

Why do people homeschool?

by Bill Greer, Family Unschooler's Network

Homeschooling, by definition, is hard to observe. As a result, the question of why people homeschool is often pondered by those unfamiliar with this educational approach. The quick answer is that there are almost as many different reasons for homeschooling as there are homeschoolers. Today's homeschooling parents are a diverse group from a variety of income levels, education levels, races, religious beliefs, and political beliefs. The decision to homeschool is often the result of a unique combination of considerations by each family.

To better understand some of the factors that may contribute to an interest in homeschooling, it can be useful to ask another question. Based on current research and common sense, what would the perfect school look like?

There would be fewer than 17 students in a class.

Students would have the opportunity for lots of one-on-one time with the instructor.

Teachers would be truly caring and motivated to ensure the success of each student. Those teachers would also have time to be flexible and adapt lessons to the individual needs and abilities of each student.

Students would be able to work at their own pace and have the time they needed to master a concept before moving on. They would be able to do this without feeling that they were holding up (or were being held back by) the rest of the class.

There would be access to the best and most current materials available-not textbooks held together by tape that can't be taken home. Students would not be locked into using textbooks full of factual errors and watered down content because they were selected by committees primarily interested in political correctness and supplier contracts.

The parents would be actively involved, supportive, and interested in their children's progress.

The children would feel they were in a safe environment so they could concentrate on learning rather than worrying about guns, knives, peer pressure to try cigarettes or drugs, or to engage in other risky behaviors. That safe environment would be provided without relying on strict rules, locked doors, metal detectors, and the other things that can make all the students feel like criminals.

The end result of the school program would be students who can think, who know how to read and how to do math-students who are able to get into the best Ivy league colleges, get good jobs, or even start their own businesses.

We have just described homeschooling. Homeschoolers are accepted at the best Ivy league colleges, win national competitions, and have been successful by every measure! When you add the fact that it can cost only a few hundred dollars per year to homeschool, it might seem more appropriate to ask why there aren't more homeschoolers.