

Homeschooled 14-yr-old tops Delhi IIT entrance

Written by Administrator

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Fourteen-year-old Sahal Kaushik, who holds the 33rd rank at all-India level in the IIT JEE exam, emerged the Delhi region topper in the entrance examination. At the press conference to honor the toppers, Sahal, who was too shy to speak on stage, handed the mike over to his mother Ruchi Kaushik. But that was just for a while, off the stage, the boy giggled with his friend and answered media questions quite comfortably.

"He mixes where he wants to. He has participated in competitions at the international level and mixed very well with everyone," says Ruchi. A doctor by profession, Ruchi was her son's first teacher.

The first signs showed when he was two. "He could spell four to five letter words then. At three, he could recite multiplication tables of up to 100," said Ruchi Kaushik, his mother. "I just knew he would not fit in the formal system of education."

So Ruchi quit her job as a doctor and homeschooled her son.

Kaushik discovered he was "different" when he enrolled in Class IX in Sangwan Model School, Rohini at the age of 10. "I had already covered the math syllabus," said Kaushik, who read his first novel (Time Machine by HG Wells) at the age of six and has read over 2,000 books.

His IIT success, hence, is not a surprise for his family and teachers.

"He cracks mathematical problems mentally. That's what he did even in the JEE," said U.P. Singh, Kaushik's Physics coaching teacher from the Narayana Academy.

There is no age bar for entering IIT, but a candidate is required to clear class XII. So, Sahal enrolled with Vandana International School, Dwarka, for two years. He scored 78% in PCM ^ marks that might not be enough to get him into a half-decent Delhi University college. Asked about his lacklustre class XII results, Sahal said, "That's because I studied for only four days for

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