

Homeschooling-Related Terminology

Autodidact

A self-taught person.

Charter School

Some charter schools offer independent study programs which enroll homeschooling children. Charter schools receive public funds, but operate under different requirements than other public schools.

Curriculum-In-A-Box

A type of curriculum that closely resembles that offered by public schools, generally including textbooks, assignment sheets, examinations, teacher's texts and even pencils.

Deschooling or Detoxing

A period of time during which a child is adjusting to being out of school. Homeschoolers often recommend that a child be allowed a period of time to deschool before the parent begins imposing new requirements.

Eclectic Style

A style of homeschooling where a variety of resources and approaches are combined to fit the needs of the parent and child.

Government or Compulsory Schools

Terms homeschoolers often use for public schools.

GWS

Growing Without Schooling Magazine. Started by the education reformer, John Holt, who became a strong advocate of unschooling.

HEM

Home Education Magazine. A bimonthly magazine with articles by and for homeschoolers.

Holt, John

Early education pioneer and author who advocated homeschooling.

Homeschooling

An education alternative to institutional schooling. Parents and children assume control of their learning. It is a complete substitute for institutional schooling. Homeschooling is also sometimes referred to as home-schooling, home learning or home education.

Homeschool Support Group

Many homeschoolers belong to groups in which members cooperate to create social activities, learning activities, field trips, special interest groups such as sports or music, parent education, or homeschooling resources.

HSLDA

Home School Legal Defense Association. An advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms. Represents a conservative Christian segment of the homeschooling community.

Inclusive

Refers to a homeschooling group, publication, or philosophy that includes everyone without regard to religion, educational philosophy, or style of homeschooling.

Independent Study Program

These are usually referred to as "ISPs" by homeschoolers. They are public or private programs that involve the child learning at home, outside of regular school. Programs vary greatly in how much supervision or control they exert over the education of the child.

Learning Clubs

Clubs formed by homeschoolers in order to learn a specific subject or skill. For example, Latin Club, Bird Watching Club, Math Club, Rocketry Club, etc.

Learning Style

This refers to the way in which a particular child learns best. For example, some people learn more by listening, some by watching, others by doing.

R-4

This is a "Private School Affidavit" which is filed by all private schools in California. One of the ways to homeschool in California is to establish a private school in the home and file an R-4.

Scope and Sequence

A curriculum guide which specifies what children will be taught in each grade level. These are usually available from school districts as well as from curriculum publishers.

Socialization

Most homeschoolers have heard the question, "But what about socialization?" The question sometimes refers to how the children will learn to get along with others and sometimes to whether the children will have enough friends and playmates if they do not go to school.

Statement of Faith

A statement that some Christian-based homeschooling groups ask members to sign indicating their agreement with specific religious beliefs. Sometimes such groups are referred to as "statement-of-faith groups."

Structured Homeschooling

This is sometimes referred to as "school-at-home," since it involves recreating at home much of what normally goes on in a classroom. The parent is the teacher and determines what and how learning will take place.

Umbrella School

This is a term for a private or public organization which oversees homeschoolers. Also sometimes known as a "cover school."

Unit Study

An approach to homeschooling in which the child's educational activities are focused around a specific topic for a certain period of time. All, or most, subjects are learned in the context of that topic.

Unschooling

This is sometimes referred to as "interest-initiated" education. The parent's role is to encourage and support the children as they learn from real-life experience and by pursuing their own goals.