



In all the years that my wife Diana has been homeschooling our six children, I have not fully comprehended the obstacles that are thrown in front of her -- and I imagine thrown at all traditional homeschoolers. During the times that my attention was focused solely on my job, I was not concerned whether she homeschooled the children, or whether they went to school.

During my recovery from surgery two years ago, I had the first opportunity to see how hard my wife worked at juggling all the responsibilities of training our young children. I was also very surprised at the contempt that many have towards home schooling. What I have found the hardest to understand, however, is the negativity that sometimes comes from within the church. Some of my daughter's friends were talking about school at youth group one day, and I overheard the following comment: "Its not like you are in the same grade as me because you are homeschooled; it's not the same." I had to spend the next while trying to show her that she actually takes classes that are beyond the grade that she is in; and in doing so, I understood for myself the benefits that my wife was giving to the children in choosing to school them at home.

I am glad that I have had the opportunity to see just how much resistance my wife and children get from their friends

and peers. It has embarrassed me that in a way it shows me that I am no different than those who criticize. I owe it to my wife to be more engaged with what she is doing for the benefit of our children.

I would encourage any parent that leaves the responsibility of homeschooling to their partner to become more involved in their children's education. This would indicate that your spouse not only has your support amidst the critics, but that you can see for yourself the benefits that it brings to your children's lives. Also, I would encourage you to become more involved in the Alberta Home Education Association (AHEA), to learn how they are working on your behalf. With the resistance to traditional homeschooling coming from so many directions, it is good to know that there are dedicated people who keep us aware of these dangers, and help us work together to stand firmly against them.

*Ian Kennedy*

*Ian is married to Diana and is the father of Alannah (14), Jessica (12), Kurt (9), Sean (7), Michael (7), and Clairissa (6). They reside in MacKay, Alberta. He is currently a second year student in a pastoral program at Vanguard College, Edmonton.*

