

TOUCHING THE FUTURE *Schoolhouse Rocked*

By Peter Gray, PhD.
Pathways #39, page 32



Talking Points

- ❖ Peter Gray, author of a new book *Freedom to Learn*, discusses his concerns with compulsory education or “forced schooling.” He hopes, with this book, to reach families who already practice alternative education approaches with their children, as well as those who had not yet spent much time thinking about the difference between education and schooling. He also hopes that this book, and the discussion it might foster, will “help promote societal change in the way we treat children.” (34)
- ❖ Gray explains that *Freedom to Learn* covers two tracks: 1) it offers empirical evidence from sociology in areas of historical and modern societal formation, as well as research psychology on education and the innate skills of human children. 2) It documents a history of our “coercive system of schooling.” He addresses the ways in which our current system was devised “explicitly for purposes of indoctrination and obedience training, not for education, as most of us think of it today.” He further examines the harm our school system may be doing to our children by “depriving them of the freedom of play they need for healthy development.” (34)
- ❖ “It also describes the environmental conditions that enable children to educate themselves well. These conditions include unlimited freedom to play and explore, access to the tools of the culture, access to adult experts, free age mixing among children and adolescents, and immersion in a stable, moral, caring local community.” (35)
- ❖ Numerous responses from a survey of families who “unschool” their children are included.

Resources

[Psychology Today's Insights on Education](#) [Psychology Today's Understanding Child Development](#)
[UN Declarations of Rights of Child](#)

Peter Gray references some of the founders of unschooling. Here are some additional resources for some of these educators:

[A.S. Neill and Summerhill School](#)

[John Holt](#)

[John Taylor Gatto](#)

[Sandra Dodd](#)

[Interview with Daniel Greenberg](#)

Another educator examining child-led learning - Sugatra Mitra on Student Organized Learning Environments (22 mins) - [Building a School in the Cloud](#)