Clarion Review

Education

Something Extraordinary: Parental Leadership in Home Education
Chenele Dixon
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Four Stars (out of Five)

With estimates of nearly two million homeschooled students in the United States, increasing numbers of parents are scrambling to attain resources that will equip them for their adventures in home education. *Something Extraordinary: Parental Leadership in Home Education* is one such book that, though brief, may be just what some parents need to keep the faith in their homeschooling operation.

According to Dixon, homeschooling doesn't work apart from parental leadership, and she provides the reader with the ingredients for success in this area: "planning with a purpose, personal mastery, time management, space management, and the ability to lead well in different situations." In each chapter, Dixon addresses some of the most common frustrations and fears homeschooling parents face—from insecurity over whether one has what it takes to homeschool, to organizing a schedule to fit in the necessary areas of study, to the problem of the clutter families invariably confront in the schoolrooms that double as kitchens or living spaces.

Something Extraordinary will most likely find an audience in novice-to-moderately experienced homeschooling parents who are still working on mastering the art of leading their children in education. Mastery "is a journey that can begin at any time. It requires patience and arduous work because the climb is not always consistent," writes Dixon. She asserts that, although the journey of parental leadership will cause parents to struggle at times, "the *process* of homeschooling *is* the reward."

While the book's breadth prevents it from being an all-answers guide for the parent embarking on homeschooling, it does provide important tools for getting started. It also offers fine tuning and direction to those who are already established in a home education routine. By profiling types of parental leadership and approaches, Dixon gives readers an opportunity to identify their own tendencies and habits of leadership. She offers a challenge to parents that

encourages them to develop specific steps that will help them attain their homeschooling goals. In addition, Dixon addresses the fact that what works for one child simply won't work for all. She discusses the combinations of "commitment" and "competence" in children and the sort of parental leadership a child might require at any given point in their development.

In short, the work is a simple homeschooling road map for parents just starting out. For those parents who are some years into journey, Dixon will help them stay on the path toward successfully educating their children.

Heather Weber