

SUMMARY OF AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH ON HOME EDUCATION

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Australian Home Education Advisory Service**

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Research on home education in Australia has a small but growing presence. Parent reasons for home educating have been extensively explored while student academic success has not attracted much Australian research. Socialisation has been examined in different ways by a number of studies. Demographic material on home educating families has been collected. A few projects have specifically focused on student perceptions of their home education experience. Studies of students with specific needs have been conducted by a couple of researchers. Home educator interactions with networks, their use of community resources and their needs for appropriate information have also been analysed. Throughout the research problems with home education were identified. The most contentious issue identified was parent resistance to legislation and regulation. The developing theory of home education has distinguished home education as quite distinct from the education provided in formal schools and institutions. A few researchers have included Distance Education in their definition of home schooling and a few academics have addressed the possibilities of home education in the Australian context. This resource was originally developed as a direct result of Victorian Legislative changes in 2006 and was presented to the then Minister of Education and Training of Victoria when comments from officials within the department to home education representatives were made indicating their understanding that there was little Australian research on home education.

Australian Home Education Research

There is a small but growing of body literature available in Australia on home education. Most of this is contained in unpublished theses but there is also some published work available. This literature includes professional journal articles, a book, and documents from Parliamentary Reviews and Departments of Education. The topics covered in this literature cover the reasons parents home educate, demographic information, studies of how parents manage the home educating process, student perceptions, special needs, academic success, the process of learning in home schooling, student competencies and social development, legislative and legal situations in all states of Australia, and home education as an alternative form of education in rural areas.

Jackson, G. M. (2016). Common Themes in Australian and New Zealand Home Education Research. In M. Gaither (Ed.), *The Handbook of Home Education* (pp. 329-361). USA: Wiley Blackwell Books.

Reasons for Home Education in Australia

Australian parents choose to home educate for many reasons. These can be grouped into two major categories: negative features of formal institutions and the positive attractions of home education. Many researchers have addressed this question.

Barratt-Peacock. (1997). *The Why and How of Australian Home Education*. Unpublished PhD, La Trobe, Melbourne. (Published by Learning Books, Yankalilla, SA)

Beirne, J., (1994), Home Schooling in Australia, Paper presented at the Annual Home Schooling Conference, 25th April, Sydney.

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- Drabsch, T. (2013). Home Education in NSW. NSW Parliamentary Research Service. Sydney. e-brief 15 [http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlament/publications.nsf/key/HomeEducationinNSW/\\$File/Home%20schooling%20GG%203.pdf](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlament/publications.nsf/key/HomeEducationinNSW/$File/Home%20schooling%20GG%203.pdf)
- Education Queensland, (2003). *Home Schooling Review* (Research-Parliamentary report). Brisbane. <http://education.qld.gov.au/publication/production/reports/homeschooling.pdf>
- English, Rebecca M. (2013) The most private private education: home education in Australia. *Homeschool Researcher*, 29(4), pp. 1-7.
- English, R. (2015). Too cool for home school? Accessing underground unschoolers with Web 2.0. In K. Trimmer, A. Black, & S. Riddle (Eds.), *Mainstreams, Margins and the Spaces In-between* (pp. 112-124). London, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- English, R. (2015). Use Your Freedom of Choice: Reasons for Choosing Homeschool in Australia. *Journal of Unschooling and Alternative Learning*, 9(17), 1-18.
- Habibullah, A. (2004). "Mum, when's recess?" *A glimpse into two contexts of home schooling*. Unpublished Honours of BEd, Monash, Melbourne.
- Harding, T. J. A. (1997). *Why Australian Christian Academy Families in Queensland Choose to Home School: Implications for Policy Development*. Unpublished MEd, Partial fulfillment, University of Technology, Brisbane.
- Harding, T. J. A. (2003a). *A submission for the Home Schooling Review*. Brisbane: Australian Christian Academy.
- Harp, B. (1998). *Home Schooling: A Study of Reasons Why Some Central Queensland Parents Choose the Home Schooling Alternative for their children*. Unpublished Master of Education Studies, part fulfillment, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton.
- Honeybone, R. (2000). *A South Australian case study examining the home - schooling experiences of eight primary department aged children and their families*. Unpublished Thesis (B.Ed. (Hons.)), University of South Australia, Adelaide.
- Hunter, R. (1993). Christian fundamentalist education: a twentieth anniversary. In, 'Godly schools?: some approaches to Christian education in New Zealand'. B. Gilling. Hamilton, New Zealand, University of Waikato in conjunction with Colcom Press. 4.
- Hunter, R. (1994). The home school phenomenon. *Unicorn*, 20(3), 28-37.
- Jackson, G. (2009). 'More than One Way to Learn': *Home Educated Students' Transitions Between Home and School*. Unpublished PhD, Monash University, Clayton.
- Jacob, A., Barratt-Peacock, J., Carins, K., Holderness-Roddam, G., Home, A., & Shipway, K. (1991). *Home Education in Tasmania: Report of Ministerial Working Party October 1991*. Hobart: Government Printer.
- Jeffrey, D., Giskes, R., & Section, Queensland. Parliamentary Library. Research Publications and Resources Section (2004). *Home schooling*. Queensland Parliamentary Library, Research Publications and Resources Section.

<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/view/publications/documents/research/ResearchBriefs/2004/200409.pdf>

Kidd, T., & Kaczmarek, E. (2010). The Experiences of Mothers Home Educating Their Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Issues in Educational Research*, 20(3), 257-275.
<http://www.iier.org.au/iier20/kidd.pdf>

Maeder, G. (1995). *Parents' reasons in the Hunter area for choosing a Montessori school, Steiner school or home schooling for the early schooling of their children*. Unpublished MEd, University of Newcastle, Newcastle NSW.

McAlevy, F. (1995). *Why home school?: an exploration into the perspectives on education of parents who home school in Otago and Canterbury*. Unpublished Master of Arts in Education, partial fulfillment, University of Canterbury.

Patrick, K. (1999). *Enhancing community awareness of home - schooling as a viable educational option*. Unpublished In partial fulfillment of the requirements of Bachelor of Education (Primary)(Honours), Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW.

Reilly, L. (2004). *How Western Australian Parents Manage the Home Schooling of Their Children with Disabilities*. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education (28 November - 2 December 2004), University of Melbourne.

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Roache, L. E. (2009). Parental choice and education: the practice of homeschooling in New Zealand, Massey University. EdD, Partial fulfillment.

Rowntree, S. (2012). "Homeschooling: education outside the box." *Quadrant* 56(n.6): 74-78.

Simich, M. (1998). *How parents who home school their children manage the process*. Unpublished MEd, University-of-Western-Australia, Nedlands WA.

Stroobant, E. (2006). *Dancing to the Music of Your Heart: Home Schooling the School-Resistant Child*. Unpublished PhD, University of Auckland, Auckland.

Stroobant, E., & Jones, A. (2006). School refuser child identities. *Discourse*, 27(2), 209- 223.

Thomas, A. (1998). *Educating Children at Home*. London: Cassell.

Academic Success

While there are no specific major studies on the academic success of home educated students, a couple of small studies and most other research indicate that Australian home educated children have achieved an equal or higher than average result to their formally educated peers.

BOSTES, (Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards, NSW), (2014). *Academic Outcomes of Home Schooling - Review of Research and Analysis of Statewide Tests*. Retrieved from Sydney:
http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/policy-research/pdf_doc/home-schooling-outcomes-review.pdf

BOSTES, (Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards, NSW) (2016). *Home Schooling Data Reports - March 2016*. (D2016/23064). Sydney: BOSTES Retrieved from
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Harding, T. (2003a). A Comparison of the Academic Results of Students Monitored by the State, with the Academic Results of Students Not Monitored by the State. In *A submission for the Home Schooling Review* (pp. 6). Brisbane: Australian Christian Academy.

- Harding, T. (2006a). *A Study of Victorian Home Educator – Home School Law Reforms*. Paper presented at the Home Education Symposium and Parliamentary Presentation, Camberwell Civic Centre and Victorian Parliament, Melbourne.
- Harp, B. (1998). *Home Schooling: A Study of Reasons Why Some Central Queensland Parents Choose the Home Schooling Alternative for their children*. Unpublished Master of Education Studies, part fulfillment, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton.
- Jackson, G. (2009). *'More than One Way to Learn': Home Educated Students' Transitions Between Home and School*. Unpublished PhD, Monash University, Clayton.
- Lampe, S. (1988). *Home Education: A Survey of Practices and Attitudes*. Unpublished MEdSt, Partial Fulfillment, Monash, Melbourne.
- McColl, A. (2005). *ACE Homeschooling: The Graduates Speak*. Unpublished Masters of Education, part fulfillment, Christian Heritage College, Brisbane.
- Simich, M. (1998). *How parents who home school their children manage the process*. Unpublished MEd, University-of-Western-Australia, Nedlands WA.
- Thomas, A. (1998). *Educating Children at Home*. London: Cassell.

Socialisation

Studies which have looked at the social experiences of home educated students indicate that the students have broad, healthy social interactions although a few students would have appreciated more interaction with peers, particularly in home education network groups. Studies have also shown that some students who have been hurt socially at school have been able to recover when home educated.

- Barratt-Peacock. (1997). *The Why and How of Australian Home Education*. Unpublished PhD, La Trobe, Melbourne. (Published by Learning Books, Yankalilla, SA)
- Barratt-Peacock, J. (2003). Australian home education: a model. *Evaluation and Research in Education*, 17 (2), 101-111.
- Broadhurst, D. (1999). *Investigating young children's perceptions of home schooling*, from <http://www.aare.edu.au/99pap/bro99413.htm>
- Brosnan, P. (1991). *Child competencies and family processes in homeschool families*. Unpublished MEd, University of Melbourne, Melbourne.
- Chapman, A., & O'Donoghue, T. A. (2000). Home schooling: an emerging research agenda. *Education Research and Perspectives*, 27(1), 19-36.
- Clery, E. (1998). Homeschooling: The meaning that the homeschooled child assigns to this experience. *Issues in Educational Research*, Vol. 8(No. 1), 1-13.
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- Honeybone, R. (2000). *A South Australian case study examining the home - schooling experiences of eight primary school aged children and their families*. Unpublished Thesis (B.Ed. (Hons.)), University of South Australia, Adelaide.
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<http://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/view/publications/documents/research/ResearchBriefs/2004/200409.pdf>
- Kidd, T., & Kaczmarek, E. (2010). The Experiences of Mothers Home Educating Their Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Issues in Educational Research*, 20(3), 257-275.
<http://www.iier.org.au/iier20/kidd.pdf>
- McCull, A. (2005). *ACE Homeschooling: The Graduates Speak*. Unpublished Masters of Education, part fulfillment, Christian Heritage College, Brisbane.
- Krivanek, R. (1988). *Social development in home based education*. Unpublished MA, University-of-Melbourne, Parkville Vic.
- Lampe, S. (1988). *Home Education: A Survey of Practices and Attitudes*. Unpublished MEdSt, Partial Fulfillment, Monash, Melbourne.
- Patrick, K. (1999). *Enhancing community awareness of home - schooling as a viable educational option*. Unpublished In partial fulfillment of the requirements of Bachelor of Education (Primary)(Honours), Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW.
- Rowntree, S. (2012). "Homeschooling: education outside the box." *Quadrant* 56(n.6): 74-78.
- Simich, M. (1998). *How parents who home school their children manage the process*. Unpublished MEd, University-of-Western-Australia, Nedlands WA.
- Thomas, A. (1998). *Educating Children at Home*. London: Cassell.

People Who Home Educate Their Children

It is difficult to estimate how many people are home educating because there is known non-compliance, however, official numbers per state and territory are available (Chapman 2015). Home educators come from all walks of life, from every corner of the country, from varying income brackets, and with various levels of education.

None of these features appears to impact upon their success in educating their children.

BOSTES, (Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards, NSW) (2016). *Home Schooling Data Reports - March 2016*. (D2016/23064). Sydney: BOSTES Retrieved from http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/bos_stats/pdf_doc/home-schooling-data-march-2016.pdf.

Chapman, S. (2015). Principal's Address [Press release]. Retrieved from <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B6yrd-aI2gPX2tUWml2NWpIX1k/view?pli=1>

Collis, M., & Dickens, K. (2008). School at home. *Nurture*, 42(1), 8-9

Colvin, N. (1993). To school or not to school?: that is the question! Home education from the perspective of a teacher and parent. *Classroom*, 13(2), 19-20.

Croft, K. (2013). Exploring Motivations For, and Implementation of, Home Education by Qualified Teachers in Australia. MA. *Faculty of Education*. Cooranbong, Avondale College.

Denahy, R. (1991). Home Schooling: a Victorian Experience. *Education-Monitor*, 2(2), 19-21.

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English, R. (2015). Too cool for home school? Accessing underground unschoolers with Web 2.0. In K. Trimmer, A. Black, & S. Riddle (Eds.), *Mainstreams, Margins and the Spaces In-between* (pp. 112-124). London, New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Habibullah, A. (2004). "Mum, when's recess?" *A glimpse into two contexts of home schooling*. Unpublished Honours of BEd, Monash, Melbourne.

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Harding, T. (2006a). *A Study of Victorian Home Educator – Home School Law Reforms*. Paper presented at the Home Education Symposium and Parliamentary Presentation, Camberwell Civic Centre and Victorian Parliament, Melbourne.

Harding, T. (2006b). *Don't "Fix" What Isn't Broken*. Paper presented at the Home Education Symposium and Parliamentary Presentation, Camberwell Civic Centre and Victorian Parliament, Melbourne.

Harding, T. J. A. (2011). *A Study Of Parents' Conceptions Of Their Roles As Home Educators Of Their Children*. Unpublished PhD, Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane.

Harp, B. (1998). *Home Schooling: A Study of Reasons Why Some Central Queensland Parents Choose the Home Schooling Alternative for their children*. Unpublished Master of Education Studies, part fulfillment, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton.

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- McHugh, W. (2007). *Meeting the Davis family: a case study examination of values education and home schooling*. Unpublished Honours, Avondale College, Cooranbong.
- Mullaly, A. (1993). *Christian Home School Families: A Selective Study*. Griffith University, Queensland, Australia. (Reported lost by Mullaly and Hunter, 2006.)
- New South Wales Office of the Board of Studies (OBOS). (2001, 2004). *Home education study report of findings*. Sydney: Office of the Board of Studies NSW.
- Patrick, K. (1999). *Enhancing community awareness of home - schooling as a viable educational option*. Unpublished In partial fulfillment of the requirements of Bachelor of Education (Primary)(Honours), Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW.

Student Views of Home Education

Students have generally reported positively about home education. Comments about missing peers at school were generally tempered by the benefits of being able to flexibly learn at their own pace. Self-esteem appeared to be healthy among these students with a number of them crediting their own self-image directly to their home education experiences.

- Broadhurst, D. (1999). *Investigating young children's perceptions of home schooling*, from <http://www.aare.edu.au/99pap/bro99413.htm>
- Carins, K. (2002). *Graduates' perceptions of the ACE program as preparation for life long learning*. Unpublished B Ed (Hons), University of Tasmania, Hobart.
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- Lampe, S. (1988). *Home Education: A Survey of Practices and Attitudes*. Unpublished MEdSt, Partial Fulfillment, Monash, Melbourne.
- McColl, A. (2005). *ACE Homeschooling: The Graduates Speak*. Unpublished Masters of Education, part fulfillment, Christian Heritage College, Brisbane.
- Reader, P. (2008). *Hypermedia in Evaluation of a Year-long Learning Contract*. Paper presented at the International Society for Teacher Education Conference. <http://www.artlearn.net.au/iste/2008/>
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Stroobant, E., & Jones, A. (2006). School refuser child identities. *Discourse*, 27(2), 209- 223.

Special Needs

Special needs students (including school refusers) and their families especially appreciated the learning and social opportunities provided by home education. This group in particular felt the need for interaction between formal institutions and home education. Giftedness and home education is an area waiting for research.

Cordes, Sharee (2001). Interview with a Home Schooling Mum. *Gifted*, September, 23-24.

Gribble, K. & English, R. (In Press). Helping children with home education: How home education can enable good educational outcomes for children and young people in out-of-home care. *International Journal of Child, Youth and Family Studies*.

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Jolly, J. L., Mathews, M. S., & J, N. (2013). Homeschooling the Gifted: A Parent's Perspective. *Gifted Child Quarterly*, 57, 121-134.

Kidd, T. (2008). *Cognitive theories of autism spectrum disorders : how do they impact children's ability to learn in education settings? ; Coming home : exploring the experiences of mothers home educating their children with autism spectrum disorder*. (BA(Hons) Thesis/Dissertation), Edith Cowan University, Curtin. Retrieved from <http://trove.nla.gov.au/version/43606775>

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McDonald, J. and E. Lopes (2014). "How parents home educate their children with an autism spectrum disorder with the support of the Schools of Isolated and Distance Education." *International Journal of Inclusive Education* 18(1): 1-17.

Reilly, L. (2001). *How Western Australian Parents Manage the Home Schooling of their Children with Disabilities*. Unpublished Honours Dissertation, University of Western Australia, Perth.

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Reilly, L. (2007). *Progressive modification: how parents deal with home schooling their children with intellectual disabilities* Unpublished PhD, University of Western Australia, Perth.

Reilly, L., Chapman, A., & O'Donoghue, T. (2002). Home schooling of children with disabilities. *Queensland Journal of Educational Research*, 18(1), 38-91.

Stroobant, E. (2006). *Dancing to the Music of Your Heart: Home Schooling the School-Resistant Child*. Unpublished PhD, University of Auckland, Auckland.

Stroobant, E., & Jones, A. (2006). School refuser child identities. *Discourse*, 27(2), 209- 223.

- Trevaskis, R. (2005). *Home Education - The Curriculum of Life*. Unpublished MEd, Monash, Melbourne.
- Williams, R. (2004). "Accelerated university access." *Mindscape* 24(1): 7-11.
Title: Accelerated university access.
- Wills, Marie (Ed.) (2010). *The Gifted and Talented Children's Association of South Australia* (pp. 14). Adelaide, SA: GTCASA Committee.

Home Education Networks

Many home educators value their home education networks as they cater for social and education needs of both students and parents.

- Education Queensland, (2003). *Home Schooling Review* (Research-Parliamentary report). Brisbane.
<http://education.qld.gov.au/publication/production/reports/homeschooling.pdf>
- English, R. (2015). Too cool for home school? Accessing underground unschoolers with Web 2.0. In K. Trimmer, A. Black, & S. Riddle (Eds.), *Mainstreams, Margins and the Spaces In-between* (pp. 112-124). London, New York: Routledge, Talyor & Francis Group.
- Habibullah, A. (2004). "Mum, when's recess?" *A glimpse into two contexts of home schooling*. Unpublished Honours of BEd, Monash, Melbourne.
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- Kidd, T., & Kaczmarek, E. (2010). The Experiences of Mothers Home Educating Their Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Issues in Educational Research*, 20(3), 257-275.
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- Lampe, S. (1988). *Home Education: A Survey of Practices and Attitudes*. Unpublished MEdSt, Partial Fulfillment, Monash, Melbourne.
- New South Wales Board of Studies. (2004). *Home education study report of findings*. Sydney: Office of the Board of Studies NSW.
- McColl, A. (2005). *ACE Homeschooling: The Graduates Speak*. Unpublished Masters of Education, part fulfillment, Christian Heritage College, Brisbane.
- Patrick, K. (1999). *Enhancing community awareness of home - schooling as a viable educational option*. Unpublished In partial fulfillment of the requirements of Bachelor of Education (Primary)(Honours), Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW.
- Reader, P. (2009). 'Learning in community': making sense of home education and the changing context of schooling. *Entering the age of an educational renaissance: ideas for unity of purpose or further discord: ANZCIES 09 conference proceedings of the 37th annual conference*. University of New England, Armidale, University of New England.
- Reilly, L. (2004). *How Western Australian Parents Manage the Home Schooling of Their Children with Disabilities*. Paper presented at the Australian Association for Research in Education (28 November - 2 December 2004), University of Melbourne.
- Reilly, L. (2007). *Progressive modification: how parents deal with home schooling their children with intellectual disabilities*. Unpublished PhD, University of Western Australia, Perth.
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Simich, M. (1998). *How parents who home school their children manage the process*. Unpublished MED, University-of-Western-Australia, Nedlands WA.

Thomas, A. (1998). *Educating Children at Home*. London: Cassell.

Use of Community Resources

Parents use a wide variety of community resources. These include the use of libraries, clubs, tutors and specialist classes as well as relevant excursions.

Barratt-Peacock. (1997). *The Why and How of Australian Home Education*. Unpublished PhD, La Trobe, Melbourne. (Published by Learning Books, Yankalilla, SA)

Harding, T. (2006a). *A Study of Victorian Home Educator – Home School Law Reforms*. Paper presented at the Home Education Symposium and Parliamentary Presentation, Camberwell Civic Centre and Victorian Parliament, Melbourne.

Jacob, A., Barratt-Peacock, J., Carins, K., Holderness-Roddam, G., Home, A., & Shipway, K. (1991). *Home Education in Tasmania: Report of Ministerial Working Party October 1991*. Hobart: Government Printer.

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New South Wales Board of Studies. (2004). *Home education study report of findings*. Sydney: Office of the Board of Studies NSW.

Patrick, K. (1999). *Enhancing community awareness of home - schooling as a viable educational option*. Unpublished In partial fulfillment of the requirements of Bachelor of Education (Primary)(Honours), Avondale College, Cooranbong, NSW.

Parents Seeking Information and Public Understanding

Many parents want access to information relevant to their home education programs.

Carins, K. (1997, 29 September - 3 October 1997). *Home education in Tasmania*. Paper presented at the Open, flexible and distance learning: education and training in the 21st century: selected papers from the 13th Biennial Forum of the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA), Launceston.

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Professional Experiences with Home Educated Students/Student Transitions between Home and Mainstream Institutions

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