## ***When to Start Home-Training***

By Bruce McNeice

On the day your baby was born, a new learning journey began: a learning journey for your baby and a learning journey for yourselves. Learning is not just the academic part of life. Learning encompasses the whole of life and occurs right throughout our life. The ways in which we learn and the habits that are developed in the formative years, influence our character growth and intellectual development for the rest of our life. A baby's first lessons in faith are in response to the mother's care. Those first lessons in trust, security, and regularity build a foundation for learning to trust a father, be secure with other people, and eventually develop faith in God.

As explained in the previous section/article (‘Better Late Than Early’), research shows there are dangers with forcing young children through *'formal schooling’* before the age of 8 to 10 years.

However, Dr Raymond Moore (1975) concludes, *"What the child needs most to grow well is a warm one-to-one relationship with a parent (or parent figure) who is always there to comfort and guide him."*

Although there are dangers with intense early academic schooling, we do recommend that the *'training and teaching’* of your children can begin even during the first year of the mother's care. I was completely amazed to witness my less-than-one-year-old grand-daughter sitting in the high-chair where, after her meal, she would be given a cloth washer, and she would wipe down her high-chair tray. Such is the power of habit-training in routine, regularity and order in a fun-loving atmosphere.

There is significant evidence from research on parenting (Dr. R. Moon, Dr. R.& D. Moore, Dr. J. Dobson), that children grow up being more settled, peaceful and self-disciplined if routines are put into place very early in a child's life. A family's routine could include some or all of the following: regular times for family meals, rising and bedtimes, devotions, household chores, learning activities, a study program, quality family time and recreation. Such routines can help to minimise a mother's stress, and help the children to grow up healthy, self-disciplined and ordered in their thinking, as well as being more secure in themselves.

Character training in routine habit-forming, helps Children to be secure by:

a) knowing they are very special, loved and accepted, (including the flexibility to follow their special interests), and

b) realising that the world does not revolve around themselves, but they have a place and a role within their family and community.

The child should learn to co-operate within the family schedule and grow up seeing themselves as part of the team. (For more information on this topic you may wish to read the following books:

* ‘Formation of Character’ by Charlotte Mason;
* ‘Parents and Children’ by Charlotte Mason;
* ‘Home Built Discipline’ by Dr R & D Moore
* ‘Training for Royalty’ by E. & D. Rodd.
* Also check out the parent-training resources at [www.loveandlogic.com](http://www.loveandlogic.com/)