

My days at home

Business



I have gotten loads of different reactions from people when I tell them that I am homeschooled. Most of the time people don't really know what to say about the fact for a minute or two. When they re-gather themselves they bombard me with questions like a river that finally broke its dam.

So, do you like it? Do you go to school in your pajamas? What about friends? Well, here's how my story goes... When I was young and still in grade school my parents decided to homeschool me. My mom stayed home to teach me.

I would have to get up in the morning, get dressed, eat breakfast; all the things that any normal public school kid would have to do. There was one major difference though. No waiting for a school bus on a cold winter morning! I just went the dining room of my warm house where my mom was waiting to teach me. We normally started working around nine o'clock in the morning just like everybody else in grade school, except my class size was much smaller. One to one teacher-student ratio.

I had all the normal subjects that any other kid would have to take. I had math, science, social studies, writing, everything. For P. E., I took afterschool gymnastics classes with other kids my own age.

I was also on a soccer team for a little while and I took music lessons as well. My mom certainly didn't miss anything when she was teaching me and she was a tough teacher, too. When I took tests, she wouldn't accept anything below a B. As I got older, she let me take over some of my subjects.

Meaning, I would basically teach it to myself and correct my own work. After I was done with the day's assignments my teacher would go over what I had done and help me when I needed it.

That was probably the most important thing she could have done for me. She taught me how to teach myself. It sounds kind of strange but it certainly helped me, especially when I moved on to middle school. In 7th and 8th grade, I did most of the work myself. I learned how to be independent in my schoolwork, not needing a teacher to explain things to me and working out things for myself instead.

With this new arrangement, my mom let me take over organizing my schedule as well. She just made sure that my work was done and helped me if I was having trouble. I always knew that I could ask for help if I needed assistance, but I got a sense of achievement if I worked through a tough spot myself. Test scores still had to be A's or B's. And yes, now that I had more control over my schedule, I did go to school in my pajamas.

And yes, I did love it. My mom let me choose when I started my schoolwork for the day but since I still had things going on outside of the house, such as friends and sports, I had to make sure that my work was done before I could go out. In general, I did most of my schoolwork early in the day that way I could have the afternoons to do what I wanted. A big incentive for me was the desire to do art projects. I loved to paint and create things with my hands. I still do.

It got to the point that my mom signed me up for art lessons, there I met some of my best friends. I saw them every week and we often got together to do things on breaks and days that they got off from public school. My high school years were pretty fun, too. Freshman year was intense. I started taking classes from the University of Nebraska Independent Study High

School. They were distance education courses, but boy let me tell you, they were tough.

I learned pretty fast that they expected me to know things inside out and backwards. I had to be an expert on the material they covered to do well on the tests. Oh yeah, and now that I was in high school, my parents expected me to be a straight A student. It was a tall order and it took a lot of work, but eventually I started taking honors classes as well. Being homeschooled allowed me to focus better on my studies than if I always had friends around me.

I still got to see my friends and everything; I still talked to them regularly, but I was able to focus on my work during the day while they were in school. I set my sights on A's and with just a few exceptions, I achieved them. During my junior year, I started taking college courses at the local university. At the University of Alaska Anchorage, I learned how to cope with a work load and having friends around me nearly the whole time I was on campus. Multi-tasking became my new past time not to mention I started taking lessons for my third instrument. Although taking high school classes and college classes didn't really allow me to go to school in my pajamas anymore, I still loved it.

Now as a high school senior, I am taking a full college course load and getting both high school credit and college credit at the same time. I have plenty of friends on campus and off. Even with them and all my hobbies, my parents still expect me to do well in school. I am working really hard to do that for them because they put so much time and effort into bringing me to

this point. Not only do I have to do it for them, but I have four younger siblings who are also homeschooled and I have to set an example for them.

I have one more semester to finish for high school before I graduate. I'm in the class of 2010 and I can't wait to move onto the next challenge! Having been homeschooled, I know that I will be able to do well in whatever direction I decide to go in college because I know how to learn. Another question that I often get asked is: Do you wish that you weren't homeschooled? My answer is... No, I loved being homeschooled.

It taught me not to settle for average, but to strive for more; to be above the normal and exceed even my own goals.