

{Home}

Meet Charles Condit, many of his friends simply call him **Chuck**. Charles has been home schooled ever since he completed the seventh grade. Charles is 17 now, working on finishing up his high school work and getting ready for college. Charles hopes to attend Moody Bible Institute, in Chicago; but said, "That's all in God's hands." After living in Indiana, New York, and Ohio, Charles and his family now reside in Spring Grove, Illinois. Charles enjoys snowboarding, fishing, photography, and paintball.

How many years did you attend public school prior to beginning home school?
I went from Pre School all the way through seventh grade.

Did your parents decide to home school you? Or was it your decision?
That was my mom's decision.

What were the reasons for switching to home school?
There's a lot of stuff. One of the main things is just the religious aspect of it. And being able to just have curriculum that is based off of the Bible, and I mean a good example of that is evolution and the teaching of that in public school. Just the academic freedoms that you have, where you really have a much wider range of what you can do, where its not so closed. But, its like a bigger door that you can go through. You can further study something if you really like it, or you can just kind of tone it down if its something that you really hate. That's pretty cool.

Well, I guess you just answered this next question... Overall, how do you like home school, as opposed to public school? What are some advantages and disadvantages?
Yes, I do like home school better than a public school. Honestly, when I was in the public school I was a very small individual and I don't know I just was—I got picked on a lot. That didn't have anything to do with us home schooling. I definitely did not miss getting picked on, like getting thrown into lockers and stuff. I mean, I missed all of my friends, but it didn't take long to get over that because I really didn't really have great friends in the public school, they were just acquaintances that I had. Definitely, as a person I grew and matured in the home school environment. I was around older people and people who were more mature than I was a lot more than I had been when I was in the public school, where I was all day long with my friends and I would just do whatever they were doing, you know. So my maturity levels definitely went up, it took awhile, but it eventually got up there.

What are some of the conditions of home school that may not make it a good choice for everyone?
Work ethic. I mean, if you're someone who can't get it done...

After leaving the public school setting to study in your own home, did you feel socially left out? Did you miss friends, clubs, sports, etc.?
My first year I actually—so that was my eighth grade school year—I was on a basketball team. I had the opportunity to be involved in starting a home school basketball team from scratch, where there's a guy who I knew and a couple home school guys and he was like, "yeah I'm gonna be your coach." We just got together and starting practicing. For about three months, there were only four of us. We just started pulling some strings and we got enough guys to play some games. It was a really cool experience. I mean now I've been on other basketball teams, but to see where all those [teams] started from, from the ground up. Its different than when you can just say "yup, I'm on a team, its been here for the past twenty years." So that was really cool.

What kinds of opportunities does that provide you with that you didn't have in public school?
I could have my teacher twenty-four hours a day. I mean, I could say, "Mom, I have a question." And just go tap her on the shoulder and be like okay, "what's this, what's that." You know. Whereas there aren't too many teachers who give out their home phone number and say, "just call me anytime." I think there are definitely advantages with that.

In public school, students have to follow a set schedule, in which they can only work on a subject in an allotted period of time. In

your home study, do you have a daily schedule that you consistently follow? If so, how did you set it up?
I don't really have a schedule. I just say, "Okay, I'm going to spend a lot of time on this; well, you know we'll do this now." I just go through my schoolwork that way. I know that there are a lot of home [school students] that have a very strict schedule that they stick to. I just never got into that. We tried that one year, but I don't told my mom I didn't like it, so I just do my stuff and get it done and it's done.

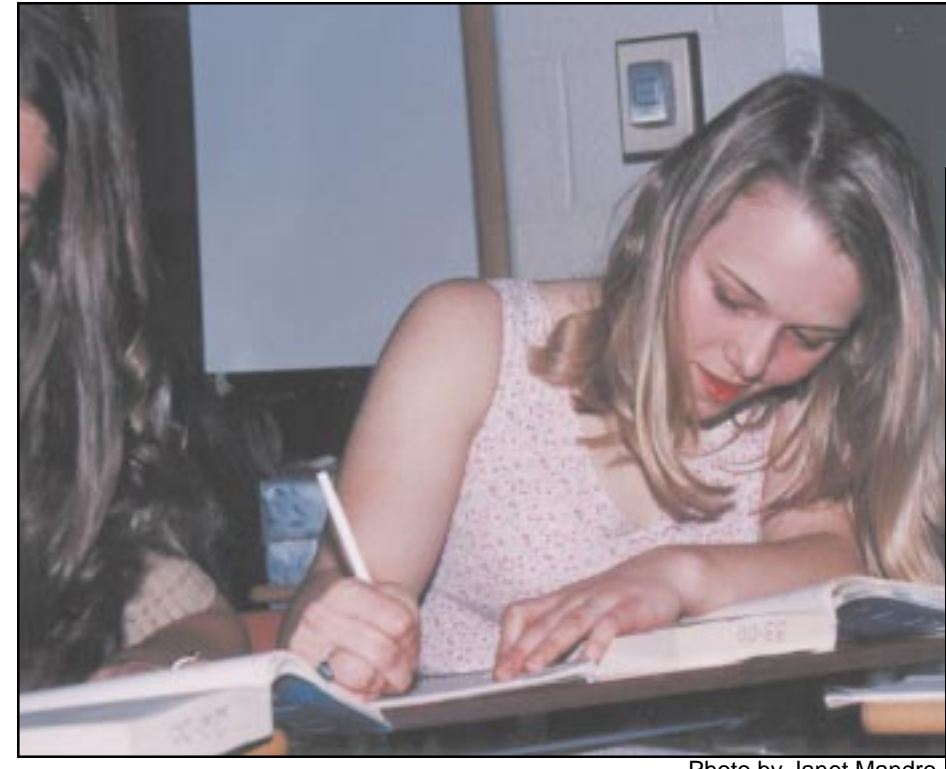
Do you stay disciplined with completing your work? And how do you do that?
It's hard. It would be so easy to be like, "You know what, I'm going to go watch soap operas." I'm not that into soap operas, but, if I were...

In comparison to schoolwork they're pretty good...
Exactly. You know, I mean—that's some good stuff right there. It is hard to go and really sit down and be like, "okay, we're going to get this done right now." Having the discipline to do that is very important in home schooling.

Do you think the freedom and flexibility of not having a schedule affects home school students in developing their time management skills?
I think in certain situations, you can cope with it and be fine, and there are other situations where I think that it could have a negative effect. The thing about home schooling is that its not just, well sit down and do your thing, and there it is. It's so much more than that where you can use everyday life stuff. Like your job, you can go and kind of incorporate that into your home schooling. You know, there are so many other things that you can bring in. I guess kids in the public schools would have the same opportunities, but they may not see it. I went on a missions trip, and I had deadline after deadline with that, and there were one or two situations were I was like, "oh dear, I'm not doing very good with this." But for the most part I did fine with it. So I think it's not a problem, but I could see where you'd have problems with it.

Would you say a home school student is as widely accepted as someone who has a standard high school diploma?
I think its just as accepted. Home schooling has really taken off over the past ten, like fifteen years. I'm sure that when home school first started there were a lot of controversies about that issue right there, like "Well how do we know you didn't just sleep?" I think now it's just as accepted.

What things do home school students have to do to be accepted to college?
They like it if you can have your GPA. I actually haven't got that all figured out. SAT's and ACT's are so huge. That's so humungous, just for home [school students] and getting in. Letters of recommendation, mainly from pastors are good. I only know about christian colleges though, not about any other colleges.



HARD AT WORK: Sharon Gray left public school half way through her kindergarten year to be home schooled. She returned to public school freshman year. She enjoys the chance to participate in activites that are offered at public school.



Photo by Kevin Kruthers

AT HOME: Charles Condit attended public school until he completed the seventh grade. After that, his mother decided to educate him herself in their Spring Grove home. Condit's sisters are home schooled as well. Condit does not miss the being in the public school environment at all, and enjoys learning from his mother. Charles stays socially active by working several jobs, attending church youth groups, and playing on a home school basketball team.

Vs.

{School}

Sharon Gray is currently a sixteen year-old junior at Antioch Community High School. She was home schooled for eight years, from age 5 to age 13. She began her schooling

in a public school as a freshman.

I slept until about 10 every day, woke up and worked on my homework until I finished (usually about 2 o'clock).

What was the reason for you to be home schooled?
My family moved from Cincinnati in the middle of my kindergarten year. My mom didn't want my bother, my two sisters and I to have to switch schools in the middle of the year, so she decided to start home schooling.

a lot of fun with both of these sports and they helped me meet more kids from school.

When returning to school (public) what was one reaction you had?
When I was home schooled I finished all of my work in about four hours. Doubling that time (and then adding homework) made me feel like I was doing a lot of busy work and wasting time.

Later years?
I was in gymnastics again sophomore year, and have been in three school plays (Our Town, Harvey, The Heist).

Schooling wise how do you feel you fall (behind/ahead of what the other students were doing)? What was your reaction to that?
Because my parents and I weren't sure how my academic ability would compare with the other students, I did not take any honors classes freshman year.

What type of activities did you involve yourself with while in home school?
I was on a gymnastics team at a private club (Ultimate Gymnastics in Gurnee).

Did you involve yourself in school sports and/or activities when you entered into public school? (if yes what was your reaction to it and what did you get involved with, if not then why?)
Freshman year I played field hockey and I was on the gymnastics team. I had

How was/is the teaching methods at home different from public schooling?
Which do you prefer and why?
I was more self-taught when I was home schooled, and only asked my mom questions if I couldn't figure something out on my own. At ACHS, however, I'm walked through every concept by a teacher. When I was learning more simple concepts (in math for example) I could teach myself, but now that what I'm learning is more complicated I appreciate being walked through every new concept.

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What do you believe was the best aspect of home schooled and why?
The freedom and ability to go at my own pace.

What do you believe was/is the best aspect of being in a public school and why?
The social interaction/activity opportunities that are offered.

Which over all do you prefer and why?
Public school because of the variety of classes that I've been able to take and the variety of different people I've met.

Do you believe that home schooled children get a better education and why?
In some cases yes, in some no. In my situation, the individual help and ability tog o at my own pace helped me learn very well. Maybe, better than I would have in a public school.

While being home schooled, did you stay involved with public school students? Was it difficult at times to relate, why?
Yes, most of my friends went to public school and that was never really a factor in our relationships.

If you had a chance to go back to home schooling, would you do it, why?
No, because I enjoy seeing my friend's everyday and participating in activities like drama and school sports that I didn't have the opportunity to participate in beforewhen I was home schooled..

