



How to Stay on Track

Young people, it is possible to achieve a quality education while pursuing your motocross dreams! I know because this has become my passion.

You see, five years ago when our family traveled to far off places to attend amateur nationals, I realized that our son, Michael, and daughter Ali's schooling was going to suffer, and that simply was not acceptable with neither my husband nor myself. I had been in the educational field for over 20 years at that point in my life, and was in the process of getting my Master's Degree in Educational Counseling. I actually had mixed emotions where home schooling was concerned, but this was a true case of "never say never", because, just as I was offered a position as a school counselor, I felt I had to decline. The truth is motocross is also a very family oriented sport and I wasn't willing to miss being with my family during the racing events.

We have always prioritized education in our home. In fact, if our son, Michael, wanted to become a champion on his motorcycle, he was going to have to be one in school first. During that first year of home schooling my children, my experience was limited to a trial-and-error approach when it came to curriculum, however, I soon developed an individualized method to instructing my two children, as well as the students I tutored at the amateur nationals. I began looking into alternative curriculum options, and found nationally accredited programs that I could then customize to each of my students' individual needs. I was also able to create individual educational plans for new students based on a learning style profile that each student takes upon enrollment.

Because I do recognize that we all learn differently, as well as have our own interests that can be incorporated into curriculum in order to keep us motivated, my goal is to make the home schooling experience as positive as possible. It has become my mission.

There are several aspects of home schooling that highlight the possibility to stay On Track while educating our children in conjunction with pursuing the demands of motocross racing. Often I am asked questions regarding my On Track program. These are the most frequently asked:

Q: How long does it take each day to complete school?

A: If a student is focused, and that means AIM is turned off, then it is reasonable to complete lessons for the day within 3 hours.

Q: How much homework is involved?

A: As long as lessons are completed at an 85-100% level, then there is no such thing as homework. Students who do not achieve at least a B+ are expected to raise their grade. Also, students who fall behind the weekly allocated lessons are required to get caught up so that suspension doesn't become an issue in the future. I am a strict teacher when it comes to getting it done, and getting it done right!

Q: Do we have to do our entire lesson for full credit?

A: Now come on, of course you do! Staying On Track is all about discipline; much like a motocross-training program. I love this quote by Henry Ford, "If you think you can or you think you can't, you are right."

There are aspects of the program that I really enjoy as they emphasize how unique we are, especially these motocross boys and girls, and I mean that in a good way! For instance, when we were together in Las Vegas for the World Mini, I put together a field trip to The Body Exhibition that was held at The Tropicana Hotel. This was such an amazing experience that I cannot say enough

about it; being able to learn through experiential methods are so important because we retain at least 70% more information this way. At this exhibit students were able to look at ligaments, tendons, muscles, organs, skin, all the systems within, and gain so much more respect for how their bodies are able to endure all that they ask of it as athletes.

Also, earlier this year we took a trip to The Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles. In World History we spend a great deal of time learning about the Holocaust, and this field trip brought it home in a big way. We were actually able to listen to one of the few survivors from that horrific time in history, and I know none of us will ever forget that experience. If you haven't had a chance to see the movie "Freedom Writers", I highly recommend this movie. It portrays much of the same goals and focuses on teaching through motivation, much like the On Track program. Capture a subject and go there, really go there and feel it, see it, touch it, hear it, and then be able to apply it to life today – this experience is something tangible that the student can identify with. We are actually learning and not just going through the motions.

This is what I love to share with my students, even if they walk away simply realizing that they can achieve anything they set their mind to.

Too often in this sport, education takes a back seat. We all know someone who is not going to school, doesn't have the time to finish school, is getting Ds because her or she missed too many days in order to attend amateur nationals in other states...the list goes on and on. I am not here to judge anyone; rather I am here to offer a pathway to success off the track so that racers can achieve a cutting-edge education while pursuing their own passion on the track. It is not only possible; it has become a certainty that has given the students I have worked with a greater sense of who they are. That alone has been more satisfying and rewarding to me than words can say.

For more information about On Track customized learning options, please contact me at andrea@stayontrack.net

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