

Christian Home-School Students'
Perceptions of Their Socialization

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University of Virginia

In Partial Fulfillment
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by
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze Christian middle-school-aged home-school students' perceptions of their socialization. The researcher interviewed a total of ten middle-school-aged children. All student respondents were from rural localities, encompassing five Virginia counties.

The majority of the previous research on socialization within the home-school population was (a) focused on personality; (b) concentrating on self-esteem; and (c) designed to determine what practices home-school educators were using to meet the students' socialization needs. By contrast, this study was (a) focused on middle-school-aged students; (b) based on information obtained directly from the students themselves; and (c) designed to assess the students' perceptions of socialization in the home school.

In this study, socialization was defined by seven areas: (1) personal identity; (2) personal destiny; (3) values and moral development; (4) autonomy; (5) relationships; (6) sexuality; and (7) social skills. These seven areas were identified by Johnson (1991) following an analysis of the developmental literature as well as the guidelines for socialization determined by the Virginia Department of Education for Virginia middle schools. These seven areas were used to form

a structured interview for data collection. A content analysis of the student interviews was completed using the same seven areas of socialization as the framework.

Given the nature of qualitative studies, the findings and concluding statements were limited to the study population. Based on the literature regarding home schooling and analyzing the findings grounded in the data of this particular study, four major reflections have emerged and are as follows:

- (a) the majority of the students viewed socialization in the home school in a positive manner;
- (b) student perceptions were closely related to their degree of participation in the decision to be home schooled;
- (c) the literature regarding home schooling, while minimal, appears to be in accord with the majority of the students' perceptions, yet it lacks any direct reference to student participation in the decision to home school; and
- (d) much of the responsibility for the success of the home school with regard to socialization rests upon the home-schooling parent.

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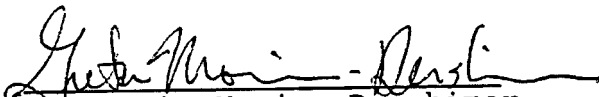
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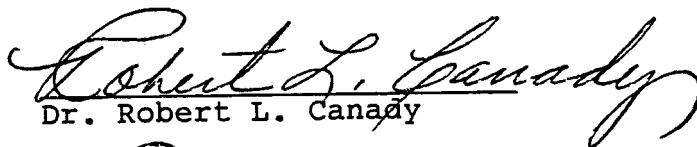
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APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation, Home-School Students' Perceptions of Their Socialization, has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.


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DEDICATION

This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to those whom I love: my husband, Jeff Mullins, who constantly encourages and loves me; my parents, Joseph and Alice Burdo, who continuously inspire and pray for me; and, my LORD and Savior, Jesus Christ, Who ever remains faithful to His Word. "The LORD, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed." (Deuteronomy 31: 8)

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INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background Information

The purpose of this study was to analyze the perspectives of Christian home-school middle-school-aged students regarding their socialization. According to Naisbitt (1982), home schooling is an ever-growing trend of the future. Because this is the case, it is imperative that researchers analyze this alternative approach to education.

Education in the home is not a new phenomenon; however, the modern day home school movement is fairly recent in its inception. People are often unaware as to what is exactly involved in home schooling as it is known today. Dr. Raymond Moore is a well-known advocate of home schooling who has been involved in various aspects of schooling for more than thirty years, serving as teacher, principal, superintendent of both public and parochial school systems, teacher education dean, college president, and university officer. He defines home schooling as "concerned parents teaching their children systematically at home" (Moore, 1985, p. 8). He has also referred to home schooling as a "nationwide move back to home schooling" (Moore, 1982, p. 9).

The contemporary movement back to home schooling has evolved over the years. Early in America's history, in the colonial and early national periods, home schooling of some form was commonplace and even predominant. Such men as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, James Monroe, James Madison, Charles Dickens, and Thomas Jefferson all were instructed at home.

✕ After 1791, the Tenth Amendment of the Bill of Rights proclaimed education as being a function of the states. At this point, however, schooling was not universal, compulsory, or tax supported. Until the late 1800s, American education was primarily a function of the private or religious schools. There was little division between religious and secular authorities, and the Bible was the moral guide for the nation as well as for the educational system. By the 19th century, the state's interest in education was growing, and the formation of universal and public education was on the horizon. Following the Civil War, most states had passed legislation for free public education.

By 1918, almost every state had compulsory attendance laws in effect. But these laws were both blessing and bane to education. Just prior to the Soviet Union's launching of Sputnik in 1957, America began to realize that the educational system was in

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need of drastic improvement. The launching of Sputnik caused many Americans to analyze the educational system, and by the 1960s, skepticism towards the system had become commonplace. People wondered if formal education was the only option, and many families began to consider home schooling as an alternative to formal schooling. Home schooling, the predominant form of education until about World War I, was again on the rise.

Legal Implications of Home Schooling

Is home schooling legal? The foundational issue here is the decision determining whose responsibility the education of children truly is. Does this responsibility lie ultimately in the hands of the state or the parents? In response to this question, former President Reagan stated: "The primary right, duty, and responsibility of educating children belongs to parents. Their wishes should be heeded" (Reagan, 1984, p. 6). The American Civil Liberties Union took the side of the parents when they stated:

In the interest of parental right to choose an alternative to public education (home education with safeguards, such as approval of curriculum or testing of the child)...should be extended to all jurisdictions because the state's interest in assuring minimum levels of education does

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not extend to the control of the means by which
that interest is realized. (Lines, 1987, p.
514)

Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the state
to be certain that each child is receiving appropriate
education of some sort. Home schooling is clearly
a First Amendment right, but gives rise to a quality
control issue: American law requires each child to
be given "schooling" or "equivalent instruction."
Home schooling apparently fits under the phrase
"equivalent instruction" as is indicated by the fact
that by the year 1986, every state permitted home
schooling in some form with only a few states
regulating the practice strictly.

✓ Most states require a minimum number of days
of instruction and competency testing of some sort.
Testing is done by standardized tests or by individual
portfolios as a record of progress (Bedford, 1991).
The National Association of State Boards of Education
compiled state-level standards in 1988. These included
that: (1) home-schooled children be required to
register with their local school systems, county,
or state; (2) minimal criteria such as teacher
certification or the use of approved curriculum
materials be established by the state; (3) parents
be required to report on their child's progress to
the school officials quarterly for two years; (4)

an evaluation system be put into place for those instructing their children at home; and (5) a probation or remediation system be implemented for those children who did not make adequate progress during the school year.

✓ Each state varies somewhat in the regulations imposed on home-schooling parents. The General Assembly in the State of Virginia passed a law in 1984 that regulated home schooling for Virginia. The law included a choice of one of four conditions that parents could meet in order to home school their children legally. The conditions are as follows: (1) a parent must hold a baccalaureate degree in any subject from an accredited institution of higher learning; (2) a parent must meet the qualifications set by the Board of Education for a teacher; (3) a parent must enroll their child in an approved correspondence course; and (4) a parent must follow a course of study in line with the Standards of Learning (SOL) objectives adopted by the Board of Education for language arts and mathematics as well as provide evidence to the district that he or she is able to provide an adequate education for the child.

✓ An organization that deals primarily with home-schooling legalities is the Home-School Legal Defense Association. Officers of this organization are able to provide up-to-date legal information about

✗ this area of concern. Another organization, the Rutherford Institute, also deals with home-schooling issues. These organizations, along with others, are helpful sources of home-schooling legal information.

The Process of Home Schooling

✓ The academic aspect of home schooling is accomplished in several different ways. There are three general types of methodologies that are employed by parents who instruct their children at home. The first method is that of independent study where the curricular materials guide the learner through lessons, and the student learns the material primarily on his own. The second method is that of group teaching where the parent teaches one lesson to several children. The third method is that of tutorial teaching where the parent teaches the subject matter to an individual child. Most families engaged in home schooling use all three of the methods at various times depending on the type of learning and the needs of the learner(s).

✓ Home schoolers follow no standard pattern among themselves except that the environment is generally child-centered. The curriculum chosen is usually customized to the child's achievement-tested ability. This individualized approach to learning is much easier to create because of a characteristically small student

to teacher ratio.

Often, those engaged in home schooling are encouraged to involve the child in what is known as a "cottage industry." This is where the child actually gets involved in a family-type business or an apprentice type of work. Ben Franklin reportedly stated: "Tell me, and I forget; teach me, and I remember; involve me, and I learn." By affording the child the opportunity to learn by doing, subject matter is taught in the form of meaningful experiences.

There are many types of curricular materials available to home-schooling families. Some families use the World Book Encyclopedia and support that material with activities, projects, and other books. The Calvert School, which began officially in 1908, offers the same materials as those produced on their Baltimore campus. A correspondence teacher may be employed with this program, if so desired. Alaska's Centralized Correspondence Course is modeled after Calvert's, but their correspondence teachers visit the students and are often in contact by phone. Such programs as the Hewitt-Moore Child Development Center, as well as the Evangelistic and Faith Enterprises of America, both offer special help to families with children who have learning disabilities. The largest religiously-based curriculum is published by the Christian Liberty Academy. They offer individual

packages of textbooks and workbooks, older textbooks, McGuffey Readers, and a wide range of additional supplies. Many families use the materials published by Bill Gothard's Advanced Training Institute. This program requires involvement on the part of the fathers as well as the mothers and helps the families learn how to incorporate the instructional process into their total way of life. One couple using this program in Virginia was quoted during a personal interview as saying:

The curriculum is called the Advanced Training Institute, and they [the writers] don't like to call it a curriculum. They call it a way of life because if you incorporate the curriculum the way they want you to, it involves all areas of your life, not just your hours in school. So it's not so much that this is school time, and this is not. It's a way of life, not just a curriculum.

This family, along with many others, revolves much of their life around the instruction of their children. It is not a game to these families; rather, the process of home schooling is taken quite seriously.

Socialization Practices of Christian Home Schoolers

A complete education has many facets. This "way of life" encompasses not only the academic aspect

of home schooling but also the socialization aspect of home schooling. In a study done to determine the socialization practices of Christian home schoolers in the state of Virginia, Kathie Johnson (1991) found that these families are engaged in various traditional and nontraditional methods of socialization. Home schoolers seem to have created small communities for the children's education involving the family, church, home-schooling groups and other networks. The families seem to share much in common in terms of their lifestyles and morality. The families are solid ones and deeply committed to their Christian faith. The families Johnson interviewed reported various ways in which they have provided for the socialization needs of their children. According to that study, home-schooling parents seem to be actively pursuing socialization opportunities for their children.

Assumptions of Home Schoolers

Many have erred in studying a particular phenomenon by not becoming fully aware of the underlying assumptions foundational to that practice. The study of home schooling is no exception to that rule. When considering the basic, underlying assumptions of home schoolers, one must be aware that they are different depending on the primary motivation

for home schooling. The following statements are characteristic of those who have chosen to home school for academic, sociological, and religious rationales.

These parents believe that it is within their ability to teach their children, and that the children are capable of learning through this mode. They also believe themselves capable of providing an education in the child's best interests in the academic, sociological, and religious realms. Further, the parents believe that the other alternatives are not in the best interests of their child or children. Finally, these parents are generally not against public or private schooling: one may occasionally encounter a hostile family, but that is the exception and not the rule. Dr. Raymond Moore (1985) states that home schooling parents are aware that the fault for the problems in our schools usually lies with the uninformed or derelict home. These families realize that good schools come only when there are good homes. These parents have made a commitment to get to know their children. They have rejected the option to delegate to someone else the responsibility of educating their children.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify, elicit, and analyze the perceptions of Christian

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middle-school-aged home-school students in regard to socialization in the home-school environment. In the previously cited research study, Johnson (1991) identified and described methods and practices home-school educators are using to meet the socialization needs of their children. In another research study, Taylor (1986) found home-school students to score in the "well adjusted" range of the Piers-Harris Personality Test. However, to date there have been no studies that have focused on the perceptions of home-schooled adolescents themselves about the socialization aspect of their education.

This study focused on the following question:

What perceptions do middle-school-aged home-school students have of the socialization process in the home-schooling environment?

The findings from this study shed light on other research on socialization (Delahooke, 1986; Johnson, 1991; Montgomery, 1986; Taylor, 1986). This study also provides educators with new information about home-school students as well as alerting home-school educators about socialization areas that may be weak and might need improvement. This information, if used wisely, can be used to prevent socialization problems for home-school students.

Limitations of the Study

This study was done using descriptive/qualitative methods. The researcher interviewed ten Christian middle-school-aged home-school students. The names of the students were obtained from the researcher who had done an earlier study with Virginia home-school families (Johnson, 1991) after the parents had given Johnson permission to release their names. Each child's parents were asked for permission to interview their child, and nine of the ten parents agreed. The parents that declined said that their children had been interviewed by newspapers and the like. Due to this fact, they chose not to engage their children in another formal interview.

A structured interview was used to gather data from each informant. The interviews took place in a situation where the parents were not able to hear the responses of the adolescents so that the students would not be influenced by their parents' presence. The adolescents interviewed belonged to the families engaged in the kinds of socialization practices described in the prior study on socialization (Johnson, 1991) and were, in fact, those same families interviewed by Johnson. Those practices are described in detail in the literature review chapter.

Data were gathered through a combination of open-ended and focused questions posed to the

informants. The questions were derived from the developmental literature as well as the State of Virginia's guidelines dealing with socialization in Virginia middle schools, which provided the basis for the Johnson study (1991). The seven areas of socialization identified by Johnson served as the framework for the content analysis of data in this study.

The researcher kept thorough notes, audio tapes transcribed copies of the interviews, and a record of the process in order to ensure reliability. Validity of the construct of socialization was addressed by using the seven general areas of socialization mentioned above.

Definition of Terms

Definitions of primary importance in this study are as follows:

Home school, home schooling, home education --

"...concerned parents teaching their children systematically at home" (Moore, 1985, p. 8).

Student -- ...A Christian middle-school-aged (11-14 years) home-school youngster.

Socialization -- "...that process that instills a member of society with the behaviors and social ways of their culture" (Johnson, 1991, p. 7). The seven

areas of socialization determined in the Johnson study (1991) provided the framework for the construct of socialization.

Personal Identity -- ...The area of socialization dealing with self-esteem.

Personal Destiny -- ...The area of socialization dealing with goal-setting, achievement, and career choices.

Values and Moral Development -- ...The area of socialization dealing with learning social mores and rules.

Autonomy -- ...The area of socialization that is defined as learning or gaining independence.

Relationships -- ...The area of socialization dealing with peer relationships as well as friendships with various age-groups.

Sexuality -- ...The area of socialization dealing with the awareness of sex roles and physical development.

Social Skills -- ...The area of socialization dealing with social manners, development of adult roles, and acceptance of the differences of others.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

The remainder of this study is organized into four chapters. A review of related literature and research is presented in Chapter 2. Research

methodology and procedures are described in Chapter

3. Content analysis findings are contained in Chapter

4. Conclusions and recommendations are presented
in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Home schooling is not a new phenomenon. Since the early 1970s, this practice, now known as the contemporary home-schooling movement, has been on the rise. This movement seems to be somewhat of an outgrowth of the movement back to the home as the center of activity. Many home-schooling families grow their own food, have their children born at home, and seek more natural ways of living (Lines, 1987).

Lines also states that the movement began with a small number of children somewhere near the 15,000 mark in the early seventies and has grown to at least 260,000 today. Ray (1988, August) believes that the number may be as high as one million. This number is not exact because there are a number of families leery of reporting this practice to school officials because of a fear of harassment. It is unlikely that this growth has peaked. It seems inevitable that further expansion will become easier as time goes on. Even state laws have changed somewhat and have eased the legal burden of home-schooling families.

Research on this topic is growing, and many areas linked to home schooling are being scrutinized. Nevertheless, much more research is needed. When

one considers the growing number of children home¹⁷
schooled today, the lack of research on the topic
is surprising. Taylor (1986) states:

In view of the dramatic renaissance of the
home-schooling movement and the confrontations
which are multiplying in educational, legislative,
and judicial circles, it is ironic that there
is a serious lack of research which deals
directly with the subject. Until objective
research is conducted, educators and public
authorities may continue to rely upon hearsay
or intuition. (p. 2)

Cole (1983) spoke of how the schools look at
home schooling as a threat to the worth of the public
schools. In another study, Knowles (1988, November)
spoke of how the general public views home schooling
as a "subversive educational activity" (p. 7).
Apparently, many people see home schooling as a direct
assault on the quality of public or formal education.

Some of the main topics found in the home-school
literature include the rationales for home-schooling,
characteristics of home schoolers, developmental
implications of home schooling, academics in home
schooling, and the socialization aspect of home
schooling. This literature review will focus on all
of those preceding topics as well as the literature
on adolescent development.

The two main areas of concern are academics and socialization. Academics is of vital concern to educators. The research on this topic is growing, and the results seem to be positive. Monfil (1991) advocates home schooling by explaining how home schooling provides an education tailored to meet the child's needs and interests. Home schooling allows the children to receive individualized instruction as opposed to learning the same lessons at the same time as all of the other students. Obviously, the pupil-teacher ratio found in the home school contributes to the feasibility of an individualized instructional program.

Lines (1987) explains how many home-schooling parents, formerly teachers, are able to plan lessons carefully to meet their children's individual needs. Other parents, having less training, are able to consult other teachers or experts on learning and child development. Each family is different in the manner in which they set the pace and plan for the direction of the educational experiences, ranging from highly structured programs to very unstructured programs. The curriculum and style of teaching tend to become that which both the home-school teacher and pupil are most comfortable with as time passes and this will vary from family to family. Divoky (1983) quotes one home-schooling family who described

their approach to education as follows:

'We had a specific curriculum for the first three or four months when we started this,' says Francis Turano. 'But then we found we didn't need it, so now we just use a reference or guide. At first, when we took them out of public school, they seemed to have lost the ability to think and learn on their own - their zest and curiosity. They had lost the natural instinct to learn. Then, after a period of time, it was like: Look out, here we come. They're studying more now, on their own, because they want to. My wife (who was a public school teacher for seven years) and I just oversee their studying now. We assist them, but they're pretty much on their own.' (p. 397)

Many of these parents not only attempt to individualize instruction, but they also enhance the curricular materials. VanGalen (1988b) states that many parents choose and modify existing curricular materials based on their perceptions of what their children's needs and interests may be. Many of the parents are attempting to integrate the subject matter across the curriculum as well. The parents appear to have as a goal their child's attaining the ability to analyze what is learned, rather than simply memorize the facts in the books. They want the children to

learn about the 'ways of knowing.'

Academics, in home schooling, is of primary concern to educators in the public arena as well as in the home-school arena. These parents may appear to be doing a lot all on their own, but that is not totally accurate according to the literature. Home schoolers tend to operate as part of a community. There are families throughout the country that have become part of these groups. Holt (1983) claims that internal communication within the home-schooling movement is rampant. What one parent learns is often passed on to other parents to help them in their quest to provide the best possible education for their children. When one family needs help, other families are part of the network to help provide the solution to the problem. Home schoolers usually have meetings where they can share both ideas and experiences. At these meetings, or group gatherings, projects are often planned. This commonality of interest creates a strong bond and has caused many to "liken it to being a member of a very large but close family" (p. 394).

The second area that seems to be the target of much concern is the area of socialization. In an article giving an overview of home schooling, Lines (1987) states that evidence for home-schooled students' social development is very scarce. For some educators

the issue of academics is second to that of socialization. Wallace (1982), a home-schooling parent, spoke of a meeting her family had with the local school board and the superintendent. At the meeting, the concern was not so much over the quality of academics as it was the issue of socialization. The educators felt that home-schooled children would not be prepared for life's future challenges. Wright (1988), a home-school researcher, mentioned that the area needing further study is that of the children's social development. He says that socialization is "a primary concern to those who have negative perceptions of home schooling" (p. 109).

Ray (1988), a prominent researcher of the home-schooling movement, has mentioned that home-schooling parents have specific goals for their children's socialization. Apparently, only a very few studies have dealt with this topic in depth (Delahooke, 1986; Taylor, 1986; Wartes, 1988; Johnson, 1991). The idea of parents not allowing their children the opportunity of being with their peers daily (for six to eight hours a day) leads many to believe that this will harm the child socially. According to Ray (1986), most debates concerning home education deal with the affective dimension of education.

Tizard and Hughes (1984) seem to think that specific needs children have may not be met in a home

school. Some examples of these are "how to get on with other children, to be a member of a group, to separate from their families, and to relate to, and communicate with, strange adults" (p. 259). Ray (1986) claims that statements of such are "appeals to a priori knowledge" (p. 37). He suggests that there is a need for some evidence, one way or the other, to substantiate the discussion. Kathie C. Johnson (1991), a recent doctoral graduate of the University of Virginia, interviewed home-school parents for her dissertation focusing on the socialization practices of Christian home schoolers in the state of Virginia. In the section dealing with recommendations for further study, she mentioned that a possible future study of interest would focus on the students' perceptions of their socialization. She recommended interviewing the students themselves to elicit their thoughts about the subject. This present study is to be performed in direct response to that suggestion, which is supported by other statements found in the literature.

Research/Theory Used to Support Home Schooling

Many have chosen to home school their children because of research and theory that advocates the kind of learning environment found in the home school. For instance, many see home schooling as an avenue

> for the development of the childhood pattern for
Xgenius. McCurdy (1960) studied the childhood pattern of genius and found the typical pattern to be inclusive of three basic aspects. The first involved a "high degree of attention focused upon the child by parents and other adults" (p. 38). This attention involved a focus on educational activities as well as abundant love being demonstrated for the child. The second aspect involved the child being somewhat isolated from other children, especially those found outside the family. The third aspect was described as "a rich efflorescence of fantasy as a reaction to the preceding conditions" (p. 38). McCurdy went on to say that he felt that the mass education of our public educational system is an example of a learning environment where all three factors found in the childhood pattern of genius have been severely reduced to a minimum, thereby tending to "suppress the occurrence of genius" (p.38).

Another area of research that tends to support the home-schooling environment as being conducive to learning is the area of questioning. A study was performed by Tizard, Hughes, Carmichael, and Pinkerton (1983) to see whether youngsters' questions, particularly 'why' questions, occurred more frequently in certain settings than in others. Some of their conclusions were that: (1), children asked more

questions at home than at school; (2) most questions were asked when an adult was not too busy and not moving around a lot; (3) persistent questioning was more common at home; and (4) teachers asked more questions than did mothers, and children learned that their job was to answer questions, not ask them. In other words, the home seemed to appear to provide for a better environment for asking questions.

Other research focuses on developmental implications of home schooling. Contemporary home schooling is a phenomenon that partially has its roots in developmental psychology. Many experts in this field seem to believe that children remaining at home, until a developmentally appropriate age, actually facilitates academic growth as well as self-esteem. Dr. James Dobson, host of the 'Focus on the Family' radio broadcast, compiled a list of conclusions regarding the developmental advantages of keeping children at home until a later age than is common today. Dobson (1989) reported that delayed formal education for young children is in accordance with research studies conducted in cooperation with the University of Colorado, Stanford University, and several federal government agencies. It was concluded that although most youngsters are initially excited about school, they become tired of school by the time they have completed their third or fourth grade in

school. The youngsters are pressured to the point where they experience "educational burnout" (Dobson, 1989, p. 1). Dobson argued that the studies revealed that children's vision, hearing, and other senses are not appropriately developed for the type of learning programs found in schools until ages eight or ten and possibly even age twelve. Children who are engaged in formal education before age twelve often experience permanent damage to the eyes. The maturation of the central nervous system, as well as the 'balancing' of the cerebral hemispheres, does not typically occur until at least the ages of eight to ten. Dobson contended that little children are often better taught and socialized at home. The child who spends more time with parents than with peers tends to avoid the trap of peer dependency. The child often comes to believe that the family loves and appreciates and actually needs him or her, and this tends to create a deep self-confidence. This kind of socialization reduces the "negative, me-first sociability" (Dobson, 1989, p. 2) that often occurs in the formal school. Dobson suggested that the more children included in the child's interactive peer group, the less the child will be able to form meaningful relationships.

Dobson concluded that "home instruction is often a highly desirable alternative to institutionalized

education during the first ten years of a child's life" (Dobson, 1989, p. 2). He added that the home-school atmosphere produces children who achieve more, scholastically as well as socially, than children who are in the formal school, especially when the home school includes opportunities for service and work of some form (possibly cottage industries).

Education analyst, John Holt (1983), recommended the process of home schooling for reading instruction. He believes that when children are given the opportunity to decide when to learn to read, and they are able to work out the problems associated with reading, most of them will learn to read more efficiently, quickly, and with greater enthusiasm, than children in formal schools.

Dr. David Elkind (1990), one of America's leading Piagetian psychologists, says that sending a child to school too soon can create negative learning outcomes. He approached this concept in terms of reading experiences when he said that many children tend to acquire the trait of learned helplessness in formal schools when they are given tasks too difficult for their ability level. He explained how some children have a hard time learning to read because of the way it is taught. In other words, the task is not controllable or comprehensible for the child, causing the child to shy away from anything to do

with the task of reading.

Dr. Raymond Moore is a prominent child development specialist. Moore (1985b) states:

Reviews of more than 8,000 studies have failed to turn up any replicable research suggesting that normal children should be schooled before age eight. 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 eight and twelve....Except for highly specialized clinical services, even handicapped children are best taught in their homes prior to the age of eight or ten. (p. 63)

Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1970), a professor at Cornell University, has said that children who spend more time with their peers than with their parents tend to become peer-dependent. He claims that if children depend on their peers for their values, to that same extent they will lose their optimism, sense

of self-worth, respect for parents, and their trust in peers.

Benjamin Bloom was once a strong promoter of the Head Start program, a program that encourages early entrance into formal-schooling environments for pupils considered to be academically at risk. Based on his more recent studies of unusually talented children, he is now quoted as having stated that a ✓mother who is truly interested in her child can teach ✓that child much more than that same child could learn ✓in a class of twenty or more children (Shedlin, 1986; Bloom, 1980).

These researchers have played a large part in the home-schooling movement, both directly and indirectly. They have shed new light on the subject of the appropriate age for school entrance as well as other issues related to home schooling. Many home schoolers have espoused these concepts and have chosen the route of schooling their children at home in order to prevent some of the problems mentioned and to provide an atmosphere conducive to creating some of the advantages discussed in the preceding pages.

Rationales for Home Schooling

A primary topic found in the home-school literature is that of rationales given by home-schooling parents for home schooling their

children. Knowles (1988) conducted a study dealing with these rationales for home schooling. Naturalistic inquiry was the chosen method of research for this multisite, ethnographic case study project. The researcher used life history accounts, interviews, and observations for the study. He found the rationales to fall into several specific categories. These were:

- (1) desire for family unity;
- (2) dissatisfaction with academic standards of schools;
- (3) dissatisfaction with the standards of discipline and morality perceived in many public schools;
- (4) opposition to the socialization process in schools;
- (5) desire to provide for the spiritual needs of their children; and,
- (6) a desire for a holistic approach to education emphasizing direct and experiential learning.

(Knowles, 1988, p. 73)

The first category dealt with the home-school parents' family backgrounds. Experiences such as parental neglect or disinterest, parental substance abuse, or parental social maladjustment were cited frequently. These home-school parents wanted to develop strong family relationships with their own children so that

X the children would not need to undergo some of the stresses they had experienced. The second category dealt with the schooling and learning experiences of these parents. They saw home schooling as a place where the educational needs of their children could best be met. The third category revolved around the desire to guard their children from the contemporary problems found in schools today. The fourth category involved the assumption that the parents could provide the best environment for their children's learning. Some of these parents had special needs children, and they felt as though they were best-suited to help their special child. According to Knowles, these parents had experiences in their own personal biographies that led them to take the step in the direction of home schooling their children. He stated that survey studies have provided researchers with various rationales for home schooling, and suggest that the prior experiences of present home schoolers are very influential in their decision to home school their children.

In an article advocating home schooling, Wilson (1988) stated that home schooling is chosen for several reasons. Included were parental religious convictions, the belief that the child could be better challenged academically at home than in a formal school, the parental desire to learn with and teach their children,

and the parental response to a negative schooling experience.

VanGalen (1988b) conducted a study by means of participant observation, interviews including both home-schooling parents and public-education officials, and document analysis. She stated that home-schooling parents feel that their values or views are excluded from what is being taught in the schools. The parents were somewhat critical of the traditional school. A main criticism dealt with grouping, labeling, or tracking children. The parents felt that these practices created inferior educational settings and limited the children's future possibilities. The parents apparently believed that they could provide a better education for their children than could the traditional school. According to VanGalen, the three main reasons parents opt to home school their children are: (1) the belief that home schooling will strengthen their families; (2) the belief that the schools teach values and beliefs contrary to what the parents want the children to learn; and (3) the belief that only the parents can fully understand the child's specific and unique educational needs well enough to best teach the child.

Wartes (1988, November) also studied parental rationales for home schooling by means of requesting home-schooling parents in the state of Washington

to complete a questionnaire dealing with various aspects of their home-schooling experience. He listed the top seven reasons for home schooling to be: (1) religion or philosophy; (2) avoidance of peer pressure; (3) greater parent-child contact; (4) enablement of better self-concept; (5) avoidance of peer competition; (6) more personalized learning; and (7) accomplishment of more academically.

In an article advocating home instruction, Kendall (1982) discusses various reasons why parents should consider home instruction as an alternative option for their children's education. The primary reason given was the author's belief that parents hold the responsibility for their children's education as opposed to the responsibility being held by of teachers, schools, or the Department of Education. The author believed that the other schooling alternatives are not in the very best interest of many children.

Having said all of this, it appears that home-school parents might be hostile toward the schools. According to the literature, that is not the case. Monfils (1991) quoted the editor of Home Education, Mr. Hegener, as stating:

As the movement grows, I hope we'll all begin to value our children differently, because schools aren't at fault so much as parents are at fault.

‘ Their involvement, at home, or in the schools,
makes all the difference in the world. (p. 17)

In an article advocating home schooling as opposed to formal schooling, Holt (1982) said that these home-schooling families are aware of the fact that the nation's schools are a reflection of the society in which they operate. The situation here is that these societal values do not mirror those espoused by most home-schooling parents. Moore (1985) wrote:

A few home educators have been suspicious of all schools, but most of them understand, for they realize that the state does have legitimate interests. Nothing is more appalling to genuine home-schooling parents than the accusing finger which blames teachers mostly for problems in our schools, for they know that the fault often lies with the uninformed or derelict home. They know that good schools are seldom possible without good homes. (p. 1)

These parents are not so much against the traditional schools as they are committed to providing what they believe to be the best education for their children. They have made a decision to get to know their children and in doing so have rejected the option to delegate the responsibility of their children's education to another.

Many of these parents have chosen home schooling

because of strong religious convictions. Some would send their children to private schools, but because of financial reasons are unable to do so (Kendall, 1982). Other families, home schooling primarily for religious convictions, do not even regard private schooling as the best alternative. They see the education (academic, social, and spiritual) of their children to be their responsibility. They believe that in order to be able to educate their children 'completely,' they must center a majority of their lives around this endeavor. A key Biblical verse in this regard was quoted by some home-schooling parents who were asked about their Biblical conviction to educate their children at home. The verse reads:

And thou shalt teach them [God's principles] diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. (Deuteronomy 6:7)

For these people, home schooling is not just a change from one type of schooling to another. Rather, it is a change in their total way of life.

The rationales for home schooling seem to fall primarily into the categories of academic, social, and spiritual reasons. Yet, each family is different regarding the emphasis placed on these three areas.

Divoky stated:

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 willing to be different, to take a socially unorthodox route to rearing the kind of children they want. (p. 397)

Demographics of Home Schoolers

A second main topic found in the research on home schooling focuses on the demographics of home schoolers. Just as the reasons for home schooling are varied, yet reveal some common themes, so the characteristics of home-schooling families vary and converge in relation to certain features. According to Lines (1987), conservative Christians make up at least eighty percent of the home schoolers today. Monfils (1991) states that although the percentage of conservative Christian home schoolers is high, the "number of unaffiliated secular home schoolers is starting to grow at an increasingly rapid pace" (p. 14).

In an article describing home schoolers as pioneers, Divoky (1983) describes home-schooling

parents as seeming to exhibit much personal confidence, enterprise, and tenacity. She describes the act of home schooling as follows:

On a political level, home schooling is an act both revolutionary and reactionary: revolutionary because it flies in the face of established social order; reactionary because it means turning one's back on the larger society and on the time-honored assumption that parents and society share in the rearing of the young. (p. 397)

These parents appear to not be 'society dependent' in the same way in which they hope that their children will not become 'peer dependent.'

In an article advocating home schooling, Wilson (1988) noted that many parents who have chosen the route of home education were once teachers. He thought that perhaps they had chosen to home school their children because they especially enjoyed teaching, felt qualified to teach their own children, or felt a sense of dissatisfaction with the traditional schools.

Mayberry (1988, November) reported on a study providing results from a state-wide Oregon survey and interviews with fifteen home-schooling families. The purpose of the study was to compare the attitudes of home-schooling parents to those of parents whose children attended traditional schools. In the study,

she addressed two main questions about home-schooling families in Oregon. The first question dealt with the demographic make-up of those who chose to teach their children at home. The second dealt with the displayed religious, political, and educational characteristics and attitudes of these families. In response to the first question, Mayberry found the home-schooling parents tended to be well-educated and economically secure. They were also likely to live in residential areas. A large percentage of them worked in technical or professional fields, with a greater percentage being either self-employed or working for small organizations that afforded them much autonomy. Mayberry also found the parents to be highly committed to their religion and very likely to attend church regularly. Many home schoolers were also part of nontraditional religious organizations, having left the traditional religions. They lacked confidence in the major institutions of society, such as the military, the executive branch of the government, and organized religion. The parents appeared to be lacking in confidence in public education and seemed to be desirous of less state and federal government control of schools. They also seemed to prefer that schools would return to either parental or local control. Mayberry found that approximately 65% of the parents surveyed were

motivated to home school because of religious beliefs, 22% were concerned mainly about academic achievement, 11% felt that they could provide the most conducive learning environment for their children's social development, and 2% desired a New Age orientation for their children's schooling. She found the main commonality of the group to be that "these families may perceive home schooling as the only route available to provide the type of ideological and pedagogical training they desire for their children" (p. 30).

In an article designed to synthesize the home-schooling research dealing with general characteristics of home schoolers, Ray (1988) found home schoolers to be characterized as follows:

- (1) Both parents are actively involved in the home school with the mother/homemaker as the teacher most of the time;
- (2) the parents have attended or graduated from college;
- (3) the total household income is \$20,000 to \$30,000 per year;
- (4) over 65% regularly attend religious services;
- a variety of religious backgrounds are represented;
- (5) three children are in the family;
- (6) formal instruction begins at 5.5 years of age;
- (7) a nearly equal number of boys and girls are educated at home;
- (8) 70% of the youth are nine to twelve years old;
- (9) the learning program is flexible and highly individualized, involving

both homemade and purchased curriculum materials; (10) children are formally 'schooled' three to four hours per day, and often spend extra time in individual learning endeavors; (11) they study a wide range of conventional subjects, with an emphasis on math, reading, and science; (12) the home school is operated for more than two years; and (13) home education is chosen for various reasons, including concerns for both the cognitive development of children (e.g., to accomplish more academically and individualize learning to a greater degree) and their affective development (e.g., to teach selected religious or philosophical values, avoid peer pressure, increase parent-child contact, and enhance self-concepts). (pp. 16-17)

Ray thinks that home-schooling families are vitally concerned with their children's total education. He adds that these home-schooling parents see themselves as more than just guardians for their children. Rather, they have espoused the belief that their children's education is primarily their responsibility.

Socialization in Home Schooling

Home-schooling parents have espoused the concept that one cannot just put youngsters into groups and expect them to cooperate and live properly and peacefully with one another. They believe that parents must teach social skills to their children in an appropriate and positive manner. The approach to socialization taken by these parents is different from that of society in general. Home schoolers tend to consider the process of home schooling as a way of life, and the issue of socialization is an integral part of the way they live from day to day.

In the study described in the previous section, VanGalen (1987) examined the home-schooling movement as a "phenomena of sociological and educational importance" (p. 161). VanGalen concluded that home schooling is not just a preference for the parents involved. Rather, home schooling has become "an integral component of the family's broader lifestyle and value system" (p. 161). Home schooling has become a way to pass down the parent's values to the children in the family:

Negative socialization. The issue of socialization in the home-school environment is of primary consideration to home-schooling parents. They look at socialization as being something that

can be either positive or negative. Much of the literature dealing with home schooling, particularly the socialization aspect, speaks of this concept of positive versus negative socialization. An example of negative socialization is exemplified in the following story:

'If you hate Graham, sign here.' This petition was making the rounds in one fourth-grade classroom not long ago. Fortunately, the teacher intercepted the paper just before it reached Graham's desk. This time, at least, Graham was spared. Lots of children find themselves in Graham's situation in school. (Asher, 1982, p. 23)

Many home schoolers also believe that the actual structure of the traditional school is a negative form of socialization for their children. Moore (1984) believes that children are not better adjusted socially if they are with their peers for extended periods of time. He brings up the concepts of positive and negative socialization. Moore claims that the essential element necessary for positive socialization is for the child to feel needed, wanted, and depended on at home. The child who shares family tasks has a greater chance of developing a deep sense of self-worth and a consistent value system.

Peavy (1990) claims that the organization and

culture of the traditional school lead to negative socialization for the child. The best manner in which to properly socialize children never included rushing children from class to class, grouped with various arrangements of their peers. Most children learn to adjust to that, but child behavior specialists are noting that these elements create pressures and tensions that are not beneficial to the child's well-being. Peavy believes that a system designed as such creates abnormal and unhealthy socialization. "Children are turned inward upon themselves and their peers in an interaction rife with peer pressure, peer dominance, peer images, and peer values" (pp. 3-4).

VanGalen (1987) states that home-schooling parents are fearful that if their children are with the children in schools too soon and too long, they will be negatively influenced. These parents are determined to protect their children from the peer pressure found in schools. The parents believe that their younger children are more prone to falling into the traps of negative influences and damaging relationships.

The concepts of peer pressure and peer dependency are seen throughout the home-school literature. Urie Bronfenbrenner (1970) of Cornell has recommended less concern for increased peer contact and more concern for parental attention. He claims that children will become peer dependent if they are with their peers

more than their parents prior to the fifth or sixth grade. He says that these children will become negatively socialized resulting in a loss of self-worth, optimism, respect for their parents, and trust in their own peers. This negative socialization also results in the children being able to get along solely with their own peers and not others of different ages.

Meade (1990) wrote a report dealing with the moral life of America's schoolchildren. He interviewed Robert Coles, a prominent child psychiatrist and Harvard professor, who might be considered part of the "liberal intellectual left" (p. 39). Coles apparently wished for the days when the Bible was part of the curriculum in public schools. The results of his studies seemed to show that the children in American public schools have belief systems that "run counter to traditional values" (p. 40). Apparently, the source of guidance for moral decisions has shifted from parents, teachers, and religious leaders to peers. The pervasive attitude seems to be where "winning is everything. Me first" (p. 40). These results seem to confirm the fears of negative peer pressure in the schools as expressed by home-schooling parents. Coles has come to the conclusion that moral education is necessary. He claims that until 1902, Harvard's mission was to educate men to develop character.

He went on to say that "moral education is the very heart of education" (p. 41). Coles believes that schools should provide education for the whole person, and it is the school's responsibility to instill character in the students.

Activities for positive socialization.

Interaction with peers is an aspect of home schooling, but it appears to be less than the main focus. Home schoolers, in general, plan for opportunities wherein the children will be able to interact with people of different ages as well as their peers. These parents want their children to be exposed to those experiences and people that will contribute positively, as opposed to negatively, to their children's lives while they are still in the formative years.

Rakestraw (1990) speaks of the parental belief that socialization, as it is done in formal schools, is a primary negative aspect of schooling. The parents desire their children to have positive role models as opposed to negative role models. "While those wary of home schooling worry about the children's socialization, the parents worry about the quality of socialization that takes place in the traditional schools" (p. 74). In other words, socialization alone is not the goal; positive socialization is.

This positive socialization seems to be achieved

in a variety of ways. In addition to providing good, stable homes for the children, the parents seek additional experiences that will benefit their children. These parents see the home as the environment most conducive to that idea. Walden (1983) mentions how children can acquire necessary academic and life skills at home without the unhealthy competition found in the acquisition of grades in school. At home, children can receive encouragement from their parents as opposed to unhealthy competition with peers.

Kearney (1984) mentions several suggestions for activities the parents can involve the children in outside the home. Such activities as 4-H, dance classes, Scouts, church groups, sports groups, and music classes are encouraged. Volunteer work and community service are also possible activities available to home-schooling families. Some states now allow for home-schooling children to become involved in public-school events and special classes.

Tye (1985) found that "students who are involved in extra-curricular activities had higher self-concepts than those who did not" (p. 172). Lines (1987) says that home schoolers look for activities that "enhance social development" (p. 513). Home schoolers can also become involved in home-school groups. She claims that home-school children are not isolated but rather

are able to take part in community activities. Many home-schooling families purposely plan for social activities where the children will meet and interact with other people of various ages. Many of these activities involve community service trips, such as visits to nursing homes where the children can read to residents and do special things to brighten their days. The home-schooling families within the community also band together. Because of their common beliefs and practices, the natural result is a bonding of the families, thereby creating an 'extended family' of a sort. One would be amiss to believe that most home schoolers are isolationists among themselves. Their circle of friends and acquaintances extends far beyond the parameters of just other home-schooling families.

Richoux (1987) notes that home-schooling families consistently engage in activities with people of all ages. Community theatre, 4-H, Scouts, ballet, karate, and church activities are just a sampling of activities commonly chosen by home schoolers. An example of home-schooler involvement is seen in the following quote from a home-schooling parent:

Since Ishmael 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 friendly with three

other families in the area that are also involved with home schooling, and Ishmael 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 an American sign language class, all of which give him a chance to mix with other children.

(Marshall, 1980, p. 92)

If these parents had isolation in mind, it would seem that they would not want their children to engage in any community activities. It appears that the parents are not seeking to smother the child but rather to protect and guide the child in the most beneficial manner they believe possible.

Socialization objectives of Virginia middle schools. An interesting comparison in this area of socialization involves looking at the similarities in the mind-set and planned objectives of home schoolers and those of educators involved in the planning for socialization in the middle schools of Virginia. This section deals with the literature detailing the socialization objectives of Virginia middle schools, and shows how similar the ideology is between the Virginia Department of Education and

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home-schooling parents. The other interesting thing to note is just how conducive the home-schooling environment is for the achievement of these primary objectives.

Braddock (1988) says that educators are agreeing to the premise that the best learning environment for middle-school students is one that promotes both academic and social development. In order to provide the best learning environment, the school should "provide an appropriate balance of adult supervision and support along with meaningful opportunities for students to develop a sense of responsibility, independence, and maturity" (p. 1). One of the main goals of home schoolers is to provide meaningful learning experiences. This is often accomplished through adult guidance for the child as he or she participates in various learning experiences.

The very fact that there are fewer children in the care of each adult is a beneficial aspect of home schooling. The literature on the middle-school grades seems to imply advantages found in the opportunity for adolescent relationships with a caring adult as seen in the Virginia Department of Education's (1990) desire for each student to be "known well and advised by at least one adult who works in that school" (p. 14). This is attempted by some Virginia middle schools by providing each student with an adult friend. The

schools seek to provide for close adult supervision and support in the schools. The self-contained classroom provides the best situation for that to occur. The departmentalized situation found in Virginia middle schools is compensated for by providing the child with a homeroom advisor. An adult advisor is assigned to students and is to be viewed as a possible person to go to when a problem is encountered or a need is realized.

The area of self-image is of primary concern in the construct of socialization. The middle-school years are vital ones for the development of a positive self-image. Dobson (1979) says that self-image is not comprised so much of what a person thinks of himself or herself, nor what others think of that person. Rather, self-image is often determined by what one thinks others think of oneself. Learning is often hindered drastically when one's self-image is damaged in some way. Braddock (1988) says that the early adolescent period is vital in the development of an individual's self-image. Early adolescents are constantly questioning their self-image and building their confidence in order to face the challenges they encounter. Braddock says that early adolescents are often very sensitive to interactions with teachers and peers. The reactions they encounter can influence their self-image drastically.

Grouping and scheduling can affect an adolescent's self-image as well, especially when ability groups or tracks are involved. Braddock states that:

research strongly suggests that grouping decisions can have negative impacts on some students if a school establishes broad rigid tracks for student groups based on general tests of performance or ability. In these situations, students in the lowest tracks are often stigmatized by teachers and peers as poor learners. These negative expectations are often internalized by the lowest track students into a poor self-image and a low level of confidence in one's abilities as a learner. (pp. 6-7)

An example of this negative impact on self-image is often seen in cases of 'non-promotion.' An experience such as this can have a negative impact on an adolescent's self-image and confidence in a school situation. Yamamoto (1979) reported that elementary students ranked non-promotion as the third most stressful life experience. In addition, Byrnes and Yamamoto (1985) noted that children who have experienced non-promotion are often "anxious about the reaction of their peers and others to their status as 'school failures'" (p. 213). Because of the very structure of the home school, a child would not need to face a traumatizing experience such as

✓ non-promotion.

This clearly pervasive theme of self-image and self-esteem is seen throughout the Virginia middle-school literature. It is clear that educators seeking to help adolescents are aware of this fragile element in a middle schooler's life. The Virginia Department of Education (1990) states that it is imperative that middle-school students develop positive self-images as well as positive attitudes toward others.

The Department of Education is also seeking to organize middle schools in a way that accounts for specific early adolescent developmental characteristics. Included in these are the need for a strong self-image, an understanding of themselves and their feelings, and the attainment of autonomy. The schools' desire is that adolescents become healthy and contributing members of society in addition to becoming the kind of people who relate well to people of all ages. According to the Virginia Department of Education, "interacting with adults outside the usual teacher-learner relationship, practicing appropriate social behaviors, developing values through instruction and example, and learning to respect different people and cultures should be a part of students' experience in the middle-school grades" (p. 2).

Throughout the Virginia Department of Education (1990) literature, one continually sees the emphasis on a positive learning climate in the schools. This is best accomplished by affording learners with opportunities for success and recognizing that each student is deserving of respect and recognition. It is clear through the recurrence of such statements that Virginia middle-school educators are concerned with healthy development of the middle-school youngster's self-image and self-esteem.

A second prevailing theme throughout the Virginia middle-school literature involves affording the youngsters the chance to broaden their horizons. Often, this is seen through recommendations dealing with community service and personal exploration. For instance, one of the requirements for Virginia middle schools is that each student should choose areas of academics, vocational studies, or fine arts, based on each student's interests and abilities. The Department of Education says that "all students should be involved in activities which enable them to experience success and social growth, and to be of service to others" (p. 9).

Seen throughout the middle-school literature is also a desire for a sense of community including more than just peer groups. This community extends far beyond the borders of the local school and into

the actual far-reaching community. An example of this sense of an extended community of teachers and learners is that the Virginia Department of Education (1990) desires for middle schoolers to actively seek involvement and cooperative relationships with local businesses. It is also recommended that the middle schools be positive contributing factors to the community in which they exist. In addition to these guidelines, parental and community involvement is also recommended for a healthy educational environment. Clearly many of the socialization objectives and goals of those involved in the Virginia middle schools are parallel to those of home-schooling parents, at least in general principle.

Studies of socialization in home schooling.

The issue is now whether or not the home schoolers' activities are accomplishing the desired goals. With that thought in mind, several studies dealing primarily with the results of the socialization of home schoolers need to be examined. Ray (1986) notes that many seem to think that children need the kind of socialization found in schools. He points out that "replicable evidence clearly points the other way" (p. 2). In terms of affective outcomes, Ray (1988) suggests that home-school students are doing at least as well as their peers in formal schools. He refers to studies

that indicate home schoolers have strong self-concepts, have regular involvement with people of varied ages, and appear to be socially well-adjusted. He goes on to note that the home-school students appear to be less peer dependent than their counterparts in formal schools.

Mona Maarse Delahooke (1986) compared nine-year-old home-school youngsters to private-school youngsters in terms of their social/emotional adjustment and academic achievement. On the Roberts Apperception Test for Children (designed to measure children's perceptions of common interpersonal situations), both groups scored in the "well adjusted" range. One interesting observation from the study was that the home-school youngsters were less peer oriented than the youngsters from the conventional school. This reflects the goals of many Christian home-school parents, that being the reduction of peer pressure influence.

Jon Wartes (1988) polled Washington home-school students. He found 52.8 percent of the home-school youngsters reportedly spent from twenty to more than thirty hours each month in community activities; sixty-eight percent spent twenty to more than thirty hours each month with children of various ages (outside the family); and, forty percent spent more than thirty hours each month with peers in their own age group

(outside the family). Wartes' conclusion was that home-school youngsters are not socially deprived.

Linda Montgomery (1989) studied the influence of home schooling on the leadership skills of home-school students. She interviewed students and parents involved in both home schools and traditional schools. She summarized the results of the study, saying that "home schooling is not generally repressive of a student's potential leadership, and may in fact, nurture leadership at least as well as does the conventional system" (p. 8). She also found three other predominant patterns that seemed to stand out as characteristics. First, many home-school parents are leaders in their own way and display those leadership traits delineated in the literature pertaining to leadership. Second, the home-school youngsters seem to receive much affirmation of their worth from their parents. Third, the home-school youngsters are not denied social interaction, nor are they isolated. As a matter of fact, their social activities appear to be many and varied.

John Wesley Taylor (1986), a professor at Andrews University, studied the relationship between self-concept and home schooling in youngsters in grades four through twelve. Taylor used the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale because of the need for positive self-concept for effective learning. He chose to

study self-concept because of its close link with values, self-evaluation, and social competence. He found that the home-school youngsters' scores were significantly higher than the scores of youngsters in traditional schools. Taylor concluded that "insofar as self-concept is a reflector of socialization, the findings of this study would suggest that few home-schooling children are socially deprived" (pp. 160-161).

Taylor believes that questions are legitimate regarding the benefit of home schooling and its impact on children. He states that many people seem to feel that home-school children are socially deprived, which can create a negative self-concept. He claims that home-school advocates believe that the positive socialization and the opportunity for individualized instruction found in the home-school environment actually "enhance the child's self-image and encourage superior academic achievement" (Taylor, 1986, p. 2).

Peavy (1990) notes that first-hand observations of home-school students typically produce positive reports describing the children as being mature, stable, responsive, and self-assured. According to Peavy, many parents state that the main factor in their decision to home school their children came from observing the social skills of home-school

students. Peavy states that "certainly one should⁵⁷ not underestimate the contribution to social values and social character that comes from a firm foundation in moral and spiritual values common to most home schools" (p. 4).

Bedford (1991) made mention of the leadership potential of the home-schooled children. She noted that when home-schooled children are engaged in activities with public-school students, the home-school students tend to be given leadership positions. For instance, the home-schooled boys in a local Boy Scout troop were elected into patrol leadership positions. Bedford stated that when it comes to formal-school children's perceptions of home-schooled children, "rather than considering the home schoolers 'odd,' children seem to recognize their independent qualities" (p. 18).

The Johnson study. The Johnson study (1991), on which this study is based, asked what the Christian home-schooling parents (in the state of Virginia) were doing to meet the socialization needs of their children. Using guided interviews, Johnson conducted case studies of ten home-school families with middle-school students as well as students in other age brackets. She determined that the seven main categories of socialization are: X(1) personal

identity; (2) personal destiny; (3) values and moral development; (4) autonomy; (5) relationships; (6) sexuality; and (7) social skills. These categories were identified by looking at both the developmental literature and the literature published by the Virginia Department of Education.

The first area investigated was that of personal identity. The respondents included such things as church attendance, religious beliefs and values, Biblical perspectives of self, lack of peer pressure to conform, encouragement of personal strengths, money-earning jobs, household responsibilities, time and energy devoted to the children, and the children's pursuit of individual interests as contributing factors to the children's personal identity.

The second area investigated was that of personal destiny. The respondents included such things as allowing the students to be engaged in real-life work situations, earning money for themselves, conveyance of high expectations to the child, student involvement in planning decisions about the school work, and exposure to different career options as contributing factors to the children's development of personal destiny.

The third area investigated was that of values and moral development. The respondents included such things as religious beliefs and faith, regular church

attendance and involvement, family communication of values and expectations, encouragement of volunteer service, the ability to meet the needs of others, exhibition of a strong work ethic, parental modeling, curriculum materials, and real-life experiences involving self-discipline and problem-solving as contributing factors to the children's development of values and morals.

The fourth area investigated was that of autonomy. The respondents included such things as giving the children home, school, and business responsibilities, self-discipline and self-direction with school work, parental praise and encouragement to reinforce independent behavior, and parental encouragement to make personal decisions as contributing factors to the children's development of autonomy.

The fifth area investigated was that of relationships. The respondents included such things as interaction (both in the family and outside the family), church activities (choir practice, youth group meetings, regular services, drama groups, volunteer services), 4-H, home-school group activities, sports activities, Scouts, interaction with others outside the peer group, and extended family ties as contributing factors to the children's development of healthy relationships.

The sixth area investigated was that of sexuality. ~

The respondents included such things as family-life curriculum and family discussions as contributing factors to the children's development of a proper understanding of sexuality.

✓ The seventh area investigated was that of social skills. The respondents included such things as the teaching of manners in real-life experiences, clear transmission of parental expectations, responsibilities to develop adult roles, and family discussion about the specialness and uniqueness of every type of person as contributing factors to the children's development of social skills.

Johnson noted that the home-school educators in this study reported creating small communities for learning within the family, church, and home-schooling groups. She concluded that:

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 other students and have provided controlled access to others as well. (Johnson, 1991, p. 208-209)

Student attitudes. The final area of research

on home-schools to be looked at is that of student attitudes toward home schooling and particularly toward the socialization aspect. There is very little that refers to this side of the issue in the literature. Nevertheless, where there is reference to this topic, the instances found seem to represent positive feelings of children toward the issue of home-schooling socialization. One female home-school student commented:

'People often seem to think that since I'm fifteen, the only people I can socialize with are high schoolers. I find that limiting. I know twenty-seven-year-olds, and they don't just socialize with people in their twenties. They socialize with everybody. Home schooling has given us the flexibility to spend time with younger and older people, and I think that has better prepared me for dealing with people of all ages after I graduate from high school.'

(Ray, 1988, p. 24)

The second indication of student attitudes toward home schooling in the literature involves a reported (Charvov, 1988) discussion between a young man and his parents:

Dana: Before I was taken out [of 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 put 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. That was one of the nicest things to come from my home-schooling experience. And it has continued into college.

Danae [the mother]: Did you develop a confidence in yourself because you were having successful experiences?

Dana: Yes, that helped too. If you can have success all the time instead of having to judge yourself on how the rest of the class is doing, it helps. Not having competition helps a lot.

Roger [the father]: How did you feel when we took you out of school?

Dana: It was kind of exciting. It was my decision to come out. My parents let me know how they were feeling, and I agreed.

Roger [the father]: What did your friends think?

Dana: They all thought it was kind of weird. The friends that weren't close fell away. But those that were close and that I really cared

about were still there. I just told them ⁶³ that
my parents were teaching me at home.

Roger [the 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 [the father]: 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. (Charvov,
1988, pp. 88-89)

Bedford (1990) included in her report on home
schooling in Virginia a conversation with a local
home-schooling family. The child was involved in
a course given by a local Ham Radio club where the
goal was to earn a radio license. He had become
involved with radios and electronics, and so his father
purchased an oscilloscope for him at the University
of Virginia's annual auction. In addition to this,
an electronics engineer in the area offered to teach
him some things about the field. Bedford states that
"it's no wonder that this child, after visiting a

local junior high school and being asked if he wished to attend it, replied that, no, he would miss out on all the neat things he can do at home" (p. 19).

Need for Further Research

These studies and reports have begun to add to the growing body of literature related to home schooling. Nevertheless, the body of research on this topic is quite limited. To date, very few studies deal directly with the effects of home schooling on academic achievement or social development. This present study sheds some light on this subject, focusing particularly on children's social development, and reveals areas worthy of further study in relation to the home-school movement.

Adolescent Socialization Issues

This final section addresses some recent research dealing with adolescence. In order to understand the perceptions of middle-school-aged youngsters about home schooling, or any other topic, it is imperative that one understands the period of early adolescence.

Agreeing with Erickson's theory of psychosocial development, Berzonsky, Rice, and Niemeyer (1990) discuss the primary developmental task of early adolescence, that being the adolescent's attainment of a stable personal identity. Incorporated in with

the construct of personal identity is that of self-image. Palazzi, DeVito, Luzzati, Guerrini, and Torre (1990) point out that research has shown a relationship between problems in childhood and adolescence and the development of a healthy self-image. Such events as a mother's death before the child's age of eleven, parental separation or divorce, or other "depressive episodes in childhood" (Palazzi, et al., 1990, p. 54) all have a bearing on one's self-image. Recent research has investigated the influence life events have on the psychological distress of adolescents. The area of self-image in the adolescent's life is a very fragile area, especially during the difficult adolescent years. Self-image has a direct effect on one's development of personality, relationships with family members and outsiders, ability to cope, moods, and health in general. A disturbed self-image can have a strong impact on the life of the adolescent as a whole.

Espousing the Freudian theory that the primary adolescent task is to break ties with parents and replace those ties with peer relationships, Quintana and Lapsley (1990) wrote that adolescents can remain somewhat attached to parents while becoming differentiated from them. In other words, adolescents can actually "maintain both a sense of communication and trust with parents while also seeking a more

differentiated relationship with them" (p. 382).⁶⁶

In addition, the area of choosing role models was discussed by Klingele (1979). He noted that typical adolescents often "seek...models other than parents" (p. 23).

Santrock (1987) notes that adolescents continue to be somewhat connected to parents as they head toward autonomy. Attachment theorists differentiate between what is known as secure attachment and insecure attachment. Secure attachment is a healthy bond developed between an infant and its guardian. It is believed that this bond promotes a healthy sense of exploration because the infant can return to the security of the guardian if a difficult challenge is encountered. On the other hand, insecure attachment refers to a situation where the infant either avoids or is ambivalent towards the guardian. This type of attachment is thought to be linked with abnormal infant behavior.

This idea of secure attachment is important for adolescents as well as infants. A secure attachment in infancy will often be continued into adolescence in regard to the relationship between the parents and the adolescent. A healthy, secure attachment in adolescence is thought to influence relationships as well as aid in the development of personal identity. It is thought that adolescents who do not believe

that they have a stable home environment to turn to in times of trouble tend to seek autonomy by negative means. In addition, they are more likely to develop a negative self-image than a positive self-image.

Klingele (1979) described adolescents as being "unsure of what lies ahead, they often have a pessimistic view of the future, adulthood, and life in general" (p. 22). Raskin (1989) also addressed personal destiny issues. He discussed identity status research which led to implications for career counseling. It was noted that an adolescent's inability to determine what occupation to pursue is quite disturbing to the adolescent. Vocational counseling is designed to help adolescents determine the best vocational route to pursue, based on their abilities and interests. Raskin noted that "much of how we conceptualize vocational choice is thought to be intrinsically related to self-concept" (pp. 375-376). This being the case, self-concept seems to influence many areas of an adolescent's life, both present and future.

Mann, Harmoni, and Power (1989) discussed evidence regarding the adolescent's development of competence in decision making. They note that "the ability to make sensible decisions is one of the key characteristics of the mature adolescent" (p. 265). Decision making is crucial, for the results of

incompetence in this skill are far-reaching. The authors note that an adolescent's tendency towards peer conformity often delays the "growth of personal control and responsibility for choices" (p. 267). Studies show that the peak time for peer conformity is between the ages of twelve- to thirteen-years-old. The need to conform appears to decrease when the adolescent reaches the ages of fifteen- to seventeen-years-old. These findings imply that youngsters are most apt to succumb to peer pressure during the early adolescent years. This research seems to substantiate home-schooling parents' concern about early adolescent tendencies towards peer dependency.

Klingele (1979) noted that adolescents often have an "increased desire for making personal decisions" (p. 23). Brown and Mann (1990) examined the relationship between family structure and adolescent decision making. They noted that one of the most important tasks of adolescence is the development of autonomy. Autonomy is gained gradually, and independent decision making is the main evidence of independence. According to this study, "parents are the most influential in training adolescents to become autonomous and competent decision-makers" (p. 25). They noted that the larger the family, the less of a role adolescents have in family decision

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making. It was also mentioned that parental modeling plays a large part in adolescent decision making. Parents who provide more positive models of decision making will tend to have adolescents with greater competency and participation in decision making. The results of this study showed that healthy communication between parents and adolescents, positive parental decision making modeling, and a strong family unit were all significantly related to the success of the adolescents' decision making skills. The study confirmed the home-schoolers' belief that a healthy family environment is vital in the socialization of adolescents, especially as it relates to decision making.

Klingele (1979) described adolescence as a time when "outside pressure by peers coupled with the desire to please adults creates emotional tension" (p. 23). Pombeni, Kirchler, and Palmonari (1990) conducted a study investigating adolescent identification with peers as a means of surviving struggles during the difficult years of adolescence. Adolescence was described as a stage of major discomfort. It was noted that adolescence is a time when the peer group is of primary importance, and that typical difficulties faced by adolescents often contribute to family conflict. This can negatively influence relationships, and parents will often be alienated as a source of

support. Often, the greater the gap between the values of the adolescent's peers and those of the adolescent's parents, the greater the tension will be between the parents and the adolescent. An interesting observation was that "the more the adolescents identified with their group, the more favorably they perceived themselves, their groups, and groups different from their own" (pp. 353-354). Perhaps this is why home-schooling parents tend to carefully direct the development of relationships for their adolescents. The proper formation of surrounding groups might lead to a healthier self-image for the adolescent.

Hortacsu (1989) conducted a study to determine targets of communication during adolescence. Most studies have shown adolescence to be a time when peer friendships increase and parental friendships decrease. The adolescents in the study were asked to identify their closest friends. They named same-sex friends and mothers to be the closest friends. In addition to that, it was noted that as the adolescents got older, they named more peer friendships than family friendships. This study leads one to believe that the typical adolescent develops more and deeper friendships with peers than with family.

DiBlasio and Benda (1990) analyzed adolescent sexual behavior. The research found that adolescents are more likely to engage in sexual activity when

x their friends are also engaging in sexual activity.

"This strategy assumes that delinquency is learned from peers, that deviant peers mostly transmit definitions favorable to deviance, and therefore that the number of friends engaged in norm violation is correlated with one's own deviance" (p. 451). Such things as reinforcement, positive and negative definitions, law-abiding or law-violating behavior, parental reaction, modeling, religiosity, closeness to parents, academic performance, and gender were also related.

Verduyn, Lord, and Forrest (1990) conducted a study in order to evaluate the effectiveness of social-skills training in schools. Social skills, as defined for this study, involve one's ability to appropriately interact with other people in certain social situations. It was noted that children's perceptions of their success in social situations can have an influence on their self-esteem. The teachers involved in this study perceived a definite need for a social-skills program in the schools.

Each of these studies and references to research deals directly with the issue of socialization in adolescence. It is interesting to compare the results of these studies conducted with adolescents in the traditional-school environment with the comments of home-school adolescents interviewed in the study

reported here. Such a comparison is presented in
chapter 5 of this report.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The purpose of this study was to investigate the home-school socialization process as perceived by Christian middle school-aged home-school students. No specific hypotheses could be posited due to the "emergent design" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 221) of the study. Rather, the interview format was designed to elicit student perceptions regarding their socialization.

Prior research in the area of socialization in home schools has been minimal, and no research has been done to determine student perceptions regarding this subject. There appears to be a large void in the literature dealing with this aspect of home-school research, and much concern seems to fill the minds of many educators regarding this topic. Ray (1986) states that "socialization is the affective dimension most frequently mentioned in discussions or debates concerning home centered learning" (p. 37).

I chose to organize the study around the seven areas of socialization found in the Virginia Department of Education literature for middle schools, as well as in the developmental literature. These were identified in the Johnson study (1991) which was

performed to determine the socialization practices of Christian home-school parents in Virginia. Johnson recommended that "a study that would prove interesting in relation to this one would be to interview the home-school students regarding their socialization" (p. 210-211). This present study was performed in direct response to that recommendation. Each child interviewed was asked both open-ended and closed-ended questions that were designed to focus on the seven areas of socialization.

Theoretical Perspective

This study was a descriptive/qualitative investigation of the socialization issue as perceived by middle-school-aged home-school students. Qualitative research methods, promoted by those espousing the naturalistic paradigm, have been long accepted as trustworthy methodology in anthropological, sociological, and historical studies. However, this type of naturalistic research has only recently been accepted and supported by researchers studying teaching and learning.

In the field of research on teaching, it has become accepted practice to view programmatic research in terms of a "descriptive-correlational-experimental loop," a phrase first introduced by Rosenshine and Furst (1973). They argued that observations of "what

is" should be the first step in exploring a given topic. Such descriptive studies would identify important variables, which could then be examined further in correlational studies designed to determine relationships between and among variables. Finally, experimental studies would test promising correlational relationships for causal effects. Rosenshine and Furst conceived of descriptive research as basically quantitative, and merely the initial step in the then-predominant quantitative research paradigm, but others have since argued that qualitative approaches fulfill the descriptive function more adequately, and serve to enrich and strengthen our understanding of teaching and learning (e.g., Evertson & Green, 1986; Gage, 1989).

Michael Quinn Patton (1990) speaks of qualitative analysis as enabling the researcher to study events, issues, or cases in greater detail than quantitative analysis. He states:

A structured, multiple-choice questionnaire requires a deductive approach because items must be predetermined based on some theory or preordinate criteria, such as program goals specifying what is important to measure. An open-ended interview, by way of contrast, permits the respondent to describe what is meaningful and salient without being pigeonholed into

standardized categories.

In practice, these approaches are often combined. Some evaluation questions are determined deductively while others are left sufficiently open to permit inductive analyses.

(pp. 45-46)

This study combined the two approaches spoken of above. I determined prior to the interviews the areas of importance and sought to keep the informants focused on those specific areas of socialization described earlier in chapter 1. Because of the desire for in-depth information, open-ended questions were posed to allow the respondents to answer as completely as needed.

Qualitative Analysis

Qualitative analysis was the methodology chosen for this study because of the desire to gather in-depth data. The study was conducted in accordance with standard qualitative evaluation methods to ensure trustworthiness of the findings. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) have defined qualitative research as follows:

There are five features of qualitative research, as we define it. All studies that we would call qualitative do not exhibit all the traits with equal potency. Some, in fact, are almost completely barren of one or more. The question

is not whether a particular piece of research is or is not absolutely qualitative; rather it is an issue of degree. As we mentioned earlier, participant observation and indepth interview studies tend to be exemplary.

(1) Qualitative research has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument....

(2) Qualitative research is descriptive....

(3) Qualitative researchers are concerned with process rather than simply with outcomes or products....

(4) Qualitative researchers tend to analyze their data inductively....

(5) 'Meaning' is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. (pp. 27-29)

This study used indepth interviews in home-school settings and participant observation in selected naturally occurring non-school activity settings. Analysis of the data was inductive and descriptive. The focus of the study was to determine the meanings that home-school students ascribe to socialization aspects of their education.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) speak of the issue of trustworthiness in qualitative research as expressed by the terms credibility, dependability, and confirmability. The terms seem to somewhat parallel

the quantitative terms of validity, reliability, and objectivity. This qualitative inquiry was guided by the principles established by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to ensure trustworthiness: credibility, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility of the Study. Credibility, one of the three primary elements of trustworthiness, refers to measures taken to ensure specific and comprehensive authenticity of the data and findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) say that credibility may be protected by five safeguards: (1) prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation; (2) peer debriefing; (3) negative case studies; (4) referential adequacy; and (5) member checking. (p. 301)

Triangulation, peer debriefing, and member checking were the safeguards used for this study. This study's design was clearly defined, including ten students from rural areas in Virginia. Ten interviews were conducted over a period of four weeks.

Triangulation was achieved by comparing data from student interviews, parent interviews, and observation. Each interview served as a main point of reference for the study. When a specific topic became unclear, further questions were asked to elicit richer and more accurate data. The data gathered by Johnson (1991) when parents were interviewed about

the socialization aspect of their child's home-school education provided another source of information. The researcher also observed three of the children in social settings, thereby providing the third prong of triangulation.

Selected education professors as well as a prior doctoral student served as peer debriefers at various points throughout the study. Member checks were conducted during the interview by asking the respondent if the responses were understood correctly. Follow-up interviews were conducted with the students, as needed, to confirm and clarify existing data.

Dependability of the Study. Dependability, the second of the three primary elements of trustworthiness, is the defensibility of a certain process as related to a certain product. Lincoln and Guba (1985) cite ten indicators of dependability:

- (1) appropriate inquiry decisions and methodological shifts,
- (2) inquirer resistance to early closure,
- (3) comprehensiveness of categorical scheme and exploration of relevant areas,
- (4) resistance to undue practical pressure,
- (5) inquirer responsiveness to positive as well as negative data,
- (6) inquirer resistance to cooptation,

- (7) absence of the Pygmalion Effect,
- (8) absence of the Hawthorne Effect,
- (9) sound sampling decisions, and
- (10) extent of triangulation. (p. 324)

Appropriate inquiry decisions and methodological shifts were made in response to the emergent design of the study. Several inquiry decisions and methodological shifts were already made prior to the ten formal interviews due to the information gained from the six pilot study interviews. These pilot interviews were conducted with middle-school students, except for one which involved a University of Virginia student who had been home schooled from the third grade through the twelfth grade. The pilot interviews served as practice interviews which were designed to spot problematic questions, procedures, or design. The pilot interviews also led the researcher to conclude that the best issue for this study to investigate would be student perceptions, rather than student attitudes, as was previously planned. The study was designed with a scope and depth sufficient to avoid early closure. The comprehensiveness of a categorical scheme was protected by the use of the seven areas of socialization as explained earlier. Relevant areas were accounted for in the interview's emergent design.

All interview data were transcribed, including

both positive and negative responses. These responses were included in the findings in the form of direct quotes when needed. Researcher cooptation was guarded against by categorizing and using student responses in chapter four.

The Pygmalion Effect was guarded against in the study by including numerous respondent quotations in chapter four. In addition, all interviews were recorded and transcribed, and conclusions were defended to the peer debriefer. The Hawthorne Effect was also guarded against in the study. The interviews were related to the perceptions of students regarding their socialization in the home-school environment. No evidence of the students adding or deleting any responses to impress the researcher was found.

Sampling decisions were designed to meet the criteria of Christian, middle-school-aged home-school students living in a rural area of Virginia. An additional factor in sampling involved focusing on interviewing the children belonging to the families interviewed in the earlier Johnson study (1991).

Triangulation was accounted for as stated in the prior section. The data were content analyzed prior to the identification of themes. All categories, findings, and concluding statements are grounded in the data and the literature review.

Confirmability of the Study. Confirmability, the third of the three primary elements of trustworthiness, refers to the extent to which the findings and conclusions of the study are supported by the existing data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) list five elements of confirmability: (1) extent to which findings are grounded in the data collected; (2) extent to which inferences are logical; (3) usefulness of the category structure; (4) degree of inquirer bias affecting findings; and (5) appropriateness of 'accommodation strategies'. (p. 323)

All findings were grounded in the data. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Interview and observation data, notes, and a log were kept for purposes of an audit check. The categorical structure was based on the Virginia Department of Education's references and the developmental literature's references to the seven areas of socialization appropriate for Virginia middle-school-aged youngsters. Chapter four contains numerous quotes from the data to eliminate researcher bias, and raw data are distinguished from researcher interpretations. All quotations are referenced by indicating the assigned name and the page number within the transcript document. All analyses, findings, and concluding statements are outgrowths of the data base.

The Interview as a Research Tool

The interview was chosen as the research tool for this study because it afforded the opportunity to elicit student perceptions otherwise unattainable. I chose to combine the guided interview approach with the standardized open-ended approach (Patton, 1990). Patton describes this approach as follows:

A standardized open-ended format may be used in which each person is asked essentially the same questions. The interview questions are written out in advance exactly the way they are to be asked during the interview. Careful consideration is given to the wording of each question before the interview....

The basic purpose of the standardized open-ended interview is to minimize interviewer effects by asking the same question of each respondent....it is possible to combine a guided approach with a standardized open-ended approach. Thus a number of basic questions may be worded precisely in a predetermined fashion, while permitting the interviewer more flexibility in probing and more decision-making flexibility in determining when it is appropriate to explore certain subjects in greater depth or even to undertake whole new areas of inquiry that were not originally included in the interview

instrument. (pp.285+287)

Consistent with these approaches, questions and possible probes were written out prior to the interviews (see Appendix A). Each question was formulated to elicit student responses in one of the seven areas of socialization. The questions provided structure for the interview but also allowed for interviewer probes to elicit richer responses. Within each section of the interview (sections corresponded to the seven areas of socialization) the initial questions were most open-ended, and later questions more focused.

Weaknesses of the guided interview, such as important or salient topics being inadvertently omitted or interview flexibility in sequencing and wording questions, can result in substantially different responses, thus reducing the comparability of responses. These problems were combatted by the strengths of the standardized open-ended interview. In addition, the weaknesses of the standardized open-ended interview were combatted by the strengths of the guided interview. One main strength of the guided interview is the opportunity for the interview to remain fairly conversational and situational. (Patton, 1980)

In conducting pilot interviews for this study, the researcher tested this interview format. Some

questions were revised in order to make the wording more understandable to the students. The questions included in Appendix A were successful in promoting conversational interviews.

Self as Instrument

In qualitative research the researcher becomes an "instrument" in both the data-gathering and data-analysis phases. It is therefore important to identify possible biases the researcher may bring to the study, and guard against these, as well as to identify the strengths the researcher contributes to the study as a result of prior experience. I have had experience as an educator in lower-elementary, upper-elementary, and middle-school grades. This experience with children and adolescents enabled me to relate to the children who participated in this study, a strength necessary for interviewing this particular age group. My prior experience as an educator also gave me a background for understanding the typical socialization practices found in the traditional school.

The fact that my religious affiliation is that of conservative Christian also played a part in the study. Conservative Christian parents appear to be more prone to allow a researcher with similar beliefs to interview their children, as was evidenced by the

parents allowing Kathie Johnson to give me their names when they learned of my religious affiliation. Perhaps, had I not been of like faith, fewer doors might have been opened. For the students involved in the study, the fact that I am a Christian appeared to make talking about this issue "safer," as was the case in the prior study on socialization among Christian home schoolers (Johnson, 1991). In addition to these aspects influencing the study, my Christian world view undoubtedly influenced the way I interpreted the data, and readers should take this into account.

At the time of the study, I was a fourth-year doctoral candidate at the University of Virginia majoring in instruction, with minors in both school administration and reading. In preparation for this study, I studied both qualitative and quantitative approaches and methodologies. I also performed a case study using the observation and interview format with a home-schooling family.

Study Sample

For the pilot interviews, student respondents were obtained by referral from home-school families known to me. However, student respondents for the actual study were obtained from Kathie Johnson (1991), the prior researcher. The fact that nine of the ten families were willing for further research to be

conducted speaks highly of the manner in which Johnson conducted her research. Although all children were Christian middle-school-aged home-school students living in a rural area of Virginia, I was aware that the students' socialization situations are varied. The families to which the children belong were representative of prior demographic profiles of home-school families (Gustavsen, 1981; Wartes, 1988). All students were part of families guided by conservative Christian principles.

I made contact with the students' parents by telephone after Johnson had obtained permission for the names of the families to be released. The purpose of the study was re-explained and the parents' permission was again requested. The students were interviewed only after parental and student permission had been secured.

Data Collection

A standardized open-ended interview composed of eight areas was conducted with each student. The interview was opened with a basic explanation of what kinds of questions would be forthcoming as well as asking the children if they would agree to having the interview taped for transcription purposes. All students gave permission for the taping to occur. Questions designed to elicit student responses

regarding the seven areas of socialization delineated by Johnson (1991) were then asked. The areas of socialization included (a) personal identity; (b) personal destiny; (c) values and moral development; (d) autonomy; (e) relationships; (f) sexuality; and (g) social skills. However, I reserved the right to be somewhat flexible in questioning the students. In conclusion, some general questions were asked about their perceptions and attitudes toward socialization in the home school, and the students were thanked for their part in the study.

Following the interviews, three students were observed in selected non-school activity settings. One student, Dave, was observed at one of his Civil Air Patrol meetings. The second observation took place at a pizza restaurant with Carrie and her youth group peers. The final observation took place at a church car wash, where Keith was interacting and working with people of various ages. In order to avoid discomfort, I refrained from taking detailed notes during the observations. However, immediately following each observation, basic impressions from the observation were recorded.

Data Analysis

In order to ensure trustworthiness of the study, several procedures were followed. Each interview

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was recorded and then transcribed. Following that, a content analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted. The transcripts were analyzed and student responses were categorized. Three interviews were carefully read in order to identify types of comments made, and twenty-two categories emerged from the data. The interviews were then separated by section so that the students' answers could be viewed within the original seven topics. It became clear that the students were not compartmentalized in their answers. Very often, their responses in one section of the interview would pertain to other sections of the interview. After identifying emergent categories and then looking at the original topical structure of the interview data, the two types of data were blended together to form a complete picture of the responses.

After conducting a thorough analysis of the data, I concluded that it would be most useful to report the data according to the seven areas of socialization because of the way the study had been conducted, including the way the interview was designed, and the way the students answered the questions. However, one further category not originally mentioned, student attitudes, was added to the list of seven categories. All resulting categories were grounded in the data that were collected.

After initial analysis of patterns of response within the eight major categories (topic areas), an interesting relationship between student participation in the decision to be home schooled and student attitude about home schooling was identified. In order to illustrate this relationship in greater detail, four case studies were developed, with each case representing a different pattern of participation in the decision to be home schooled. Within these cases, some triangulation of data was conducted, using information from student interviews, earlier interviews with parents (Johnson, 1991), and observations of selected students in their outside activities.

Finally, the general patterns of student responses to the interview questions were compared to the general findings from the parental reports about socialization activities reported in the Johnson study (1991), as well as to the literature on home schooling and on adolescent socialization.

Limitations

The study was confined to Christian middle-school-aged home-school students living in rural areas of Virginia. This study was restricted to this group and cannot be generalized to all home-school students. This study provides a rich description of these students' perceptions of

socialization in the home-school environment. The reader must determine the relevance of the findings and concluding statements to other home-school socialization situations.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS OF THE CONTENT ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study was to answer the following question: What perceptions do Christian middle-school-aged home-school students have of the socialization process in the home-schooling environment?

I addressed this question by conducting structured interviews with ten middle-school-aged home-school students and by analyzing their responses.

Organization of the Chapter

This chapter is comprised of eight sections in which the findings of the content analysis are presented. The first seven sections focus on the seven areas of socialization: (a) personal identity; (b) personal destiny; (c) values and moral development; (d) autonomy; (e) relationships; (f) sexuality; and (g) social skills. The eighth section deals with student attitudes.

Each section is introduced with a chart presenting the questions asked along with the common and unique responses. Each chart is then followed by a summary of the findings pertaining to that area of socialization. All summaries begin with a definition of the categorical boundaries.

Each student was given an alias in order to protect anonymity. Following all quotes, a letter and a number are presented within parentheses. The letter indicates the child speaking (see chart below), and the number indicates the page where the quote is found in the interview transcript. All quotes are written just as the children spoke during the interviews. In conclusion, four exemplary case studies are presented.

Name Key

1. D = Dave
2. P = Paula *Younger sister of Meg
3. M = Meg *Older sister of Paula
4. C = Carla
5. J = John
6. K = Keith
7. Ci = Carrie
8. S = Sue
9. A = Alice
10. G = Gail

Figure 1

Sample Comments About Personal Identity

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
Describe yourself to a new acquaintance./ What makes you special?	<p>I like being home schooled. -Meg</p> <p>I'm a Christian. -Carla</p>	<p>A lot of people tell me that I act a lot older, and I act more polite than kids my age and things like that. -Alice X</p>
What are some things you do (activities you're involved in) as a result of being home schooled that make you feel good/proud of yourself?	<p>The home schoolers get together a lot and have picnics. We have a good time. Go to the park or go swimming. Or we go roller skating. -Meg</p> <p>I enjoy doing a lot of stuff with the church youth group. -John</p>	<p>I'm involved in CAP [Civil Air Patrol] which is like an Air Force auxiliary program. -Dave</p> <p>I enjoy racing a lot and a couple of other sports. -Keith</p>
What do you perceive to be the influence of home schooling on these things?/ How might your self-image be different if you were attending regular school?	<p>There'd be a lot of peer pressure [in regular school]. I see my friends who are in regular school, and they aren't as self-confident as I am. They go more with what the crowd wants them to do because they want to be accepted. I don't have to worry about that. -Carla X</p> <p>I have a greater opinion of myself and what I do and have more confidence in it. -Dave</p> <p>At your own pace, there's no pressure on whether you make it or not or what you do in a certain year....You do it on your own pace, and you don't have to keep up with everyone else. -Dave X</p>	<p>I might have a lower self-esteem, or it might be higher... [Higher?] Well, that I'd have more friends and might get to do more things and go more places. -Sue</p>

Personal Identity

I opened each interview with a series of questions about personal identity, the area of socialization dealing with self-esteem. Figure 1 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

Most students identified themselves in terms of being home schooled (6) or being a Christian (5), or both. Three students described themselves as enjoying "being around people" (P, 1). They also mentioned involvement in many types of activities. Most frequently mentioned were activities with other home schoolers (10) or with church youth groups (9). 4-H activities (5), jobs (4), and sports (3) were also mentioned. A variety of fine arts activities was noted. Paula reported:

I'm in the Roanoke Children's Choir, and we go and do different stuff. And we sang for Carmina Burana, and last year they went to sing for the president. And when we went to King's Dominion, we were with eighty-nine other choirs: middle-school and high-school choirs, and we took first place." (p. 1)

* Overwhelmingly, the students perceived home schooling to have a positive influence on their self-image. They noted a lack of peer pressure (10), an increase in self-confidence (6), and academic

▷ benefits (5) as primary effects of home schooling.

Also mentioned were many opportunities for autonomy (4), freedom to be themselves (3), lack of peer cruelty (1), and feeling "special" because of parents' involvement of time and energy in their education (3). When explaining about this freedom to be oneself, Meg commented:

I don't have to go by what anybody else does like the peer pressure at school. I can be my own self. It doesn't matter what they think....Most of the kids at school, they get frustrated with other kids picking on them or trying to be like them, or just trying to fit in with them. But here...you can be yourself. (p. 1, 24)

A sense of being special came through in all their comments, particularly because of parental influence/role. Carla noted, "It's [home schooling] helped me to accept myself because my parents have invested a lot of time and energy into me. That makes me feel really special that they would want to do that for me" (p. 1). However, when asked how his opinion of himself might be different if he attended traditional school, Keith said, "You'd be like the majority of the kids....Normal" (p. 2). He said that he felt that his home-schooling involvement, as well as various other factors, such as his racing

and his family life centering predominantly around the house, had made him "different than the others" (p. 1). He perceived that anything that might set him apart from his peers would hinder his acceptance by his peers. Yet, when other students referred to their being home schooled, home schooling was perceived as a positive label. For instance, Carrie reported, "It's just something else I can...People say, 'Oh, neat! Tell me more about that.' Because it's fun to tell about this stuff....Nobody really thinks of it as being different" (p. 22).

Perhaps the students' own attitudes toward home schooling might influence the reaction of their peers, which in turn would influence the home-schooling student's attitude. For instance, the students who perceived the home-schooling label as positive also spoke of home schooling in a positive manner throughout the interview, whereas, Keith, who regarded this "difference" in a negative sense often spoke of home schooling in a negative manner throughout the interview.

Sample Comments About Personal Destiny
(Accomplishments and Goals)

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
What are some of your achievements in groups/activities?	<p>For my Tai Kwon Do, I have tournaments that I get medals for. And I've gone to one tournament, and I've gotten first place. -Carrie</p> <p>In 4-H I did real well. -Paula</p>	<p>In the youth group at church we went on a tour last summer...we were singing and doing puppets and drama and stuff, and we got to witness to those people, and we saw results, and we felt good. -John</p>
How do you perceive home schooling to have influenced your involvements and achievements?	<p>I guess I have a whole lot more time to practice. -Paula</p>	<p>If I wasn't home schooled I probably would compete more, and I might win trophies or something like that...It doesn't really bother me. I mean, that's not a major goal in my life to be famous in sports... -Alice</p>
What are some of your personal goals?	<p>Go through four years of college. -Dave</p> <p>I'd like to be more of what God would want me to be. -Carla</p> <p>I'll save my money if I want to buy something, or if it's something I want to do like...the missions trip. -Meg</p>	<p>I want people to be able to trust me. -Carla</p>
What are your career choices?	(no common response)	<p>Missionary, carpenter, armed services, racing, singer, nurse, homemaker, uncertain.</p>
What do you perceive to be the influence of home schooling on your personal goals or career choices?	<p>We're taking biology and chemistry, and my mom used to teach...So I can take things I'll need to be a nurse now when I want to, and keep at it until I learn it the way I should. -Meg</p> <p>It's taught me to see that I can use [learning] in different areas of my life. It's not just math and English. It can be used all throughout your life. -Alice</p> <p>I would just say that whatever I do, whether it would be racing or whatever, that I would have the principles to live by that I learned through home schooling. -Keith</p>	<p>Home schooling, with the goals we set, in organizations you go through, it's "I'm gonna get those goals accomplished in this group." More often, you usually do good at accomplishing. A lot of that carries over from the way you've been schooled or taught. You just complete your goals...and a lot of that carries over. You just work towards that goal, and you usually finish it. -Dave</p>

Personal Destiny

The second set of questions within each interview focused on personal destiny, the area of socialization dealing with achievement, goal setting, and career choices. Figure 2 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

In terms of achievements, four students mentioned achievements in such sports as Tai Kwon Do, archery, basketball teams, soccer, and volleyball. 4-H was also reported (3) as an area in which they could achieve. However, many achievements noted were unique. Nice singing, Pioneer Girls awards, sharing one's faith through drama and puppetry, and making friends all were reported. Three students noted leadership positions such as a CAP squadron representative, youth group class president, and Leader in Training in AWANAS.

The home school was seen as influencing achievements primarily because of the time factor (5). In addition, two students perceived home schooling as affording them more opportunities for involvement in areas in which they could achieve. For instance, Carla stated, "Home schooling has helped me to be involved in more things" (p. 6). However, Alice noted that she wasn't involved in activities where she might be able to compete more or win trophies. Nevertheless, she added that sports

achievements were not of primary importance to her.

Most frequently mentioned goals were related to college (9), finances (9), and their Christian walk (8). Excelling in school (4), influencing people for Christ (3), and prosocial goals (3) also were reported. Carla stated, "I'd love to be someone who...the world could look up to, my family could be proud of, and even if I'm famous, I'd like to maintain a giving spirit and humility. I'd love to influence the world for Christ, too" (p. 26).

There were no common responses in terms of career choices except for two students aspiring to become involved in missions, and two other students who were uncertain regarding a choice for a future career. For instance, Paula stated:

I want to go to college and then I want to be able to get a job and do something....Still thinking...but not real definite ideas." (p. 3)

The other students mentioned possible careers such as carpentry, racing, singing, nursing, and involvement in either investments or a leadership position in the armed services, most of which they were preparing for in some way at the present time. Carrie expressed an interest in a flower shop or a day care; however, she noted that when she had children, she would like to be a full-time homemaker in order to be there for

her children.

Interestingly, when discussing current achievements and activities, several of the students seemed to cross stereotyped sex roles. For instance, three girls referred to competitive sports, and one boy spoke about a youth group tour with singing and drama activities. When discussing future career choices, however, many of the students held to very stereotyped sex roles. For instance, the boys spoke of carpentry, racing, and involvement in the armed services, and the girls spoke of nursing, singing, teaching, and becoming a homemaker. It is difficult to determine just from this data, but perhaps this pattern is somewhat a result of the parental encouragement for involvement in varied activities, accompanied by their strong adult role models engaging in careers exemplary of conservative sex roles. However, Keith made reference to his plans of teaching his future children the importance of holding to conservative sex roles regarding masculine and feminine endeavors, and it appeared that he felt this to be important for both children and adults.

Overwhelmingly, the students perceived home schooling to have a positive influence on their personal destinies. The majority of the students (9) perceived home schooling to be beneficial in terms of its influence on their goals and career choices.

Dave reported:

Through home schooling, I've always wanted to strive to be the best I can. I think that'll affect the way I'll go out in the world, and the way I want to advance in things like my job....I think it'll help a lot through the way I've home schooled, the way I've been taught, how that affects the way that you live, and the way you carry yourself. (p. 37)

Six students perceived the home school as preparation for "real life" (D, 18). As far as factors found within the home-schooling environment that influenced personal destiny, they commented on the role of parents (6), values learned (6), the lack of negative peer pressure (5), and family members influencing career choices (3). Speaking of negative peer influences, Carla said, "They could really sway my values and sway my whole future" (p. 22). Three students spoke of academic benefits found within the home school as being helpful in terms of their personal destiny. For instance, Carla noted, "I think if I'd been in regular school, I wouldn't have gotten as much individual attention and help in my learning" (p. 4). However, several students (3) noted that home schooling might hinder possible sports goals. They commented that there are not as many sports opportunities in the home school as there are in the

Figure 3

Sample Comments About Personal Destiny
(Possibility of Failure)

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
What would be your probable response if you failed to meet your goals?	<p>I probably just would try again at it and think why I failed at it and try to work at it more and try not to fail again. -Meg</p> <p>You'd have to think of another goal. Set another goal for yourself. -Sue</p>	I'd ask the Lord what He wanted me to do next. And I'd just trust Him that He'd show me. -Alice
What might be the possible cause of your failure to meet a goal?	<p>Maybe not working hard enough for it or maybe not really wanting it bad. Just kind of lazy about it. -Sue</p>	Not keeping your life in balance. Not keeping God first in everything. -Keith
How do you perceive home schooling to have influenced the way you might deal with failure?	<p>When you're home schooling, you don't complete every goal you're going to make. You either fall short or you don't complete it all the time, but you strive for that. And when you don't accomplish it, that even makes you want to work harder towards your next goal...And if I ever fail at something...I think I'll either work hard toward that goal or go on to the next objective....I don't plan on failing at most things. -Dave</p> <p>I haven't had to face hardly any failure that I can think of. Some of my friends say that they had a bad year at school, but maybe next year will be better. All of my years have been good. -Carla</p>	I had to repeat second grade, but now I've gotten to skip back up because I'm at home school, and it really doesn't matter what grade I'm in. -Carrie

regular school.

Two students perceived the home-schooling environment to be a place that allowed for creativity and expansion of personal interests. For instance, Carla noted that she might not be as creative had she attended a traditional school. She reported, "I might not have been able to do as many things as I've done. Home schooling has helped me to see that there's lots of stuff out there that I can do" (p. 5).

The concluding set of questions within the section on personal destiny dealt with the possibility of failure. Figure 3 shows questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

When discussing probable responses to failure, trying again (6), attempting a new goal (5), and praying for wisdom (2) were mentioned. The only common response for possible causes of failure was not trying hard enough (4). The other children mentioned a possible change of interest, not enough experience, or "not keeping your life in balance" (K, 6) as possible causes of failure.

* The majority of the children (7) perceived home schooling as having a positive influence in terms of their dealing with failure. For instance, one student noted, "I think it [home schooling] helps you to do better and really be more successful" (J,

5). Parental role/influence in the home school was seen by several (3) of the students as an influence in terms of the way they would deal with failure. Keith believed that outside activities, specifically his racing involvement, had helped him to learn how to deal with failure. Several (4) of the students reported that failure was not a common experience. In addition, Carrie noted how a traditional-school failure of grade retention had been remedied as a result of her being home schooled. Apparently the home school and activities associated with the total home-schooling experience had been helpful in terms of their dealing with and responding to failure.

What seems to come through in most of their comments is the fact that they attribute failure (and presumably, conversely, success) to the amount of effort they put into an endeavor. They seem to feel in control of their lives, and optimistic about their ability to accomplish most of what they aim toward. Given enough time, they believe they will succeed, and they don't sound as if they give up easily.

Figure 4

Sample Comments About Values and Moral Development

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
Cite your personal values.	<p>My parents have always instilled in us a view of Christianity, and I think that's a good thing....Without that...it's more a trial and error system. There's no set of rules to go by in your life. It's just, go as you will. -Dave</p> <p>I want to do what God wants me to do. -Paula</p> <p>I always want to be honest... -John</p> <p>I want to be nice to people. -Paula</p>	<p>I guess just being loyal....You're not gonna have friends if you're not loyal. -Gail</p>
Values desired for future children.	<p>I'd like them to have the same values my parents have taught us and to go to a good church and learn there about God. And I'd like to home school them, too. -Meg</p> <p>I want them to be self-confident in themselves and not to feel peer pressure. And I want them to be Christians and Christlike. -Alice</p>	
Identify some people who are role models in your life.	<p>This man from Romania. He's a really godly man. -Carla</p> <p>My parents. I've always looked up to them. They've always been honest with me. -John</p>	<p>Some of the people at work are extremely good role models. -Dave</p>
Influence of home schooling on values.	<p>I've had a lot of really good influences in my life since I was a little kid. -Carla</p> <p>If I was attending regular school, my views would be different because my parents wouldn't have been around me as much. I wouldn't have spent as much time learning from them, or what they think is right. -Dave</p> <p>[In the home-schooling environment] I wouldn't have both tugging on either of my arms at the same time. It'd be a whole lot easier in learning a set of values and living by them and stuff like that. -Paula</p>	

Values and Moral Development

The third set of questions addressed within each interview focused on values and moral development, the area of socialization dealing with the acquisition of social mores and rules. Figure 4 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

This area, more than any other, was permeated with references to the students' Christian faith. In terms of personal values, all of the children reported that their values were grounded in Christianity. All of the children also cited obedience/closeness to God as something they held in high esteem. In addition, nine of the children reported desiring for their future children to espouse Christian values.

Other values such as standing up for what you believe (4), friendliness/being pleasant (4), integrity/honesty (4), respect for others (3), kindness (1), and loyalty (1) also were cited. Carla commented on the importance of living according to what you believe. She stated, "I think it's important to not compromise your standards and values....Of course, if you're wrong, you need to compromise...but I mean compromising to do the wrong thing" (p. 7). Carrie reported that she thought it was important to be available for her future children. Hypocrisy,

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rudeness, arrogance, disobedience to parents, bad attitudes, and self-pity were all mentioned by the students as being undesirable patterns of living.

In terms of role models, Christian adults (9), parents (5), Jesus Christ (3), older friends from church (2), and people at work (1) were all named. Interestingly, Meg concluded that she might have chosen different role models if she had been attending traditional school. She noted, "I might have picked role models that other kids had...or I might pick different qualities from what I learned there at school" (p. 10).

Overwhelmingly, the students perceived home schooling to have a positive influence in terms of their values and moral development. Parental role (10) and lack of negative peer pressure/influence (7) were both reported as factors found within the home-school environment that influenced their values. In addition, two students perceived the home school to be a place where values are strengthened. For instance, Carla commented, "I think it's [home schooling] strengthened what I believe" (p. 7).

As might be noticed when reading through the findings, the values that these children espoused were embroidered upon every area of socialization. Personal identity included statements about parental values influencing one's self-image. For instance,

Dave reported, "My parents have always instilled their morals in us. They've always taught us to think the best things of ourselves, and I think that's changed a lot of the way we think of ourselves" (p. 2).

Personal destiny also was seen as something that would be influenced by the values taught in the home school.

For instance, Keith reported, "I would just say that whatever I do...I would have the principles to live by that I learned through home schooling" (p. 23).

Comments about relationships included statements about the importance of choosing friends that hold good

values and the impact that might have on personal destiny. For example, Carla said, "They could really sway my...values and sway my whole future" (p. 22).

Discussions of autonomy, especially when it came to decision making, included values. John described

his method of decision making as such: "Well, some things, the important things I pray about and see

what God would want me to do, and just think about it for a while" (p. 12). Sexuality also was permeated

with statements about values. For instance, Meg

stated, "I think it'll [home schooling] help me because of the Christian influence. My parents are Christians, and the school books are Christian books" (p. 21).

Finally, the section dealing with social skills also was spotted with allusions to these students' values, as when Carla noted, "My parents like me to be very

Figure 5

Sample Comments About Personal Money Management

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
How do you manage your personal money?	<p>...most of it I put in the bank to save for when I go to college and get a car and all that stuff. -John</p> <p>I like to save some of it, but most of it I put into like activities I have like CAP, or if I need a new set of boots or uniforms or something like that. -Dave</p>	<p>I save it when I get lots of it together, but when I have just a couple of dollars, I spend it right away usually. -Carrie</p>
Influence of home schooling on personal money management.	<p>I don't feel pressured to spend my money on what my friends would like me to have....I don't feel pressured to have everything they have. So I feel like I can spend my money more freely and how God wants me to. -Alice</p>	<p>Most kids I know don't have jobs, and most of the money is got from their parents. And as soon as they've gotten it, they go out and spend it on something instead of saving it. A lot of that's changed from the way I handle my money. I save, and I have to make my own, 'cause my parents have always believed in us making our own money and everything like that. -Dave</p>

respectful, and I like that, too, because that's good values. And respectfulness and not haughtiness is what will get you a job and accepted by people and everything" (pp. 25-26).

The concluding set of questions within values and moral development dealt with the students' personal money management. Figure 5 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

The majority of the students (9) reported saving their money. For instance, Sue reported, "I usually just save it, and I'm real careful about what I buy" (p. 8). Four students reported saving their money to spend on desired items such as gear for activities. Three students reported giving a portion of their money to their church or missions projects. For instance, Carla reported, "I have a 'Lord's Bank' where I put maybe the first fifteen or twenty percent of my money" (p. 10). Carrie said that she sometimes saves her money, but she tends to spend it right away when she only has a small amount.

In terms of the perceived influence of home schooling on their money management, lack of peer pressure (5) was the most frequently cited influence. Dave said that the parental role in home schooling had influenced his money management, particularly because of their valuing a strong work ethic. Four students thought that home schooling had not influenced

this area of their lives.

Figure 6

Sample Comments About Autonomy
(Responsibility)

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
State your responsibilities at home.	<p>Cleaning, stuff like that's pretty easy. And I cook meals sometimes. Not very often. -Paula</p> <p>My parents give me an amount of clothing money each month, and I'm supposed to spend that on what I need. And I make a list sometimes, have a list of things I need, and I buy that. -Alice</p> <p>Feed the animals. -Gail</p>	<p>Maintain a good Christian testimony. -Keith</p>
State some autonomous tasks you perform.	<p>We have our morning planned out for home schooling. And to a certain extent I'm supposed to do my chores at a certain time of the day. But I sort of plan how I do my school work and my chores and my piano in with all of it. -Alice</p> <p>With work I...know what I'm supposed to do when I go in there. There's not a lot of guidance there because they've already set out something I should do... -Dave</p>	<p>Drive the race car. -Keith</p> <p>I sometimes bake. -Alice</p>
Influence of home schooling on autonomy.	<p>With home schooling, you're in charge of what you have to do....A lot of that goes out with you. Because in real life, you don't have someone sitting over you all day saying, "You have to do that." And so it's changed a lot of the way you think. The goal is up to me, so I have to do it. So, therefore, let's get it done. -Dave</p>	<p>I feel I'm more organized. I have a list of everything I have to do and check it off. I probably would have that if I was in school, too, but I feel more responsibility since I've been home. -Alice</p>

Autonomy

The fourth set of questions addressed within each interview focused on autonomy, the category dealing with learning or gaining independence. Figure 6 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

When discussing personal responsibilities, household chores (9), personal finances (3), care of family animals (3), and school work (2) were all reported. In addition, two students reported performing household responsibilities in order to ease the mother's household burdens. For instance, Carla noted, "My brother and I clean a room a day to help Mom....We try to help her more when Dad's gone 'cause a lot of responsibility is on her" (pp. 11,4). Keith said that one of his responsibilities was to conduct himself appropriately.

In terms of tasks performed independently, school work scheduling (6), part-time jobs (4), reading (3), and practicing musical instruments (2) were all reported. Unique responses included driving a race car, baking, and fixing breakfast and lunch.

Overwhelmingly, the students perceived home schooling as having a positive influence on the development of autonomy. All of the students perceived home schooling as being beneficial in the development of personal responsibility. Four students reported

Figure 7

Sample Comments About Autonomy
(Decision Making)

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
Name some personal decisions.	<p>I have a sheet that I do on the computer, and I keep track of all the money that I get and all the money I spend. -Paula</p>	<p>It's sort of my own decision to more communicate with my parents. -Alice</p> <p>My decision to join CAP. That was mine. A lot of the decisions I make in work or CAP are up to me. -Dave</p> <p>I don't have that many decisions to make. -Gail</p>
How do you make decisions?	<p>The important things I pray about and see what God would want me to do. -John</p> <p>I usually ask my parents' advice on those [important] things. -Alice</p>	<p>I try to live it like thinking...going through a week. That's what I especially felt like choosing whether or not to go to the high school next year. I think, what would I be doing at this time?...Would I have time to do the things I love to do? -Carla</p>
Influence of home schooling on decision making.	<p>Definitely helped me. A lot of having to make my own decisions, it carries out with you. You take it wherever you go. You go into life and kids offer you, "Hey, why don't you go do this with me?", and you can tell them, "Hey, I don't want to." And...it's easier to make your own decisions when you've been in that situation where you're making your own decisions for six years. -Dave</p> <p>I have so many more decisions to make. -Carrie</p>	

that being home schooled had fostered self-confidence when they performed tasks independently. In addition, four students reported that the home-schooling environment provides for more time to perform responsibilities. Three students reported parental role/influence in the home-schooling environment as positively influencing their development of autonomy. For instance, Carla reported:

My parents try to instill in me the...well, learning to do things on my own because they try to make up for me not being on my own at school and everything.. They do that a lot to make up for it so that I'll be able to be independent. (pp. 11-12)

Two students reported that the home-schooling environment had taught them the importance of completing their work before doing other things.

The second set of questions within the area of autonomy dealt with decision making. Figure 7 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

In terms of personal decisions, financial decisions (9) were mentioned the most. Choosing friends (3), personal conduct decisions (3), academic decisions (2), faith-related decisions (2), and the decision to attend camp (2), all were reported. Unique responses included the decision to work part-time,

joining CAP, decisions at work, and the decision to increase communication with parents. Gail, the youngest of the students, made reference to the decision to attend camp, but added that she doesn't have that many decisions to make.

✓ When discussing how the students make decisions, the role of Christianity (7) was reported as the most prevalent guide in decision making. Parental advice (4) and the advice of friends/significant others (3) also were cited. For instance, Meg reported, "I usually ask my mom or dad what they think, or ask my friends or the youth pastor at church, or ask several people and get their opinions, or sometimes I just make up my mind by myself" (p. 16). Carla described how she carefully thinks through a decision before coming to a conclusion.

The majority of the students (9) perceived the home-schooling environment as having a positive influence on their decision making. Various factors within the home-schooling environment were perceived as being influential. Lack of peer pressure (6) was noted as a major element in terms of the influence of home schooling on their personal decision making. Four students also noted that the home-schooling environment had given them confidence, or the ability to stand alone, when making decisions. For instance, Alice commented, "I'd feel self-confident, but I

wouldn't feel as [if attending regular school]....I see a lot of my friends at school. They choose to go with the crowd rather than to stand alone, or they don't choose the best friends because that's the way the crowd goes" (pp. 9,11). Three students perceived the home school as a place where they were given more opportunities for decision making. Carrie noted, "I have so many more decisions to make" (p. 20).

*Note: The students' voice in the decision to home school is presented in the section dealing with attitudes.

Figure 8

Sample Comments About Relationships

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
Name some of the people you are closest to.	<p>My parents and my friends at church and probably more my friends at church than my friends in the home-school bunch 'cause I see them more times in the week, and lots of people, several people that are home schooled go to our church, too. So I see them all over the place. -Meg</p> <p>Well, my best friend is Susan Newcomb, and we are quite close. -Sue</p>	<p>God. -Gail</p> <p>Most of my friends go to school. -Carrie</p> <p>We're (her family) too different to be friends, I guess. We're not really enemies but a bunch of people who've lived together. We're a family but not the family thing on t.v.. -Carrie</p>
When do you spend time with these people?	<p>Church groups like all the time. -Carrie</p> <p>...a couple of weeks ago several of the families from church got together and went to Cave Mountain Lake for a picnic, and we go camping....we're going to Fishnet [a retreat] together, and the missions trip... -Meg</p>	
Influence of home schooling on family relationships.	<p>I know I'm a whole lot closer to my mom than I would if I was in school. Because a lot of people in school, it's just not cool to be friends with your parents. -Paula</p> <p>I'm close especially with my mom. I'm here all the time with her. And then when my dad comes home, I'm usually with him. -Meg</p>	<p>Just being around them day in and day out. Sometimes it's good. Sometimes it gets you worn down and stuff like that...I don't really know. I guess it's just being different. My dad has the lab at home, we're home schooled, and we live in this house. You know what I mean? So everybody's like, "Man, you do everything in the same house." And it's like, "Well, sorta." -Keith</p>

Figure 8

(continued)

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
<p>Influence of home schooling on non-family relationships.</p>	<p>...home schooling has really improved the amount of time I spend with my friends. -Dave</p> <p>I see a lot of my friends at school. They choose to go with the crowd rather than to stand alone, or they don't choose the best friends because that's the way the crowd goes. -Alice</p> <p>Some people have a lot of friends. But for me, I don't have as many, so I have closer friendships with them. -Sue</p>	<p>My parents have made an effort to...give me the opportunity to make good friends. And plus, they make friends so easily, so I've seen their example. But it depends a lot on how much the parent tries to help you. -Carla</p> <p>Well, there are certain benefits to being in public school. You're around kids all the time, and you deal with that better. -Dave</p> <p>You don't have the peer pressure of other kids as you would in normal school....It's good, and it's bad. -Keith</p>
<p>Best place for developing relationships?</p>	<p>The home school. Well, in the regular school, you're only with one group of kids your own age, and of course they are from all different...backgrounds and everything, but then they are more in groups, and whatever group you get stuck with, that's who you're with mostly. It's a little hard to get out of that classification and everything. But nobody knows if I'm not...a prep or whatever. So the cool people can talk to me and everything because they don't know....[so] it [home schooling] lets me free to be more myself and have more friends. A lot wider perspective. -Carla</p>	<p>It depends on who you are. It could be, and it could not be. Somebody that was involved with like sports a lot, say football, basketball, and baseball. I would say go to a Christian school or a public school. Home school would definitely not be the route....They have rec leagues, but it's just not the same as being on a school team. -Keith</p>

Relationships

The fifth set of questions addressed within each interview focused on relationships, the area of socialization dealing with peer relationships as well as relationships with people of various ages. Figure 8 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

All of the students reported being very close to family members, including parents, siblings, and extended family members. Seven of the students reported close friendships with peers, and two students reported close relationships with older friends. Gail said that she was close to God.

All of the students noted activities outside-the-home as being the primary place to meet new friends and get together with friends. However, all of the students also referred to having guests in the home, and that also provided for interaction with people, both peers and a variety of others. Carla noted:

We are very creative. I think I like being with them [home-schooled friends] so much because they're creative also. We do all these crazy things. We draw house plans and love to look at Southern Living and get all these ideas. So we get that graph paper and do each little block is a square foot and do these little

extensive houses, draw furniture and everything. We made...an end-of-the-year meal with all these exotic food and stuff from Southern Living and play games...and we talk and talk and talk, have these marathon phone conversations." (p. 19)

Overwhelmingly, the students (10) perceived home schooling to have a positive relationship on family relationships. Carla noted, "My public-school friends really envy me because I'm home schooled. They see all the great things we get to do, and I think they see how close my family is, and I think they'd like that for themselves" (p. 6). The primary reasons the students (10) gave for this closeness was the amount of time the home-school environment provides for families to be together. However, Carrie noted that she was closer to her mother and brother but not to the rest of her family. This particular family was different from the others in the sense that both parents had been divorced and remarried, and the new family unit was now a combination of two separate families. In addition, Carrie was the only child in the family who was being home schooled. It seems logical that it would be much more difficult for two separate families joined as one to become close than for an original family unit to grow close because of struggles common to families in this type of a

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situation. Because of the fact that only one child within the family was being home schooled, it also seems logical that the influence home schooling would have on family closeness would be very limited.

Another unusual comment dealing with family relationships was Keith's reporting getting "worn down" because of being together more than usual. He also felt that the fact that the family's activities centered around the home made him "different" from his peers. He perceived this factor found within the home-schooling environment to be both positive at times and negative at times.

The students' responses dealing with non-family relationships were much more varied than those dealing with family relationships. In terms of benefits of the home-school environment, lack of negative peer pressure (7), learning how to choose good friends (5), spending more time with friends (4), and having quality friendships (4) all were reported. For instance, Alice stated:

I feel it's an advantage [in home schooling] to have...a deeper friend relationship and true friends that you don't just like them because of what they wear or what they do....The time I spend with them, I see more of...their real personality, and I learn to love them how they really are and not just a front they put

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on at school or something like that. (p. 17)

In terms of the home-school environment providing for an ample supply of friendships, seven students perceived that the home school met this need. Paula noted, "I think I have enough friends now. I wouldn't mind having more, and I don't think that I'd have anymore friends in school than I do now." (p. 13)

However, three students expressed a need for more friends. For instance, Sue noted, "Sometimes I feel like I need some more friends, but I have a couple of good friends....The school may prepare you more socially because you're around all those people all the time....But I know some people that have got lots and lots of friends, and they're home schooled....Maybe I'm closer to them because I don't have lots and lots of friends" (pp. 3,13,20). Carla, one of the other students who expressed a desire for more friends said that although she had many friends now, she had chosen to attend the traditional high school in order to "make more friends". She also noted that her parents had made a special effort to be sure she had the "opportunity to make good friends". However, she felt that going to the high school would afford her the opportunity to "get to know more people" and experience "dating relationships and that kind of stuff" (pp. 20, 29-30).

Nevertheless, when asked to choose which

environment was the best for developing relationships, the majority (9) of the students chose the home school. Their explanations included reasons such as an opportunity for a broader range of friends, learning values to help in choosing friends, lack of negative peer influence/pressure, and closer/more genuine friends. For instance, Alice noted, "I think the home-school environment is because you see people for who they really are and not just a front they put on....And you have more friends because they're really your friends" (p. 11).

Both Dave and Keith, said that the type of student involved would determine the best type of environment. However, Dave said that for him, the home school was the best. Keith did not state which environment he perceived to be the best, but only reported that he felt that if the student were heavily interested in sports teams, the traditional school would be the most beneficial. Apart from discussing relationships, Alice made a comment similar to these when she was expressing her thoughts about which type of schooling environment is better for socialization as a whole. Talking about what she would recommend for her own children, she noted:

I'd say the majority of the social would be better for them at home. And I would probably home school them the first couple of years and then

give them their own choice. I might home school them when they're older. I don't know. I'd have to really consider it and pray about it. To see if that's what God wanted me to do because home schooling is not for everybody. (p. 17)

These findings suggest that some students might choose to attend a traditional school, especially when they are older, in order to expand their circle of acquaintances and friends. According to these students, each student is different and has different needs, and certain environments might better fit the needs of certain students.

Figure 9
Sample Comments About Sexuality

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
What opportunities have you had in home schooling to learn about becoming a man/woman and the differences between men and women?	<p>Probably just the book <u>Shadow of a Man</u>. We had to study that and do that. -Keith</p> <p>Our parents will talk to us, you know. -John</p>	<p>Well, science has taught me some. -Alice</p> <p>I've gotten to be with more people in all stages of my growing up and everything. When I was really younger, six or so, my neighbors had three boys, so I ended up being better friends than I did with the girls. So in some ways, I kind of liked that...because after I got a little bit older, I had all girlfriends, and it evened out then because I knew how to get along really good with guys and have fun with them. -Carla</p>
Whom do you mostly discuss these issues with?	<p>My parents. Both of them in general, I guess. -Keith</p> <p>Probably my [best] friend. -Sue</p>	<p>My brothers and my friends basically. -Dave</p>
How do you plan to teach your future children about this issue?	<p>Probably would want to do it probably the same way my mother did it to teach me. -Paula</p> <p>I would definitely try at least not to let them be exposed to things at too early of an age. -Alice</p>	<p>I would probably say if you're a girl, do the feminine things. And if you're a boy, do the masculine things. -Keith</p> <p>What I'd like to do is maybe get some tapes... listen to them myself, and then explain to them some of the words 'cause some of the words I didn't understand like "inferiority." -Carrie</p>
Influence of home schooling on learning about sexuality.	<p>Being a home schooler, I want to know the people more than just their looks because that's what really matters. -John</p> <p>Back to the peer pressure thing, if you were in public school, you'd probably be pressured to do what your friends are doing and think what they're thinking. -Carla</p>	<p>I usually do what I think is right and not what they [negative influences] think is right anyway. -Meg</p> <p>I think it's [home schooling] given me a desire for a strong marriage... because I see what my parents have. -Alice</p>
Attitude regarding learning about sexuality in the home-school environment.	<p>It will probably help me because I'm probably closer to my family than most people that go to school. So you'll be closer to your children when you have them and know what a real mother or father is. -Sue</p> <p>It seems like it would be a whole lot easier to learn that way and somebody being there. Well, you'd be talking to somebody you know really, really well, and you'd be able to ask things about the life's experience that you wouldn't be able to ask. -Paula</p>	<p>I think it [home schooling] will probably help me free to be myself. -Carla</p> <p>I think it [home schooling] will give me higher standards and to a certain extent will hinder me because I'm not used to interacting with guys or anything like that. -Alice</p> <p>I don't know [which is the best environment for learning about sexuality] because I haven't been in the other environment.... it's in between. -Sue</p>

Sexuality

The sixth set of questions within each interview dealt with sexuality, the area of socialization focused on awareness of sex roles and physical development. Figure 9 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

Parental discussions (6), books teaching about sexuality (6), and tapes aimed at preparation for adolescence (2) were the common methods of learning about sexuality reported by the students. Alice credited science lessons with teaching her about sexuality, and Carla reported that her varied interactions with people of the opposite sex had been helpful. When citing who they primarily discuss sexuality with, parents (8), friends (4), and brothers (1) were named. It is noteworthy that friends were superseded by parents in this area, particularly because of the age of these students. However, because of the fact that these students are quite close to their parents, this is not a very surprising finding.

When asked how they plan to teach their future children about sexuality, six students reported that they plan to follow their parents' pattern of teaching. Delaying dating until an appropriate age (4), guiding according to morality (2), creating a sense of open communication (2), and helping them to feel comfortable with the opposite sex (1) also were cited as desired

approaches for their future role as parents, which all directly paralleled their parents' approaches.

Several unique responses included Keith's who reported that he would stress the importance of masculinity and femininity. In addition, Carrie noted that she would be certain to explain the difficult words found in books or tapes to her children before asking them to read a book or listen to tapes. Apparently, she had experienced some difficulty understanding some words when listening to several tapes, and she didn't want her children to experience the same difficulty. John declined to answer this question, and I felt it best to not force the issue, because of the nature of this questioning.

The students perceived home schooling to have a direct influence on their learning about sexuality. Parental role/influence (10), values/morals learned within the home-schooling environment (7), and lack of negative peer pressure/influence (5) all were reported as being influential. However, regarding peer influence, Meg felt that peer pressure would not influence her attitudes/behavior in the area of sexuality. Curricular materials with a Christian emphasis also were cited by two students. In addition, two students reported that the home-schooling environment fostered closer relationships with parents, and, thereby, created an environment suitable for

open communication regarding sexuality. One of those two students, Alice, commented that this enhanced communication also was due to her own decision to improve communication with her parents.

However, two students perceived that the home-schooling environment would be a hindrance in terms of dating relationships. Alice commented that she did not feel very confident in terms of her interactions with the opposite sex. Carla, the other student sharing this perspective, did not express a lack of confidence with the opposite sex but rather said that one of the main reasons that she had chosen to attend a traditional high school the following year was because of more opportunities for dating relationships.

When expressing attitudes regarding learning about sexuality in the home-schooling environment, the majority of the students (7) perceived home schooling's influence to be beneficial. In addition, when asked to choose which schooling environment they perceived to be the best regarding the learning of sexuality, the majority of the students (8) chose the home school. The most common reasons for this choice included parental influence/role within the home school (4), lack of peer pressure to begin dating early (2), and an individualized/personal learning environment (2). Carla noted that home schooling

has helped her to feel free to be herself, and this in turn would help her when engaged in dating relationships and relationships with the opposite sex. Only two students, Alice and Sue, noted benefits to both environments at this point. When choosing which environment was perceived to be the best for sexuality, Alice reiterated her comments about home schooling providing her with a set of values to help in choosing whom to date, but added that the traditional school would provide for more interaction with members of the opposite sex. Sue said that it was difficult for her to choose since she had been home schooled for her entire schooling career.

Figure 10

Sample Comments About Social Skills

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
Name some manners/social skills you've acquired.	<p>...just being polite when you're around other people. -Meg</p> <p>I feel like I can talk to people who are older more confidently since...I don't always just talk to friends my age. -Alice</p> <p>I think it helps in just picking up the newspaper every now and then and reading it...I mean, you're going to need to when you grow older, and it's always a good habit to get in when you're younger. -Dave</p>	<p>Pretty much make sure I'm the same person at home that I am at church. -Carrie</p> <p>Like helping it [the neighborhood] out...fighting crime, help that. And just keeping your neighborhood looking good and all. -Keith</p>
Influence of home schooling on manners/social skills.	<p>They [her parents] wouldn't have as much influence on us, and we'd be with our peers all day long. And we'd probably go how they acted and stuff. -Sue</p> <p>...you'll learn how to communicate with adults. -Keith</p>	<p>I think they'd be the same. Well, I just don't see how being in school would affect my manners really. -John</p> <p>The kids at school might have an influence on you, or I'd have an influence on them. -Gail</p>
Influence of home schooling when relating to someone who might be 'different' or 'handicapped' in some way.	<p>I'm not forced into any one group and not accepted by the other group. I can just be friends with everybody. -Carla</p> <p>At school, they make fun of people like that...but I like to just be nice to them. -Sue</p> <p>My mother would've already taught me if I was in public school how to be kind and nice to people like that. -Paula</p>	

Social Skills

The seventh set of questions within each interview dealt with social skills, the area of socialization focusing on manners, acceptance of others' differences, and development of adult roles. Figure 10 shows the questions asked and presents examples of common and unique responses.

Basic politeness (5), table manners (3), and showing respect (2) all were listed as acquired manners. When discussing respect, John stated, "And showing other people respect. I think that's a very important thing" (p. 17).

Social skills reported included enjoyment of learning about current events (9) and the ability to communicate with people of various ages (5). Two students reported outsiders' comments regarding their manners/social skills. Carrie said that she tried to be sure that she was the same person at home that she was at church, and Keith said that he thought that helping his community was important.

The majority of the students perceived parental influence/role (7) and the lack of negative peer influence/pressure (6) within the home-schooling environment as having influenced positively their manners. Additionally, many of the students (6) perceived that the home school was a place where manners/social skills are taught. For instance, Keith

commented that the home school is a place where one can "learn to socialize" (p. 22).

Several students contributed some unique perspectives. Three students noted that the traditional school would offer more opportunities to interact with people and sharpen some social skills. For instance, Dave commented, "Public school allows you to be around many people and to deal with them all the time" (p. 39). In addition, several children (2) believed that being home schooled had not influenced their manners in any way. And finally, Gail noted that if she were attending a traditional school, her peers might have an influence on her, but she also might have an influence on them.

When discussing the students' perceptions of home schooling's influence dealing with how to relate to someone who might be "different" in some way (particularly having a handicap of some sort), four students believed that their attitudes toward people who are "different" in some way were not influenced by home schooling. However, several (5) of the students compared themselves to the behavior of others. For instance, Sue commented, "At school, they make fun of people like that...but I like to just be nice to them" (p. 19).

Throughout the interviews, all of the students mentioned character qualities that are socially

desirable such as kindness, loyalty, cheerfulness, humility, respect, friendliness, and being pleasant to be around as being important for them to have in their lives. For instance, Alice commented, "It's important to me to be happy and cheerful" (p. 6). Paula noted, "I like being around people, and...I enjoy doing things for people...I'm friendly. I like to meet other people" (p. 1). Loyalty was mentioned as being important to Gail when she said, "You're not gonna have friends if you're not loyal" (p. 7). Meg noted that she tries to be kind and gentle towards people, "not making them mad, not hurting them" (p. 8). Humility was mentioned as an important attitude when John commented that being conceited is "really obnoxious to a lot of people" (p. 8). One last example was when Carla commented that having respect for others is a necessary skill for success in life. She stated, "My parents like me to be very respectful, and I like that, too...because respectfulness and not haughtiness is what will get you a job and accepted by people and everything" (p. 25). The students may not have perceived these as social skills or manners, but they certainly are a contributing factor towards one's social skills.

Observational Data

As part of the data collection, three students

were observed in selected non-school activity settings. One student, Dave, was observed at one of his Civil Air Patrol squadron meetings. The meeting began quite informally, and Dave used the time to talk with his peers, both male and female. Although Dave had noted during our interview that he sometimes noticed a difference in the way he related to his peers compared to the way they related to one another, my observations were that he interacted quite well with his peers in this particular situation.

The second observation took place at a pizza restaurant with Carrie and her youth group peers. She made me feel quite welcome as we joined the group. Not only did she appear to be quite comfortable with me, but she related exceptionally well to her age-level peers. This observation supported what she reported about herself during our interview. She noted, "I don't have any problem talking to people or anything like that."

The final observation took place at a church car wash, where Keith was interacting and working with people of varied ages. Although some were older than he, no discomfort was evident, and it appeared that he related quite well with the others. This observation supported what he had noted about feeling comfortable when interacting with people of varied ages.

Although the children were aware that I was purposefully observing them, they showed relatively little discomfort. All three of the students welcomed me and were exceptionally polite. In addition, their interactions with others were quite natural. However, these observations were quite limited and more in-depth observational research would be helpful regarding middle-school-aged home-school students.

Figure 11

Sample Comments Regarding Attitude

Interview Questions	Common Types of Response	Unique Responses
(No question asked.)	<p>I like being home schooled....We don't want to go back to school. -Meg</p> <p>I'm glad I'm home schooled. I'm really glad...I like it. I'm gonna stay from high school. -Carrie</p>	<p>I'd have more friends and might get to do more things and go more places [if attending regular school]. -Sue</p> <p>...like when people ask you what school you go to, it would...just make you even more different than the others. -Keith</p>
How did/does your family go about making the decision to home school?	They asked us what we wanted, and we both wanted to be home schooled, so it was really half and half...I'm glad we did that. -Paula	My parents did. That's just, we're gonna do it. -Sue
Do you hope to home school your future children?	<p>I wouldn't want to go to school, and I wouldn't want them to go to school either....Because I went to school until third grade, and I didn't like it. And I have friends that still go to school...and they don't like school either. -Meg</p> <p>I'm certainly not going to force them to be home schooled. If they don't want to be, they won't be...I think a lot would depend on my wife and the kids 'cause I don't really think it would be up to me to say, "You are going to school" or "You are going to be home schooled." I think we all need to make the decision. -John</p>	
Which type of school environment do you perceive to be the best for socialization?	<p>I think the home school because most of the kids at school, they get frustrated with other kids picking on them or trying to be like them or just trying to fit in with them. But here you can be yourself. -Meg</p> <p>Well, there are certain benefits to being in public school. You're around kids all the time, and you deal with that better....It's hard to say which one is better because both of them prepare a certain way. I think home schooling is a better way because you get the morals and understandings towards how to choose your friends...I'm not sure which one is better. I would say home schooling personally, but there are two sides to the issue. A lot of it depends on what you want, or what you're looking for, I think. -Dave</p>	

Attitudes

Throughout each interview, the students expressed attitudes regarding their home-schooling experience. Figure 11 shows common and unique statements offered by the students. Some of these statements were not in response to any particular question. Rather, they were statements interwoven through other comments. Figure 11 also shows questions asked regarding the decision to home school, both for these students as well as their plans regarding home schooling their future children.

Eight of the ten students consistently expressed positive feelings about the home school even though some were aware of some disadvantages found in the home-school environment. For example, Dave said, "I wouldn't give up home schooling for the world...It's been really fun...This is the best thing...This is what I like" (pp. 1,3,31). These eight children who consistently expressed positive attitudes towards home schooling perceived themselves as having a voice in the decision to home school.

One of these students, Carla, has chosen to attend a traditional school for her high-school years. She reported that she has made this decision because she perceives herself to be "ready to go now" (p. 1). She stated:

Every year they've [her parents] let me choose

whether or not I want to be home schooled or not. Every other year, after visiting the regular school, I've wanted to be home schooled because I see all the things I'd miss and not be able to do if I went there. I didn't want to have to do what they do every day. That didn't sound good to me at all. But I'd like to go now...to be able to take more advanced art classes and get into sports some and stuff like that....I thought about it a lot and decided that now was the time." (pp. 1,12)

One student, Sue, expressed mostly positive statements about home schooling, but she occasionally expressed some negative feelings. One of her negative comments was, "I'd have more friends and might get to do more things and go more places.....Sometimes I feel like I need some more friends, but I have a couple of good friends....We don't go on too many field trips but do more things at the house. I'd probably get to do more things outside" (pp. 2-3). However, one of her positive comments was, "I'm glad I'm not [in regular school]. [You like it this way?] Yes" (p. 5). Sue reported that her parents had decided for them to be home schooled. When I asked her how she felt about that, she responded with an explanation of how she tends to vacillate in terms of her desire to continue to be home schooled or to

attend a traditional school. She said, "Well, sometimes I think, maybe I want to go to school, but then other times, no....Maybe I'll have more friends or have a more social life maybe, but most of the time it's no, I don't want to go to school" (p. 11).

The other student who said that the decision to home school was made solely by his parents, Keith, said that there are both positive and negative things associated with home schooling. He never gave a statement as to whether he really liked home schooling, nor did he say that he really disliked it. All comments were clothed in statements about advantages or disadvantages from his point of view, as well as from how he perceived other people might feel in the home-schooling environment. However, throughout the interview, Keith seemed to point out a considerable number of disadvantages which would lead one to believe that his attitude towards home schooling was not the best. A sampling of his comments are as follows:

Just home schooling has its advantages and its disadvantages....Not getting a diploma. It's like, take the GED, and it's well, you passed. I don't know. I'm not saying that you have to have that big thing where you walk up the aisle and stuff like that. But that would be another disadvantage....It's [home schooling] been helpful in some ways. Well, a lot of ways." (p. 3,12,26)

One student, Alice, said that she now likes home schooling, but that had not always been the case.

She reported:

I used to really want to go back to school...But this year, especially this last year, I've learned to enjoy it, and I like it a whole lot now, and I want to be home schooled now. Before I really wanted to go back to school, and I didn't really like it, but now I do...and I really wanted to for a couple of years, and then Mom and Dad told me they'd give me a choice last year, and so they asked me to visit the school...before I made the decision. And I realized that I just didn't like it at all, and I really didn't want to go there. So...then, I made my own choice to stay home this year, and since I made my own choice, I feel happier now, and I like it, and I've learned to like it, and I realize I really don't want to go back to school....So I'm especially glad now...I sort of imagined what it was like when I used to go, and I thought I really liked that. But I realize I wouldn't...If they [her parents] would've told me I couldn't make the choice, I think I would've always wished I would have gone back. But since I got to make the choice myself, I feel like that's my choice, and I'll live with it. And

I'm glad that I made the choice and all." (pp. 17-20)

All ten of the students, including Sue and Keith, said that they would probably like to home school their future children if possible. For instance, Carla said, "The more I think about it, and the more I look back on home schooling and all it's done for me, I definitely think it is the best way. Definitely, and I'd probably do it for my kids" (p. 29). However, when the students were discussing whether or not they would like to home school their future children, an interesting pattern emerged. Four students made mention of giving their children the choice as to whether or not they would prefer to be home schooled. For instance, Alice said, "I'd probably home school them the first couple of years and then give them their own choice" (p. 17). Interestingly, Keith was one of those four.

When the students were asked to choose which type of schooling they perceived to be most beneficial in terms of the whole concept of socialization, five students chose the home school and five students saw benefits in both environments. The five who chose the home school (Paula, Meg, Carla, John, and Carrie) chose the home school for reasons such as parental influence, preparation for life, encouragement, lack of peer pressure/influence/cruelty, and values

instruction. The five who saw benefits in both environments (Keith, Sue, Alice, Dave, and Gail) chose the home school for reasons such as learning how to communicate with people of various ages, self-confidence, learning how to socialize, more opportunities for decision making, lack of peer pressure, and values and moral development. On the other hand, the traditional school was also chosen because they said that it offers more opportunities to interact with peers and more opportunities to interact with the opposite sex.

Based on these responses and comments from these ten students, it appears as though the voice in the decision to home school plays a large part in their total attitude regarding socialization in the home school. The case studies that follow highlight this aspect of the findings, as the student's role in this decision is different for each case.

Case Study #1: Dave Kelly

Dave Kelly, age 14, lives in Bedford, Virginia and has been home schooled for seven years. Dave's father, John, is a nuclear engineer, and his mother, Cindy, is the director for a local business as well as the home-school teacher. Dave has two older brothers, Rob and Zach. Rob is seventeen, and Zach is fifteen. All three of the boys have been home schooled.

Dave was typical of most students in this study, in that the decision to home school was perceived by Dave as partly his and partly his parents. He said, "They asked me and it was 'Would you like to?' Why not. It's a new experience. So I guess it was kinda half and half." Like other students who had participated in the decision to be home schooled, Dave was quite positive about the experience. "You're not exposed to all the stuff that you are in regular public schools: drugs, alcohol, any of that. It's a lot better. I wouldn't give up home schooling for the world. This is how it's been for the last how many years. I started after...first grade, and that was it. It's been since day one. It's been really fun. Although I must say after spending that many years with your mom, you do get tired of that."

Relationships

Despite this last comment, Dave clearly had a good relationship with his whole family. He felt closest to his best friend. "I spend a lot of time with him. And my parents, and of course I've got to be close to my brothers after spending the past seven or eight years with them....My parents I'm close to 'cause I spend time around them."

Dave thought that home schooling helped him in terms of developing relationships. "Through home schooling I've met my best friend....Through home schooling I've grown closer to my brothers. Because if you have to spend that many hours with them, it's better to start to like them...or you make it miserable....So you try to make friends. After a while you grow closer to your family. You really do. Especially with my mom and dad. I spend a lot of time with my mom since she teaches us. And my dad's home a lot to do activities with us. It's definitely helped us to grow closer, I would say. And also through home schooling I've gotten a great deal of respect for my parents and what they've done and how they've cared about me. So my mom manages a job, a household and teaches school. I think that's pretty amazing for one person. I've got a great deal of respect for her, and dad especially with all he has to go through with his job."

The Kelly parents felt that their boys didn't have an "abundance of acquaintances but they did have a small group of closer friends they do things with" (Johnson, 1990, p. 115). Developing relationships in the home-schooling environment was not seen as a problem by Dave. "I think it's extremely interesting being home schooled cause a lot of your friends are off about the same time you are. Although you don't go to school everyday with them, you spend a little more time than you usually would if you did see them all the time....Your friends, basically people that are home schooled, get off earlier in the day, and, therefore, you tend to spend a little more time, either talking to them on the phone or spending time at their house because you have that time free before you either go to work or have activities....Home schooling has really improved the amount of time I spend with my friends." He felt that being home schooled had opened up many doors to meet a large number of people, and to develop strong relationships. "You meet a lot of kids through home schooling. You'd be surprised the number of kids that do this. It's easier to make friendships, and you keep them a lot longer. I've known my best friend for eight years now." He further noted, "Definitely through home schooling I've learned how to choose my friends."

Activities

Dave was somewhat unique in his outside interests, which focused on his involvement in Civil Air Patrol (CAP). "That's where I meet a lot of my friends, is in that kind of organization. Because since I home school, there's not much how people can meet me." I joined Dave at one of his Civil Air Patrol squadron meetings. The group consisted of both males and females his age. He interacted quite well with them as he joined in and initiated conversations.

Dave's brother had been involved in CAP, and he had been heavily influenced by his brother. "I've been doing that for the past year and a half, and it's been really interesting....It's a place where I can meet people and go out and do stuff I've never done before." He was enthusiastic about a summer "encampment" that he had been to. "You got to go out and do everything on the base you ever wanted to do, like an F-16 simulator, and that was impressive. And a C-130 ride, and that's where you get to do all the interesting things in your life. I think you're really lacking something if you've never gone through a program like that. That's where you learn a lot of leadership qualities and just morals and the way you go through life. It's a real good program." He felt that his CAP activities added to his home-schooling experience "in more ways than one...[In]

home schooling....You learn to do some things, math and stuff, but you never get the real-life qualities like leadership or stuff like that. When you go into CAP, the first thing they instill from day one is you're going to become a leader in this organization. And they're preparing you for it from step one, and it's one of the best programs I've ever been in."

Dave's parents put the two brothers in CAP units in separate cities so they would not have to compete with each other. Dave explained, "Instead of going to Roanoke like my brother did, my parents decided to put me in Lynchburg cause myself and my older brother always compete. It's always been interesting with that."

Civil Air Patrol

Dave had clear goals in terms of his CAP activities. He represented his squadron in Richmond at the Cadet Advisory Council. There, he helped to decide what would happen with the cadet program in Virginia. His hopes for the future included receiving the Mitchell Award (the next award up), becoming a cadet commander, and eventually getting a national position in the Cadet Advisory Council. According to Dave, home schooling had influenced his goals and, thereby, his personal destiny. He felt that he had learned how to set and meet goals in the home-schooling

environment and that had carried over into other areas of his life. "In the military they set goals for you and stuff like that, but most of the time you're working by yourself, or you're doing what you should do. And I think it's a lot of what you do in home schooling, sort of a carrying on of your home-schooling career." Dave also perceived the scheduling aspect of home schooling as being beneficial. "With my involvement in home schooling, I have a lot more time to spend on these activities."

Job

In the Johnson study (1991), Cindy Kelly indicated that they were trying to teach the boys responsibility, organization and perseverance. Johnson said that Cindy "stated that she wanted them to know that, in life, sometimes things are just hard work, and you go ahead and do it" (p. 108). Dave's parents had taught him that his education would prepare him for his future career. "I wanted to get a job earlier to see what it was like. And so it was last year about May, I started at the library as a page, shelving books and stuff like that. And I started off in that job, and it was extremely interesting at first to see how the real work place operates. It's a lot different from what you think it is when you're a kid. You know, things will be fine. No problems

will ever arise at work, but it happens....I'm glad I've taken the time to get a job, trying to work harder at life, getting ahead. This job has done a lot for me. I mean, I met several people, and it gives me a lot of what it's going to be like in the real world, what's going to happen to you."

Self-pacing

In particular, Dave's job had helped him to get used to situations where he would not be able to proceed at his own pace. "I think getting this job early was good for me...get used to what real work is like. I mean, I've always been used to following...my pace...work...that was good for me cause all of life is not like home schooling. You're not going to go through and make your own pace through work. You have deadlines, and in that way, getting this job was good for me."

Being able to go at his own pace was an aspect of home schooling that Dave thought was extremely helpful. "With home schooling, you take everything at your own pace....You're not pressured with other kids and stuff. You take things on a lighter scale. You don't keep it so intense. It's just it makes an education more fun. You want to learn about it. It's not just this is one thing I have to go do before life....At your own pace there's no pressure on whether

you make it or not or what you do on a certain year. It's just what you get accomplished. Of course, you know, we set goals for ourselves, and try to complete those goals, but there's not that pressure on you that you have to complete this task or book by this time. You do it on your own pace, and you don't have to keep up with everyone else. So if you have a certain problem here, you stop there, and you concentrate on that problem and go on."

Responsibility

Along with self-pacing, Dave saw that home schooling required responsibility. "With home schooling...basically it's up to you to make sure it gets done. A lot of that goes out with you. Because in real life, you don't have someone sitting over you all day saying you have to do that. And so it's changed a lot of the way you think. The goal is up to me, so I have to do it, so therefore, let's get it done....So it carries over a lot. I do a lot of my own planning with my time and how to manage it. And it's an interesting task to try to do. I plan a lot of what I do."

Dave's ability to take responsibility was further illustrated by his ideas about managing his personal money. "I like to save some of it, but most of it I put into like activities I have, like CAP. If I

need a new set of boots or uniforms or something like that. And I skateboard a lot so I put a little money into that. And besides that, I put most of it in my savings account and put it away till later till I can get something I really want." Dave felt that being home schooled had influenced his money management. "Most kids I know don't have jobs, and most of the money is got from their parents. And as soon as they've gotten it, they go out and spend it on something instead of saving it. A lot of that's changed the way I handle my money. I save, and I have to make my own cause my parents have always believed in us making our own money....All three of us work...so my parents have always instilled that in us."

When Dave's parents spoke to Kathie Johnson about how they tried to encourage their boys' autonomy, they noted, "'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'" (p. 115).

Self-confidence

Like many other students in this study, Dave

clearly felt special. "I'm involved in a lot of activities, and they [other kids] ask me a lot about the way I'm schooled and my education and stuff. And every time you describe it to them, they're extremely shocked. I'm like, my mom teaches me at home. They always get me a little bit about, 'Hey, you must get great grades with your mom teaching you.' I just tell them I'm home schooled with my mom, and I'm very thankful that my mom's done this. I tell them that they should've done this from day one, too, and this is the best thing." Dave believed he had been lucky to be able to avoid situations that one might encounter in public schools. "I'm not exposed to all that, and therefore, I don't have the problems in my life." My mother "poured her morals into us as kids, and I think, coming from a Christian background, it's pretty good. It's helped a lot, really. Like with my job and everything a lot of that comes out there....It really shows."

In the Johnson study (1991), Dave's parents emphasized the importance of their Christian background. When they were asked about their children's development of personal identity, John responded, "'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'" (pp. 108-109).

Dave was aware of the major influence his parents had on him and his brothers. "My parents have always instilled their morals in us. They've always taught us to think the best things of ourselves, and I think that's changed a lot of the way we think of ourselves. I mean, my parents have always put that into me, you're always what you make of yourself....It instills you, I mean, it's just the best thing. Once you get self-confidence in yourself, it's, everything leads off that." Dave felt that being home schooled had influenced his own self-confidence. "We have Bible classes and stuff like that in which we discuss the moral aspects and stuff like that about life, and so it gives you a lot of stuff to think about, what you think of yourself. And after a while, it starts to take effect and stuff. You start thinking about yourself better and better. And you get up there, I guess."

Dave thought it would be hard to be as self-confident if he were attending regular school. "A lot of regular school...you're forced to combine with everyone else....You have to be just like everyone else to fit in. And with being home schooled, my

parents have always taught me to think the best of myself, and I follow what I do, not what other kids do, and therefore make my own decisions, so I have a greater opinion of myself and what I do, and I have more confidence in it. Most other kids...it's, let's follow him. We don't have that in home schooling. It's what you do."

Dave compared himself to his friends in public school. "Most of my friends that go to public schools don't like what they do, and they hate school. Most of them don't try towards it because learning hasn't been made interesting to them...or they go with the crowd that thinks school is one of the worst things in life. And a lot of that is what they think of themselves or what they think of school."

Dealing with Failure

In the Johnson interview, Cindy noted that they wanted the boys to be able to deal with both success and failure. They encouraged the boys to try different things so that they could determine what they were good at "while they have the support of parents. If they fall on their faces, it's OK to try something else" (p. 111). Dave tended to dismiss the possibility of failure. "I don't plan on it [failing]. I don't plan on having that. If you don't succeed first, try and try again. That's always been my

motto." He thought that failure might result from "incorrect decisions. Something like that can be the cause of a failure....Just simply not attempting at it can cause failure....If you want to accomplish that goal, you don't just sit there and watch that goal and don't strive for it. Usually you go for that goal and try to finish it. If you don't go for it, then most likely you're going to fail at that object or what you're going to do." He thought that home schooling had influenced his attitude towards failure. "A lot of that carries over from the way your parents have taught you. And they always instill their morals in you. And if you don't succeed, you should try again or go on to another objective or something like that. And a lot of that carries over from the ways your parents have taught you or raised you."

Values and Moral Development

When the Kellys discussed how they approached values and moral development in the home school, they said that they use the biblical principles as the foundation for this topic. Dave felt that it was important to have a standard to go by in life. "My parents have always instilled in us a view of Christianity, and I think that's a good thing. And I think that's an important thing to have in your

life. Without that...it's more a trial and error system. There's no set of rules to go by in your life. It's just go as you will. I think that's important too." He felt that the values and morals his parents had passed on to him really "showed through" in the various situations he was in, such as at work and when he was with peers.

Dave also felt that your values could influence your personal destiny. "You're not going to get very far in life if you're rude to people or you gossip about people. And most people aren't going to respect you if you do that kind of thing. And a lot of what you do in your job is respect towards someone else. If your boss respects you and thinks you do a good job, there'll be benefits from that. If you gossip and talk and that prevents you from doing your job, that's going to prevent you from advancing or doing what you want in life because of the way you act or the way you talk or something about people, and it's just not a good quality to ever pick up."

Dave saw home schooling as "definitely" influencing his values. "If I was attending regular school, my views would definitely be different because my parents wouldn't have been around me as much. I wouldn't have spent as much time learning from them or what they think is right, their morals and values and stuff. I'd spend a lot of time learning what

the teacher thinks is right. And it's very important that you have a certain set of values instilled in you from the first time you were there."

As role models, Dave chose his parents and some of the people at work. Regarding the people at work, he noted, "The patience that they have in their jobs and what they have to deal with. I mean, that's extremely amazing." Explaining why he chose his parents, he commented on "the way my parents have dealt with us and the way they deal with things in life. I think my parents have done an extremely good job of raising us. I respect them for that. It's not easy. I've tried dealing with little kids before, and it's definitely not easy. They've always been there..."

Sexuality

The area of sexuality was addressed by the Kellys as something that they dealt with through books, informal conversations, and actually teaching about sexuality. Cindy noted in the Johnson study (1991) that they use a biblical approach when addressing the topic of sexuality. Dave noted that his parents had discussed sexuality with him, and he also discussed that topic with his brothers and friends. Dave couldn't imagine "having a kid" himself, but was sure that if he did he would follow his parents' examples

in teaching about sexuality. "I'd talk to them whatever my parents have always taught me. Try to instill what I think about that into them. I'd rather them have my morals about that issue than someone else's." He would also set guidelines for his children. "My parents have certain things they don't want me doing, and I respect that, and, therefore, I don't do that."

Dave thought that being home schooled would help him in terms of his future dating and marriage. "Definitely. Through home schooling the way my parents have always taught me through Christianity and everything, I go through choosing my girlfriends or my wife or my friends through that....I think the way they've taught me, the morals they've taught me are extremely good for me, and the situations I'm in, that helps a lot when you have those good morals." Dave's parents did not believe in pushing dating at too early an age, but stressed instead the development of good friendships. Dave seemed to concur. "I haven't had to deal with any of that quite yet. My experience with dating has been extremely limited. Not enough time. Don't get involved too early...I think it's fine once you reach an older age like sixteen or so."

Dave perceived the home-schooling environment to be beneficial for learning about sexuality. "Public

school, a lot of the kids have a very low sense of their morals. A lot of what they do, I wouldn't particularly want to do or believe in doing. So I definitely think the home-schooling environment would be better for it. You basically make your own decision in that area. And hopefully your parents have taught you right, and you can make your own decision and basically hope you have made the right decision."

Social Skills

Social skills and manners, according to Dave's parents, were mostly taught through "real-life experiences" (Johnson, 1991, p. 117). They mentioned doing several things in school having to do with manners, but felt that if the boys were weak in any area, that was probably it. (I would beg to differ when it came to Dave. The two times I was with him, he was very polite.) However, Dave's parents noted that he was quite comfortable communicating with adults, and Dave seemed to agree with that. "My parents have always wanted to instill manners in me....Like a lot of my other friends haven't been taught. They don't talk to grown-ups very well or respond to people very well, and through...home schooling and my parents...it's been easier to talk to adults or grown-ups or other people that you'd think it would be hard to or something like that."

He felt that his manners might be different if he had attended regular school. His reasoning was, "With regular school, everyone always goes along with the crowd or goes with who's popular or whatever. And if that person's doing the wrong thing, you definitely would change because you'd want to follow the crowd and fit in with everyone. I've seen a lot of that with my...friends that go to public school. They want to stick with the crowd and therefore they do. Sometimes they make the wrong decisions."

Dave clearly felt capable of making the right decisions. He thought that home schooling "definitely helped me. A lot of having to make my own decisions, it carries out with you. You take it wherever you go. You go into life and kids offer you, 'Hey, why don't you go do this with me' and you don't want to do it. You can tell them, 'Hey, I don't want to.' And it gets...easier to make your own decisions when you've been in that situation where you're making your own decisions for six years. I mean, it really gets...a lot easier when you grow up and having to do more things and take on more responsibility."

Dave also enjoyed current events. "I like to keep up with what's going on around me....I think it helps in just picking up the newspaper every now and then and reading it....It helps a lot....I mean, you're going to need to when you grow older, and it's

always a good habit to get when you're younger."

This interest apparently contributed to Dave's hopes of getting a leadership position someday. "I wouldn't mind getting a leadership position where I could discern what was going to...go on. Unfortunately, we don't know what's going to happen or what's going to go on, but I think in a leadership position, you would have more of the ability to make decisions that would affect the things that are going to happen. And I would like to get in a leadership position someday where I could do that, either with my job or with the armed forces. I'd like to do that."

Leadership

Dave's plans for the future included preparation for leadership. He wanted to finish high school, go through four years of college, and then either go into the armed services or some type of investment career such as investment banking.

Dave perceived home schooling as influencing his thoughts in that area. "Through home schooling I always wanted to strive to be the best I can. I think that'll affect the way I will go out in the world and the way I want to advance in things like with my job. I think I'd always want to advance or be better than I was...when I started out. I think it'll help a lot through the way I've home schooled,

the way I've been taught, how that affects the way that you live and the way you carry yourself."

Final Thoughts

While Dave was clearly positive about his experiences in home schooling, he recognized that there were pros and cons. "There are certain benefits to being in public school. You're around kids all the time, and you deal with that better. And your peers you can deal with them. Through home schooling you don't get a lot of that cause a lot of who you deal with is your family and your friends. In a way public schooling is better towards that goal. I don't think you'd get all the values and morals...in public school. In home schooling you get that type of thing. And I'd have to say it's about fifty-fifty cause public schooling allows you to be around those people and to deal with them all the time. In home schooling you can tell a difference between when you get around other kids. I mean, it's not hard to get along with them, but it's interesting to see the way they get along with each other and the way you get along with them. It's hard to say which one is better because both of them prepare a certain way. I think home schooling is a better way because you get the morals and understandings towards how you choose your friends....I'm not sure which one is better. I would

say home schooling personally, but there are two sides of the issue. A lot of it depends on what you want or what you're looking for, I think."

Commentary

Dave Kelly's insights and comments clearly shed light on perspectives of Christian home-school students regarding their socialization. He is clearly positive about his own experiences even though he is cognizant of several disadvantages found in the home school.

When reading through Dave's comments, the reader might note that there is one point at which he appears to contradict himself. He said: "Since I home school, there's not much how people can meet me." However, he also said that he meets many people through his involvement in home schooling, and he meets many people through his involvement in CAP. Perhaps this contradiction can be resolved by the fact that Dave often interchanges his meanings for the term "home school." At times, he refers to home schooling as purely his academic ventures, and at other times, home schooling means the total way of life of home schooling. It would seem apparent that, because of the very nature of home schooling, the time set aside for academics is not a convenient time for developing relationships. It seems that this was what Dave was referring to when he spoke about there not being many

opportunities for people to meet him when "home schooling."

Dave's separation of the two meanings of the term "home schooling", involving at times the academics and at other times, the way of life, emphasizes the importance of the home-schooling parent providing for and encouraging involvement in outside activities. Dave credits his involvement in Civil Air Patrol and his part-time job with providing for preparation for life in the "real world", relationships, goal setting, training in meeting deadlines, and learning leadership qualities. For instance, he concluded, "I think you're really lacking something if you've never gone through a program like that [Civil Air Patrol], and that's where you learn a lot of leadership qualities and just morals and the way you go through life." Assuredly, Dave's comments emphasize the necessity of incorporating outside-the-home activities into the total home-schooling way of life.

Also, when referring to relationships, Dave makes mention of the benefit of the traditional-school environment in the sense of providing for greater opportunities for interaction with peers. Dave comments that it is not difficult for him to get along with his peers: however, he noticed a "difference" in the way they relate to one another in comparison to how he relates to them. Dave's frequent

interactions with older siblings and adults might be manifesting itself in terms of creating somewhat of a gap between him and his age-level peers. When talking to Dave, as with the majority of the other home-schooling students, I noticed that a maturity beyond his years was extremely evident. This quality might present somewhat of a difficulty when interacting with some children his age.

When comparing and contrasting the two schooling environments, home school and traditional school, Dave concluded: "I'm not sure which one is better. I would say home schooling, personally, but there are two sides to the issue....A lot of it depends on what you want or what you're looking for, I think." Much of what home-school advocates and parents are "looking for" includes the passing on of their value system. Dave never referred to a "difference" between him and his home-schooling peers. Perhaps the values these students have begun to espouse could contribute to a potential "difference" between them and some of their traditionally-schooled peers.

Case Study #2: Alice Lewis

Alice Lewis, age 13, lives in Rockingham County and has been home schooled for six years. Her father, Tom, is an executive with the poultry industry, and her mother is the teacher in the home school. She has a master's degree in a science-related field. Alice's mother, Ann, taught at the University of Maryland for several years, and both parents taught one year at the school where their children were enrolled before the family began to home school. However, neither Ann or Tom have had any professional education courses.

Alice has one sister, Beth, who is two years her senior. She also has one brother, John, who is three years her junior. All three of the children are home schooled.

The Decision to be Home Schooled

Alice was somewhat different from the other students in this study, in that her attitude towards home schooling had undergone major changes since she began her home schooling career. She said that she was now happy being home schooled, but that had not always been the case. "I used to really want to go back to school, especially the many years I was home schooled. But this year...I've learned to enjoy it, and I like it a whole lot now, and I want to be home

schooled now. Before, I really wanted to go back to school, and I didn't really like it, but now I do."

These comments paralleled what Alice's parents had said in the Johnson study (1991). Mrs. Lewis reported, "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" (p. 143). She went on to say that they were planning to give their children the choice as to whether or not they wanted to be homeschooled anymore.

Alice referred to this change in "school policy." "I really wanted to go to school....And then Mom and Dad told me that they'd give me a choice last year. And so they asked me to visit the school, our church's Christian school, before I made the decision. And I realized that I just didn't like it at all, and I really didn't want to go there. So...then I made my own choice to stay home this year. And since I made my own choice, I feel happier now, and I like it...and I realize I really don't want to go back to school." She went on to elaborate about how she came to this decision. "I just thought I didn't want to do that every day for a whole year. And I would have friends there, but I wouldn't have a whole lot of friends. Because there's a crowd that's sort of off, and then there's a good crowd. And the good

crowd is very small....I'm glad especially now that I didn't go because a lot of the kids that were in the good crowd went off into the wrong crowd. And a few of them have changed a real lot but a lot of them haven't. And so I'm really glad because I realize I probably would've gone down the wrong road, too."

Alice reflected on what she perceived to be the primary factor in changing her mind about wanting to be home schooled. She surmised this change in attitude began when her parents had given her the opportunity to be a part of the decision to be home schooled. "If they would've told me I couldn't make the choice, I think I would've always wished I would have gone back. But since I got to make the choice myself, I feel like that's my choice, and I'll live with it. And I'm glad that I made the choice and all."

Sports

When describing herself, Alice noted that she enjoys various activities, including sports. Some of the activities she engaged in were home-school activities, soccer lessons and teams, skating, volleyball, and her church youth group. She felt that she had more opportunities to engage in extra activities than would the majority of children who attended traditional school. However, she felt that

X being home schooled had limited her achievements in sports to a certain extent. "If I wasn't home schooled, I probably would compete more, and I might win trophies or something like that....In that sense it has, but in the sense of learning how to play and everything, I feel like I've learned about as equally as I would have at school." Nevertheless, she concluded that this was not of utmost importance to her. "It doesn't really bother me. I mean, that's not a major goal in my life to be famous in sports or anything like that."

Family Relationships

Also in describing herself, Alice referred to her family, and her comments indicated that family relationships were quite important to her. She believed she was closer to her family than were her traditionally-schooled peers because she was home schooled. "I guess it's because I see a lot of my friends that go to school. They're just not as close to their brothers and sisters. I'm around them all day. I learn to put up with them more, I guess you could say." She also attributed this closeness to her personal decision to communicate with her parents. "It's sort of my own decision to more communicate with my parents. But I also feel closer to my parents, X and I feel like they know me better, and I know them

> better because we're together more often, especially Mom, because Dad works, but Mom is there a lot."

Responsibilities

In the Johnson study (1991), Mr. and Mrs. Lewis described Alice as being diligent, responsible, and a self-starter. Alice herself mentioned the comments others had made about her. She noted, "A lot of people tell me, I guess I haven't noticed it myself, but a lot of people tell me that I act a lot older, and I act more polite than kids my age and things like that....I don't notice it a whole lot in myself."

Alice referred to her responsibilities at home, and noted the influence she perceived home schooling to have had upon her ability to perform them independently. "To a certain extent...I feel I'm more organized....We have our morning planned out for home school. And to a certain extent I'm supposed to do my chores at a certain time of the day, but I sort of plan how I do my school work and my chores and my piano in with all of it....I feel like if I wasn't home schooled, I'd probably be able to do things just about the same. I'd feel self-confident, but I wouldn't feel as."

Personal Decisions

When Kathie Johnson (1991) interviewed Alice's

parents, they said that they often tell the children that 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" (p. 138). These thoughts were clearly reflected in Alice's comments regarding various decisions she had made, such as the decision to become a Christian, school and college-related decisions, and her decision to study to become a missionary. "That's what I feel God's called me to do."

Alice considered the lack of peer pressure in the home school to be heavily influential regarding her decision making. "There's peer pressure to a teeny little bit, but it's more peer pressure to do good and not to do bad." She felt that she wasn't pressured to choose those things that "the crowd" would want her to choose.

The manner in which Alice reported making financial decisions shed light on these comments. "My parents give me an amount of clothing money each month, and I'm supposed to spend that on what I need, and I make a list sometimes...of things I need, and I buy that. And my personal money, I give to missions, or I save, or I spend on books, or things I want....I don't feel pressured to spend my money on what my friends would like me to have....I don't feel pressured to have everything they have. So I feel like I can

spend my money more freely and how God wants me to." Johnson (1991) reported that Alice's parents mentioned giving their children money for performing their chores. They noted that, at that point, Alice had saved over one-hundred dollars. Mrs. Lewis also mentioned that she "encourages the children to consider giving their own money for special needs in the world community" (p. 145).

Self-confidence

Alice felt that various factors within the home-school environment had contributed to her self-confidence, particularly the lack of peer pressure once again. "I would feel probably more pressure to go with the crowd and everything like that. I wouldn't feel as self-confident in myself, and I wouldn't feel like I could expand my own interests as much. I'd feel as though I'd always have to please everybody else, kind of."

Johnson (1991) reported that Alice's parents said that they were teaching their children "to stand alone...to be a leader" (p. 141). Alice's comments reflected that statement in terms of how home schooling had influenced her relationships. "I think it gives me more self-confidence to do things on my own. I don't feel like I have peer pressure to do a lot of things that the crowd does. I don't just follow the

crowd....I see a lot of my friends at school. They choose to go with the crowd rather than to stand alone, or they don't choose the best friends because that's the way the crowd goes."

Outside-the-Family Relationships

Alice believed that being home schooled had also improved other relationships. "I get to spend more time with my friends, such as talking, rather than just being with them at school....We're able to talk more and play more, rather than just seeing each other all day....The time I spend with them, and I see more of...their real personality. And I learn to love them, how they really are and not just a front they put on at school or something like that."

Interaction with people of various ages was also referred to as a positive aspect of home schooling. Her reasoning was that "nowhere in life are you going to be with people just your age." She felt that home schooling had "definitely affected" this ability because it had given her greater confidence as well as more opportunities to interact with a broad spectrum of people, not just those in her peer group. "I don't just interact with people who are sort of on my same level or go to my same school....I sort of compare myself with my friends when you ask me these questions because I see, they don't...as far as I know they

don't interact with people that are totally different from them. They interact with people that are more on their level and their friends....I feel like I can talk to people who are older more confidently since I'm not around my friends all day. I don't feel like I have to talk to people in my age group. I feel comfortable talking to older people also....[If I were in regular school], I wouldn't feel as confident talking to older people, I don't think."

Sexuality

In terms of relationships with the opposite sex, Alice felt that the home school would be influential in a variety of ways, both positively and negatively. In the positive sense, she noted that the values she had learned in the home school would be beneficial, and she hoped to pass these same values on to her children one day. "I'll probably just sit down with them and show them from the Bible some stuff, and then just tell them about it....I would definitely try at least not to let them be exposed to things at too early of an age, and I would try to control it so that they don't learn it in the wrong sense." In addition, she hoped to create an environment that would foster open communication between her and her children. "I'd like to have an open communication and have my kids feel free to talk to me and things

like that."

However, Alice also mentioned some negative aspects of the home-schooling environment in reference to sexuality. Although she felt confident in her interactions with people of varied ages, she didn't consider herself to be very confident in her interactions with members of the opposite sex. "In the sense of dating...you don't feel as confident socially in that sense of interacting with guys....I think it [home schooling] will give me higher standards, and to a certain extent will hinder me because I'm not used to interacting with guys or anything like that....I'm more used to interacting with girls my age instead of guys. So, in that sense, I feel like it will hinder me, but in standard setting and choosing who I will date, I think it will help me....And I think it's given me a desire for a strong marriage...because I see what my parents have."

Values

Values that Alice held in high esteem included honesty, living right, obeying God, and cheerfulness. In addition, she chose role models that reflected her Christian values. "Mr. Jones has a close relationship with God, and he obeys God...And I look up to Jesus, of course....He's just so righteous, and so perfect, and so holy."

Alice thought that being home schooled had strongly influenced her values. "I definitely feel it has because I see a lot of kids in school don't have as strong of values. They don't hold as strong a values as I do....So I probably wouldn't hold those values as strongly if I went to a Christian school." She explained that she thought that peer pressure, even in a Christian school, would have an impact on her values. "It's so easy just to follow the crowd and not to set your own standards, and do things as you would do them and as pleasing to Christ. It's easier to just do what everybody else does."

Johnson (1991) reported that Alice's parents said that their primary goal for Alice was "molding a godly character" (p. 146). Alice's comments indicated that she, too, shared this goal regarding her values. "I hope they'll deepen. I hope they'll become more Christ-like and more of what Christ wants them to be and all." In addition, she hoped that her future children would share the values her parents had passed down to her through home schooling. "I want them to be self-confident in themselves and not to feel peer pressure. And I want them to be Christians and Christlike."

Commentary

Alice's case is probably the most illuminating

in terms of the importance of allowing the students to have a voice in the decision to home school. Her comments describing how her attitude changed when she was given the choice really need no further explanation. However, the remainder of her comments are indicative of how she now sees the benefits of home schooling and enjoys it, even though she is aware of several disadvantages.

The only major disadvantages that she refers to involves sports and dating relationships. For instance, Alice notes that the home-schooling environment somewhat limits her opportunities in sports. However, she expresses no bitterness about this. In addition, when discussing dating relationships, she notes that she has had fewer opportunities to interact with the opposite sex and therefore feels less confident in that respect. However, she doesn't end on that thought. She goes on to say that although that will be a hindrance to her, the values learned in the home school will be a help.

The majority of her comments are very positive in nature regarding home schooling. For instance, she noted that both family and non-family relationships have been improved due to home schooling. In addition, she attributes home schooling as fostering self-confidence in a variety of areas. She also talks

about her personal values and the influence home schooling has had on them in a very positive manner. And in conclusion, she said that she hopes that her children will hold to those same values and attitudes that her parents have passed on to her through home schooling. She stated, "I want them to be self-confident in themselves and not to feel peer pressure. And I want them to be Christians and Christlike." It appears that Alice views home schooling as a sort of protective device, particularly regarding peer pressure. Apparently, she hopes to protect her future children from peer pressure in the same way that her parents have protected her, that being home schooling.

Based on her parents' comments, Alice's statements mirror their desires for her which they hoped to achieve through home schooling. It seems clear that once Alice felt that she was a part of the decision to be home schooled, she could "live with" any disadvantages. "And since I made my own choice, I feel happier now, and I like it."

Case Study #3: Keith Croft

Keith Croft, age 13, lives with his family in a rural subdivision in Campbell County, Virginia. Keith's father and mother, Al and Judy, operate a business directly from their home. Keith's older sister, Cathy, also is home schooled. Both Keith and Cathy have been home schooled for four years.

When Keith's parents were interviewed by Johnson (1991), one of Judy's comments was that they didn't decide to home school in order to "pull out from a bad society" (p. 147). Rather, she stated that they wanted "their children to have specific life principles to build upon after their elementary and high school experiences" (p. 148).

The Decision to Home School

Keith was a unique student in this study in the sense that he perceived his parents to have solely made the decision to home school their children, without giving their children a voice in the decision. When describing how he felt about that, he never gave a clear answer. "Well, you're under your parents' authority, and you have to do what they say, but I don't know. It's been helpful in some ways. Well, a lot of ways." Interestingly, Keith noted that when he had children one day, he would give them the choice as to whether or not they wanted to be home schooled.

"It's up to them. I would give them the choice. If they want to do it, yes. If not, they wouldn't have to....To make them happy."

Throughout all of his comments, Keith cited various advantages and disadvantages he thought were a part of his home-schooling experience. "Well, it has its advantages and its disadvantages." Many of his comments were positive about home schooling, particularly regarding life principles learned in the home school. "I'd say [it] helped in some ways....Just being in the curriculum....I would just say that whatever I do, whether it would be racing or whatever, that I would have the principles to live by that I learned through home schooling. However, Keith listed numerous disadvantages that he felt were associated with home schooling." For instance, he said, "Not getting a diploma. It's like, take the GED, and it's well, you passed....I don't know. I'm not saying that you have to have that big thing where you walk up the aisle and stuff like that. But, that would be another disadvantage, not being able to graduate. Well, you graduate, but not really. You know what I mean? They have a thing where the home schoolers graduate, but that's little."

Personal Identity

In regard to Keith's personal identity, he felt

that he was special because he was "a Christian."

However, he felt that being home schooled had made him "different" from the others. "It would make you, like when people ask you what school you go to, it would make you, I don't know how to say it, but it would just make you even more different than the others." He said that makes him feel "sometimes good, sometimes bad. It depends which crowd you're with." He felt that his opinion of himself might be different if he were attending a traditional school. "Possibly. You'd be like the majority of the kids." However, he added that "some of the other kids in the youth group are also home schooled, and it sort of helps you through...knowing it's not that you're the only one."

The majority of Keith's negative comments about home schooling revolved around what others might think about his being home schooled. "The only thing I wouldn't like about home schooling right now is its bad image. Like some people, the first thing they think of in home schooling is red-necks out in the barn trying to teach their kids. You know what I mean?...It's like, 'Oh, you're one of those home schoolers.'"

Racing

Although Keith said that being involved in racing

also makes him feel "different from the others," much of Keith's self-confidence stemmed from his racing activities. He was quite unique from the other students in that he enjoys driving sprint racing cars and Winston Cup cars, and he plans "to race professionally on the Winston Cup Circuit....It gives you more self-confidence, and it helps your self-image, I would say....knowing that you can do things on your own. And not to say that you're trying to go independent, but that you can do things on your own with God, God's help."

In the Johnson study (1991), Mr. Croft commented that Keith's main desire in life is to be a professional racer. He also noted that he thought Keith found acceptance from his driving activities. Keith felt that being home schooled had somewhat influenced his racing endeavors. "Probably when you're racing and when you win. And they ask you, 'How do you find time to do it with all your homework and stuff?' And you say, 'Well, I'm home schooled.'" He thought he'd still be involved in racing if he weren't home schooled: however, he said that they "wouldn't be able to work our schedule in as much."

Sports

Keith also noted disadvantages found in the home-school environment related to sports. Although

he was heavily involved with car racing, he brought up the lack of team sports in the home school.

"Somebody that was involved with like sports a lot, say football, basketball, and baseball. I would say go to a Christian school or a public school. Home school would definitely not be the route....They have rec leagues, but it's just not the same as being on a school team....I mean, I'm not saying...cause racing is like way different than most people have ever done or anything....I don't know."

Failure/Success

Keith's mother, Judy, told Kathie Johnson (1991) that she focused on the importance of balance when it came to Keith. Keith's comments regarding possible failure reflected his mother's thoughts. He thought that the cause of failure might be "not keeping your life in balance....Not keeping God first in everything." Keith noted that racing had been beneficial in his learning how to deal with failure. He said that racing had "helped a lot with that area. Like the last race I ran in, I was leading the race, and the car broke. And I guess you just have to get used to that. Don't let it get to you." Keith's responses in the event of possibly failing at racing were rather insightful. He said that he would "probably just go to college and probably get a real

job. I mean...you know what I mean? That's [Racing] a real job, but I would just go to college and get a degree....If you can't make a living at racing, you've got to find some other way."

Peer Pressure

According to Keith, the home school could be good for certain types of people and bad for other types. "Basically, it depends on what type of person. The home school could be good, and it could be bad in some ways. Like for someone with a poor self-image of themselves, the home school could be good because of the fact that you learn to socialize, and I would say you could make more decisions on your own with home school. And with the Christian school and regular school, I'd say, if somebody had a higher self-image of themselves, and they were strong with the principles, then they could take a stand in the school and say, 'Here it is. Take me or not.' You know what I mean? And not somebody who would submit to peer pressure real easy....You don't have the peer pressure of other kids as you would in normal school."

Keith saw advantages and disadvantages to this smaller amount of peer pressure. "It's good, and it's bad. Sometimes you're glad that you don't have it, and sometimes you kinda wish you did just to, well, I don't know. Like at the church, the kids

that aren't home schooled, they're in their own group, and like, they aren't dorks, but they're like, I mean, you don't hang around them basically. Everybody that's not in their group, you have to avoid them, you know what I'm saying? Where, in a regular-school environment, you may be in that little group with peer pressure or whatever, but in home schooling you wouldn't be. But I'm not saying I would want to be in their little group....They're just sort of all best friends, and they think, they like judge every person in the class, you know what I'm saying?...I think they're wrong. Well, of course, they're the all-star players at John Ford High School....I'm just saying if you had peer pressure, it might be like, they would possibly like let you in because you'd do anything they said to get in it...That's fine with me, I don't care. But like the other kids, they try so hard, and I think that's stupid. I mean, you know you're not going to be accepted, so forget it."

Relationships

Although Keith felt he wasn't accepted among the all-star players from the local high school that attended his church, he mentioned that he had been elected as the "class president" of his church youth group. In addition, he mentioned various other relationships, where most of his friends were older

than himself. He noted being close to several people, including a boy named John, (age 15), Warren, (age 17), Tom, (age 19), and Charles, (age 21). One of those cited was a home schooler, and the others were racing friends.

He felt that being home schooled had helped him in his interactions with people somewhat older than himself. "You're communicating more with adults, and you're not going to be communicating with kids in the real world. It's going to be adults, so you'll learn how to communicate with adults."

Nevertheless, Keith felt that if he were attending regular school, he "definitely...would have more friends." However, he surmised that his friends made at a traditional school might not be true friends. "They could also be not genuine friends, just friend-friends. You know what I mean? They wouldn't really be your friends. Like they'd be fickle towards you." He added, "It could be less trouble....Just not worrying about what so many other people think. Like you'd have to act or do a certain thing when you were around certain people." He thought that made him feel "better about" his friends. "It's like, here I am. Take me or leave me....I don't know. It's just, some of the thirteen-year-olds, they think they're like big-time, and a lot of the thirteen through...fourteen, they'll like you one day, and

they'll hate you the next. So, the others, they're sort of just more stable....I'm not saying I'm a lot more mature than them, but I just..find it easier to hang around with the other people. They aren't going to be like, they like you one day and hate you the next."

Family Relationships

Home schooling's influence on increased family closeness was thought by Keith to be beneficial. However, he noted that there were disadvantages to that family closeness. "Just being around them day in and day out. Sometimes it's good. Sometimes it gets you worn down and stuff like that....I guess it's just being different. You know what I mean? My dad has the lab at home. We're home schooled, and we live in this house. You know what I mean? So everybody's like, 'Man, you do everything in the same house.'" However, despite those previous comments, when naming role models, Keith chose his father. He felt that his father possessed the quality of "always being there for somebody that would need you."

Sexuality

In terms of sexuality, Keith saw advantages to both types of schools. He noted that the advantage

of being in a traditional school would be the wide variety of people to choose from when picking a husband or wife. "In the Christian-school scene, there's like zillions of people, but with the home-school scene, it's just a matter of where you go and who you meet." However, he thought that values learned in the home school were beneficial regarding sexuality. He said that in the home school, you are always learning about "the same basic principles and how to apply dating, marriage, and whatever to those principles."

Keith's comments regarding sexuality were the most unique of all the students. Although he was similar in the sense that he incorporated values throughout the topic, his comments were indicative of somewhat of a different perspective than the others. For instance, when discussing how he would teach his future children about sexuality, he said that he would stress the importance of girls being feminine and boys being masculine. "I would probably say, if you're a girl, do the feminine things. And if you're a boy, do the masculine things."

Commentary

Keith's case is considerably different from those of the other students. Whereas the majority of the other students consistently spoke about the benefits

of home schooling, Keith consistently struggled with the pros and cons of being home schooled. Although he saw the benefits of values education in the home school as well as more opportunities to learn how to interact with people older than himself, comments throughout the interview indicated that he felt that there were numerous disadvantages associated with being home schooled.

When Keith spoke about his perceptions of how being home schooled had influenced his personal identity, he said that he thought it made him "different from the others." Although he was heavily involved in car racing, he noted that home schooling was lacking in terms of sports opportunities. Relationships were not exempt from his comments about the negative aspects of home schooling. For instance, although he saw closer family relationships as being a positive outgrowth of home schooling, he said that because his family was heavily home-based, that made him different from his peers as well. His peer relationships also were influenced by home schooling. Although he felt that he enjoyed the company of older friends, he felt that the lack of peer pressure found in the home-schooling environment had caused him to not be accepted by some of his peers. And, finally, even the area of sexuality was seen as both negative and positive in the home school. Although he had

learned many "principles" in terms of dating and marriage, he felt that being home schooled would limit his choices for meeting many girls.

Keith's comments regarding his perceptions of his lack of input in the decision to be home schooled set the stage for his other comments. He never stated clearly whether or not he enjoyed being home schooled. Rather, he consistently referred to the idea that being home schooled has many "advantages and disadvantages." The fact that he did mention several advantages to home schooling indicates that he saw that home schooling had been "helpful in many ways." However, the fact that he said that he would give his children a voice in the decision to be home schooled "to make them happy" clearly indicates that he felt that his not being a part of the decision had influenced his attitude toward home schooling.

At the conclusion of the interview, Keith was asked to make some judgments about home schooling. Although Keith had expressed a considerable number of disadvantages associated with home schooling, when asked to choose which type of schooling environment better prepared a person socially, he chose the home school. His reasoning involved more opportunities for interacting with adults. "I'd say possibly the home schooling. 'Cause for most people, a lot of them, you're communicating more with adults, and you're

not going to be communicating with kids in the real world. It's going to be adults, so you'll learn how to communicate with adults." I was able to observe Keith at a church car wash where he was working and interacting with people of varied ages. He appeared to be quite comfortable as he joined in with the work and conversation. In addition, when asked if he planned to home school his future children, he said that he would if they wanted to. It would seem that if Keith truly thought that the home-school environment was as bad as his other comments indicated, he would never want to subject his future children to being home schooled.

In conclusion, I asked Keith if he would like to continue to be home schooled if he were given the choice. He responded, "It's been helpful in some ways. Well, a lot of ways....I don't know. With my sister going off to college, I don't know. I think I'd want to try it for a year without my sister and see how it was." Although these responses were not overly positive in nature towards home schooling, they also were not totally negative. These comments were somewhat surprising, because of the number of negative comments he made throughout the interview. Perhaps these responses indicating that he would probably like to continue home schooling reveal that Keith truly did look at home schooling somewhat

favorably, and given the choice, he would like to continue. In addition, based on his final comments, it seems possible that if he had willingly given up opportunities found in the traditional school, his attitude and perceptions of the home-school environment might have been considerably altered.

Case Study #4: Carla Ellis

Carla Ellis, age 13, lives in Mount Crawford and has been home schooled for her entire school career. Carla's father, Ben, is an evangelist, and often travels both in the United States and abroad due to the nature of his ministry. Carla's mother, Sara, a former school teacher, is the teacher in the home school. Carla has one brother, Josh, who is three years her junior.

Carla's parents were interviewed by a prior researcher, Kathie Johnson (1991), regarding their socialization practices in the home school. The Ellis' reported that they are committed to raising their children in the light of Christianity. "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 curriculum" (Johnson, 1991, p. 81).

The Decision to Home School

Carla is a unique student in this study because of the fact that she has chosen to begin attending

a traditional school for her high-school years. In the Johnson study (1991), Mr. and Mrs. Ellis mentioned that Carla has been given the choice since third grade as to whether or not to continue home schooling, and each April the agreement is made once again. Carla also referred to this decision-making process in our interview. "I'm going to go to the high school next year....My parents gave me the choice, and I went to the school for a day to see what it'd be like, and I think I'm ready to go now. I think I can have an impact on some of the other kids....Every year they've [her parents] let me choose whether or not I want to be home schooled....Every other year, after visiting the regular school, I've wanted to be home schooled because I see all the things I'd miss and not be able to do if I went there. I didn't want to have to do that every day. That didn't sound good to me at all. But I'd like to go now...to be able to take more advanced art classes and get into sports some and stuff like that. My dad said that the high school years are really good....I made that decision on my own. I thought about it a lot and decided that now was the time....I don't know if I would want to go all the way through high school and be home schooled....I feel like I might miss out on the sports...plus getting to know more people and dating relationships and that kind of stuff."

In describing how she had come to the conclusion to begin attending a traditional school, Carla described how she typically makes major decisions. "I talk to my parents a lot, and I think about it a lot. And I try to live it like thinking, going through a week. That's what I especially felt, like choosing whether or not to go to the high school next year. I think, what would I be doing at this time? You know, would I have time to do the things I love to do?...I pray about it a lot. And Dad, we talked about it a lot...I really try to read the Bible and search what I felt."

She felt that being home schooled had helped her in terms of decision making to "feel more confident." She also noted that having her parents there to go to for wisdom was a real asset for decision making.

Being Special

When choosing those aspects about herself that made her unique, Carla stated, "I would tell them that I'm a Christian, and that I'm home schooled." Rather than feeling "different" because of being home schooled, Carla clearly felt "special." She noted that because her parents had chosen to home school her coupled with their encouragement, she considered herself to be "special." "My parents are

there to encourage me and help me. That makes me feel really good about myself. It gives me self-confidence."

In addition, Carla said that certain factors aside from parental encouragement found in her home-schooling environment had contributed towards her self-confidence. She particularly felt that the home school had given her an "opportunity for creativity." She noted that specific activities she was involved in such as writing, drawing, piano, art, and reading were all enhanced due to the amount of time she had at her disposal due to the home-schooling environment. "I'm pleased with what I've done with piano and stuff. I don't think there'd have been the time to devote to that if I'd been in regular school."

Relationships with Peers

Carla mentioned having a very wide and varied sampling of relationships, all very important to her. Carla noted that she truly enjoyed being with people. When describing herself, she noted, "I'd tell them that I am...outgoing, and I like people." Among these relationships, she mentioned spending time with other home schoolers, church friends, and friends in the regular school. "The only reason I have a relationship with Ann and Lisa is through home

schooling because we get together every Tuesday.

We found each other through home schooling....With my youth group and stuff, when we get together, and my other friends, we invite them over on Saturday night, and then we'll spend the night and have a slumber party here and then go to church Sunday...It used to be that I was the only one that ever had the slumber parties and stuff, but, especially, when I was younger, everybody drew to me more, finding out, 'Oh, you're home schooled'....And I've gone to camp, where, the last five years, so I've met lots of people there....My public-school friends...I don't get to see them as much, so I'm not quite as good friends with them, but they find me so interesting and different from their other friends when we do get together."

She commented that home schooling has pushed her to make the effort to develop friendships. "It's either you're all to yourself, or you get out there and stuff." However, Carla did not ignore the importance of the parental role regarding her developing relationships. "My parents have made an effort to give me responsibility and given me the opportunity to make good friends. And plus, they make friends easily, so I've seen their example. But it depends on how much the parent tries to help you. It really depends on the parent because you

can't do that on your own."

Carla also considered her creativity as being an asset in terms of developing relationships. She noted that several of her home-schooled friends were also creative. "We are very creative. I think I like being with them so much because they're creative also. We do all these crazy things. We draw house plans and love to look through Southern Living and get all these ideas. So we get that graph paper and do each little block is a square foot, and do these extensive houses, draw furniture and everything. We made a meal, an end of the year meal, and with all these exotic foods and stuff from Southern Living. And play games...and we talk and talk and talk and have these marathon phone conversations. I do that with my other friends."

In addition, Carla perceived the absence of peer pressure in the home-schooling environment as being beneficial regarding her relationships because she was "free to be" herself. "I see my friends who are in regular school, and they aren't as self-confident as I am. They go more with what the crowd wants them to do because they want to be accepted. I don't have to worry about that. It kind of frees me up to be myself....I'm not forced into any one group and not accepted by the other group. I can just be friends with everybody....In school, I think you're wired

so much for, they've got to look right, and they've got to act right, and they've got to be right. I just met some kids in Ohio the other day, and they were both deaf, and it was fun to be with them."

The home-school environment was seen by Carla as being a good place to develop relationships with other people because of the amount of freedom found in that environment. "In the regular school, you're only with one group of kids your own age. And of course they are from all different...backgrounds and everything. But then they are more in groups. And whatever group you get stuck with, that's who you're with mostly. It's a little hard to get out of that classification. But nobody really knows if I'm a prep or whatever. So the cool people can talk to me and everything because they don't know. So it doesn't hinder me at all. In fact it lets me free to be more myself and have more friends, a wider perspective." She also felt that the home-schooling environment had helped her to be her true self, and she added, "in the long run,...that's how people want you to be anyway."

However, this lack of peer pressure in the home-school environment also caused Carla to wonder what would happen when she did begin attending a traditional school. "I'm not pressured as much to be friends with the hot group and everything. It'll

be interesting when I go to high school because I have so many different friends at our church. I have friends that I think are great, but somehow they're at more the bottom of the social ring or whatever. They're not the preps or whatever. And then I've got good friends that are like really cool, and so they're like, 'Oh, Carla, you've got to start going with us and getting to know all these cool people at high school and everything.'" She noted that she had determined to just continue to be who she was, and the others would just have to accept that. "I'm just going to do my best to be myself and keep my friends that maybe aren't as accepted....I definitely don't want to hurt them and go be with the cool people just because they're cool. I just want to be nice to them. And then if other people can't take me for who I am and wanting to be nice to everyone, well, that's their problem."

Sexuality

Factors noted by Carla as being influential in terms of her developing relationships with peers were also noted as being important regarding relationships with the opposite sex. Primary in Carla's mind was the presence of parental influence. Clearly, her parents had established a positive relationship with their daughter, and this was manifested in her

comments. "You can trust your parents to tell you what's really true."

The second major element in the home-school environment influencing sexuality was the lack of peer pressure. "Back to the peer pressure thing, if you were in public school, you'd probably be pressured to do what your friends were doing and think what they're thinking."

Carla felt that she had been given ample opportunities to learn how to interact with the opposite sex. She referred to some neighbor boys that she had as good friends when she was younger. "I've gotten to be with more people in all stages of my growing up and everything. When I was really younger, six or so, my neighbors had three boys, and so I ended up being better friends than I did with the girls." She noted that when she got older, her friends tended to be predominantly females, but she said that was all right because of her prior experiences "evening [things] out." "So in some ways, I kind of liked that though, because after I got a little bit older I had all girlfriends, and it evened out then because I knew how to get along really good with guys and have fun with them."

In addition, she felt that her friendships with boys had helped her to feel comfortable when interacting with boys now. "Some of my good pals

and stuff are guys. And also it leaves me a lot freer to be myself because a lot of my friends, they think that the only way a guy-girl relationship is girlfriends and that kind of stuff. But me, I'm just good friends."

Carla's parents had said 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 [Carla's father] said, had never been a taboo subject for discussion" (Johnson, 1991, p. 89). When describing how she might teach her future children about sexuality, Carla's comments reflected what her parents had done for her in this area. "Probably as they get on and as they grow up, just as naturally as things come up....I definitely would help them to get good friends with the opposite sex and to get to feel comfortable with getting to know people as friends and stuff....I think after you're friends with people, then you can [have good dating relationships].....I definitely wouldn't want them to only have girlfriends if they're a girl, or only have boyfriends if they're a guy. I wouldn't really encourage them a whole lot in terms of girlfriend-boyfriend relationships and stuff, especially when they're younger. I don't know. I have some friends, and their parents are like, 'Oh, you've got a girlfriend!...Go buy her a gift....So

you're going with so and so.' You know. When ²⁰⁵ they're just ten-years-old, and they're really pushing that." She felt that good friendships would lend themselves to good dating relationships. "Being friends starts a firm relationship if it's based on friendship."

Family Relationships

Carla had been given the privilege of a wonderful family life according to her comments. Her family had become very important to her. For instance, when describing herself, she said that she would also tell people about her family. "I'd tell them about my family." Carla's father mentioned that it was important to him to have an affectionate relationship with his daughter (Johnson, 1991). This goal had apparently been met, for when Carla indicated who her role models were, she chose her parents. "I really respect them. They're really good people....My dad is really godly. He's really kind to us and is really close to God. He helps people a lot, too. And my mom is always there for us. She gave up her time for us to be home schooled. She could've been going to the garden club or something, but she gave that up for us. I really appreciate that."

In addition, Carla felt that being home schooled had contributed to her family's closeness. "A lot of my friends envy my relationship with my mom and

especially my dad, too. Because they don't see their dad a lot, or when they're with him, they don't know how to relate to him and things like that."

Varied Relationships

In addition to peer and family relationships, Carla spoke of having friendships with people of different ages. She attributed her access to these people to her father's ministry. "My parents like to reach out and have our friends here. We're very involved with the church. We have a small group here all the time, and...we have families from our church that we're trying to help. And, of course, with my dad's ministry, we've had Armenians and Nigerians and just about anybody you can think of has been here."

One of those people that the family had become friends with had also become a role model for Carla. "This man from Romania. He's a really godly man. He's been persecuted for Christianity, and yet he's not bitter or anything. I really admire that."

Carla also felt that being with her parents and other adults frequently had helped her to relate to adults better. "Because I'm with my parents more, and I get to be with adults more...I know how to relate to adults better. A lot of my friends don't know how to relate to adults at all. They're like, how can you say that right in front of them?"

Values

The issue of values and moral development was described by Carla's parents in the Johnson study as "more a way of life than a set curriculum" (Johnson, 1991, p. 85). They reported that Carla was exposed to many people, both in the standard curricular materials, as well as through their lifestyle. These comments were reflected in Carla's words about influences in her life. "I've had a lot of really good influences in my life since I was a little kid." She felt that the amount of time spent with her parents, as opposed to spending large amounts of time with peers, had heavily contributed to her values.

✓ "I'm with my parents a lot, so their values and stuff
✓ influence me all the time. If I weren't with them
✓ as much, I might have picked up other people's values.

I guess it's strengthened my values, helped me to be more secure in them." In addition, Carla felt that it was especially important for her to incorporate good values into her life in her younger years.

"Especially being able to instill the values because...it's your younger growing up years that really count a lot." She also commented about the impact positive or negative influences could have on her whole life. "They could really sway my...values and sway my whole future."

Being home schooled, according to Carla, had also influenced her values regarding dating, marriage, and family life. "As far as a family, just bring them up in the way of the Lord....That's been instilled in me so much, it keeps coming out." She noted that it had become important to her to date people of like values as well as those known as friends. "As far as dating, no compromise. Be sure to also date people who you can trust and who hold the same values as you do...who you know as friends first and things like that."

Money Management

Values are often manifested in the light of how we spend our money. Carla mentioned two things she regularly does with her finances, giving and saving. "I have a 'Lord's Bank' where I put maybe the first fifteen or twenty percent of my money. Then I save a lot of it. I have a lot of savings bonds. My brother does, too. I don't spend a lot of money...hardly at all." She felt that her money management style was influenced by the lack of pressure in the home school to have all the "latest things." "I don't have to worry about it. It frees me up a lot to do what I want to with my money."

Goals

Carla spoke of various goals. Her school-related goals included doing her best in her studies and then going on to attend college. "I'd like to do well and excel at what I do in school and other things....I want to go to college....My dad speaks at a lot of colleges, and I've been to a few of them. It's fun when we get to go with him and see what he's doing." In terms of a future career, she was uncertain, however, she was considering missions work as a possible option. "I've thought about missions. I'm not sure if I'd go for a full term or something, but I'd like to be involved somehow. I've got so many interests. I'm interested in piano, and art, and writing. People say I'm a really good writer, so maybe I'll do something like that. There are so many options available to me. I don't know. It's hard to narrow it down yet."

She felt that being home schooled had helped her in a variety of ways. "I've been able to be more creative because of home schooling. It's helped me to see that there are a lot of things I can do, not just one or two." She also considered home schooling to have given her a "love for learning". "It's given me a love for learning, too. I really like what I do. My parents have told me that even if you can't do what you like, like what you do. I don't want

to waste my life."

She added that because her parents were able to individualize instruction for both her and her brother, that would help them both in the path they chose. "I think if I'd have been in regular school, I wouldn't have gotten as much individual attention and help in my learning. My parents knew me, and so they were able to help me to do things that fit me. My brother, too. They've been able to kind of pick things for him that he's really good at or whatever."

In preparation for her future, Carla noted that her parents had provided for various opportunities for her to develop independence. "My parents have made a special effort to make sure I learn how to do things on my own....[they] try to instill in me the, well, learning to do things on my own more because they try to make up for me not being on my own at school and everything. They do that a lot to make up for it so that I'll be more able to be independent."

When describing the future role she hopes to play in the world, Carla's statements clearly manifested her values. "I'd love to be someone who...the world could look up to, my family could be proud of, and even if I'm famous, I'd like to maintain a giving spirit and humility....I'd love to influence the world for Christ, too."

Failure/Success

Failure was not something Carla had experienced in large amounts. "I haven't had to face hardly any failure that I can think of. Some of my friends say that they had a bad year at school, but maybe next year will be better. All of my years have been good. Sometimes they say they had a teacher they didn't like, but I can't really say that....I haven't been held back for any reason. It's [home schooling] been good for me."

However, when explaining how she would respond to possible failure, she stated that she would either put more effort into her goal or try something new. "I guess I'd try harder or try something different." She felt that it was difficult for her to say because she couldn't imagine failing at the particular goal she had in mind. "I'm not really sure. It's hard to imagine failing at this goal....Playing for the guild [a musical organization]." She explained that the only reason why she might fail is if she didn't put enough effort into her practicing. "Maybe I didn't practice hard enough or give it enough time. I can't really think of any other reason for not achieving that goal."

Although Carla did not identify this "failure experience" when discussing failure, she had mentioned

a situation where she did experience failure. Interestingly, her attitude towards this failure was consistent with the attitude she said that she would have if she did experience failure. "I write. I've sent things in to magazines to be published. Sometimes they send them back to me, though. One time they sent it back and said that they wouldn't accept it because they hadn't solicited for it. I thought that was dumb. Why couldn't they give me a chance?"

Final Comments

Carla's attitude towards home schooling was consistently positive. She felt that the home-school environment was the best place for socialization on the whole. "It just prepares you for life because your parents are able to prepare you for life....You're with them, and...they have so much wisdom that you pick up a lot more because you're around them so much time." In addition, she hopes to afford her children the opportunity to receive a home-school education. "For a while, I probably would. A couple of years ago, I would have said no because I see how much time my mom has to put into it...but the more I look back on home schooling and all it's done for me, I definitely think it's the best way. Definitely, and I'd probably do it for my kids."

Commentary

Carla Ellis obviously feels that her home-schooling experiences are invaluable in terms of every area of her life. It is difficult to add to her words, for they so clearly manifest her perspectives and attitudes towards home schooling. However, I believe that the freedom she felt throughout her home-schooling career was highly influential. She always felt free to choose to begin attending a traditional school, and it would seem that this freedom had paved the way for her to fully experience all of the benefits that were afforded her.

Although Carla definitely believed that she "made the decision" to begin attending a traditional school, various comments throughout the interview point very strongly towards her parents' influence in this decision. Possibly the most obvious comment is when Carla said that her father "said that the high-school years are really good" and these are the very years Carla has chosen to begin attending a traditional school.

Interestingly, she often referred to being "ready" to make this change. For instance, she had decided that now was the time to begin attending a traditional school. She commented, "I think I'm ready to go now." In addition, she noted that her parents had made a "special effort" to do various things to prepare her,

or make her ready, for the challenges that she would face in the future. For instance, she noted, "They try to help me to do things on my own so that I'll be ready when I go to regular school and for life in general." Based on Carla's comments, it seems that her parents have been home schooling with the goal in mind to prepare her "for life in general," whether that meant a traditional high school or in the years beyond. Perhaps Carla would make for an interesting study regarding her perceptions of how home schooling had prepared her for life in a traditional high school.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS,
CONCLUDING STATEMENTS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Espousing the idea that student perceptions can influence the effectiveness of an educational process, a researcher must include student perceptions when analyzing a particular alternative approach to education. This qualitative study was performed in order to determine what were the perspectives of Christian home-school middle-school-aged students regarding their socialization experiences in home schooling. The study focused on ten students in five rural counties in Virginia. It was a follow-up study to a previous investigation of the practices home-school educators are using to meet the socialization needs of their middle-school-aged children (Johnson, 1991). A structured interview was used, with questions based on the socialization goals established for Virginia middle schools and the developmental literature. Home-school students were asked to describe and comment on the socialization activities and practices they were aware of in their daily lives. The conclusions discussed here have been drawn from the resultant rich data base as well as the research on home schooling and the socialization literature.

Limitations of the Findings

Findings of the study are limited to one specific group of home-schooling students from five counties in Virginia. Given the nature of this qualitative study, the findings are not intended to be generalized to other home-schooling students. Rather, the findings are limited to and formulated from the responses of a total of ten home-schooling students who met the following criteria: (1) were being home schooled; (2) were of middle-school age; (3) were from conservative Christian families; and (4) lived in a rural county in Virginia.

The students' comments were in response to a structured interview on their attitudes regarding seven specified areas of socialization: (1) personal identity; (2) personal destiny; (3) values and moral development; (4) autonomy; (5) relationships; (6) sexuality; and (7) social skills. The results are based primarily on self-report data. Observational data were collected for three students to corroborate their reports about social skills. However, the study is limited primarily to findings about students' stated perceptions of their socialization experiences.

Organization of the Chapter

The remainder of this chapter is comprised of

seven sections, each focusing on one of the seven areas of socialization delineated in the Johnson (1991) study of home-schooling socialization practices. These are followed by one further section discussing students' attitudes toward socialization in the home school. Within each section, student responses are analyzed in the light of both the socialization and home-school literature, including Johnson's (1991) findings regarding socialization practices of the parents of the children in this study.

Personal Identity

The first question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence personal identity as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Self-concept. Many of the students [6] reported that the home-schooling environment actually promoted self-confidence. The children perceived a combination of factors found in the home-schooling environment to be major contributors to their personal identity. The students in this study seemed to align with the conclusions in the literature regarding personal identity of home-schooling students.

Berzonsky, Rice, and Neimeyer (1990) state that the primary developmental task of early adolescence is the attainment of a stable personal identity. Palazzi, DeVito, Luzzati, Guerrini, and Torre (1990) discuss the concept that a disturbed self-image can influence the entire life of the adolescent. In terms of home-schooling literature dealing with self-concept, Ray (1988) commented that studies seem to suggest that home-school youngsters appear to have strong self-concepts. Delahooke (1986) found home-school youngsters to score in the 'well adjusted' range on the Roberts Apperception test for Children. Peavy

(1990) noted that home-school students are typically described as being mature, stable, responsive, and self-assured.

Peer influence. Ray (1988) noted that home-school parents appear to have specific goals for their children's socialization. The primary goals according to Ray (1988) and Wartes (1988, November) include the enhancement of the children's self-concepts. This particular goal appears to be influenced by the second goal, that of the removal of children from negative peer pressure.

The results of this study indicate that the students themselves also consider the lack of peer pressure to be essential in the formation of a healthy self-image. All of the students noted that the lack of peer pressure was primary in terms of their development of personal identity. This seems to align with various studies, including that of Charvov (1988) who reported a home-schooled student's release from peer pressure when removed from the traditional school. Bronfenbrenner (1970) claims that to the extent that children are peer dependent, to that same extent they will lose their sense of self-worth. In addition, Moore (1984) noted that children will not be better adjusted if they are with their peers for extended periods of time. Mann (1989) found the peak time

for peer conformity to be between the ages of twelve and thirteen. Given the fact that most of the students interviewed for this study were either twelve or thirteen, the students' reference to the lack of peer pressure as influential in their development of personal identity would appear to punctuate what the research suggests regarding this topic.

Peer cruelty. The lack of peer cruelty found in the home-school environment was referred to by Meg. She noted:

I probably wouldn't feel as good about myself [if attending a traditional school] because everybody there would be telling me that I wasn't any good and everything...I went to school until like third grade, and everybody picked on me there so...I think I feel a lot better about myself here. People don't pick on me." (M,3)

Peer cruelty is sometimes found in the traditional school environment according to Asher (1982). This particular perspective appears to align with the perspective of a traditional-school teacher. She stated, "I can't believe how cruel kids are to each other. If it's not physical, it's verbal. It's constant, and it's intense. It's worst in fourth through sixth grades, but it's all the way down in the younger grades, too" (Lickona, 1991, 15).

Although this is just the perspective of one student, it suggests that the lack of peer cruelty found in the home school might contribute to the students' personal identity.

Parental influence. Peer pressure missing within the home-schooling environment was for many students replaced with parental influence. Three students specifically mentioned the influence parents had on their personal identity. For instance, Dave reported:

Once you get self-confidence...everything leads off that....A lot of regular school, you're forced to combine with everyone else. And being home schooled, my parents have always taught me to think the best of myself and follow what I do, not what other kids do, and therefore make my own decisions. So I have a greater opinion of myself and what I do and have more confidence in it. (D, 3+5)

Carla mentioned feeling special because of parental attention. She reported, "It's [home schooling] helped me to accept myself because my parents have invested a lot of time and energy into me" (C, 1). An interesting thing to note is that the child who referred to peer cruelty in the traditional school, Meg, responded in this way when she was asked how she might describe herself to a new acquaintance:

"I think I'm all right. If I were somebody else,
I think I'd probably like me all right" (M, 1).

Given the notion that a teacher has much potential influence on a student's self-concept, it is interesting to note the findings of several studies involving home-schooling parents. Johnson (1991) noted that the families she interviewed gave much consideration to the formation of their children's personal identity. The parents in her study included such factors as Biblical beliefs and values, parental time and encouragement of personal strengths, autonomous tasks and responsibilities, lack of peer pressure, and the children's pursuit of individual interests as being contributors to personal identity. Montgomery (1989) found home-schooling youngsters as recipients of much affirmation of their worth from their parents.

Moore (1984) considers the home to be the institution which is the most influential contributor to a child's development of self-concept. He believes the essential element necessary for positive socialization to be causing the child to feel needed, wanted, and depended on at home. He noted that this aspect of positive socialization will influence the development of a deep sense of self-worth in the child. Truly, both direct and indirect messages to children are powerful influences in their development of

self-worth. Walden (1983) noted that at home, children can receive parental encouragement as opposed to unhealthy competition among peers. The Virginia Department of Education (1990) noted that in order for the students to reap the benefits of a positive learning climate, they must be afforded opportunities for success as well as recognition that each student is deserving of respect and recognition. Supporting what Montgomery (1989) and Johnson (1991) said about parental influence in the home school, the students interviewed in this study view the lack of peer pressure and the presence of parental encouragement as major contributors to their personal identity.

The role of academics. Many of the students [5] referred to the academic benefits of home schooling as influencing their personal identity. Success within the school environment seemed to play a part in personal identity. Also, the freedom in the home-schooling environment to go at your own pace and not compete with others relieved some of the normal tension found within the traditional-school environment according to these students. This seems to align with what Braddock (1988) referred to when he commented on the influence grouping and tracking has on self-image. Being afforded the opportunity to go at your own pace without the competitive elements

of grouping or tracking appears to be a benefit of the home-schooling environment according to these students.

One interesting comment was that of a student who had apparently been retained in second grade, Carrie. She noted, "I had to repeat second grade, but now I've gotten to skip back up because I'm at home school, and it really doesn't matter what grade I'm in" (Ci, 35). This comment suggests a lack of stress in the home-school environment related to grade placement. Byrnes and Yamamoto (1985) and Yamamoto (1979) reported that grade retention is an extremely stressful occurrence in the life of an elementary-school student. Interestingly, Carla made the following comment about her home-schooling experiences:

I haven't had to face hardly any failure that I can think of. Some of my friends say that they had a bad year at school, but maybe next year will be better. All of my years have been good....I haven't been held back for any reason. It's been good for me." (C, 6-7)

Much research seems to indicate a correlation between academic success and self-esteem. Taylor (1986) conducted a study using the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale with home-school youngsters, and noted a significant correlation between self-concept

and school achievement. He concluded that the home-school environment can actually "enhance the child's self-image and encourage superior academic achievement" (p. 2). Divoky (1983) and Monfil (1991) both mentioned academic benefits of home schooling such as the element of an individualized instructional program tailored to meet the child's needs and interests. Many studies refer to parental rationales for home schooling as including potential academic benefits found in the home-schooling environment. Ray (1988) and Wartes (1988, November) note that home-schooling parents desire to individualize learning to a greater degree than is possible in a traditional-school environment. Moore (1986) says that many home-schooling parents emphasize mastery learning within the home school. Wartes (1988, November) indicates that many parents believe that more can be accomplished academically in the home-school environment. These students seem to agree.

Activities. Each of the children in this study mentioned various activities in which they were involved as contributors to their personal identity. Such activities as church groups, home-schooling groups, sports, 4-H, Civil Air Patrol, car racing, and fine-arts activities were all mentioned. However, Sue reported that she was not involved in many

extra-curricular activities, and suggested that lack of involvement had influenced her self-esteem. She noted, "I might have a lower self-esteem, or it might be higher....[Higher?] Well, that I'd have more friends and might get to do more things and go more places" (S, 1).

Johnson (1991) noted:

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." (pp. 194-195)

Tye (1985) found that students involved in extra-curricular activities appeared to have higher self-concepts than students that were not involved in such activities. Dobson (1979) refers to the concept of "compensation." He notes that because of the attacks on self-image during the adolescent years, the wise parent involves the children in some form of compensating activity where they can excel. The results of this study indicate that these students perceive extra-curricular activities to be influential

in the formation of their personal identity, and the inclusion or exclusion of these is consequential.

Autonomy. Several [4] of the students reported that their ability to perform tasks independently had given them self-confidence. For instance, Keith reported, "It gives you more self-confidence, and it helps your self-image, I would say...knowing that you can do things on your own" (K, 11). This was reflected in Johnson's (1991) reports where she discussed the parental effort to provide opportunities for independent tasks and activities for the children. Such things as part-time jobs and household responsibilities contribute to the child's self-image, according to these home-schooling parents. It would make sense that the ability to perform tasks or make decisions autonomously would make one feel more confident. Apparently, many parents and students see the influence of autonomy on personal identity. (Autonomy is discussed in greater detail in a later section.)

Labels. The labels we wear are part of who we are and therefore can influence our self-image. When the students were asked how they might describe themselves to a new acquaintance, six of the students referred to their home schooling. Three of the

students went so far as to say that their being home schooled made them feel "special." Several of the students elaborated on this in terms of how this label might influence their responses to peers' questioning about this alternative approach to schooling. Almost all responses were positive. For example, Meg commented, "My friends that go to public school,Some of them ask me, 'Why do you want to be home schooled?' And then after explaining it to them...usually after a while they understand. They just never heard of it before" (M, 19-20).

However, Keith commented that being home schooled made him feel "different" from his peers. He said, "It would make you, like when people ask you what school you go to, it would make you, I don't know how to say it, but it would just make you even more different than the others" (K, 1-2). When asked how his opinion of himself might be different if he were attending regular school, he responded, "You'd be like the majority of the kids. Normal" (K, 2). He also spoke of his feeling "different from the others" because of his being involved in car racing and his home-centered family life.

However, when I mentioned to Carrie what Keith had said about feeling "different", she responded that the "difference" between her and regular-school peers was positive. She noted, "It's just something

else I can....People say, 'Oh, neat! Tell me more about that.' Because it's just fun to tell about this stuff....Nobody really thinks of it as being different. They don't look down on me. They don't necessarily look up to me, but not down because they go to school....No, it's not a problem" (Ci, 22).

Dobson (1979) noted that one's self-image is not so much comprised of what a person thinks of himself or herself. Nor is it so much comprised of what others think of us. Rather, he believes that self-image is comprised primarily of what we think others think of us. These responses suggest that the way the students themselves view the home-schooling label as well as the way they perceive outsiders to view the home-schooling label can have an influence on their personal identity.

Religion. When the children were asked how they might describe themselves to a new acquaintance, five of the children referred to their Christianity. What was interesting to note was that when the children were asked what it was that made them "special", four responded that being a Christian made them special. When Johnson (1991) interviewed the home-schooling parents regarding how they seek to enhance personal identity in the home-schooling environment, all ten of the parents mentioned religious beliefs as

X influencing their teaching regarding personal identity. These results suggest that the parents' efforts to encourage a healthy self-image by incorporating Christian beliefs into their teaching about personal identity had met with some degree of success.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study gave strong indications that all but one had very positive self-concepts. Most participants identified themselves first as a home-school student or as a Christian. Next in importance as contributors to personal identity were the outside activities in which students were engaged. In addition, students' comments indicated that lack of peer pressure, success in their academic endeavors, and the attention and encouragement of their parents all provided support for development of a strong personal identity. These findings reflect parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are consistent with the literature on home schooling and on adolescent development as noted within this section.

Personal Destiny

The second question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence personal destiny as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Activities. Much of what a child is involved in as an adolescent will influence future careers and interests. The students in this study noted involvement in activities such as 4-H, Pioneer Girls, sports, choral groups, church groups, car racing, Civil Air Patrol, and AWANAS (a church-related group somewhat similar to Boy or Girl Scouts). Many [5] perceived home schooling as affording them the opportunity to participate extensively in outside activities because of the amount of time available to them. Two of the children even reported that the home-schooling environment enabled them to be involved in more activities than if they had been attending traditional school.

Research on home schooling (Johnson, 1991; Kearney, 1984; Montgomery, 1989; Richoux, 1987; Ray, 1988) seems to indicate that home-schooling parents look for activities for the children that "enhance social development" (Lines, 1987, 513). The Virginia Department of Education (1990) said that "all students should be involved in activities which enable them

to experience success and social growth, and to be of service to others" (p. 9). The responses of these students agree with what Ray (1988) said about the extra time available for these students to engage in individual learning endeavors, including special activities. Most home-schooling students in this study perceived the home school as a place that was beneficial in terms of opportunities for involvement in outside-the-home activities.

Achievements. The children interviewed in this study noted achievements in various activities. Tai Kwon Do tournaments, 4-H archery tournaments, basketball leagues, Pioneer Girls awards, racing achievements, Civil Air Patrol achievements, and achievements in church groups were all mentioned. Girls mentioned achievements in sports as frequently as did boys. In addition, some interesting statements regarding less traditional achievements were made by the students. One was the achievement of making many friends. John reported that sharing his faith with others was an achievement. These children reported achievements that were wide and varied.

Half of the students felt that the time factor in home schooling had afforded them more time to be involved in various activities which provided opportunities to achieve in various ways. However,

Alice suggested that she might compete more if she weren't home schooled, or perhaps she might win trophies. She felt that home schooling had limited her achievements in that sense, but in the sense of learning how to do things well, she felt she'd learned as much as she would have in traditional school. Dave perceived home schooling as helping him to set goals to accomplish things. He noted that in home schooling you work towards a goal and usually complete that goal, and he believed that this particular habit learned in the home school would "carry over" into other areas where one might achieve. These findings support what Dobson (1989) claimed about the home-school atmosphere being able to produce children who are high achievers, especially when the home school includes opportunities for service or work of some sort.

Leadership. Students in this study referred to leadership positions of several sorts and made a number of statements that spoke of leadership characteristics. Dave reported being a squadron representative for the Cadet Advisory Council in Virginia's Civil Air Patrol program. He also indicated that he was interested in attaining a leadership position of some sort in his future career. Keith wasn't sure about his achievements, but then said,

"I guess just being the class president and stuff [in the youth group]" (K, 4-5). Carrie mentioned her involvement in AWANAS where she was going to become a "Leader in Training." Gail reported that she felt strong enough in her personal values to be able to influence others to do right. Three students spoke about being leaders in terms of their Christian faith. For instance, John noted that he'd "like to influence people to come to church and be Christians" (J, 18). Finally, Carla indicated that she, too, would like to influence others for Christ, but she said that, if given a leadership position of some sort, she would "love to be someone who...the world could look up to, my family could be proud of, and even if I'm famous, I'd like to maintain a giving spirit and humility" (C, 26).

Montgomery (1989) claimed that home schoolers appear to be leaders in their own way. Bedford (1991) commented that when home schoolers are engaged in activities with regular-school students, home schoolers are often given leadership positions. She noted that traditionally-schooled students seem to recognize independent qualities within home-schooling students. Many of these home-schooling students have both indicated a desire to be a leader of some sort and have expressed statements that speak of leadership characteristics.

Goals. These children indicated having scholastic goals which included the desire to do their very best. Interestingly, nine of the students planned to go to college. The only one who was unsure was Keith who reported that he might want to continue his racing career. However, he did note that if that didn't work out, he planned to go to college and "get a real job" (p. 6).

Many of their personal goals related to their Christianity. Eight of the children referred to Christian life-style goals such as "always keeping God first. Staying in His will" (K, 7). Three of the children expressed a desire to influence others for Christ. Three of the children noted goals having to do with relationships such as wanting to be nice to people, being pleasant, and trustworthy. Johnson (1991) reported that the parents of these children conveyed high expectations for their children. These findings suggest that these students had begun to internalize many of the Christian teachings their parents were attempting to share with them.

In addition, all of the children mentioned financial savings goals. Many of the children had personal savings accounts, and many referred to carefully spending their money. Carla reported, "I save a lot of it [money]. I have a lot of savings

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bonds" (C, 10). I found this interesting due to the fact that they were adolescents, and many adolescents tend to not think about personal savings to a great extent. Perhaps this could be related to the fact that the parents of these students seemed to encourage a strong work-ethic, and all of the children were encouraged to earn money for themselves. The fact that these children had earned this money on their own could lead to a more responsible approach to money management.

Career choices. The children had varied responses regarding their hopes for a future career. The list included such careers as Christian missions, carpentry, nursing, investments, racing, singing, businesses, and home-making.

What was interesting to note was that many of the children were interested in careers that seemed to branch off from their present activities. For instance, Dave, the student involved in Civil Air Patrol expressed a desire to be involved in the armed services. John, who often helped his father building houses, expressed a possible desire to become a carpenter. Keith, the student involved in racing, expressed a desire "to race professionally on the Winston Cup Circuit" (K, 3). Gail, the student involved in choral groups, said that she hopes to

become a professional singer.

Another interesting thing to note was the influence family members had on career choices. Three students specifically referred to family members who had influenced their career choices. Dave explained "'cause that's what my brother's going into, and he's always been a big influence with that" (D, 7). Meg, whose grandmother had been a nurse, was also planning to become a nurse. This particular grandmother lived next door to this home-schooling family, and apparently had become a role model of sorts to this youngster.

Paula and Sue were uncertain regarding a career choice, but both planned to go to college and then home school their future children. Sue noted, "I want to go to college so that I can home school them [her children]" (S, 4). These plans were clear indicators of their perceptions regarding the benefits of the home-school training. In addition, they apparently perceived home schooling to be worth their time and energy when they might become a parent.

Another interesting response came from Carrie who planned to work in either a day care center or a flower shop. She intended to cease working full-time when she had children. She had seen so many children who were dropped off at a day-care where she occasionally worked, and she concluded that she did not want to do that to her future children. Perhaps

her mother's effort to spend time with her through home schooling also had an influence on this particular statement.

Johnson (1991) reported that the parents of these students put forth much effort to expose their children to diverse career options as well as assistance in pursuit of their children's personal interests. This was clearly reflected in these students' responses, particularly in what Carla said regarding her future career. She noted, "I've got so many interests. I'm interested in piano and art and writing. People say I'm a really good writer, so maybe I'll do something like that. There are so many options available to me. I don't know. It's hard to narrow it down yet" (C, 4).

Perceived influence of home schooling on goals/careers. A) Academics. Nine of the children perceived the home-schooling environment to be helpful when it came to achieving goals and future careers. One student perceived home schooling as encouraging him to "strive to be the best" (D, 37) he could be. X He thought his future career to be a "sort of a X carrying on of your home-schooling career" (D, 9).

The students perceived their learning experiences in the home-schooling environment to be beneficial in terms of their preparation for a future career.

X The concept of individual attention was cited as a benefit of home schooling. Paula believed her learning to be "better, quicker, and it's just sticking better than it would if I was in public school" (P, 4). These perceptions could have to do with the amount of individual help and attention these students receive in the home school. It could also be somewhat related to the parental desire for mastery learning (Johnson, 1991). This would also support what some research (Monfil, 1991; Ray, 1988; Wartes, 1988, November) has said about home-school academic benefits.

Meg thought that her mother's expertise in science would be helpful in preparing for her future career in nursing. An interesting note was that this student spoke in terms of learning things now that would benefit her later, and also reported that she planned to master the material as much as possible. She said, "I can take things I'll need to be a nurse now, when I want to, and keep at it until I learn it the way I should" (M, 4-5).

X B) Hindering possible sports goals. Two students saw the home-school environment as possibly hindering one's sports goals. Alice mentioned this twice in the interview, but did not express any extreme concern over this prospect for her life. It is often difficult to surmise if a student truly feels ambivalent about

something, or if they are covering a stronger feeling with a nonchalant comment. She noted, "There's not as many sports opportunities as if you went to school...if you're really interested in that" (A, 18). The other student sharing this perspective, Keith, surmised that if a student was heavily involved in group sports such as football or baseball, he would recommend they go to traditional school. This recommendation reflected his awareness of the fact that traditional schools offer more competition in terms of team sports and more opportunities to be heavily involved in them.

C) Preparation for real life. Six of the children in this study perceived the home-schooling environment as preparatory for real life. This included the aspects of home-schooling students' responsibilities for school work, their use of learning, and parental modeling. Dave reported, "With home schooling, you're in charge of what you have to do....A lot of that goes out with you because in real life you don't have someone sitting over you all day saying you have to do that. And so it's changed a lot of the way you think. The goal is up to me so I have to do it" (D, 18).

Alice noted that being in home schooling had "taught" (A, 34) her that what she learned in school

could be used throughout life. This was an interesting statement because of the concept of relevance. So many adolescents perceive what they learn in school as being irrelevant to life, and this perspective influences learning. The Johnson study (1991) indicated a parental desire to engage the students in real-life situations to prepare them for their personal destiny. Most of the families noted that the children were very self-directed when it came to school work. They reported that students were also participants in the planning process for school work. This perspective was shared by the students as well. Perhaps the parental desire to incorporate real-life situations into the children's schooling has influenced this type of perception. However, Wallace (1982) reported that many educators feel that home-schooled youngsters will not be prepared for life's future challenges. According to these findings, the home-schooled students do not share this perspective.

D) Parental role. Six of the students considered the role of their parents to be helpful in terms of their personal destiny. The children commented about how their parents "knew" them, and therefore were able to plan for their education accordingly. In addition, parental modeling in terms of how to perform

tasks was perceived by the students as being beneficial. The data suggest that the students were aware of the effort their parents were putting forth in terms of helping them to plan for their future.

E) Lack of peer influence. Half of the students perceived the lack of peer pressure or influence within the home-schooling environment as an influential factor in terms of their personal destiny. Carla spoke about the impact negative friendships could have on her future. She commented, "They could really sway my values and sway my whole future" (C, 22). The benefits of a lack of peer pressure at this stage in the adolescent's life was discussed by many researchers (Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Delahooke, 1986; Dobson, 1989; Johnson, 1991; Moore, 1986; Peavy, 1990; Pombeni et al., 1990; Ray, 1988; VanGalen, 1987; etc.). Apparently, not only do these researchers hold to the belief that the lack of peer pressure is beneficial, but both the parents and the students perceive that to be the case as well.

F) Values learned in the home school. Six of the children perceived values learned in the home-school as being influential in terms of their personal destiny. For instance, Carla commented about the influence values might have on a future career

and future friendships. She noted, "Good values and respectfulness and not haughtiness is what will get you a job and accepted by people and everything" (C, 25). Keith perceived that the principles he had learned through home schooling would go with him wherever he went. He noted, "I would just say that whatever I do, whether it would be racing or whatever, that I would have the principles to live by that I learned through home schooling" (K, 23). These students thought that the element of values education found in the home school was influential for who they are as individuals, and believed that in turn would influence their total destiny.

Failure/Success. No one can know for certain what will be encountered in the future. However, both success and failure are certain visitors in the life of everyone who walks this planet. When the students discussed what might be their response to failure, I was quite intrigued by the pattern that emerged. Six children said that they would try again at whatever it was they were attempting. Five children said that they might attempt a new goal. Two children mentioned going to God for wisdom regarding how to deal with the failure.

When asked what they might have considered to be the cause of possible failure, all of the children

seemed to respond from an internal locus of control. Four children said that they might fail if they don't try hard enough. Keith mentioned that failure might come if his life had gotten out of "balance" (K, 6). Carrie noted possible interest changes, and Paula surmised a possible lack of experience. No student perceived home schooling as being the cause of a possible failure. The interesting thing to note was that not one student blamed another individual or an outside source. The children seemed to perceive success as being in their hands, and they did not perceive themselves to be at the mercy of circumstances. In addition, none of the children appeared to consider themselves to be helpless in any way. In other words, there were no signs of learned helplessness found in their statements. Elkind (1990) found that learned helplessness was often the result of a child being given a task too difficult for his or her ability level, thereby causing the student to experience repeated failure. Perhaps these home-school students did not exhibit any traces of learned helplessness because of the individualized and tailored approach to learning found in their schooling environment.

Home schooling's influence on failure/success.

Four of the students perceived the home-schooling

environment to be beneficial in terms of teaching them how to respond to possible failure. Two of the students perceived the parental role within the home school as influential in terms of their learning how to respond to failure.

The concept of failure was dealt with directly in the interviewer questions. However, when five of the students answered the questions dealing with failure, as well as throughout the other parts of the interview, the concept of failure was superseded by comments pointing to success. Dave said, "I don't plan on failing at most things" (D, 4). Meg mentioned the goal she had in mind when answering the questions dealing with failure. She said, "I was thinking about nursing if I failed at that, which I don't think I will" (M, 7). John commented with regard to home schooling's impact on his success or failure when he said, "I think it [home schooling] helps you to do better and really be more successful" (J, 5). Carla compared herself to her peers when she said, "I haven't had to face hardly any failure that I can think of. Some of my friends say that they had a bad year at school, but maybe next year will be better. All of my years have been good....I haven't been held back for any reason. It's been good for me" (C, 6-7). It would appear from these comments that these children were accustomed to successful experiences

within the home-school environment. When one experiences an abundance of failure, he or she is more prone toward failing again. The results of this study indicate that these students have experienced much success in their lives, and these experiences have created a mind-set geared towards success. This ties in with the Virginia Department of Education (1990) recommendations about creating an emphasis on a positive learning climate in the middle schools in Virginia. Part of attaining such a climate would be affording learners with opportunities for success. The children in this study clearly perceived the home-school environment as a place where success was attainable.

The only reference to failure came from Carrie who had to repeat the second grade in a traditional school. She noted, "I had to repeat second grade, but now I've gotten to skip back up because I'm at home school, and it really doesn't matter what grade I'm in" (Ci, 35). She felt that the home school had turned a negative situation into something that could be accepted.

These responses, so clearly pointed to an optimistic mind-set, set the stage for an interesting comparison. When describing characteristics of the typical adolescent, Klingele (1979) said, "Unsure of what lies ahead, they often have a pessimistic

view of the future, adulthood, and life in general" (p. 23). Not one student expressed any pessimism regarding their personal destiny at any time throughout the interview. This might be explained by Bronfenbrenner's (1970) views on peer dependency. He noted that to the extent that children depend on their peers for values, to that same extent they will lose their optimism and sense of self-worth. Perhaps the factors absent from the home-school environment, as well as the factors found in it, have contributed to these students' attitudes of optimism.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study strongly suggest that they perceive the home-schooling environment to have a positive influence on their personal destiny. The majority of the students noted involvement in activities in which they were given opportunities to achieve as well as prepare them for life in the "real world." In addition, students' comments indicated that positive academic experiences, parental involvement, values learned in the home school, and the lack of peer pressure all were influential in terms of their personal destiny. The only area mentioned that might be influenced negatively by home schooling was in relation to sports goals. In conclusion, comments made by students indicate that they feel the

home-school environment has had a strong impact on the way they deal with challenging situations involving both potential failure or success. These findings reflect parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are consistent with the literature on home schooling and on adolescent development referred to within this section.

Values and Moral Development

The third question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence values and moral development as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Values. When referring to personal values, all of the children, either directly or indirectly, alluded to their values as being grounded in their Christian faith. In addition, when they spoke of specific personal values, all of the children mentioned obedience or closeness to God as being important to them. Furthermore, when noting which values they would like for their future children or families to espouse, nine of the ten children hoped that they would have Christian values. The importance the home-schooling parents in the Johnson study (1991) placed upon their religious beliefs and faith as instruments in teaching values to the children were reflected in the responses of the students in this study.

Other specific values mentioned by the students included integrity or honesty [4], friendliness [4], standing up for what you believe [4], and respect for others [3]. Kindness, loyalty, Christ-likeness, and living according to your standards and values were also mentioned. Carrie reported that she plans

to be a full-time homemaker when she has children. She noted "I want to spend all my time with my kids and make sure that I'm a part of their lives" (Ci, 5). This attitude might have been a result of her own mother's doing just that for her. The students also included traits such as hypocrisy, rudeness, arrogance, disobedience to parents, bad attitudes, and self-pity as being undesirable patterns of living.

The role models chosen by these students appear to be different from those that one would expect adolescents to choose for role models, such as sports heroes, rock music singers, or television stars. All of the students identified Christian adults. Nine cited adults from church such as the pastor or his wife, youth pastors, and international Christian leaders. Two students chose Christian singers. Two students chose older friends from their church, and three students chose Jesus Christ as their role model. Dave chose the people he had met at work. Five students chose their parents as role models. This clearly manifests the attitude these students have toward their parents. Johnson (1991) referred to a parental desire to be role models for their children, and apparently this desire has been realized by many of the parents.

Home-schooling parents have specific goals in mind when they choose to home school their children.

✓ Primary among these goals appears to be the passing
 ✓ on of family values to the children (Johnson, 1991;
 Knowles, 1988; Mayberry, 1988, November; Ray, 1988;
 VanGalen, 1988b; Wartes, 1988, November; Wilson, 1988).
 Apparently, these parents' goals agree with what was
 once said by Theodore Roosevelt. He commented, "To
 educate a person in mind and not in morals is to
 educate a menace to society" (Lickona, 1991, p. 3).

Influence of home schooling on values. All of
 the students reported that the influences present
 in the home-school environment had an impact on their
 personal values. Two of the students perceived the
 home-schooling environment to have strengthened their
 values. For instance, Carla noted, "I think it's
 [home schooling] strengthened what I believe" (C,
 7). Judging from the extensive references to personal
 values throughout the interviews, the values learned
 in the home school had permeated each and every area
 of socialization in one form or another.

All of the students perceived the parental
 influence to be primary in terms of their values and
 moral development, and seven of the students also
 referred to the lack of negative peer pressure or
 influence. The amount of time spent with parents
 was perceived to be a heavy factor when it came to
 parental influence. Carla commented about how her

parents had been with her for large amounts of time in her earlier years. She noted, "it's your younger growing-up years that really count a lot" (C, 29).

These comments appear to align with much of the literature dealing with home schooling and socialization. The age factor regarding entrance into traditional school is considered to be of importance in much of the research (Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Dobson, 1989; Moore, 1985b; Peavy, 1987; VanGalen, 1987). Bronfenbrenner (1970) claims that if children are with their peers for greater amounts of time than with their parents prior to about the fifth or sixth grade, they will become peer dependent. He recommends less concern for increased peer contact and more concern for parental attention. This desire that students not become peer dependent is typically seen as a major parental rationale for choosing home schooling (Johnson, 1991; Moore, 1986; VanGalen, 1987; Wartes, 1988, November; etc.), and the comments of the students in this study indicate that they perceive the lack of negative peer influence as beneficial.

Paula described the lack of peer pressure in the home-schooling environment as follows. She said, "I wouldn't [in the home school] have both tugging on either of my arms at the same time. It'd be a whole lot easier in learning a set of values and living

by them and stuff like that" (P, 5). Pombeni and his colleagues (1990) noted that adolescence is a stage of major discomfort. They said that the peer group is of primary importance, and that typical adolescent difficulties often contribute to family conflict. It was also noted that the greater the gap between the adolescent's peers' values and the parental values, the greater the tension will be between the adolescent and the parents. This family conflict can often lead to negatively influential relationships and parents are often alienated as a source of support at a time when the adolescent needs support the most. Bronfenbrenner (1970) notes that to the extent that children depend on their peers for values, to that same extent they will lose their optimism, sense of self-worth, parental respect, and their trust in peers. Delahooke (1986) found home-school youngsters to be less peer oriented than youngsters who attended conventional school.

Judging from their choices for role models, these students are not heavily dependent upon their peers, nor have they lost respect for their parents. Rather, they seem to look to their parents and other adults as role models, and they have found these role models to be worthy of respect. According to the literature, this attitude should foster a sense of security within their hearts and minds at a time in their lives when

they are undergoing so much transition both emotionally and physically.

Influence of home schooling on personal money management. Often, what we truly value is manifested in the light of our personal money management. It has been said that where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Mann et al. (1989) reported that one of the key characteristics of the mature adolescent having the ability to make sensible decisions. Regarding personal decisions about money management, the comments of students in this study were quite interesting. Nine of the ten said that they save a good amount of their money. Carla mentioned having savings bonds, Meg had money in a credit union, and many of the children had personal savings accounts.

The attitude towards spending appeared to be exceptionally mature for this age group. For instance, many of the students noted being careful with their money and carefully choosing items worthy of purchasing. John reported saving his money for college and a car. Four students noted saving up their money for desired items such as apparatus for Civil Air Patrol, or karate, or personal books to read. For instance, Dave noted, "I put most of it in my savings account and put it away till later to get something

I really want" (D, 22). In addition, three of the students said that they give some of their money to church or missions organizations.

Only six of the students believed that home schooling had influenced their personal money management. Five of those students thought the lack of peer pressure played a large part in how they managed their money. Carla noted that she didn't feel like she had to have "all the latest things" (C, 10), Carrie said that she didn't have to try to "keep up with the group" (Ci, 15). Several students expressed a freedom concerning personal money management due to the lack of peer pressure, and Alice added that this freedom had afforded her the opportunity to spend her money "more freely and how God wants me to" (A, 8).

Dave, who was one of the students who perceived home schooling to be influential in this area, traced the source of his money management to his acquisition of his parents' work ethic. He noted, "Most kids I know don't have jobs and most of the money is got from their parents. And as soon as they've gotten it, they go out and spend it on something instead of saving it. A lot of that's changed from the way I handle my money. I save, and I have to make my own, 'cause my parents have always believed in us making our own money and everything like that" (D,

22).

Apparently, the values learned within the home-school environment had influenced the monetary values of many of these students. The parental model and expectation of the work ethic noted in Johnson (1991), coupled with the clear message of the importance of careful decision making, had played a large part in how these students handled their personal money. Finally, all of these factors combined with the absence of peer pressure had created quite an unusual result in the money management of these home-schooling adolescents.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study clearly indicate that they perceive the home-schooling environment to have a positive influence on their values and moral development. Parental influence and the lack of peer pressure were perceived to be the primary factors found within the home-schooling environment as influencing values. In addition, many of the students' comments indicated that these same factors had influenced the way they manage their money. These findings reflect parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are consistent with the literature on home schooling and adolescent development cited within this section.

Autonomy

The fourth question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence autonomy as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Influence of home schooling on responsibilities and tasks. When the children named areas for which they were responsible, nine cited household chores, three cited personal finances, three cited care of family animals, and two cited school work. Two students mentioned that they performed household responsibilities in order to somewhat ease the mother's household burdens. Keith mentioned being responsible for his own behavior.

Other tasks were reported by students as being performed independently. Four students mentioned jobs such as baby-sitting or part-time library work. Two students mentioned practicing musical instruments, three students mentioned reading, and six mentioned planning for school work. Alice mentioned baking, Carrie referred to both getting up on her own in the morning and reading her Bible, and John reported fixing his own breakfast and lunch. Keith spoke of making independent decisions in relation to driving a race car.

All of the students thought the home-schooling

environment was beneficial in the development of personal responsibility. For instance, Dave perceived that in the home-school environment, he was responsible for getting various things done. He believed that "a lot of that goes out with you" (D, 23). In other words, he perceived that his ability to perform tasks independently would transfer to "real life" (D, 23) situations. Alice noted that she felt a stronger sense of responsibility as a result of being home schooled. She commented that she would have felt that way if she were in a traditional school, but she felt "more responsible" (A, 8) as a result of being home schooled. It would seem that this view of herself would contribute to her personal identity.

The students named various factors that they perceived as contributing towards their attainment of learning how to do things independently. Four students found that being home schooled afforded them more time to perform responsibilities. Two students mentioned that being home schooled had impressed upon them the importance of completing their work before moving on to other activities. Three of the students found that their parents were of primary importance when it came to the development of autonomy. For instance, Carla stated that she had noticed her parents making a special effort to help her to do things on

her own.

Johnson (1991) noted that home-schooling parents appear to delegate a specific amount of responsibility to the child. Included in their list were household, financial, business, and school work responsibilities. Brown and Mann (1990) noted that one of the most important tasks of the adolescent is the development of autonomy. They also said that "parents are the most influential in training adolescents to become autonomous and competent decision makers" (p. 25). It would seem true that parents, particularly home-schooling parents, would hold the key to the door of autonomy for their children.

It was interesting to note that the students saw the interdependence between self-confidence and autonomy. Four of the students found the factors within the home-school environment as being influential in helping their self-confidence when performing tasks independently. For instance, Keith said that "it helps your self-image...knowing that you can do things on your own" (K, 11).

These students had been given tasks for which they were responsible, and apparently they had experienced success with those tasks. As a result of their successes, they were exempt from repeated failure which often tends to lead towards the attitude of learned helplessness (Elkind, 1990). This would

relate to what Palazzi and his colleagues (1990) noted about a disturbed self-image having a strong impact on the total life of the adolescent. It appears that the avoidance of learned helplessness, coupled with the attitude of self-confidence, contributes heavily to personal identity, which in turn contributes to one's ability to perform tasks in an independent and responsible manner.

Influence of home schooling on decision making.

The students each reported making personal decisions in the area of finances [9], friendships [3], morality [2], academics [2], Christianity [2], attending camp [2], and personal conduct [2]. Two students referred to their decision to be of service to others. Dave referred to his decisions to begin working part-time, and his decision to join the Civil Air Patrol. Alice made note of her decision to communicate more with her parents. This was reflected in what Johnson (1991) reported about several of the parents referring to instances in which they encouraged personal decision making. Brown and Mann (1990) spoke about the large part parents play in adolescent decision making.

Mann, Harmoni, and Power (1989) stated that one of the key characteristics of a mature adolescent is that of making sensible decisions. Each of the students explained how they go about making decisions.

Seven of the students referred to the role their Christianity plays in terms of decision making. Four students referred to parental advice to aid them in the making of decisions. Three students mentioned going to significant others or friends for opinions regarding a specific decision to be made. Carla explained that she tries to "live" (C, 12) the results of her decision in her mind. She referred to her decision to begin attending the traditional school for her high-school years, and she mentioned having asked herself, "Would I have time to do the things I love to do" (C, 12). This question somewhat manifested her attitude towards home schooling. A similar attitude appears elsewhere in the literature. Bedford (1990) referred to a home-school student who had visited a local junior high school, and then he was asked if he wished to attend it. She reported that the child responded negatively, saying that he "would miss out on all the neat things he can do at home" (p. 19).

Nine of the students found the home-school environment to be beneficial in terms of decision making. Six of the students perceived the lack of peer pressure in the home-schooling environment as being beneficial when it came to decision making. The home-schooling student interviewed in Charvov (1988) also expressed that the lack of peer pressure

helps one's self-image which in turn influences personal decision making. He noted, "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" (pp. 88-89).

Three students perceived the home school as a place where more opportunities are given for decision making, which would agree with what was noted in Charvov's (1988) interview with a home-school student. Only Gail, the youngest of the ten students, reported that she did not have that many decisions to make. However, her other comments regarding decision making in the home-school environment were positive. In addition, Dave referred to how he had become used to making his own decisions, and as a result of that, he would have more confidence when faced with "peer-pressure" decisions. These comments, made both by the students in this study as well as in Charvov (1988), reflect what Mann and his colleagues (1989) reported about how an adolescent's tendency to peer conformity often delays the "growth of personal control and responsibility for choices" (p. 267). These comments suggest that it is necessary for peer dependency to be minimal if true autonomy is to be developed. When these students are involved with their peers, it would seem that they would not be

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totally exempt from peer pressure. However, perhaps their reported lack of peer dependency gives them the ability to resist negative peer pressure. Perhaps this idea would provide for an interesting observational study.

Four students referred to acquiring self-confidence due to home schooling which was beneficial in terms of decision making. Alice referred to the ability to "stand alone" (A, 11) when making decisions. Seven other students also referred to instances where they had or would stand alone in a given situation. Apparently their self-confidence contributed substantially towards possible leadership qualities, specifically the quality of standing alone.

Braddock (1988) noted that early adolescence is a vital period in terms of developing a self-image. He went on to say that early adolescents are constantly questioning their self-image and building their confidence in order to face challenges. One of those primary challenges is that of personal decision making. These comments regarding peer pressure and self-confidence relate to what Braddock (1988) noted about early adolescents being very sensitive toward interactions with peers, and how peer reactions often influence self-image drastically. The element of a healthy personal identity was seen by the students as playing a part in their development of autonomy,

specifically the aspect of personal decision making. These findings suggest that the area of personal identity was perceived as foundational to various other aspects of socialization.

The majority of these students found the home-schooling environment to be beneficial in terms of decision making as a whole. Factors that, according to Brown and Mann (1990), contributed towards adolescents' success in terms of decision making skills might have played a part in these students' skills. Brown and Mann (1990) found that being a part of a strong family unit was significantly related to the development of these skills, and it certainly appears that this factor is in place with these children. Secondly, they noted that healthy communication between parents and adolescents significantly related to adolescent success in decision-making skills. Judging from responses of the students within these interviews, this factor was also in place, giving home schoolers the potential for developing good decision-making skills.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study indicate that they perceive the home-schooling environment to be beneficial in the development of autonomy. Such factors as more time to perform responsibilities, parental role/influence,

encouragement of self-confidence, and success in performing tasks were all reported as being influential. In addition, the majority of the students found the home-schooling environment to be beneficial in terms of personal decision making. Students' comments indicated that the lack of peer pressure coupled with increased self-confidence were especially helpful in regard to their decision making. These findings reflect parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are consistent with the literature on home schooling and on adolescent development referred to within this section.

Relationships

The fifth question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence relationships as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Influence of home schooling on family relationships. When asked to name some of the people they were closest to, all of the children spoke of family members, including both immediate family members and extended family members. Carla noted, "My public-school friends really envy me because I'm home schooled. They see all the great things we get to do, and I think they see how close my family is, and I think they'd like that for themselves" (C, 6). All ten of the children perceived that they were closer to their family members due to home schooling. Paula noted that she was much closer to her mother than she would be if she were attending traditional school. Her reasoning was for "a lot of people in school, it's just not cool to be friends with your parents" (P, 12). All of the students thought the amount of time spent with family members contributed to their closeness. However, Keith went on to

say that "sometimes it gets you worn down and stuff like that" (K, 15). He then linked this statement to his statement about being different because of home schooling.

One unique response was from Carrie who noted that she was closer to her mother and brother due to home schooling but felt she wasn't overly close with the rest of her family. She said that they weren't close because they were so "different" (Ci, 23). She went on to say, "We're not really enemies but a bunch of people who've lived together. We're a family but not the family thing on t.v." (Ci, 23). This particular student indicated that her parents had both been divorced and remarried. The family unit she was now a part of was the combination of two separate families.

Two students, Keith and Dave, made note of sibling rivalry within the home school. Keith thought that it might be interesting to see what home schooling was like without his older sister. Dave said that there was no rivalry between him and his brother in the academic aspect of home schooling, but when it came to activities outside-the-home, such as Civil Air Patrol, he and his brother would often compete. As a result of this, his parents had decided to place him

in a different Civil Air Patrol squadron than his brother.

Although Quintana and Lapsley (1990) state that one of the jobs of the adolescent is to break ties with parents and replace those ties with peers, much of the literature dealing with parents' rationales for home schooling (Johnson, 1991; Knowles, 1988; Moore, 1986; Ray, 1988; VanGalen, 1988b; Wartes, 1988, November) says that one of the primary reasons many parents choose to home school is to create closer family relationships and unity. Judging from the responses of the majority of these students, the parental goal had been met.

Santrock (1987) noted that secure attachment with parents can promote a healthy sense of exploration. He also said that this healthy, secure attachment in adolescence can influence relationships and actually aid in the development of personal identity. He went on to say that adolescents who don't feel a secure home environment often seek autonomy by negative means and are more apt to develop a negative self-image. It would appear that the healthy, secure family relationships these adolescents speak of would be highly beneficial in terms of their development of personal identity, autonomy, and relationships,

both during their adolescence and in the future.

Tizard and Hughes (1984) suggested that the home school may not be able to meet specific needs children have, particularly how to separate from their families. At this point in time, it is difficult to tell whether or not these children will be able to separate from their families. Ray (1986) said that this claim on the part of Tizard and Hughes "appeals to a priori knowledge" (p. 37), and he suggests that there is a need for some evidence, one way or the other, to substantiate the discussion. This particular study was not designed to determine whether Tizard and Hughes' view is justifiable or not, yet there was no evidence from the children's comments to indicate such a problem. Nevertheless, Tizard and Hughes do raise a point worthy of consideration, and perhaps this could be the focus of some further research.

Influence of home schooling on outside-the-family relationships. When asked to cite various people that they were closest to, in addition to family members, seven of the students spoke of peer friendships, both in traditional schools and in home schools. Referring to home-schooled friends, Meg noted,

"Several people that are home schooled go to our church, too, so I see them all over the place" (M, 16). Referring to traditionally-schooled friends, Carrie noted, "Most of my friends go to school" (Ci, 25). Two children mentioned having friends that were older than they were. A unique response was that Gail noted that she was close to God.

All of the students considered activities done outside the home to be the main contributors to their friendships. Such activities as church groups, jobs, Civil Air Patrol, and 4-H were all noted. Johnson (1991) also reported parental statements regarding the abundance of activities their children were in, and how these helped them form relationships. Various statements have been made throughout the literature (Holt, 1983; Johnson, 1991; Lines, 1987) indicating that home-schooling families appear to share a sense of community with one another. Many home schoolers have attempted to create this sense of community within the home-school movement. According to these students' statements, they were involved in an abundance of outside-the-home activities where they were able to make new friends.

All of the students also noted that their

ability to meet people and spend time with people was enhanced by their having guests in the home. Guests in the home included both home-school and traditional-school peers, church friends of various ages, missionaries, and various others. The parents in the Johnson study (1991) also made mention of regular times when their children would have friends over for visits. These responses support Ray's (1988) contention that home-school students experience regular involvement with people of all ages.

The views of the students in this study appear to cast considerable doubt upon Tizard and Hughes' (1984) concerns about the home school not meeting certain needs children have, specifically that of learning how to get along with other children or to be a member of a group. Judging from the responses of these children describing activities with other children, both in groups and on an individual basis (such as in choirs, scouts, 4-H, Civil Air Patrol, jobs, sports, home-school groups, and the community of home schoolers), the majority of these children are afforded the opportunity to develop these skills.

The students saw various pros and cons regarding relationships within the home-school

environment. Four of the students perceived that being home schooled afforded them more time to be with their friends. Five students believed that the home-school environment had helped them to learn how to choose good friends. For instance, Dave noted that "through home schooling...you know how to choose the correct friends" (D, 31). Apparently, this student perceived that the values and principles learned in the home-school environment had helped him to choose his friends.

Four students reported that the home-school environment had fostered quality friendships. This relates to Dobson's (1989) argument that the more children are found in their peer group, the less they'll be able to form meaningful relationships. For instance, Keith felt the home-school environment had afforded him the opportunity to have "genuine" (K, 17) friends. He was freer to be himself because he didn't have to worry "about what so many other people think" (K, 17).

Along this same line, seven of the students found the lack of peer pressure or influence to be beneficial in terms of friendships. The students referred to cliques and groups found in traditional-school environments, and they

felt home schooling was beneficial in that they did not have to deal with those situations. Carrie noted that negative peer influence can greatly impact one's behavior when she said, "The bad kids corrupt the good kids....It's easier to pull somebody down than to pull them up" (Ci, 26).

Keith commented that at times he wished that he did have peer pressure. He said, "It's good and it's bad. Sometimes you're glad that you don't have it, and sometimes you kinda wish you did....if you had peer pressure...they would possibly like let you in because you'd do anything they said to get in it" (K, 25). He went on to say that it was fine with him that he wasn't accepted by the "all-star players", but one would have to wonder about the sincerity of this response. Nevertheless, this particular student punctuated what the home-school advocates have said about the lack of peer pressure and its results within the home school. However, this particular student seemed to look at the lack of peer pressure as both good and bad: good in the sense of having friends that were true friends, but bad in the sense that you were excluded from the "cool" group.

In terms of the number of friendships, seven

of the students felt the home-school environment provided for enough friendships. Sue noted that she was closer to her friends because she didn't have an over-abundance of friends. John clearly stated that he was not deprived of friendships when he stated, "I don't live as a hermit because I'm a home schooler" (J, 14). Wartes (1988) reported that home schoolers were not socially deprived, and that they experienced many community activities where they were afforded the opportunity to meet various people.

However, three of the students expressed a desire to have more friendships. Carla felt she had been able to meet many people through home schooling, but thought the traditional school would afford her the opportunity to get to know more people. Therefore, she had chosen to begin traditional school in the fall. Sue said that she had several good friends, but occasionally felt like she needed more. She went on to say that the school might be better for the purpose of finding more friends, but then she referred to other home-schooled friends that had plenty of friends. This particular student made the least mention of outside-the-home activities, which suggests that these activities are of critical importance for development of

friendships. Carla noted, "My parents have made an effort to...give me the opportunity to make good friends. And plus, they make friends so easily, so I've seen their example. But it depends a lot on how much the parent tries to help you. It really depends on the parent because you can't do that on your own" (C, 30).

Apparently the responsibility for providing opportunities to make friends lies heavily upon the home-schooling parent.

Three students perceived that being home schooled created a difference between them and their regular-school peers. Sue felt the values and behaviors she had were different from those of regular-school peers, and that created a gap between them. Dave said that public school was more beneficial in terms of being around peers more often. He noted, "Through home schooling you don't get a lot of that, 'cause a lot of who you deal with is your family and friends" (D, 38). He said that the traditional school affords you more opportunity to deal with peers than does the home school. However, he felt the home-school environment had prepared him in terms of his values and how to choose his friends. He wasn't certain which type of school was "better", but concluded, "A lot of it depends

on what you want or what you're looking for, I think" (D, 39). Perhaps this relates to Tizard and Hughes' (1984) comments about specific needs that may not be met in the home school. One of these needs cited was the ability to deal with other children. It is difficult to say whether this is the case or not. Most students' comments regarding dealing with their friends show no indication of any difficulties in this area. Nevertheless, these three students made reference to noticing a difference between themselves and some of their peers. Perhaps this is due to less time spent with peers than is usual, or perhaps this is due to the different set of values these children appear to possess. However, these comments suggest that the lack of peer influence or pressure referred to so often by these students may in fact have some negative consequences. If they experience no negative influences from peers, they may not learn how to deal with such influences. This would make for an interesting focus of study as well, particularly an observational study. Home-school advocates claim that these students will escape becoming peer dependent. It would be interesting to see if this reported lack of peer dependency aids them when they are exposed

to peer pressure.

Attitudes regarding relationships in the home school. Interestingly, when asked which type of school was better in terms of peer relationships, nine of the ten students chose the home school. Their reasons included the values education aspect of home schooling [5], having more genuine or closer friendships [2], and the opportunity to have a wider selection of friends [1]. Two students felt it would depend on who the student was. For instance, Keith said that if the student was heavily interested in sports teams, the traditional school would be the best. The other student, Dave, said that it would depend on the student, but for him, the home school was better.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study gave strong indications that all but one had experienced close family relationships as a result of home-schooling. All participants reported activities done outside the home to be the main contributors to their friendships. In addition, their comments indicated that they were also given opportunities to develop relationships because they frequently entertained

quests in the home. Lack of peer pressure and more time to develop quality friendships were cited as the main factors in the home-school environment that contributed to their relationships. The majority of the students felt the home school provided for enough friendships: however, several students expressed a desire to have more friendships. These findings generally positively reflect parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are consistent with the literature on home schooling and on adolescent development. However, Tizard and Hughes (1984) raise several points about specific needs that may not be met in the home school, and these are worthy of further consideration, as responses of a few students reflected at least one of the concerns they raise. Specifically, the ability of home schooling to address the adolescent's need to deal with other children should be studied further.

Sexuality

The sixth question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence sexuality as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Method of teaching. Six students in this study said that they learned about sexuality through print materials, six said they discussed this topic with their parents, and two referred to having listened to tapes dealing with sexuality. Alice noted that she had benefited some through her science lessons. Carla commented that she had been given the opportunity to be with many varied types of people in her growing-up years and said that she had learned much about how to relate to the opposite sex through these acquaintances and friendships. This response was probably the most unique.

The children's responses to questions dealing with how sexuality was taught in the home school paralleled the parents' reports in the Johnson study (1991). The parents stated that they teach about sexuality through discussion and materials that are based upon a foundation of Christian values. The parents' statements seemed to echo what Lickona (1991) said in his book Educating for Character. He states, "...a growing segment of society appears to be

recovering what used to be shared cultural wisdom:
Children are incompletely developed human beings
needing special guidance and protection. That is
nowhere more true than in the area of sex" (p. 374).

Primary person for discussion regarding sexuality.

Six of the children said that they most frequently discussed sexuality with their mother. Two children included both the mother and the father. Four children referred to friends as the ones with whom they discussed sexuality. What was interesting was that most of the students referred to their parents and family members in reporting who they discussed sexuality with most. Yet, at the same time, this was not overly shocking. By this point in the interviews, the relationships most of these students shared with their parents was already apparent. As it turned out, sexuality was not an exception to the rule.

Plans for teaching future children. In trying to gain more insight on their perspectives regarding the learning of sexuality in the home-school, I asked the children how they might teach their future children about this issue. It was my intent to see if they might do things the same way their parents had, or if they might choose to approach sexuality

from a different angle. Every answer related directly to the parental method of teaching. Six children referred to their parents' pattern in some form and said that they would teach their children in much the same manner. Four children said that they would delay encouragement in terms of dating relationships until an appropriate age. For instance, Dave responded with a quote that sounded something like what his parents might have said to him. He said, "I haven't had to deal with any of that quite yet. Not enough time. Don't get involved too early...I think it's fine once you reach an older age, like sixteen or so" (D, 34).

Two children said that they would guide their children in terms of moral standards. Two students noted that they would try to create a sense of openness between their future children and themselves. Both of these ideas closely paralleled what the parents had said in the Johnson study (1991). For instance, Johnson reported that many of the parents seemed to stress standards such as abstinence from sex before marriage and the importance of a wholesome family life. In addition, the majority of the parents in the Johnson study (1990) mentioned that they openly discuss the topic of sexuality with their children.

Carla noted that she would help her children to develop friendships with the opposite sex. Her

previous comments indicated that this was exactly what her parents had done for her. Carrie said that she would help them to understand difficult words within the materials dealing with sexuality before they had to read about it or listen to tapes about it. This seemed to stem from her experience. Apparently, she had had some difficulty with understanding several of the words on tapes she had heard. All in all, the responses were positive in thought, and it appeared that the children were comfortable with how they had learned about the topic of sexuality in the home-school environment.

Home schooling's influence. The children perceived an array of factors within the home-school environment to be influential in their learning about sexuality. Seven of the children found the values learned within the home school to be influential. This was not surprising because of the emphasis on values education that permeated the interviews and the home-schooling literature. Two children perceived texts with a Christian emphasis to be influential. It seems apparent that this was somewhat of an extension of values education in the home school.

Half of the children perceived the lack of peer influence or pressure to play a part in how they learned about and approached sexuality. For instance,

Carrie discerned that "the bad kids corrupt the good kids." (Ci, 26). DiBlasio and Benda (1990) commented that adolescents are more likely to engage in sexual behavior when their friends are engaging in such activities. They noted that "delinquency is learned from peers" (p. 451) and that the percentage of one's friends who are "engaged in norm violation is correlated with one's own deviance" (p. 451). It seemed apparent that these students perceived benefits in being somewhat protected from negative influences. However, Meg responded in an interesting manner. Evidence of her perception of being able to "stand alone" surfaced when she commented that she did not think her peers would influence her in terms of her values. She noted, "I usually do what I think is right and not what they think is right anyway" (M, 21).

In addition, all ten students referred to parental influence within the home-school environment. They seemed to realize that their parents had a tremendous impact on their beliefs regarding sexuality. For instance, Carla perceived the home-schooling environment to be beneficial in terms of learning about sexuality because of the parental role within the home school. She commented, "You can trust your parents, and they'll tell you what's really true" (D: 25). It would seem that this comment speaks quite

highly of the rapport and relationship between this student and her parents. Furthermore, two students perceived the home-schooling environment as having fostered a closer or more open relationship with their mothers. However, one student commented that she had decided to communicate more with her parents, so in actuality, she perceived the closeness and openness to be a result of the combined impact of home schooling and her personal decision.

Attitude. On the whole, the students perceived the home-schooling environment to be beneficial in terms of learning about sexuality. Nine of the ten perceived the home-school environment as surpassing the traditional-school environment when it came to learning about this topic. Only one student, Sue, wasn't certain. She commented that she wasn't sure which environment might be better because she had never been in a traditional school. She commented, "Well,...it's in between" (S, 17).

Such factors as parental influence, lack of peer pressure, and the personalized learning environment were the main factors in terms of the benefits of home schooling regarding sexuality. For instance, Carla perceived the home-school environment's influence on her self-confidence to be a possible help in terms of sexuality. She noted that home schooling "will

probably help me free to be myself..." (C, 25).

What was interesting was that the students perceived the one-on-one learning process to be a factor. Paula felt that being close to her mother was advantageous. She also thought the distractions in the traditional school were detrimental to talking about sexuality with an adult. She commented, "It wouldn't be...as nice, I wouldn't think because it wouldn't be like you had one person you could talk to because everybody else would want to talk to her at the same time" (P, 15). These comments relate to the Virginia Department of Education (1990) guidelines regarding the importance of having each student "known well and advised by at least one adult who works in that school" (p. 14). It would seem that the parent of the student would be the best choice when it came to finding someone who knew a student well. In addition, Tizard and his colleagues (1983) noted that questioning was conducive to learning. They noted that questions seemed to occur more frequently in certain settings than others. The factors they listed seem to correspond to the factors found within the home-school environment.

In conclusion, several of the students noted several disadvantages within the home-school environment. Keith noted that the home-schooling environment did not provide as many opportunities

to meet people of the opposite sex as might the traditional school. He commented, "You wouldn't be around as many people to pick and choose from..." (K, 4). Alice's comment had to do with not being accustomed to interaction with people of the opposite sex. She felt that having been home schooled would help her in terms of "standard setting and choosing who I will date" (A, 13), but that being home schooled would hinder her to "a certain extent" because of her being "not used to interacting with guys or anything like that" (A, 13). Apparently, these students perceived that the home school was good in terms of learning about sexuality from a moral standpoint, but it was somewhat lacking in terms of providing for opportunities to interact with members of the opposite sex.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study revealed that they perceive the influence of home schooling to be predominantly positive regarding sexuality. Student comments indicated that parental influence/role, values education, lack of peer pressure/influence, and the personalized academic environment were considered to be beneficial factors found in the home school. The only disadvantages reported by several of the students had to do with fewer opportunities for interaction with members of

the opposite sex. These findings reflect the majority of parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are relatively consistent with the literature on home schooling and adolescent development.

Social Skills

The final question addressed within this study was: How do home-schooling socialization practices influence social skills as perceived by Christian middle-school-aged home-school students?

Influence of home schooling on manners/social skills. The students cited various examples of personal manners such as basic politeness, table manners, and respect towards others. Seven students perceived the parental role in the home-school environment as being the main factor in terms of their personal acquisition of manners. Six students perceived the lack of negative peer pressure as being influential in their development of personal manners. Alice compared her regular-school friends' manners to the home schoolers she was acquainted with, and she felt that the home schoolers were more polite. Only two students felt that their manners would be unchanged had they been in traditional school.

Five of the children referred to the social skill of being able to communicate with people of various ages, particularly adults. Interestingly, Tizard and Hughes (1984) thought that the home school might not be able to meet certain needs children may have, specifically that of relating to, and communicating with, strange adults. Based on the comments of the

students in this study, home schooling has a positive influence regarding their ability to communicate with various adults, and these students' perceptions differ from the thoughts of Tizard and Hughes. Ray (1988)

commented that because home schoolers are with people of various ages quite often, they are often better prepared for dealing with people of various ages.

These students seemed to be pleased with this ability, and they saw it as a beneficial quality. This supports what Verduyn (1990) said about how a child's perception of their success in social situations can influence self-esteem. Based on these findings, the acquisition of certain social skills, specifically the ability to interact with various people in diverse social situations, might influence one's personal identity.

Six of the students perceived the home school as a place where social skills are actually taught. For instance, Dave commented, "A lot of my other friends haven't been taught....[But] through...home schooling and my parents...it's been easier to talk to grown-ups or other people that you'd think it would be hard to or something like that" (D, 35). This is reflected somewhat by what Johnson (1991) reported. The parents of these students said that their children were learning social skills through various life experiences. Other researchers (Kearney, 1984; Lines, 1987; Montgomery, 1989; Ray, 1988; Richoux, 1987)

have also reported that home schoolers attempt to engage their children in numerous and varied social activities.

The students perceived the parents to be "teachers" of social skills as a result of both direct and indirect influence. However, three students thought that the traditional school offers one more opportunities to deal with others. Several of these students perceived the home school to be a place where they could attain the social skills necessary for dealing with various people, but the traditional school would offer more opportunities daily to practice these skills.

An interesting finding was that nine of the students responded positively to enjoyment or involvement in current events studies. Perhaps parental modeling had an impact on this area of their lives. Many of the children cited instances of engaging in the study of current events in one form or another and considered knowledge about current events to be important. This attitude towards current events clearly expresses an interest in the "outside world."

Acceptance of others' differences. Truly Robert Fulghum (1989) said it well when he said, "Sticks
X and stones may break our bones, but words will break

X our hearts" (p. 20). This idea is central regarding one's attitude towards accepting others who are different from oneself in some way. When discussing how they would treat someone who was "different" from them in some way, all of the children in this study responded with comments emphasizing the "specialness" of each individual person.

In terms of the influence of the home school on acceptance of others' differences, three of the students perceived the lack of negative peer influence within the home school as being a main contributor towards how they might deal with others who are different from themselves. Carla surmised that because she isn't "forced into any one group" (C, 27), she was free to be "friends with everybody" (C, 27). Five of the children compared themselves to how other people they knew dealt with people different from themselves. Alice said that she thought that traditionally-schooled students interact with people "that are more on their level and their friends" (A, 15-16). She believed that her experiences in the home-school environment had afforded her the opportunity to interact with a broad spectrum of people, and that this had been beneficial in how she related to various people. Johnson (1991) reported that the parents said that they were putting forth specific efforts to teach the importance of the

acceptance of others' differences, and it would seem that their efforts were fruitful. However, based on the responses of the students in this study, one area of concern might be that the home-school environment may not provide for much student contact with others who are different in terms of values and beliefs. Perhaps parental teaching regarding others who are different will carry over in this respect, however, this area might need some consideration by home-school educators.

Prosocial skills and behaviors. Throughout the interviews with the students, character qualities that are essential for proper social endeavors continued to surface in the children's responses. They held in high esteem qualities such as loyalty, friendliness, kindness, humility, and cheerfulness. In addition, although my time with the students was minimal, the social skills I observed the students to possess were exemplary. Peavy (1990) also noted that first-hand observations of other home-school students revealed that they displayed socially-acceptable behaviors. She also noted that "one should not underestimate the contribution to social values and social character that comes from a firm foundation in moral and spiritual values common to most home schoolers" (p. 4). Judging from their

responses to my questions as well as my limited time observing a few of these students in group activities, I would have to agree that the values central to these students' lives permeate every area of their socialization, including that of social skills.

Summary. Interview responses as well as first-hand observations of these students gave strong indications that each one possessed positive social skills. The majority of the students perceived the home school as being beneficial in terms of their acquisition of both manners and the ability to interact with a wide spectrum of people. In addition, many of the students thought that being home schooled had helped them to relate to others that might be different in some way. Such factors as parental influence and the lack of negative peer pressure were seen as major contributors to their development of social skills. These findings reflect parental goals as reported by Johnson (1991), and are consistent with the literature on home schooling. However, they cast considerable doubt on the claims of Tizard and Hughes (1984).

Attitudes

Throughout the interviews with the students, the pervasive attitude towards home schooling was clearly positive.

As I began to analyze the data, several patterns began to emerge. Eight of the students consistently expressed positive attitudes toward home schooling, even though some of those students were cognizant of several disadvantages found in the home-school environment. Each of those eight students perceived themselves to have had a voice in the decision to home school. Alice specifically said that she had only begun to really enjoy home schooling the previous school year when she had been given the choice as to whether she would prefer to be home schooled or to go to the traditional school.

Two students, Sue and Keith, expressed both positive and negative comments regarding their home schooling experience. Sue had a relatively positive attitude towards home schooling, but several times throughout the interview, she made comments that were negative in nature such as desiring the opportunity to have more friends and be engaged in more activities. She felt that she had no voice in the decision to home school. Keith reported that the home-school environment is somewhat beneficial, however, he consistently made mention of disadvantages found within

the home school. He also felt that he had no voice in the decision to home school.

As I looked at these patterns, several comments made by the students regarding whether or not they would choose to home school their future children stood out in their responses. All ten of the children believed that they might like to home school their children, circumstances permitting. However, four of the children reported that they would give their children the choice as to whether or not they would like to be home schooled. Alice, the student whose attitude towards home schooling had changed since having been given the choice, reported that she would home school them in the younger years, but then when they got older, she would give them the choice. In addition, I noticed that Keith, the student who made mention of many negative comments about home schooling, also said that he would give his children a voice in the decision "to make them happy" (p. 26).

It seemed apparent that the students who perceived themselves to be a part of the decision to home school exhibited a positive attitude towards home schooling, even though they might have been aware of several disadvantages found within the home-schooling environment. However, the students who felt they had not been a part of the decision to home school vacillated regarding their attitude towards home

schooling.

This is consistent with what Alice's mother reported in the Johnson study (1991). At the time of the Johnson study (1991), the Lewis parents had not yet given Alice a voice in the decision to home school. Mrs. Lewis reported that her daughter occasionally expressed a desire to return to the traditional school, however, she also really enjoyed the home-school group. Mrs. Lewis' comments are exemplary of the students' vacillation between desiring to continue in the home school and desiring to go to a traditional school.

In Charvov (1988), another home-schooling student expressed his attitudes towards home schooling. He also expressed a pervasively positive attitude towards home schooling, similar to eight of the students in this study. What was interesting was what he said regarding the decision to home school. He said, "It was my decision to come out [of the traditional school]. My parents let me know how they were feeling, and I agreed" (p. 88).

These comments support what Klingele (1979) said about adolescents being typically known for having an increased desire to make personal decisions. Brown and Mann (1990) noted that one of the most important tasks of the adolescent is the development of autonomy, and that autonomy is often encouraged through decision

making. What was interesting in Charvov (1988) was that several paragraphs immediately following the student's statement about the decision to home school was that he was asked if he perceived a lack of peer dependency within the home-school environment to have played a part in home-school students' self-esteem. He responded, "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" (pp. 88-89).

These findings suggest that the issue of having a voice in the decision to home school goes to the very heart of socialization. These students are in the stage where the formation of a healthy self-image is of primary importance, and how they view themselves in terms of decision making is an important part of their personal identity, which in a sense, appears to influence the entire socialization process.

Summary. Interview responses of students in this study gave strong indications that their attitude toward home schooling was greatly influenced by their perceptions regarding their voice in the decision to home school. Students who believed they were given a voice in the decision consistently expressed positive attitudes, whereas students who thought they had no

voice in the decision tended to express negative attitudes. These findings present new information not reported earlier in the home-schooling literature. In addition, they support what the literature on adolescent development suggests with regard to the importance of decision making in the adolescent years.

The analysis of an educational process, home schooling being no exception, is incomplete without understanding the kaleidoscope of perspectives of students engaged in that process. Based on the findings grounded in the data of this particular study and the literature regarding home schooling, four major conclusions have emerged. They are as follows:

(a) the majority of students in this study viewed socialization in the home school in a positive manner; (b) student perceptions were closely related to their degree of participation in the decision to be home schooled; (c) the literature regarding home schooling, while minimal, appears to be in accord with the majority of the students' perceptions, yet it lacks any direct reference to student participation in the decision to home school; and (d) much of the responsibility for the success of the home school with regard to socialization rests upon the home-schooling parent.

The majority of these students viewed socialization within the home school in a positive manner. Throughout the interviews, the children made comments, both direct and indirect, that painted a picture of the home-schooling experience as being a positive experience. When asked to choose which type of schooling they perceived to be the best for

socialization purposes, five of the students pointedly chose the home school. Increased self-confidence, academic benefits, parental influence, values education, and the lack of peer pressure were some of the main elements found within the home-school environment that contributed to these students' outlook on home schooling. The other five students saw benefits within both types of schools. More frequent interaction with the opposite sex, more frequent opportunities to deal with peers, and more opportunities for team sports involvement were some of the elements found within the traditional-school environment that contributed to these students' perspectives on socialization within schools. Nevertheless, based on the full scope of responses from these students, the findings suggest that they perceive the benefits found within the home-schooling environment to outweigh the detriments.

Student perceptions were closely related to their degree of participation in the decision to be home schooled. Students who believed they had a voice in the decision consistently expressed positive attitudes toward home schooling. However, students who felt they had no part in the decision to be home schooled tended to express negative attitudes toward home schooling. The findings of this study strongly suggest that the students' participation in the

decision to home school influences their attitudes toward home schooling.

The literature regarding home schooling is minimal, yet it appears to be in accord with the majority of the students' perceptions. Increased self-confidence, academic benefits, parental influence, values education, and the lack of peer pressure or peer dependency were the main benefits of home schooling cited by the home-schooling advocates, and they reflect what the students perceived to be beneficial. Interestingly, the home-schooling advocates do not necessarily promote high-school home schooling, nor do they actually discourage continued involvement through the high-school years. The majority of the home-school advocates who refer to age as a factor (Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Dobson, 1989; Moore, 1985b; Peavy, 1987) recommend home schooling up until about the age of twelve or so. The disadvantages cited by some of the students, such as more frequent interaction with the opposite sex, more frequent opportunities to deal with peers, and more opportunities for team sports involvement, are factors most frequently found to be important during a student's high-school years. These very reasons were the reasons cited by one student who had thoroughly enjoyed her home-schooling experience yet desired to begin attending a traditional school for

her high-school years. However, not all students would prefer to attend a traditional school for their high-school years. For instance, Carrie reported, "I like it [home schooling]. I'm gonna stay from high school" (Ci, 3). Nevertheless, these findings lead me to conclude that parents should consider carefully affording their home-schooling children the opportunity to choose between home schooling and traditional schooling, especially when they reach the high-school years. In the words of Alice, one of the students who perceived the choice to be heavily influential in her attitude regarding home schooling, "I would probably home school them [her future children] the first couple of years and then give them their own choice" (A, 17).

Judging from the students' references to parental influence woven throughout each aspect of socialization, it is apparent that much of the responsibility for the success of the home school rests upon the home-schooling parent. This is particularly true with regard to providing students many opportunities to engage in varied activities outside the home. VanGalen (1988b) noted that many parents opt to home school their children because they believe that they are the only ones who can fully understand the child's specific and unique educational needs well enough to best teach the child. Whether

it be in the home school or the traditional school, parental involvement and concern makes all the difference in the world. Because this study focused on home-schooling students' perspectives, I can think of no better way to close than with the words of Carla answering the question about which type of schooling is better for socialization purposes. She concluded, "My parents have made an effort to give me responsibility and given me the opportunity to make good friends. And plus, they make friends easily, so I've seen their example, but it depends a lot on how much the parent tries to help you. It really depends on the parent, because you can't do that on your own" (C, 30).

Recommendations for Further Study

There is a growing base of research regarding home-schooled children's academic achievement. However, it has been noted within the literature (Lines, 1987; Taylor, 1986; Wright, 1988) that research focusing on various aspects of socialization within the home-schooling environment is minimal. Given the fact that student participation in the decision to home school played such a large part in this particular study, my first recommendation would be to perform a correlational study primarily involving

the issue of choice. Regarding recommendations for further study, several observational studies would also be useful. To begin with, an interesting study would involve looking at how home-schooling students interact with others, particularly their peers. In addition, several longitudinal studies would be helpful. Given the fact that the issue of peer dependency/pressure is so prevalent in the home-schooling literature, as well as these students' comments, it would be interesting to see how well the students are able to cope when faced with peer pressure. Also, several researchers raise the point that these students might not be able to separate from their families later in life. Perhaps this, too, would be an interesting focus of study. One other possible longitudinal study would be to trace the lives of home-schooled children into their adulthood and see what patterns are noticeable, such as leadership abilities and various other qualities that home-schooling advocates believe are influenced by factors found in the home-school environment. A further recommendation for possible research would be to compare and contrast home-schooled youngsters' perspectives regarding socialization in the home school to those of traditional-schooled youngsters in their schooling environment. Also, because of several comments from the students regarding home schooling

during the high-school years, it would be interesting to elicit the perceptions of home-schooling high-school students regarding their socialization. One further recommendation would be to elicit the perspectives of previously home-schooled adults in terms of their total home-schooling experience once they are involved in college or the work force. Given the fact that many researchers have commented regarding the scarcity of research dealing with home schooling, one might conclude that this particular alternative approach to education abounds with possibilities for further research.

Summation Statement

The case studies, findings, and concluding statements of this study are specific to the study population and are not generalizable to other home-school populations. In addition, when considering the findings regarding these students' perceptions regarding socialization, one must recognize that the fact that the families involved in this study were very committed to their Christian beliefs, and that factor plays a large role in the students' total socialization process. This particular aspect is woven throughout and cannot be separated without unraveling many of the findings and conclusions.

The ten students interviewed are but a small

representation among the more than two thousand home-schooled students in the state of Virginia. Although this study is limited, it is the only study to date that focuses directly on home-schooled students' perspectives regarding the socialization activities and practices in their own lives. On the basis of my interviews, I have concluded that this particular group of Christian middle-school-aged home-school students perceive their home-schooling experience as being more socially beneficial than detrimental. In their estimation, the social benefits of home schooling outweigh any detriments that might be found in the home-school environment.

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Appendix A

Standardized Open-Ended/Closed-Ended Interview

I. General Information/Interview Set

Student's Name, I'm really grateful that you are willing for us to talk today. I'm doing some important work dealing with home schooling, and your help in this study is one of the most important parts of the study. I'm very interested in what kinds of things you see as meeting your social needs and how you feel about that aspect of your home-schooling experience. The information that you share with me is highly valuable because home-schooled students are a very special group of youngsters.

It is important that you know that everything you say to me during this time will be kept as confidential as possible. When it comes time for the information to be reported, all names will be changed so that no one will know what you or any of the other students have said. I would like to tape this interview so that I'll be sure to remember all of the important information you tell me today. Is that all right with you? Okay, why don't we begin with some basic questions about you as a special and unique person.

II. PERSONAL IDENTITY

Introduction: Generally, how we see ourselves is made up of what we think of ourselves, what others think of us and what we think others think of us.

1. a. If you were asked to describe yourself to a new acquaintance, what would you tell them?

b. How do you think that being home schooled might have influenced your opinion of yourself? 2. We are all unique or special in some way.

a. What is it about you that makes you special?

b. How do you think that being home schooled might have influenced you to feel that way?

3. a. What are some things you do as a result of being home schooled that make you feel good about or proud of yourself?

b. What are some activities that you're involved in, as a result of being home schooled, that make you feel good about or proud of yourself?

4. Do you feel as though your opinion of yourself would be different if you were attending regular school? If so, how?/If not, why not?

III. PERSONAL DESTINY

Introduction: These next few questions deal with setting goals, achievement, and your possible choices for a future career. I realize that you are

still young, but do the best you can to answer these questions.

1. a. What are some of your personal goals? (Prompt: What do you hope to be able to accomplish in the next ten to fifteen years? In terms of school? In terms of college? In terms of a job? In terms of a family?)

b. How do you think that being home schooled might have influenced you to choose these goals?

c. Do you feel as though your goals might be different if you were attending regular school? If so, how?/If not, why not?

d. Do you feel as though having been home schooled will help you to be able to meet these goals? If so, why?/If not, why not?

2. a. Are you involved in 4-H, Scouts, sports, or church groups?

b. What are some of your achievements in these groups?

c. How do you think that being home schooled has influenced your involvement and achievements in these groups?

d. How do you feel about that?

3. Let's imagine something that probably won't happen.

a. Suppose you were to fail at meeting one of these goals. What would you do if that happened?

b. What might be the cause of that failure?

c. How do you think that being home schooled has helped you to learn to deal with failure of any sort? If so, how?/If not, why not?

IV. VALUES AND MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction: These next few questions deal with our values in life. Values are those principles that we believe are very important and try to live our lives by. Some examples of values might be honesty or kindness. These values involve our relationship with God as well as with other people.

1. a. What are some values or life principles that are especially important to you?

b. Do you think that being home schooled has influenced your ideas about what is important in life? If so, how?/If not, why not?

2. a. Could you possibly identify two or three people whom you really look up to as role models?

b. Could you pick out two main characteristics about them that really cause you to respect them or want to be like them?

c. You've mentioned _____, _____, and _____ as being things that impress you about these people. If you could give yourself any two of these characteristics, which two would you choose?

d. How do you think that being home schooled might have influenced you to believe that those

particular qualities are most important? (Probe: In other words, do you think that your views on what is important in life would be different if you were attending regular school? If so, how?/If not, why not?)

3. a. Even when we like people a whole lot, we almost never like everything about them. Without telling me the names of these people, could you pick out several qualities about some people you know that you think are not good qualities?

b. Why do you think that they are bad qualities?

c. How do you think that being home schooled might have influenced you to consider those qualities to be bad in some way?

4. Often, what we truly value is seen in where we spend our money.

a. Do you earn any money for yourself?

b. How do you manage your money?

c. Do you feel as though home schooling has influenced the way you manage your money? (Probe: In other words, do you feel as though your money management would be different if you were attending regular school? If so, how?/If not, why not?)

5. When you are older, do you hope your values will change or deepen in any way? If so, how?/If not, why not?

6. a. What values do you definitely want your future

children to acquire?

b. Do you think that being home schooled has influenced your ideas about what are the most important things in life? If so, how?/If not, why not?

V. AUTONOMY

Introduction: Part of growing up involves gaining more independence or being able to become a more responsible person.

1. a. Tell me a bit about your responsibilities here at home. (Prompt: In other words, what are some of your daily or weekly tasks?)

b. Do you feel as though being home schooled has helped you to learn to be responsible for those tasks? If so, how?/If not, why not?

2. a. Do you plan part of your own schedule for getting tasks done?

b. Do you think that being home schooled has helped you to learn how to plan your own schedule? If so, how?/If not, why not?

3. a. Are there some things that you regularly do without anyone else's help or guidance? If so, what?

b. How do you feel about doing these things by yourself?

c. Do you think that being home schooled has helped you to learn to do things by yourself? If

so, how?/If not, why not?

4. a. What are some decisions that you've made on your own? (Probes: Can you name one that you feel good about? Can you name one that you feel bad about?)

b. How do you go about making decisions?

c. Do you think that being home schooled has helped you or hindered you in the process of making your own decisions?

VI. RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction: No man, woman, boy, or girl lives to himself. All of our lives are intertwined with other people's lives.

1. a. Who are some of the people that you are closest to now?

b. How do you think that being home schooled has helped you to develop relationships with these people?

c. When do you get to spend time with these people?

d. What kinds of things do you most enjoy doing with them?

e. How do you think that being home schooled has influenced your friendships with these people? (Probe: In other words, do you think that if you were attending regular school, your friendships would be different? If so, how?/If not, why not?)

2. a. Do you think that being home schooled might have helped you to develop deeper relationships with your family members? If so, how?/If not, why not?

b. Do you think that being home schooled might have helped you to develop deeper relationships with friends? If so, how?/If not, why not?

3. a. Do you think that being home schooled might have influenced your choice of friends? If so, how?/If not, why not?

b. Is there any way in which you think your group of friends might be different if you were attending regular school? Why?/Why not?

c. How do you feel about that?

4. Do you think that the home-school environment or the regular-school environment is the best place for developing good relationships with other people? Why?

VII. SEXUALITY

Introduction: This next set of questions deals with our awareness of becoming a man/woman and how that happens.

1. What opportunities have you had in home schooling to learn about becoming a man/woman and the differences between men and women?

2. Whom do you mostly discuss these issues with?

3. a. When you have children one day, how do you plan to teach them about this issue?

b. Is there anything that you definitely would do or definitely would not do for them in this area? Why?/Why not?

4. a. Do you think that being home schooled has helped you to develop ideas about future dating, marriage, and family life? If so, how?/If not, why not?

b. Do you think that being home schooled will help you or hurt you in terms of your future dating, marriage, and family life? How so?

5. Do you feel as though the home-school environment or the regular-school environment is the best place to learn about this issue? Why?

VIII. SOCIAL SKILLS

Introduction: This final area deals with social rules or manners, taking on and developing adult roles, and accepting the differences in others.

1. a. What are some examples of manners that you've acquired?

b. Do you think that being home schooled has influenced your manners in any way? If so, how?/If not, why not?

c. Do you think that your manners would be

different if you were attending regular school?

Why?/Why not?

2. a. Do you have guests at your house often?

b. Do you think that being home schooled has influenced the number and kinds of guests you've had at your home? If so, how?/If not, why not?

3. a. Do you enjoy learning about what is going on around you? (In terms of current events.)

b. What role do you hope to play in what is happening in the world around you one day?

c. How do you think that being home schooled has influenced the way in which you hope to involve yourself in the world around you (today and in the future)?

4. Throughout our lives we will meet people who are somewhat different from the way we are.

a. Can you think of or imagine someone who is physically or mentally "different" from the average person? (Probe: Mentally or physically handicapped in some way?)

b. Do you think that being home schooled has influenced how you would think about or treat that person? If so, how?/If not, why not?

IX. CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Introduction: These two final questions involve your opinion about the best place for someone to learn

how to get along with others and become a good part of a family and a community.

1. Do you think that the home-school environment or the regular-school environment better prepares a person socially? Why is that so?

2. These questions have involved the social aspect of your home-schooling experience. After having thought about these issues in the past few minutes, consider this next question carefully: When you have children one day, do you plan to home school them? Why?/Why not?

X. FINAL COMMENTS

I've really appreciated your willingness to share this information and part of your life with me. If I have any questions about anything you've said, would you mind if I talked with you again?

You've been a tremendous help. Thank you again for your important part in this study.