

MAKING THE DECISION TO HOMESCHOOL

By James A. Muncy, Ph.D.

We have been homeschooling for a number of years now. Knowing what I now know, I wouldn't have done it any other way. However, when we first had to make the decision of whether or not to homeschool, we didn't know what we now know. We had to make the decision before we knew whether or not it would work for us. How do you make a decision like that without knowing for sure how things will turn out?

I made our original decision to homeschool the same way I make my business decisions. I looked at the upside potential. I looked at the downside risk. I went with what that told me. It turned out to be an easy call.

Before Lisa and I ever had children, we were around some kids who were being homeschooled. I wasn't sold on homeschooling, but I was sold on the kids. These were great kids, so I was willing to explore how homeschooling might be a good alternative. The more I studied it, the more it made sense. Still, I didn't know if it would work for our family.

As Lisa and I talked about it, it made sense to give it a try, at least for the first year. What could happen? The upside potential was that our kids would turn out like all these other homeschooled children we met. That would be great.

What was the downside risk? If we tried it for a year and it didn't work, if we totally messed it up, if our son didn't learn a thing, then what? No big deal. We would put him in first grade the next year and write off that one year to experience. He would graduate from high school at nineteen rather than eighteen. College would start a year later for him than for most kids. That wouldn't be so bad. I am a college professor. I see eighteen year olds coming to college every year. One year more of maturing before students left the nest could be a good thing for many of them.

So the worst that could happen might be good. The best that could happen could be great. With little or no downside risk and great upside potential, our decision was easy to make.

Here we are, seven years later. The decision to homeschool turned out to be one of the best decisions we ever made. Our kids are doing fine academically and socially. We have a very tight-knit family. We have tremendous flexibility in our schedules. All of our kids are extremely proud to be homeschooled. It's been a great life. It all came when we made one of the easiest decisions of our life. I wish all my business decisions were as easy to make and that they all turned out so well.

About the Author: Jim Muncy holds his Ph.D. in Business Administration from Texas Tech University. He is currently Professor of Marketing at Valdosta State University. He has also taught at the University of Oklahoma, Texas Tech University and Clemson University. He serves as Executive Director of the Association for Consumer Research, which is the largest consumer research association in the world. In addition, he is president of Muncy Leadership International. He lives in Valdosta with his wife, Lisa, and his four children, Alonzo, Alice, Allen, and Alaina. Jim and Lisa are co-presidents of the Valdosta Area Homeschooling Association. For books written by Dr. Muncy on the keys to success, visit www.fewkeys.com.