

Social Justice Issue and the Context of Adolescents:

Teens' wellbeing, joy, and love of learning, decline in the current schools' setting. Teens are stretched beyond their limits. We see alarming signs of their unmet needs, such as depression, suicide, and high-risk negative behavior (Abeles & Congdon, 2010).

The ESSENCE of Adolescence:

- Emotional Spark
- Social Engagement
- Novelty
- Creative Exploration

Homeschooling:

- Personalized education, to meet child and family needs.
- Growing 2-8% per year.
- On 2010 it was estimated that 2.3 Million school aged children are homeschooled in the United States.

Rock-It-Science

Founded and directed by John McChesney, aka Mr. Mac.

It is a science program for children and teens to learn science in a safe and encouraging environment, via story, play, hands-on exciting activities, while collaborating with peers and sharing mutual joyful learning.

Methodology

- Qualitative research, semi-structured interviews.
- Research question - In what ways does Rock-It-Science provide for the ESSENCE of homeschooled adolescents?

Participants

Five parents of homeschooled teens in the Rock-It-Science teens' classes

Results

From the parents' perspective, Mr. Mac created an environment that supported all the ESSENCE, and provided support for both parents and teens.

Rock-It-Science's environment was:

- Emotionally safe and joyful
- Supported a sense of competence
- Judgment free community
- Set for successful social interactions
- Provided real social challenges
- Provided structure meeting friends
- Became a place of social personal growth
- Provided exciting experience
- Supported parents' values
- Provided what parents could not
- Taught via a creative and interactive story
- Invited and accepted all ideas
- Inspired further independent exploration

