

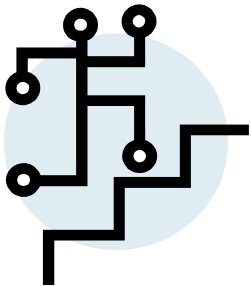
## Evaluators?

You may use the services of the homeschool evaluator of your choice. You are NOT required to have a special education certified evaluator. Those qualifications are only for the letter accompanying your affidavit if you choose to go that route.

However, many families have stated how helpful and supportive their evaluator is as they deal with their children's special needs.

So choose your evaluator wisely:

- ◆ Someone familiar with homeschooling
- ◆ Someone familiar with the homeschool law.
- ◆ Someone familiar with special needs and resources available.



*Take steps to find  
support for yourself  
as you embark on  
homeschooling.*

## RESOURCES

- Dahm, L. (1996). Education at home, with help from school. *Educational Leadership*, 54(2), 68-71.
- Field, C. M. (2005). *Homeschooling the challenging child*. Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group.
- Hannaford, D. (2005). *Smart moves: Why learning is not all in your head*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Salt Lake City, UT: Great River Books.
- Hensley, S. C. (2009). *Home schooling children with special needs* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Enumclaw, WA: Pleasant Word.

## HOMESCHOOLING CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

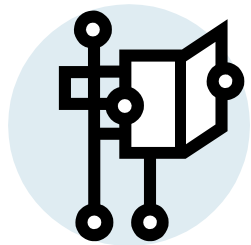
By Patti Stoudt  
Doctoral Candidate, Liberty University  
2011

To Be Labeled...  
Or Not To Be  
Labeled...  
That is the Question!



**Can something be done?  
Of Course!**

# Labeling



*Why is my child struggling? Should he be labeled?*

Many parents state they want their children to be able to live without the embarrassment of being labeled.

Labels can lack focus on the real person inside, possibly leading to lower self-esteem.

Parents should consider not avoiding labels, as they can inherent value. Labels can help parents:

- ◆ Avoid denial.
- ◆ Understand why their child is struggling.
- ◆ Find resources to address the struggles.
- ◆ Focus on both strengths & weaknesses, not just weaknesses.

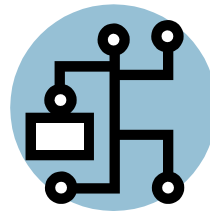
One parent stated, “I don’t like labels, but I’ve learned not to fear them” (Field, 2005).

# Diagnosing

## WHERE DO WE START?

If you have noticed your child struggling with learning... Perhaps taking longer than other children his age.... Or knowing facts one day and forgetting them the next... It’s OK to get some help.

You can talk to your family doctor about your concerns and ask for a referral. Do not take *NO* for an answer. You know your child best. Ask for a referral for a consult or to establish a baseline for future comparison.



*Get moving to find a reputable professional to work with you and your child.*

## ASSESSMENT

You can also ask other parents where they have taken their children with similar struggles. Make an appointment for a consultation and possible assessment or evaluation (different from your annual

homeschool evaluation).

- ◆ Pediatrician
- ◆ Neurologist
- ◆ Psychologist
- ◆ Audiologist
- ◆ Speech-Language Pathologist... or other



Get a diagnosis so you know what is going on.

# Identifying

## NOW WHAT?

Decide if you want your school district to be aware of your child’s struggles or diagnosis.

Identify?

- ◆ If district professionals helped with the diagnosis, they are already aware.
- ◆ If your district is homeschool-friendly, you may be able to get some support services through them.
- ◆ In your child’s yearly educational objectives with your affidavit, include objectives of how you will address his special needs.
- ◆ Have a special education teacher or psychologist write a letter to submit with your affidavit stating that your objectives do address the child’s special needs and that person approves your program.

Not Identify?

- ◆ If your district is not already aware of your child’s struggles...
- ◆ If you district does not offer services to homeschoolers...
- ◆ If you prefer to maintain privacy...
- ◆ Submit your affidavit and educational objectives without drawing attention to the special needs.
- ◆ Continue to address the special needs on your own.