

# Your Child's Schooling Options

*From Jeff Thibault, Pastor of Marriage and Family  
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Most parents would agree that giving their children a good education in an increasingly complex world is one of their biggest priorities. And often parents question whether they are doing what is best in this area. Reflect on the following questions in order to apply Biblical wisdom in your educational choices.

## **QUESTION ONE: Who has ultimate responsibility?**

Your children are learning from the moment they are born. You are their first and primary teacher, with the ultimate responsibility for choosing the best educational options for your children. The Bible emphasizes the importance of teaching children throughout the day. Deuteronomy 6:6-7 says, "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." Our God believes in utilizing every available opportunity for investing in young lives!

In Arizona, we are blessed with a myriad of educational choices! We may choose not only our children's school, but also involve them in any number of extra-curricular activities which will enhance their education. Prayerfully examine the available options and choose what is best for each child. Questions such as, "Is one form of education better than another?" or "Should I choose a private school, a public school or home schooling?" will be answered by our loving Father when you seek His direction.

Many parents believe that partnering with other people (including public and/or private schools) is best for their children. Others believe that teaching their children at home is the best option. With one of the most lenient home school laws in the nations, we truly enjoy complete freedom to make these choices. But whether your children are under the guidance of other teachers throughout the day, or with you at home, remember to diligently monitor what your children are exposed to and what they are learning. It's your responsibility.

## **QUESTION TWO: What if I want to make a change?**

Your oversight of each element of your children's education should be coupled with an annual assessment of his/her milestones, needs and future goals. Take some time each year to seriously pray about and consider whether your educational goals are being met for each child. You are never "locked in" to a schooling option.

Some questions that may be asked regularly are: "Is my child thriving in his/her educational environment?" "Is the work assigned too easy or too difficult?" "Are my children struggling emotionally with peer pressure?" "Is my child finding it difficult to find the time to complete homework, household chores and/or spend time with the rest of the family?" These and other questions will help you analyze the effectiveness of their educational experience. You may choose a different option at any time.

## **QUESTION THREE: How do we keep faith a priority?**

Every parent wants his or her child to learn, grow and find success in their lives. But how do we measure success? Is it about getting into the right college and landing a dream job? Or being well-rounded with skills in a variety of extra-curricular activities?

Writing down educational goals for your children is recommended, along with developing a plan for teaching faith at home. Regardless of the amount of talents, gifts, and intellect that a student boasts, they are blessed most by parents who will take the time to encourage them in their walk with Christ. Living in our world is not easy! But the investment in your children's character, relationships and faith in Christ will be made much easier when you spend quality time together. Put it in your day-timer!

## **QUESTION FOUR: Who can I talk to about education?**

Talk to Jesus. Pray earnestly, asking for His best for your children. And if you enjoy hearing why others have chosen **certain options**, seek out other parents for discussion. But remember that there is not a "one size fits all" in this area. You will learn much from friends who are open-minded enough to hear your concerns and help point you in the right direction for more information.

North Bible Church has families who have chosen all of the schooling options: public school, private school, charter school and home school. Inquire at the HomePointe Center or online if you have further questions about education. And may God bless you as you seek His best. Get ready...He will certainly answer!

## **GOING FURTHER - Resources**

(Available at the HomePointe Center, or HPC library check out)

### **Recommended Book:**

The *Handbook on Choosing Your Child's Education: A Personalized Plan for Every Age and Stage* (from Focus on the Family) helps readers survey today's educational choices and then make an informed decision about the best path for their children. Features include a checklist to determine individual pros and cons for each child, reproducible worksheets, a resource list, and Frequently Asked Questions. The book also includes information on children with special needs and gifted children.

### **Recommended Websites:**

The "Education" section of *FocusOnYourChild.com* offers insights and tools for evaluating educational options for your child.

For information on home schooling in AZ go to <http://www.afhe.org/>

## **GOING FURTHER – North Bible Church**

For more information or to meet with someone from our staff to discuss the different schooling options please contact Sharon Smith at the North Bible Church office – 480-607-5091.

***NorthBibleChurch.com***

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