

I was homeschooled until the 11th grade when I was dually enrolled at my local community college before I was ready emotionally, socially, and mentally. My education was grossly neglected because of my responsibility to care for my siblings' basic needs, my own mother's lack of formal education, and forging test results so I would continue at a progressed pace.

Without having access to children my own age or safe adults outside of the church, I didn't know that my normal wasn't normal. Having to grow up before I needed to has stumped my progress as an adult. My mom had spent all her time and energy on my oldest brother and sisters' education. For their entire middle and high school years, she would assign me and my siblings morsels of homework to do without being taught anything and no correction or reviewing of our answers.

She focused on having us test well on standardized tests that she would correct so that we would have high performance rates. My younger brother once asked during the standardized testing who Rosa Parks was, which left her to say "you don't need to know who that is," and wrote the rest of the answers for him in the section.

In my case in particular, my mother's neglect toward my education was motivated by her religion – specifically her beliefs about gender roles. She thought that it was not necessary for me as a girl to understand math or science. She forged math classes on my transcripts to send to the state when I hadn't worked on one problem the whole school year. If I were to take a High School math class I would fail miserably.

The same was true for the standardized testing and homework. She would focus on my brothers as they would need jobs to support their future families while I learned how to keep house.

We would watch education videos on American history and western civ and skip anything beyond European history. I wish someone would have said something or stood up to my mom. She still sings of our praises when we are burnt out from trying to keep up with our peers, are unadjusted to society, and have to re-teach ourselves basic information and life skills through hours of therapy and counseling. I will scream it for as long as I am alive. Be your child's parent. Be emotionally available as a parent. Let teachers who have gone through years of school on philosophy of education and the best ways for children to learn do the teaching. I never had a mother. She didn't let herself have time to be a mom since she was too busy teaching. I will never get through formative years and foundation education no matter how much work I do.

Signed,
BB