reason it out. They think about what we say; they are very understanding."

Rose continued, "I wouldn't realise it as much as when I see others their age. But generally, not always, but generally they are very self-disciplined. They all have responsibilities at church. Both middle school aged boys are members of the puppet team. They go to the Juvenile Detention home once a month. They

have a short chapel service and hand out literature. And then [they] have a time of talking with the kids or playing ball with them. The first couple of times they went it was scary...especially when [the youngest] came home saying 'I was the littlest and the youngest there!' They really look forward to that every month! It's something that's really meaning a lot to them."

When autonomy was mentioned the investigator noted earlier discussion of the boys' learning to do their own laundry, fixing meals, and working in the construction business. In addition, Rose mentioned that the boys were learning to handle money, they were earning a salary from their father for their work with him, and the boys had at one time had their own business making ornaments and selling them to shops in the area. Through this business venture they had learned to deal with the public, doing their own presentation to shop buyers. She went on to say the boys had sold hundreds of dozens of little gingerbread boys. Gary added, "They figured out, one day, that they were making \$20 an hour, and they handled it." Rose continued, "It was a neat experience. They have money socked in the bank, so for someday when they get ready to buy their first car. They handled figuring, [and] delivering them. It was very business-like. They were pretty fearless. They'd go into the shops and demonstrate them. It was mind-boggling before it was

all over with." Gary added, "But, they finally got tired of doing it."

When asked about relationships with peers and other adults, Rose noted the unique situation arising from the fact that the boys' grandparents are so involved and live so close. She went on to name a youth pastor at their church to whom the boys were especially close. They see him several times a week. Another member of the church is a very good friend to the boys. The boys are active in the home-schooled children's orchestra and they meet with the the orchestra once a week to practice.

When asked about the home school group, Rose explained, "There is an activity almost every other week-swimming, bowling, skating, 4-H-all of those things are worked through this group."

Gary responded to a question about the opportunities the boys have to be with other people their own age by saying they were able to be with relatives like cousins who live near by. Rose added they were all active in the youth group at church several times a week with choir, drama, puppets, teen services, fund raisers. She went on to say they all have individual friends of all ages who are in and out of the house constantly.

When discussing the area of sexuality, Rose brought up again the Dobson book dealing specifically

with changes during the adolescent years. She felt the topic was adequately covered by what they were doing within the curriculum, although she went on to say, "Quite frankly, I've never thought of it as curriculum. I'm really much more into 'the home' part of home schooling than the "school" part. All three of them are good students and do real well with academics, but my emphasis is more on their spiritual life, and hands-on things...real-life things. Then the academics come on much more easily."

When asked about the social skills aspect of education, Rose said she thought just living in a family and being with all kinds of people in their surroundings covered the skills she was interested in seeing developed in her sons. Gary felt different experiences like accompanying him on a trip outside the country and having the opportunity to have many people in their home taught the boys social skills. Gary said the boys had also always been encouraged to be polite. According to Gary, when he or Rose felt a child had acted unkindly or impolitely, they tried to talk to him about the incident and get them to reconsider their actions. Rose went on to say their home was very open to people's visiting, especially missionaries and others connected with their church. Not only have the boys been involved with the guests who visit in their home, but the oldest son as a middle school-aged child

was allowed to go on a missionary trip with his father to Mexico. Aside from experiences related directly to the home, the boys are exposed to different cultures and races and lifestyles by their frequent trips to the Juvenile Detention Home. In addition, there are handicapped people in their church from time to time.

When I asked if they planned to continue to home school, Rose responded, "Oh, yeah, we're in it for the duration!"

The response when I asked about the main focus or area of concern for the boys was, "That they become godly men."

Case Study 7

The investigator drove up through the valley of Virginia and over several rural roads to the Lewis home. The drive leading to the home passed through a two-part barn on both sides of the road and it was obvious that at one time the property must have all been one farm. Surrounded by fields, the three houses on the gravel road looked fairly new. The Lewis family lived in the next-to-the-last house on the road. Another house was visible in the distance, on up the hill. The investigator later learned that the other house was occupied by Mr. Lewis' parents.

Ann, the mother, answered the door and introduced herself. The family had been referred to the investigator by another home school family. Ann and her husband Tom live with their three children in Rockingham County. Ann has a Master's Degree in a science-related field and taught at the University of Maryland for several years. Ann did not have courses related to teaching, for she had not planned to become a teacher. Tom is an executive with the poultry industry and doesn't have an education background, either, although he and Ann each taught one year at the school where their children were enrolled before they became home schoolers.

They decided to home school six years ago when

they were presented with the opportunity to become a pilot family in a home schooling curriculum started by a ministry they had great respect for. They were in the pilot program for three years, and after that time they decided to prepare their own curriculum with a little more structure.

The children in the family include two girls, aged 14 and 12, and a son who is 9.

The interview began with a discussion of the things Ann and her husband were doing in the area of personal identity. Ann said they had a special section in their curriculum dealing with the preferences and choices that make each of us special. She also said the children liked to hear stories about their parents' backgrounds and to know about their family history. Ann went on to say that she and Tom tell the children they are very special in God's eyes, He has a special work for them to do, and God will guide and direct them into what He wants them to do. Ann made the following comments about special projects for individual children. "Both the girls took piano for a number of years, then Alice [the middle school girl] wanted to play the flute, so we let her take flute. We also have creativity afternoon. They can pick their own craft. Another thing we've done is to let each of them have their own bedroom and decorate it like they want. I am trying to slowly work them into more choices for

things. Alice is very much dependent on her older sister, and we're trying to make sure she knows that she is special. We really see that as a need, to work on that. And we try to make sure they each have their own birthday party. Their birthdays are very close. And they have their own separate friends. Margaret (another home school student) is a common friend, but she is probably the only common friend that they have. Also, I try to take the girls clothes shopping individually and they get to express [themselves] without their sister there saying, 'Oh, that looks yucky!'

Ann went on to say they did not allow teasing because of physical things that the child could not help, as in the case of Alice's height. Alice is as tall or taller than her older sister, and very slim.

Ann described how Alice had helped at the nursing home. According to Ann, Alice seems to have the qualities of a good nurse and she is also excellent in science and math. Ann then added, "But, I don't try to push her; sometimes you say something to a child and they do just the opposite just because they don't want to be pushed into something."

Ann described various field trips they had made with other home schoolers and how these had been to diverse places like "Shenandoah Pride Dairy" and the flood control center. The family had been on a field

trip to Washington, D.C. and has planned a trip to Williamsburg. Ann mentioned that they also go along on her husband's business trips. All these trips allow the children to be exposed to many career opportunities.

The parents have tried to encourage Alice and her older sister to think about a college. Ann added, "We do expect them to get some specialized training. They don't have to get a Master's Degree like I did, but they should be skilled at something besides just running a home."

Ann described the system they were using in their daily school work. She said the children had asked for a goals chart and she filled out a weekly chart of schoolwork and they were responsible for getting the assignments done and kept up to date. She went on to say she makes up about half of the goals and Alice as well as the others fill in the rest. Should Alice run into an area where she is having problems, the goals are set aside until that problem is worked out. The next area discussed was that of values and moral development. Ann laughed when I asked her about accepting the rules and mores of society. She responded, "As a Christian, we're not too concerned about that, as far as fitting in. Scripture says we're a peculiar people so what we're trying to do is very directed toward them [sic] realizing that they are a

child of God. So, I guess you could say we're teaching them to stand alone...to be a leader...to think through the roles and issues of the day. We study the mores of society in the light of Scripture." Ann went on to say that they did talk about this a lot. Alice is questioning things, and Ann commented that she believed this goes along with the age, for the older child had gone through a similar period of questioning family values and convictions also. Ann stated, "She [Alice] questions our approach, she questions a lot of things, so we try to tell her this is not our opinion, this is what God says."

When the investigator brought up the area of problem-solving, those things already relating to the subject and mentioned by Ann were again referred to: allowing Alice to pick her own clothes and decorate her room as she wished. Ann related the problem-solving to a recent shopping trip to the grocery store. She said that each week the children go with her to buy groceries and that their job is to find the best buy on each item. On this particular occasion they had tried a different grocery store and the children had immediately noticed that things were considerably higher. She stated, "To me, that's the real world. One day, whether they ever marry or not, they will be responsible for buying food."

Ann and Tom are planning to build a house and Ann

said that she encourages Alice to draw house plans since this activity is one that she enjoys. The plans Alice draws are for her dream house and Ann said that she relates the costs involved in building to help Alice face reality while not squashing her dreams. Ann said other opportunities for problem-solving included Alice's flower garden, for which she is responsible, and a science fair project. Alice had the responsibility of writing a proposal for her project and was faced with all the related problems for development of the project.

Self-discipline, Ann said, was one area that never had to be "worked on" with Alice. Ann called her a self-starter, and noted Alice didn't have to be reminded to do her jobs as her older sister did. Alice is responsible for dusting the stairs and bookshelves, vacuuming the living room and hall, doing her own laundry, mopping the kitchen, and cleaning her own room. Ann stated she does push the children to get their schoolwork done by Friday, so they can have the weekend to go somewhere or have a friend over. Ann reiterated, "She [Alice] is very diligent, very responsible."

In the discussion of autonomy, and how Ann and her husband are teaching Alice to be independent, previously mentioned things like the chores were again addressed. Ann said she does try to give the children

choices to make about their activities. The home school group has a combination volleyball and skating activity every week and they can choose to go or not. Alice can choose a friend to come over any Sunday. Ann said she sees a need for allowing more choices and would like to see both older girls work more, as in babysitting. Another way Ann provides time for their own projects is by not interfering in their free time.

An opportunity Ann sees as moving toward independence is the fact that the children are paid for their work around the house and may spend or save their money. Alice has saved over \$100. Her mother said, "This is her own decision...what she wants to do with that money."

When talking about peer relationships and adult friendships, Ann compared home schoolers to pioneers and she stated, "When you're a pioneer there aren't many other cabins." However, Ann and her daughters made a list of 18 other home-schooled girls in the area and formed a "mother-daughter" home school group. The girls in this group are helping to plan monthly activities.

Ann mentioned that Alice had what she referred to as "peer pull." Alice occasionally wanted to go back to the traditional school situation, yet, when she was with the home school group she really enjoyed that, too. Alice does see a close friend every week; she

either goes to the friend's house for lunch and the afternoon or the friend comes to her home. On Wednesdays Alice goes to church for a teen group.

Tom's parents live next door and there is contact there, although one of the grandparents has some emotional problems and is a little difficult to be around.

Alice has had in the past four years an adult "pal" at church who spends special time with her. This is a privilege that all the children in the church are given.

Their home school group, including boys and girls, have a physical education program and Alice is on the soccer team. The children participate every week.

When discussing the area of sexuality, Ann said she sat down with Alice and discussed the physical aspects of maturing and those changes that come with adolescence. Ann also said, "We study it in a matter of fact way. We discuss it in a scientific way, not so much feelings." She went on to explain that the curriculum covered the subject, and that as far as discussion of family life and marriage they were presenting that as a lifelong commitment, not something that is taken lightly or to be rushed into. At this point, Ann said she was stressing hygiene although in Alice's eighth grade year (next year) reproduction would be covered in a biology text. They were now

talking about the developmental differences between boys and girls. Since the family is involved in the President's Physical Fitness program, and Alice's younger brother can do more pull-ups than the girls, that topic has been discussed.

Ann felt the area of social skills was well-covered by their curriculum. Ann commented that she and her husband had come from different backgrounds and that there had been a lot of family discussion on manners. Ann added this might be an area that needed more attention.

Alice is doing volunteer work at church with the Junior Church Service, and in the past has been a volunteer at a local nursing home. The home school group is also making crafts to sell, so that they can contribute the money to a local crisis pregnancy clinic. Ann went on to say the family does talk about current events and she encourages the children to consider giving their own money for special needs in the world community.

When asked about Alice's exposure to people with any kind of differences Ann mentioned the aged people in their church and a cousin who is retarded. Differences among people are also discussed in the family, but she felt that the main way they have dealt with the issue was just being in the real world and in daily family life. She went on to say that she didn't

want Alice to think she [as mother] had all the answers; that they were learning together.

When I asked Ann if she would continue to home school she responded, "I would like to. At first, high school scared me, I thought I could never do that, but now I'd like to continue. If we stay in this area we will give the children a choice, but if we move [out of state] we will continue [to home school]. I've enjoyed it."

Ann was asked about what she considered to be her main area of concern in working with Alice and she responded, "Molding a godly character."

Case Study 8

The Crofts live in Campbell County in a rural subdivision. Their new, two story home is surrounded by trees. Judy, the mother, answered the door and showed the investigator into the family room. Judy volunteered to show the "school room" to the investigator while Al, her husband, finished some business. The investigator followed Judy upstairs to a very nicely furnished room over the garage. In this "school room" there was a desk for Judy and two other business-like desks for her students. The room also contained a computer with its own desk area, shelves and many books and materials.

After the tour, Judy led the way downstairs again and began the interview by describing their family and their motivation for home schooling. She stated that they have two children, Cathy and Keith. Cathy is 15 and in her second year of high school, while Keith is 12 and in the seventh grade. Both have been home schooled for three years. Judy and her husband operate a business from their home and have a "laboratory", as well as the business offices, in the basement level of their house. The family members each have a part in the actual running of the business. Judy's answer to their reason for home schooling follows: "We didn't do it to pull out from a bad society." She added that she and

Al wanted their children to have specific life principles to build upon after their elementary and high school experiences. Judy and Al felt that they were better able to teach those specific principles than anyone else.

When asked about what they as parents were doing in the area of personal identity Judy replied, "That's something we hit heavy on here. If they don't accept their 'self,' they'll never be able to accept anyone else or relate to others." She then went on to state that in the society of "peers," identity for children is based on how they are accepted; but when you know that God accepts you as you are that personal identity is easier to establish. Judy explained they try to teach this principle through every part of their children's experiences. They especially believe that the father's showing acceptance of the child is very important. For this reason, Al is teaching the part of the curriculum that deals with self-acceptance. The curriculum that they have chosen to use (ATIA, Advanced Training Institute of America), Judy said, has a lot of material that deals with this subject.

At this point Al joined the conversation and added his perspective on the area. Al began with the comment that as he traveled around the country, he had noticed that even adults, in business had very low self-esteem. The reason, he said, is because "they don't understand

who they are as far as God is concerned." He continued, "God made them [Cathy and Keith], a special person for a special task...and that's where we start. Even in the area of [physical] features...too short...too tall...whatever, we teach them God made us that way for a specific purpose. I'm even finding it in corporate leaders...many problems we're having in work today...it's because they [the corporate leaders] still have low self-esteem."

Judy added they constantly talk with Keith about the fact that he doesn't have to wear a certain type of clothes or associate with a certain crowd. They as parents want Keith to know that he is only responsible to be what God designed him to be. Al said Keith is now finding acceptance with others through motorbike riding and that he rides with Keith on the weekends. Al stated, "as far as him [Keith] feeling acceptance with other people, I think the real advantage [with home schooling] we've seen is the peer pressure is off, and they can go and be their natural self and they relate better to an adult world. If you teach them to relate to the adult world, they can always back down to a younger level." The investigator then asked about the area of personal destiny. Judy said they taught goal setting, both short-and long-term, but they tried to help Keith set attainable goals. She stated her belief that attaining a goal also contributed to a good

self-image. She explained the goals are worked on weekly and monthly, and there are long-term goals which, she added, at Keith's age are constantly changing. Keith does have definite responsibilities everyday in the actual operation of the family business. Keith punches in on the time clock, just as the other employees do, and he draws a salary (minimum wage). Judy feels this allows him interaction with other adults who are not members of the family. Judy also related the job responsibilities to the daily goals and said that these things had been "set" for him, as in any job...but these things were important and had to be done. At this point, Keith's job in the company involves emptying the trash, vacuuming the business area, and doing two steps in the actual production process of the business.

Judy went on to say they require Keith to save 50% of his earnings; the rest he keeps, although he does give a portion to his church.

Al added, "The only thing he sees is motorcycles: his only desire in life, now, is to be a professional rider. He's been very disciplined in everything from his eating, to exercise, to running. He really kind of puts us to shame, as far as the discipline goes. He will push away from things at the table because he knows it will affect his riding. And we've been letting him go with that...just developing it, because

it has given him a new challenge. We have tried to find good role models, even in the dirt bike riding. [In] some areas where these guys [other riders] are weak, we use that as a teaching lesson. The job in the company also is contributing to self-discipline; it must be done at a certain time each day to start the production process."

Judy feels that while the curriculum constantly deals with self-discipline, it is probably their lifestyle that has been the main influence in this area. She explained she could plan Keith's work and then he would go to it and finish on his own. Here, Al added, they constantly are reinforcing the principle that consequences follow if things are neglected, -cause and effect. For instance, if an assignment is not done, another will be added to it.

When discussing what Judy and Al are doing in the area of values and moral development, Judy said they use the Bible as the ultimate authority. Al stated he believed a lack of a clear standard for values or morals in our society is a problem. Because what is considered acceptable is constantly changing, a problem is created for children: they don't know where the barriers are. Judy added they had wanted to establish clear boundaries and this had been one of the primary reasons they had chosen to home school. Al said they had a desire to give values based upon truth so Keith

and Cathy would have a foundation to build upon.

In the discussion of autonomy, Al again related this to Keith's "holding down a job." Keith can accomplish his own job responsibilities on his own, and he is working about one and a half hours a day in the company. Within the family, Keith also has some responsibilities such as washing the car, emptying trash, and lawn work. Keith also rides on his own with an older boy at a motorbike track on occasion.

Keith is also helping to operate the sound system at his church during every service and has been given a set of church keys, in case the adult in charge is not there. This is also an area of career interest for Keith.

Judy said Keith hasn't shown an interest in team sports. Al believes this may be because he, as a father, has de-emphasized team sports. This has been done because, Al stated, he watched his own brother's self-esteem ruined on a little league ball team. Judy continued, "In our society, it's the 'stars' that are it. We've seen kids go through high school and be the star player, then when they get out of high school their whole world crumbles because they're not the star anymore. And their self-esteem, which was a false self-esteem, is all gone and then they really can't cope. We have an opportunity to allow Keith to pursue something that he can do alone. We wanted to help Keith

learn sports that he could pursue and achieve on his own. He didn't have to compete against another child. He is only competing against himself, or in his motorcycling he competes some against his daddy. We understand his emotional make-up and we can deal and cope with that with him."

Judy continued to explain their belief that team sports involve large time commitments and they felt the "family time" was very precious and they were not willing to sacrifice every weekend to a team. She added, "Although we are with them everyday, we are also with them every weekend and that is very important to us. He [Keith] and his daddy will be out there tinkering with the motorcycle, tearing it down and putting it back together. He's learning things from him which he cannot get from a coach or a team."

Al added, "We always tell Keith, go out there and do your best, but, if you don't win that's all right, if you had fun, enjoyed it. And that's the main thing."

Al and Judy have provided Keith with an area he can excel in. At one point, Keith was involved in skateboarding, but his parents stated they found the culture of the group objectionable (they saw evidence of occult practices and other negative influences) and they stopped that activity.

While several previous topics had related to to

Keith's relationships-the adult friend at church, employees, and other bike riders-the investigator asked if they as parents could think of other specific ways they provide for Keith to be involved with peers or other adults. Al commented, "Their [both children] friends are always much older. There is one boy down the street [17 years old] and Keith is one of his best friends. I think it is because they communicate more like an adult. They're not into all the silliness that comes down the line. They can go out and carry on a normal conversation." Judy added, "Once the child leaves that little school house, that's the only time in their life they will be with peers their same age."

Keith does interact daily with the employees and Judy stated the family is very involved in entertaining many people in their home. She said she always makes Keith and Cathy a part of the entertaining. Judy believes the family has a ministry of hospitality.

Al and Judy described two other ways they have found to help Keith develop relationships outside of the family. Keith travels with his father frequently (when Al is conducting seminars) and they allow him to have friends over to shoot baskets or play.

Al again mentioned the "sound man" at church and stated that the man and Keith have a close friendship. Both parents believe Keith has more adult friends and is treated like an equal by them. They stated their

impression that this is because Keith acts in an adult way.

When discussing the area of sexuality, Judy stated the subject was well covered in the curriculum, and interwoven with values and principles from the Bible. At church and within the home (his sister's friends), Keith has contact with the opposite sex; however, Judy added he shows no real interest in this area yet.

Social skills are dealt with by example in the family, and especially are practiced when preparing for company. Al related the job skills Keith is learning to social skills, too, such as how to deal with problems on the phone. The curriculum does address social skills and Judy added they address needs as they come up.

When asked about her area of focus, Judy answered, "Balance". Both parents stated they want Keith to keep his main interests in perspective and to follow through on responsibilities.

Judy stated they would continue to home school and Al added, "Probably on through the traditional 12 years of high school. The way our program (ATIA) is set up now, you can get the equivalent of a Master's Degree...with specialties in law and medicine. Some of the major companies are seeing the caliber of young person that is coming out of this curriculum and they are making statements like, 'Send them to us and we'll

guarantee them a job.' That was 3M."

Case Study 9

The Scott family live in Bedford County. Although the investigator had never met the family, she had talked to them on the phone several times and had known about them for several years. Bill, the father is an engineer. He helps with math work and special projects in the home school. Jane, the mother, has a degree in chemistry and taught for several years in public and private schools. She taught primarily the middle school grades and it seemed she had given much thought to middle school children and their special needs. The Scott family includes two middle school-aged daughters, their only children. The girls, Meg (13) and Paula (11), have been taught at home for five years, and both girls began their schooling in traditional school situations.

Jane said Meg had begun kindergarten when she was four years old and had not turned five until that November. In first grade, she began to have to "play catch up." This continued through third grade at which time Jane and Bill decided to home school. When the family began to home school, Meg was starting fourth grade and Paula was starting first grade.

Bill and Jane met with the researcher in their kitchen. Meg and Paula were in the living room area playing a game on the floor and could hear some of the

interview comments. The interview began with a description by Bill and Jane of things they were doing to address the area of personal identity and specific things they believed about the area of socialization. Bill spoke first: "Probably the most significant thing we have done is remove them from a false environment where they would spend 6-7 hours a day, five days a week...where you are locked in with a narrow slice of the total population-in other words, kids of your own age. The people that they run into in the course of the week are Mom and Dad, sisters, people at the grocery store, people at the bank; they get a total cross-section of people that you run into in daily life."

Bill continued, "They don't have that constant negative peer pressure and that, probably more than anything else, allows them to develop, 'Who am I?' without having a peer group to conform to." Jane added, "Everything we've taught is taught from a Christian standpoint. That 'who am I?' is solved. They know who they are as far as the Lord is concerned and can reference themselves back to the Bible."

When asked about the area of personal destiny Bill responded the home atmosphere was much more conducive to learning responsibility. He mentioned the organization of time could be better handled by not having to divide it into 50 minute slots. School work,

household jobs and activities that the girls have elected to do can be better managed. Bill gave as an example Meg's "herd" of 4 goats. She is responsible for them and had taken on the project herself with the ultimate goal of having a dairy. He added, "We feel that [the home] is an ideal environment for setting goals and learning how to manage your time to reach the goals. You have a whole day, a whole week, and a certain number of things that you need to get done, including your schoolwork. In the process of living you learn to deal with those things in a real world scenario, not an artificial scenario of the school situation."

Next year, Paula and her mother have decided to study Greek together, and this is a long-term goal. They have already started seeking out materials and people to help them.

Jane maintains a plan book for each girl. They are presented with those plans on Monday, and each can go ahead and do the work during the week as fast or as slow as they choose. Meg and Paula, Jane said, have learned from the plan books to make their own lists of things to do. Jane commented that when they began to home school, the girls got a real sense of accomplishment from marking a large X through the plan book block when an assignment was done; now they use a small mark in the corner.

Bill added another area they talk about and make a part of their curriculum is that of careers. Whenever one of the girls mentions interest in a particular field (i.e., lawyer, veterinarian), they go and talk to someone in that field. Jane said she would also take them to research any area they wanted at the area library.

According to Jane, Meg had developed a real problem with self-esteem while in the traditional school situation. She had started school too soon and had been slower than her classmates. When they began to home school, they discovered that Meg had a real interest in hamsters, so they checked out books on hamsters over and over, until in Jane's words, "She is an authority on hamsters". They even bought some hamsters; Jane added that they always try to encourage their children's interests if they can afford it. Paula had an interesting business raising chickens and selling eggs, although at the present time that is not her main interest. Participation in 4-H was mentioned as another way that provides learning achievement skills for both girls.

From the living room, Paula reminded her mother of a church-sponsored organization, much like Scouts, where awards and badges are earned for accomplishing various tasks.

Both girls are taking private piano lessons and

are members of a home school orchestra.

As a member of the Home Educators Association of Virginia Board of Directors, Bill is working on getting a statewide system of science fairs for home schoolers organized. This would be another avenue for achievement.

When asked about what they were doing in the area of values and moral development, Jane commented, "I don't think we should be teaching them the mores of society, which we don't." Bill added, "The public schools are teaching a set of values based on relativity; we're teaching values based on absolutes."

Jane said they had taught self-discipline since the girls were old enough to understand and there are many things that they don't even have to address now because of the early training. She went on to say that like many other parents, they often tie rewards to another area: if you do this, then you can do that. Bill added he felt that daily living within the home school situation is better for teaching self-discipline since students are not under two sets of conflicting conditions, school and the real world.

The girls also do some household chores; Jane mentioned helping clean the house, taking care of their own rooms, and caring for their animals (goats, chickens, and dogs). They also help with the garden in the summer. Jane praised their work, "Just about

anything I need them to do, they can do, and they are good at it." She mentioned that during a recent illness that Meg and Paula had done everything, including the laundry. Meg has recently taught herself to bake and is keeping the family supplied with deserts.

Under the area of autonomy, Bill mentioned the girls were given their school assignments at the beginning of the week. Jane added she likes them to do whatever they can in the school work on their own, and they are very self-directed. When Jane assigns a report, she gives a list of things she is looking for and the girls go from there. Jane taught middle school and she feels the girls are much more independent than the students she taught at school. Meg does babysitting and keeps the nursery at church as a volunteer service, as well as helping with the 3 year-old Sunday School class. She has also earned her Red Cross Babysitting Certification.

The girls have both saved their own money for special projects, like camp tuition and new bikes.

Jane said the family as a group volunteered services to the Red Cross when there was a need, as in the flood several years ago. The girls also do services for the neighbors.

When asked what they were doing that related to the girls' need for friends and relationships, Jane

spoke of several people they have opened their home to. One woman who had been deserted by her husband had lived with the family for about 6 months until she could get established. This woman, Jane said, was still very close to Meg and Paula and lives two houses away now. The girls particularly enjoy riding horses with her. Another adult they are close to is their Pioneer Girls leader, at church. Jane added the girls are close to several other adults in the church.

Both Meg and Paula are currently involved in a play that includes a solo song for each; in fact, Meg has the lead. This play gives them the opportunity to be with about 20 other children as well as the adult leaders. Jane said during the week the girls are with other children about four or more times. The home school group has activities every other week and they pick and choose their activities, so they won't get behind with academics. Jane added they are always at church on Sundays and Wednesdays, and Meg always goes to the teen group on Fridays.

Since their grandparents live next door, they serve as another set of adult role models.

In the area of sexuality, Jane mentioned their use of curriculum materials (Dobson, Preparing for Adolescence, 1978) to teach the physical changes related to adolescence. Having all the animals around has provided much of the girls' education in this area.

The teaching of social skills began, Jane said, long ago. She said they have worked on good manners since the children were very young, through experiences and by being very clear with the girls about what was expected.

To develop adult roles the girls have their responsibilities, especially in regard to the animals. Jane occasionally lets them stay alone at home and be responsible for themselves. Jane said she wants them to have a chance to be on their own and they will get more chances as they get older.

Bill commented, "To give the family environment its due, on a day-to-day basis it's a real life laboratory, if you will, to deal with other people. Your own family is just as much 'other people' as a roomful of kids. It really helps a child's ability to get along with other adults. You may learn how to get along with a peer group in a traditional school setting, but that's just learning how to get along with a small slice of society. I see this at church a lot. I work with [a boy's group] and the kids that are in a traditional school situation can't get along with anybody but their peer group."

Jane said Bill's mother and father had lived with them for about a year while they were building the house next door, and the girl (mentioned above) had also stayed with them for a long time. Jane commented

that this girl was hurting when she came. Meg and Paula had learned what she liked and how to help her and that sometimes she just needed to be left alone. She added, "You can get along with somebody for a couple of hours, but when they are living in your house you have to learn to get along with them all the time. You can't get away from them!"

When asked if they planned to continue to home school Jane said, "Yes, we'll be here until they finish." She said she wants the girls to be prepared academically to continue their education whenever and wherever they choose. Jane stated, "I know that Bill and I can take them beyond what they would get in a traditional high school."

When the investigator asked about their main area of concern, Bill said, "My goal all through their training is [for them] to learn to be functional. I think it's important that they have the tools they need to be able to distinguish what is true and what is false-to be able to think for themselves, I guess, is what it boils down to." Bill also went on to say that he wants them to understand our form of government.

Jane said since she had taught middle school, she had seen this age child often "lose the academic ball", and concentrate on just the peer group and what that group thinks, turning aside from studies. She continued, "I want to be able to get through these

middle school years without [my children] getting out of balance. Adolescence is a difficult time. I've seen kids with IQ's of 140 and beyond sitting in class like a bump on a log and make straight F's because that was cool. It seems like something inside kids at adolescence just goes awry. I haven't seen that here yet and I [have] been watching other families who teach their kids at home and I don't see that so much either...so that's my little bitty goal for that age...to keep what's overall 'going' without a blip."

Case Study 10

The Pauleys live on the banks of Smith Mountain Lake in Bedford County. The area looks like a resort with the surrounding woods and the lake coming up to the house. The family was referred to the investigator by another home school family; their names were also included on a list of Bedford County home schoolers. The family was contacted and the mother, Barb, agreed to be interviewed about what she was doing in the area of socialization.

Barb has a degree in social science and she has taught school prior to the home school decision. Rick, the father, is a counselor and has a counseling practice in the Roanoke area. The family includes two sons who were never home schooled. They are now away in college. The two girls, Gail (11) and Gwen (13) are both middle school age and have been home schooled for three years. Barb said although she had never home schooled her sons, she always felt that she had relinquished a responsibility which was supposed to be hers. When they moved to the lake area they decided to go ahead and do home schooling with the girls. Gail and Gwen have both been enrolled in public and private schools. Barb said they are home schooling one year at a time, deciding on the next year as they go along. Barb is using a variety of curriculum materials; she

selects them herself.

When Barb began to talk about what they were doing to help Gail and Gwen establish personal identity, she indicated she hoped the training in this area came across more in their life experiences than just in the curriculum. Barb said she felt this was also learned and came through their faith; she commented, "That is the sum and substance of our home."

When asked about teaching personal destiny Barb said she talked with the girls about things as they came up in the curriculum and in current events. She also stated Gwen (the older daughter) had a real interest in children and a reputation for being an excellent baby sitter. For this reason Barb has encouraged Gwen to consider pediatrics as a possible career choice. She went on to say that she and her husband tried to steer the girls toward areas where they showed interest. Barb added that she believed that because the girls had seen their own father change careers, they know firsthand that a person does not have to be locked into a set job.

When Barb talked about values and moral development she stated that this was also very much tied to their faith. They try to guide the girls by discussing things that are happening in society. Barb went on to say they try to show the girls the strength of their family values as opposed to societal values.

Barb added, "We're constantly talking about AIDS, premarital sex, and the problems with illegitimate pregnancies and various things that come up." Since Rick is in counseling, he deals with these subjects on a daily basis. Barb indicated the girls have heard from him about many unfortunate situations and they use this as a teaching tool.

The family attends church 2 or 3 times each week, and they consider this a reinforcement of their values and morals. Barb also added she would like to see the girls involved in some form of volunteer work but at this time they are not.

Gail and Gwen are very autonomous in their school work, Barb said, even to the point that she sometimes feels guilty that they can do so much on their own. Barb makes the weekly lesson plans and gives them to the girls and they are responsible for getting the work done during the week at their own pace. Reward activities, like trips with their friends, are tied to the completion of the school work. Barb commented that both girls were diligent workers.

Both girls have responsibilities around the house and they were preparing lunch during the interview. They also have pets (rabbits, dog, cat) that they care for.

Barb discussed their various friends (both peers and adults); she said they see their own peers on

Sunday morning and Wednesday for choir, at church. Every other Thursday evening Gwen has a youth group activity and she is also involved in the Junior Strings Symphony and attends practice every Tuesday night.

Once every month Gail and Gwen both go the home of another home school family where Gail rides a horse and where both girls are taking a creative writing class from the other home school mother. While they are there they have interaction with that family's six children.

Gail and Gwen have friends in Roanoke, and Barb says she feels they are with their friends as much, or more than, children in a traditional school situation because she makes an effort to get them to activities many times each week. Barb added, "I'm not convinced that school is the place [for] socialization anyway...I'm not convinced that the socialization they get there is all that good."

On the subject of sexuality, Barb laughed and said that the girls have her lectures numbered. She related a recent discussion in the car where she said she actually pulled off the road to talk to the girls about thirteen year-old girls having "boyfriends"; she said that she wasn't getting their interaction so she pulled off so they would talk and interact before they continued on their way. They do talk and discuss the subject often, especially since Rick is so involved in

counseling people who have made mistakes in this area. Barb stated, "We just really encourage them...today, with the norms being premarital sex...it really seems that way...today you really feel like you are fighting an uphill battle. We've just tried to stress the positive aspects of sex within marriage." Barb went on to say that she had used various curriculum materials in this area as well.

Regarding the area of social skills, Barb said she felt it is covered in everyday life. Gwen and Gail are around a handicapped child at church and Barb says she has talked to them about him and she hopes that acceptance is a part of their lifestyle. She said they would continue to encourage acceptance of people with disabilities and differences which cannot be helped.

Barb indicated the focus of her home schooling efforts related back to the reason they chose to home school: the parents wanted to have the major input and influence on the girls' lives and to teach them the family values. Barb said she likes being able to choose the materials, ensuring that the materials have a positive message. She likes feeling that she has more control and expressed her hope that home schooling actually did give her more control.

Findings of the Content Analysis

After interviewing the ten home schooling families a content analysis was done on the interview transcriptions. The seven areas of socialization (personal identity, personal destiny, values and moral development, autonomy, relationships, sexuality, and social skills) adopted by the state of Virginia Department of Education for the middle school grades were used as the units of analysis. Responses were categorized as they related to the units of analysis; some responses were applicable to more than one area of socialization. All categories were grounded and emergent from the data.

Personal Identity

The category of personal identity includes parent statements regarding those things that they see as contributing to socialization in this area. The researcher has included statements and obvious practices mentioned throughout the data that relate to the area of personal identity.

The practice in this category that was cited most often by respondents was that of providing children with a sense of being special in their creation. Nine of the families interviewed mentioned that their faith

and beliefs about being special in God's plan are an instrumental part of their teaching in the area of personal identity. Along the same line, eight of the ten families spoke of talking about individual differences and making their children aware of their uniqueness and the uniqueness of others.

Eight families in the interviews stated specific ways that they are providing an area of expertise or successful experiences for the children. These included such things as special classes (sign language, music, art) or even actual employment. Eight respondents also stated that special individual projects such as preparing for the Virginia Ten-Miler or decorating a room help to teach personal identity.

Responsibility in an important job and the related privileges for successful completion of an assignment were listed by eight families in the interviews. Seven families also stated that treating the child as an adult and allowing the child to do things for himself are practices that they use.

Six of the respondents stated ways that they encourage creativity and individual thinking (i.e., having a creativity afternoon, encouraging thinking of other ways things could have been handled). Six of the families listed life experiences and just being involved in real life as ways that were used to help the child establish a sense of self. Three families

stated that they believe that their own way of life, or lifestyle is an acceptance of who the children are.

Time spent by the parent with each individual child was mentioned by five of the families. Four of the families stated that they provide time for the child to either be alone or to do an activity alone.

Self-acceptance (accepting physical characteristics, personality, and abilities) was a practice that five informants said that they encourage. Using a specific curriculum material that dealt with the area of personal identity was cited by five of the ten informant families.

Four of the families stated that they encourage their children to develop separate individual friendships, and three families mentioned that taking the child out of the peer environment (removing the child from the peer pressure) was one of the things they are doing to allow the child to develop an identity of his own.

Other practices cited by the parents include giving the child choices to make (in clothing, room decoration, friends, activities), listed by three informants; talking about the family heritage, two informants; stressing parental acceptance, two informants; planning a special event or honoring the child, two informants; and giving praise, two informants.

Those practices mentioned by only one family are providing individual space (a room of one's own) and providing the child with a secure environment in which to develop his own identity.

Personal Destiny

The area of personal destiny includes making and achieving goals, achievement, and career emphasis. The investigator asked what the parents are doing (if anything) in each of these areas. For content analysis the three areas were separated into distinct categories.

In the area of goals, both long-range and short-range, eight informants stated that the schoolwork goals present the students with learning in this area. Both daily and weekly goals were given to the students and they are responsible themselves for meeting the challenge. Several of these families are actually using goal charts or planbooks for the students. Eight families directly stated or implied through their comments that they have very high expectations for the students themselves.

Six of the families mentioned that they are already looking at colleges with the student and talking about long range educational goals. Six of the respondents stated that they are using curriculum

materials designed to teach goals, and five families are having the middle school-age child participate in the writing of the weekly academic goals.

In the area of achievement all ten families are providing some way for the student to earn his own money, either through employment in an actual job (drywall finisher, trainee in father's technical lab) or through a student-owned business venture (raising rabbits for sale, selling eggs, regular babysitting).

Nine of the families stated directly or described the practice of placing responsibility on the child as a method they have used to give the child a sense of achievement. Seven of the respondent families gave examples of their actual seeking out of opportunities (such as working at the polls or contacting business acquaintances to ask them to work with their child) as methods used to give the child chances to achieve. Having the child in the real world and allowing that child to interact as a responsible person was mentioned by seven respondents. Having the child complete a job was listed by six parents as a practice they use to teach achievement.

Four families mentioned achievement type club membership as a practice (Scouts, 4-H, and church related). Another four families stated that the example of the parents was a teaching method they use to demonstrate achievement.

Two families gave examples of service related activities that they believe provide their student with an opportunity for achievement, and one family stated that they want their child to be able to deal with failure as well as success as a part of the area of achievement.

Methods used by the parents to introduce their children to careers include encouraging talents and interests, cited by nine of the ten families; and teaching job-related skills, listed by seven families. Seven of the families stated that they are talking about possible careers with their child, and six of the informants stated that they are trying to steer their student toward areas in which the student has obvious strengths. All ten families have provided some work activity for their children to allow them to experience "working" for money.

Five of the families mentioned career-related field trips, and three of the families include the student on actual business trips that a parent must make. Another three informants cited exposure to positive role models as a method they use to introduce various careers.

Five of the families stated that the example of the parents was a practice they use to teach career choices.

Two informants stated that they talk about careers

in relation to current events, and three families stated that the children are assured that they will be loved and supported whatever they choose to do in life.

Values and Moral Development

The area of values and moral development includes the categories of accepting the rules and mores of society, self-discipline, and problem solving. Each category was discussed separately in the interviews, and was therefore analysed as a unique area.

When the researcher introduced the topic "values and moral development" and further defined the area as accepting the rules and mores of society, four families immediately said that they did not want their child to accept the mores of society. Nine of the informants stated that they are addressing this area through their faith and through their own family values that are related to their faith. Nine families indicated that the example of family values or their lifestyle as contrasted to those of society is a teaching tool in this area. Seven informants gave examples or stated that they discuss this area with their child, providing immediate feedback and making expectations clear. Church attendance was cited by nine of the informants, and five of the families stated or gave examples that they are training their child to be a leader or to

stand alone (not to follow the crowd, to think for himself), and four informants stated that they encourage their child to think about the right thing to do. Eight of the ten families made reference to their belief that this area is "caught" through the lifestyle that they are living, and another eight gave examples of volunteer service that the child is involved in and they have encouraged.

Four families stated that they are using an actual curriculum material to teach values and moral development. Three families stated that they have the children memorize scripture or the Catechism and read the Bible regularly, while another three families have regular devotions; thus, reinforcing their religious values.

The use of positive role models was cited by two families, as was encouraging friendships with those who have similar values and morals. One informant stated that they, as parents, are open about their own shortcomings and failures as parents.

One method used to instruct in self-discipline is parental expectations for the child to get his schoolwork done on his own, cited by seven informants. In addition, seven families gave examples of important responsibilities that the child is performing on his own; these "jobs" include activities that have to be done in order for activities to run smoothly for others

within the family or at a work site. Seven informants indicated that one practice they use is talking about responsibility and making the expectations clear. Six of the families use rewards or activities as rewards for successful completion of tasks.

Encouraging the child to save money was mentioned by five informants; two families mentioned that the child is learning self-discipline through sports activities. One informant indicated that she is encouraging activities that must be done within a clear monetary budget to teach self-discipline.

In the area of problem-solving, six families gave examples or directly stated that real-life situations (i.e., dealing with business phone calls, shopping, building a home, gardening, school projects) were the methods they use to instruct in problem-solving. Four families stated that they are using actual curriculum materials to teach these skills. Using hypothetical situations and current events in discussions of how things could be resolved was cited by three informants. Three families gave examples of giving the student an actual problem which involves a choice as a practice they use to teach this skill. Family councils and parental expectation of the child to resolve a problem or conflict were each cited by one informant.

Autonomy

The area of autonomy was defined to the parents as learning independence. Those practices most often used by parents to give their child a sense of independence seem to revolve around activities and responsibilities performed at home. Three of the families stated that the child can "run the house;" nine informants listed activities involving household chores (vacuuming, dusting, care of rooms). Six of the families stated that the child is learning child care either by babysitting or by helping at home or in the church nursery. Seven informants stated that the child is at times responsible for food preparation for himself and other members of the family or for neighbors. Six of the families stated that the child is responsible for doing his own laundry. Four of the children are responsible for the care of animals.

Involvement outside of the home and in the community includes jobs such as working the polls independently and other volunteer work; these were mentioned by eight families. Five informants stated that the child has an actual job in the church which he or she is responsible for performing, such as operating the sound system or teaching and helping in younger children's classes.

All ten of the families stated that their children

have actual jobs where they are regularly able to earn money, and five informants stated that their children have savings accounts for their own money. Four families mentioned allowing spending decisions for larger items such as a bike, going to camp or saving for a car.

Another method mentioned for teaching independence, cited by seven families, was that of allowing the students to be self-directed in their schoolwork. Seven families also implied or mentioned the use of encouragement and praise to help build the child's sense of independence.

Providing the child with free time, discussion of the child's own ideas and opinions, and allowing the child to do things independently were each mentioned by three informants (not the same three in each case). Three families mentioned that their children are away from peer pressure and able to think for themselves and this is a method they consider to be building independence.

Four families stated that they do give the children choices to make concerning things that directly affect them, from continuing home schooling to choices about activities, friends, and clothing purchases.

Two informants mentioned that their children are learning a sport that could be done alone (motorcycling

and running).

Relationships

The discussion of relationships involved talking to the parents about the opportunities for the child to be with peers and also with adults outside the immediate family.

For the children in these families, church is a primary source of peer interaction. Eight of the families mentioned regular church attendance (for most, at least twice a week for regular services). Six of the families said that the child is involved with peers in a regular teen or youth group and its activities. Two families mentioned that the child is involved in choir and choir practice, and another two families stated that the child is participating in a drama group.

Eight of the families stated that their child regularly visits other children or has friends over to play. The two informants with the largest families (ten children and six children) stated that their children get most of their peer interaction at home with family. Six families stated that their child is active in home school group activities, often on a weekly basis. Five of the families mentioned that the child is with other children in regular sports activities or physical education programs. Three

informants stated that because they are home schooling, a special effort is made to get the child to activities involving peers.

Other activities with peer interaction are being a member of a 4-H club, mentioned by three families; Scouts, one family; and being a member of an orchestra with a regular practice, three families.

One of the informants stated that he does not believe that school is the place for socialization; another informant stated that he is not in favor of a great deal of peer interaction (implying that the child needed to be with all ages, not just peers), and another informant stated that the child has more older friends (this family stated that one of the child's best friends is about four years older) than ones that are exactly the same age.

When asked about adult friends, the majority of informants (eight) stated that the child has a special friend or mentor in the church; often this is a Sunday School teacher or youth group leader, but in several cases it is just an adult at the church who has taken a special interest in the child and developed a close friendship. The child is able to see this adult at least once each week.

Four of the families live with a grandparent or close relative or they live next door to the relative, and this relative is able to provide extra support and

friendship for the child. Five of the informants named another close family friend as being particularly important in the child's life. Seven families cited close extended family interaction.

Three families stated that their children have developed an especially close relationship with music teachers. Other adult friends mentioned, by one informant each, were: another home schooling mother, employees at the work place, friends at a nursing home, and a special friend in the community.

Sexuality

The area of sexuality included teaching the child about actual physical changes and making that child aware of sex roles. There was less diversity of practices in this area than in any of the categories that the researcher discussed with the parents. Eight of the families indicated that they are using curriculum materials (such as books, tapes, demonstration materials) to teach sexuality and physical changes. Seven of the families stated that open discussion is a part of their lifestyle and that the area of sex is no exception. Three of the informants stated that they encourage their children to accept the parental standard which is based on the Biblical standard, by talking about this and why it is

the best way. Three other families mentioned that they stress the positive aspects of family life (understood to mean the benefits gained by having a husband/wife relationship to support and raise children).

An open display of affection between the family members was mentioned by two respondents, as was having the child around positive role models. Having the children around animals and observing life events was cited by two families.

Each of the following responses was given by a separate informant: treating sex with respect (never using derogatory terms for body parts); being careful about what is watched on television; and actual teaching on contraception.

Social Skills

Discussion with the parents of teaching methods for social skills involved finding out what practices they are using to teach in each of three areas. These areas include: 1) social rules or etiquette; 2) development of adult roles; and 3) exposure to and acceptance of others' differences. Each area was discussed separately and was analyzed as a separate category.

The majority of informants stated that the method they use to teach the social rules is through the life

experiences in which the child is involved. These include entertaining at home, practicing during everyday life, and using the things learned at home in actual situations; two families stated that their children are included in all situations and are a part of regular entertaining with other adults. Three families mentioned that they discuss the social rules and explain their expectations before taking their children into a situation (especially a new one), and three informants mentioned that they teach the social rules by example.

Use of curriculum material that teaches manners and social rules was mentioned by four families. However, two families stated that they felt that this is an area that needed more attention.

The majority of informants (eight) cited opportunities for the child to be in an adult-like situation, such as doing volunteer work either at church, a nursing home, or some other service-related place, as the most frequently used method for learning adult roles. Seven of the respondents also mentioned giving the child responsibility within the family, and seven families named real life jobs as a way that they have instilled adult roles.

Five of the families stated that they encourage their children to give either time or a portion of their own money to help with another person's needs

(locally or even within the world community). Four informants stated that they regularly talk to their children about current events.

Two families stated that they openly admit to their children that they do not have all the answers, and another two families stated that they introduce positive role models as a method of teaching adult roles.

One method of instruction used to teach acceptance of others' differences is talking about those differences and encouraging the child to accept people, which was mentioned by eight informants. Seven families cited regular exposure of the children to people with differences (racially or culturally, as in different lifestyles) or to people who had lived in another country and could tell the child about that culture.

Five of the families stated that they encourage acceptance of differences among their own family, and that the child is exposed to many types of personalities and, in some cases, problems to deal with (a learning disability, an emotionally disturbed person) within the family. Six informants gave examples of the child's exposure to handicapped people, and one informant mentioned that the child has been given a class in sign language as a method of encouraging acceptance of those who were different.

Parental Rationale for Home Schooling Decision

During the introductory phase of the interview the researcher asked the parents to state their reasons for home schooling. This question was initially posed to help the researcher understand more about the family and their motivation. The responses were not intended, originally, to contribute to the data on socialization but were intended to add to the detailed description for the case study.

Upon examination of the data, it was noted by the researcher that seven of the informants stated areas of socialization as their reason for home schooling. Five of the families stated that they are home schooling in order to develop morals, values, or character development (stated as developing a godly character). One informant worded this as developing "life principles," while another referred to the desire of having the main influence in the child's life.

Three families stated that their motivation for home schooling is academic; they want to give the child a better education. One family, which stated their reason for home schooling as "wanting to influence character development," added that they had begun eight years ago only for academic reasons but this was now of secondary importance.

Limitations of the Findings

The findings in this study are limited to one select group of home schooling educators from five counties in Virginia. The findings are not intended to be generalized to other home school situations. The findings are grounded in, formulated from, and limited to the verbal responses of home schooling educators who met the following criteria: 1) are home schooling a middle-school aged child and 2) live in a rural county of Virginia. The parents' comments were in response to a guided interview on the seven specified areas of socialization

Concluding Statement

Chapter four introduces the ten families which were interviewed in a case study format that presents their individual situations and what they stated are their practices in the seven areas of socialization as studied. In the second section of the chapter the seven areas are presented as categories for an analysis of the findings. A statement of the motivation for home schooling in these ten families is also included.

In the following chapter a discussion of the content analysis by category will be provided. This chapter also includes concluding statements and

recommendations for further study.

Chapter 5

Conclusions

The investigator began this study in order to determine what practices home-school educators are using to meet the socialization needs of their middle school-aged children. The study concentrates on ten families in five rural counties of Virginia. The researcher used a guided interview format that encompasses the goals established for the middle schools of Virginia. After a review of literature on the socialization needs of the middle school child, the goals established by the Department of Instruction in Virginia, and the recommendations of the Carnegie Corporation Report on Education of Early Adolescents (1989), the investigator decided on a guided interview format which encompasses the goals of the state of Virginia. Home school educators were asked to describe what activities and practices they are using to address each area. The following conclusions may be drawn from the study. The conclusions are specific to the study group and are not intended to be generalized to the larger home school population.

Personal Identity

The area of personal identity was one to which all the interview families had already given much consideration. All ten informants make their church attendance and religious beliefs a major part of their instruction in the area of personal identity. While nine of the ten families cited teaching their children about a Biblical perspective of who they are (in God sight), even the tenth informant gave examples of the importance of religious convictions in other areas such as standing by a position against selling raffle tickets and placing church attendance before other activities. Seven of the informants related to the researcher that their desire to teach their own values and beliefs to their children and their desire that their children be in an environment where they could "be" themselves had been the deciding factor in their home schooling. The parents in this study expressed their belief that the "traditional" school placed their children in a situation where they were forced to either conform to the group or live in opposition to the group. They expressed the desire to provide a setting where their children can develop without undue challenge.

These parents are making specific efforts to develop their children's unique abilities by providing

opportunities that enhance the strengths they see in the children. The informants gave examples of areas where their children are excelling. The parents provide extra tutoring or lessons in the skill area. This skill or talent, the parents infer, has given the child confidence and an ability to do something of which he can feel proud.

All of the informants gave examples of work and jobs that their children do to earn money. These families place high value on a strong work ethic and encourage their children to become involved in working toward a goal of some type, such as making a specific purchase or saving money. This ability, it would seem, might build confidence in the students in their ability to be productive.

The informants expressed that they are treating the children as adults by allowing and expecting the children to do things for themselves. These parents stated that they have given their children responsibilities that are important; other people are dependent on these children to fulfill these jobs. By assigning this responsibility, it seems to the investigator that the parents have said to their children, "I know who you are, and I trust you to do this job." By acknowledging the child as a person of dependability, the child, it would seem, views himself as someone of worth.

Another piece of data that the investigator found noteworthy was that five of the informants cited that they have provided time alone with their children as a means of teaching personal identity. These families have demonstrated their concern and attention to these children by being willing to invest such large amounts of time and energy in educating them at home.

Three of the informants specifically mentioned that they believe having their children removed from peer pressure in school was allowing the children the opportunity to think for themselves. The parents believe that since the children are not in a classroom with agemates for hours each day, the home school children might be more used to thinking things out for themselves.

Parents reported that their children have more time to pursue individual interests and projects during hours which are devoted to classtime for a traditionally schooled student. This was evidenced by the number of activities in which the home-schooled children are able to participate. Several informants (four) cited instances of providing the child with time alone as well as a willingness to cooperate financially and to support emotionally a project that the child wants to try.

Limited research (Delahooke, 1986, Taylor, 1986, and Wartes, 1987) seems to indicate that home school

students have a strong self-concept. The investigator observed the efforts of home school educators in what was interpreted as their willingness to depend upon and trust their children. It may be that the confidence of the parents in their children has contributed to the students' self-confidence. These parents seem to believe that their children are more aware of who they are and are more secure about their place in their world than traditionally-educated students.

The investigator noted that all informants spoke of their students in a respectful way that seems to indicate the children are liked by the parents and that time spent with these children is enjoyable. The investigator feels that if this is also perceived by the child it would tend to increase self-esteem.

Personal Destiny

The practice of home-school educators that seems most important is that of allowing the student to actually be in work situations. All informants gave examples of their children earning money for themselves. In the majority of cases the child was operating a business or was employed in a real-life job. This early admission into the real world may be of importance not only in the teaching of personal destiny but in the area of personal identity. Being recognized

as a contributing member of society would seem to enhance the self-esteem of a child. These families indicated their belief that having the student in real-life situations was a practice which they consider to be teaching personal destiny.

A majority of the informants either stated or indicated by relating an example that they have high expectations for their students. The majority of the families indicated that they allow the student to be self-directed in their schoolwork and in setting up weekly goals. They stated that their job, as educator, mostly consists of helping with problems and making sure that the work is completed on time. By allowing the student to participate in the actual planning and decisions about when and the amount of work needed to be done daily in order to finish by the deadline, the parents believe they are teaching real-life work skills and responsibility.

These parents exhibited specific efforts, it seemed to the investigator, to expose their children to various careers as well as a willingness to discover and explore their children's interests.

Values and Moral Development

Of the ten families in this study, half mentioned some aspect of values and moral development as their

reason for home schooling.

There was a surprising degree of similarity among the responses when this area was discussed by the informants. While all the informants attend different churches and live in different areas, there is a remarkable similarity in the ways the informants believe they are approaching education in the area of values and moral development.

Nine of the informants cited religious beliefs and their faith as instrumental in teaching values and moral development. All of the families attend church on a regular, weekly basis. Nine indicated that the example of family values as contrasted to those of society is a practice they use. Not only are the parents encouraging the child's regular involvement in church, but the parents are involved themselves, as evidenced by their church attendance and the number of activities that they are participating in. Nine of the informants indicated that they regularly talk about what they believe or make their expectations clear to the student.

Another area that was common to the majority of informants (eight) was that of encouraging volunteer service and helping other people. It seems to the investigator that the parents as a group are teaching the students to look beyond the students' own world and toward the problems they might encounter in a larger

community, where they can meet the needs of other people. While these students are still quite young and must rely on others for transportation, there seems to be (according to the parental statements) a large amount of volunteerism. While the informants encouraged their students in this area, several parents mentioned services they themselves had performed as well. It would seem that example and modeling on the part of the parents has been an educational practice in this area, although none of the informants cited this as a practice. The investigator believed that this parental altruism may contribute to a more positive self-image by allowing the students to realize that they are needed by others and can make a difference in their world.

All the informant families exhibited a strong work ethic, both by their life-styles and statements. All of the families gave examples of the provision they have made for the student to learn to work, often within the real world. Again, modeling is being done by the parents as evidenced by the students' being allowed to accompany and even participate in the parents' work situations. These children are being given responsibility on a daily basis.

A small number of the informants (four) cited using actual curriculum materials in this area. However, the parents as a group seem to feel that

teaching in this particular area is not as important as modeling the life that they espouse before the child and expecting the child to live it, or as one informant stated, "to catch it." This commitment to Christian values seems to provide a motivation for the parents to home school. By keeping their children in situations where family values are reinforced, the parents are protecting what they believe to be most important for the child.

These students are learning, it seems, their values, morals, and related skills such as self-discipline and problem-solving through real-life experience rather than exclusively through textbooks. The students have been deliberately placed in situations where they can function as valued members of society. It appears that the parents consider the students worthy and able to carry out the responsibilities they have been given. The parents both expect and trust them to act responsibly. Five of the informants referred to their training the child to be a leader or to stand alone; these parents, it would seem, are allowing specific, responsible freedom while always watching to reinforce and give needed immediate feedback.

Autonomy

The practice that seems to stand out in the area of teaching independence is that of giving a specified amount of responsibility to the home-schooled child. All of the families have placed their children in situations, either with their own business or employed in some way, where they are on their own. Five of the informants specifically mentioned that the child had a savings account. This earning ability seems to give the students a feeling of accomplishment and a sense of independence.

Within the home these students have a variety of responsibilities, ranging from meal preparation and child care to doing the laundry. Informants stated that the child could "run the house." By teaching the child to perform these adult functions, the parents are giving their children an opportunity to become independent.

Most of the informants (seven) mentioned that the students are self-directed in their schoolwork, placing the responsibility for work completion in their hands. This practice allows the child to determine how much schoolwork to do each day in order to finish by the deadline. By allowing the students more freedom in scheduling their time, parents believe they are teaching self-discipline, independence, and

self-determination.

The investigator noted seven instances of the informants' using praise and encouragement to strengthen independent behavior in this area, there by building feelings of confidence and independence in the student. The parents seemed pleased with the behaviors or decisions made by the child.

Several of the informants cited instances in which they have allowed and encouraged their children to make their own decisions in personal matters. This practice might foster a sense of independence and self-control by letting the child know that he is trusted to make a decision.

RELATIONSHIPS

The amount of peer interaction exhibited by the ten case families was surprising to the investigator. While expecting to find ordinary involvement, the investigator was not prepared for the level of commitment exhibited by the parents in getting the child to various activities. While there was comment by one father that he is not particularly in favor of extensive peer (as in age-segregated) interaction, his family has the largest number of children (ten) and peer interaction is available with the family itself.

The most interaction is related to church

activity, and it seems to the investigator that the families are encouraging most interaction with others who share their own values and beliefs. Although this particular item was only cited by two families, it seems to be true for all the informants. These parents and their children are primarily involved with others who share their value system. It seems to the investigator that this is an extension of their commitment to their Christian values; by being separate, they are trying to protect a lifestyle they believe is best and they hope their children will accept and defend it when challenged.

One informant referred to home schoolers as being like pioneers. She stated, "When you're a pioneer, there aren't too many other cabins." While there are not a great number of home-schoolers it seems that the informants have made the most of their opportunities for interaction and are not avoiding peer interaction when it is available. Activities that the students are involved in with their peers at church included choir practice, youth group meetings, regular services, drama groups, volunteer services, and Sunday school classes.

Eight informants stated that their children can visit their friends weekly or invite their friends to their home. Home school group activities, sports activities, 4-H, and Scouts also provide the children in these families with interactions. Indeed, several

informants indicated that there are so many activities and opportunities for peer interaction that the children have to pick and choose so they will not be overextended.

The informants indicated that they encourage their children to interact with all ages and not just to have friendships with their age mates. This practice seems to develop out of their life-style rather than from trying to "find" other age friends for the children. Because the children are involved in many real-life situations, they seem to have greater than average contact with people of all ages. The investigator noted what seemed, to the parents, to be rapport by the children with many older people in many different capacities (as music teachers, friend at the nursing home, and people at church). A majority of the informants stated that their children have a very close adult friendship outside of the family. It was noted by the investigator that the majority of interaction with other adults is within a group of church friends (cited by eight informants) or other adults with whom the parents seem to trust and share values.

An interesting note is that six parents live very close to their own parents or siblings (grandparents, aunts and uncles to the students). Because family ties are close and the child is able to be with other family members regularly, the home-schooled student seems to

have the advantage of strong adult role models and continuity of family. It would seem that this sense of extended family would be an asset to any child by providing a sense of personal identity, stability, and other adult friendships and role models.

While this category is focused upon adults outside of the immediate family, it was noted that in all ten cases parents spoke as if they enjoy the students and have a close relationship (friendship) with them.

All of the informants in the study seem to have strong immediate family units. The fathers, while doing little actual teaching, seem to provide a strong leadership role. The mothers seem to be strong, in-control, and committed to home-schooling. Both parents provide strong role models for the children.

Sexuality

Discussion of the teaching methods used in sexuality exhibited the least diversity of all areas covered in the interviews. Eight of the families stated that sexuality is covered by their curriculum. The majority of informants mentioned that they openly discuss the subject of sexuality with their students. This subject is taught in much the same way as it would be in a traditional school situation. The informants' approaches seem to come more from the perspective of

the parents' standards and beliefs than from an exclusively academic/facts approach. Several informants stated that they try to encourage acceptance of their own standards, such as abstinence from sex before marriage, and to stress positive family life.

The subject of sexuality received the least number of comments from the parents. This may have been because the methods used are traditional and the parents feel there was little to add. Since the practices being taught seem to be structured similarly to a traditional approach, the researcher saw little need to pursue a subject which the parents showed a slight reluctance in discussing. Materials used to teach sexuality tended to be supplied by authors that supported the parent's Christian values.

Social Skills

The category of social skills, specifically manners, was the only category that brought any comment from the informants indicating their impression of needing to strengthen this area of instruction. Two of the informants commented that this area is one that needs more attention. The majority of parents felt that the students are learning social rules (manners) through their many life experiences. It appeared to the investigator that these students are involved in

more social activities, whether by design or by being with the parent in various situations, than the average middle school-aged child.

Three informants stated that one method they use to teach social skills is to make parental expectations very clear. Since these parents are with their children more hours than if they were traditionally-schooled, parental modeling, reinforcement and feedback on students' behavior is more immediate.

To develop adult roles, these parents have given specific amounts of responsibility to the children. The informants gave every indication that the responsibility is being handled well by the children through volunteer work, jobs, or household responsibilities. The parents are expecting adult-like behavior in their children and are pleased with the childrens' level of cooperation.

It appears from the comments made by informants that the category discussed as acceptance of others' differences is one in which the informants have made specific effort. Eight families stated that they talk as a family about the uniqueness and specialness of every human. Seven families cited people with whom they are regularly associated and involved who either come from another culture or have lived in other cultures. All informants gave some example of either encouraging acceptance or an activity in which their children are

able to be around those from other cultures. The investigator noted instances from six informants of opportunities for the students to be around handicapped and aged individuals. These parents seem to be extending their teaching of personal identity to include the message, "Everyone is special in God's sight and we can accept this person as God made him." Again, while allowing varied experiences, these parents are closely monitoring their students' activities.

There are experiences that public school children have because they are in a mixed cultural and racial environment on a regular daily basis. These experiences may be missing from the education of a home-schooled child's education. This area is one that may need attention from home school educators.

Final Comments

The investigator found that the home school educators in this study reported to have created small communities for learning within the family, church, and home-schooling groups. These home-schooling families, as a group, share a sense of community with each other. Their lifestyles and values seem reminiscent of the past. The families are strong, close, and built upon and committed to their Christian principles. The informants (parents) in this study indicated numerous

ways in which they have established stable, close, respectful relationships with their students and have provided controlled access to others as well.

The home school educators in this study reported a willingness to give responsibility to the middle school-aged child. These parents encourage volunteer activity and state their desire that the student is given the opportunity to be an actual participant in the world, not just an observer until they reach some magical age. These parents are convinced that their children can and will function in a responsible way if they are trained and allowed to demonstrate their maturity.

Cooperative learning has been demonstrated, not in the traditional sense of the term, but in a real sense. The home-school educators expressed their willingness for their students to learn in a real world scenario, cooperating with the people the children come in contact with and learning to function as responsible citizens. Flexibility of instructional time has allowed these students the freedom to pursue unusual interests and activities that they would not, ordinarily, have had the time to explore.

The home-school educators in this study are greatly concerned about the education of their young adolescents. They have taken on the job of educator, acting on their belief that they can do a better job

than anyone else. Parental modeling seems to be a key practice in all areas of socialization. These parents exhibit interest in their communities by their participation in various service activities and encourage their children to do likewise.

While the methods used by home-schoolers are sometimes unusual and nontraditional, these educators are addressing the socialization needs of their students in every area addressed. Mayberry (1989) indicated that home school educators viewed their children as above average and therefore expected above average achievement socially and academically. The investigator was informed of the same expectation on the part of the parents interviewed. Without exception they spoke with respect for their students and gave every indication that they believe in their children and expect the best from them.

Recommendations for Further Study

Because so little research has focused on the various areas within the construct of socialization it would be of benefit to study a group of home school educators in relation to their expected outcomes, and following their students through and beyond the home school experience to determine if parental expectations were realized. A study that would prove interesting in

relation to this one would be to interview the home school students regarding their socialization. A qualitative study that followed home school cases over an extended period of time and documented academic, as well as social behavior, would be of great help to those interested in home schooling and to educators in general.

Summation Statement

The case studies, findings, and discussions are specific to this study group and are not intended to be generalized to other home school situations. The ten families interviewed are a small representation of the more than two thousand home-schooled students in the state of Virginia. Despite limitations of this study, it is the only study to date that looks at areas of socialization other than personality and self-concept. Based on the data presented, the investigator has concluded that home school educators are providing a wide variety of activities oriented toward meeting the various socialization needs of their middle school-aged students and that they are doing so in some nontraditional ways. All informants interviewed made it clear that they have given the subject much thought and are making specific efforts to see that the needs of their children are met.

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APPENDIX A

Guided Interview Protocol

The following is a copy of the guided interview format. Questions like these were asked of all informants. There were some questions, not included, that were specific to individual interviews. These questions were made in response to emergent issues or statements made by the informant that the investigator pursued.

1. General Information/Interview Set

I really appreciate your allowing me to talk to you about your home schooling experience. I am doing a study on what home school educators are doing to meet the socialization needs of their middle school age children. This includes children between eleven and fourteen years, usually that means sixth, seventh, or eighth grade. I don't know how familiar you are with the areas of socialization, but for this study, I am looking at seven different things. These are personal identity, personal destiny, values and moral development, autonomy, relationships, sexuality, and social skills. As we talk about these areas, I will give you a general idea of the things each area includes, then I would like you to tell me what, if

anything, you are doing in that area. Even if you have never thought about the area, or not doing anything, I'd like you to tell me. I may ask you specific questions as we go along to help me understand what you are doing better.

I would like to tape the interview for my own use, later, in case I don't remember exactly what you have said, or my notes aren't clear.

Before we get into the areas of socialization, I'd like to begin our interview with a little background information. Would you please tell me about yourselves and what you both do. Then, tell me about your family; how many children you have and their ages? How long have you home schooled the children and why did you chose to home school?

2. Personal Identity

This area is defined for this study as self-esteem, or solving the "Who am I?" dilemma. Have you done specific things in this area; things that might have helped your child develop self-esteem or to determine who they were? Have to used curriculum materials in this area?

3. Personal Destiny

This area would include learning to set goals, achievement, and learning about career choices.

Have you done anything to teach goal setting, long or short range? Do you provide any ways for the child to achieve recognition? What are they? Does the child belong to any achievement clubs?

Are you doing anything that might teach the child about career opportunities?

4. Values and Moral Development

For this study that area would include learning the rules and mores of our society, self-discipline, and problem solving. Are you teaching the first area? How? Do you use a curriculum material? What are you doing about the area of self-discipline? Are you doing specific things that teach problem solving?

5. Autonomy

This area is defined as learning independence. Are you doing specific things to teach your child to function independently? What are those things? Does

6. Relationships

In this study, I am looking at peer relationships and adult friendships. First, tell me about any activity or opportunity where your child can be with others his or her own age. Second, I'd like to know about the adults that your child has interaction with. Are their regular times when the child is able to be

with other adults, outside of the family? Would you say there are any special adult friends or mentor relationships?

7. Sexuality

This area includes the awareness of sex roles and physical changes. What are you doing in this area? Are you using curriculum materials?

8. Social Skills

This area would include social rules or manners, developing adult roles, and acceptance of other's differences. How are you approaching this area? What are some of the things you have done? Are you using a curriculum material? How about adult roles, how do you teach that? What opportunities does your child have to be with others that are different from himself or herself? Is the child ever around those that are culturally or racially different? How about handicapped or aged people?

9. Area of focus

What would you say is the main area of concern or focus in your home school?

10. Discussion about the future

Do you plan to continue?

Thank you for your time, I appreciate you letting me come and learn from you. You will be hearing from me in a few weeks, I will send you a copy of the interview notes. When you receive that please read it over to make sure I have correctly interpreted the things that you said. The names in the notes will be changed to preserve your anonymity, so don't be surprised if you are Dick and Jane or somebody else! Then, later, I will call you to make sure everything is correct.