

## **Families Choose to Homeschool for a Wide Variety of Reasons**

Many people choose homeschooling for:

- academic and learning reasons
- values-based or religious reasons
- social issues
- health issues
- safety concerns
- flexibility of family schedules or lifestyles

The overriding reason, however, is that homeschooling offers freedom along with responsibility -- freedom to make their own decisions regarding how they wish their children to live and learn. Whatever initially leads parents to make this choice, homeschooling nearly always evolves into something far more than an alternative educational choice -- it becomes a lifestyle choice of personal responsibility and freedom and incredible joy within a close family life.

## **Reasons To Homeschool**

These are the results of a survey in which homeschoolers gave 55 reasons why they decided to start homeschooling.

Spend more time together as a family.

Spend more time with children when they are rested and fresh rather than tired and cranky from school.

Avoid having to struggle to get children to do the tedious busywork that is so often sent home as homework.

Allow children time to learn subjects not usually taught in their school.

Allow children to have time for more in-depth study than what is allowed in school.

Allow children to learn at their own pace, not too slow or too fast.

Allow children to work at a level that is appropriate to their own developmental stage. Skills and concepts can be introduced at the right time for that child.

Provide long, uninterrupted blocks of time for writing, reading, playing, thinking, or working so that the child is able to engage in sophisticated, complex activities and thought processes.

Encourage concentration and focus - which are discouraged in crowded classrooms with too many distractions.

Encourage the child to develop the ability to pace her/himself - this is prevented in a classroom where the schedule is designed to keep every child busy all the time.

Spend a lot of time out-of-doors. This is more healthy than spending most weekdays indoors in a crowded, and often overheated, classroom.

Spending more time out-of-doors results in feeling more in touch with the changing of the seasons and with the small and often overlooked miracles of nature.

Children learn to help more with household chores, developing a sense of personal responsibility.

Children learn life skills, such as cooking, in a natural way, by spending time with adults who are engaged in those activities.

More time spent on household responsibilities strengthens family bonds because people become more committed to things they have invested in (in this case, by working for the family).

Time is available for more nonacademic pursuits such as art or music. This leads to a richer, happier life.

Children will not feel like passive recipients of subject matter selected by their teachers. They will learn to design their own education and take responsibility for it.

Children will realize that learning can take place in a large variety of ways.

Children will learn to seek out assistance from many alternative sources, rather than relying on a classroom teacher to provide all the answers.

A more relaxed, less hectic lifestyle is possible when families do not feel the necessity to supplement school during after-school and week-end hours.

Busywork can be avoided.

Learning can be more efficient since methods can be used that suit a child's particular learning style.

Children will avoid being forced to work in "cooperative learning groups" which include children who have very uncooperative attitudes.

Children can learn to work for internal satisfaction rather than for external rewards.

Children will not be motivated to "take the easy way out" by doing just enough work to satisfy their teacher. They will learn to be their own judge of the quality of their own work.

Children will be more willing to take risks and be creative since they do not

have to worry about being embarrassed in front of peers.

Children will be more confident since they are not subject to constant fear of criticism from teachers.

Peer pressure will be reduced. There will be less pressure to grow up as quickly in terms of clothing styles, music, language, interest in the opposite sex.

Social interactions will be by choice and based on common interests.

Friends can be more varied, not just with the child's chronological age peer group who happen to go to the same school.

Field trips can be taken on a much more frequent basis.

Field trips can be much more enjoyable and more productive when not done with a large school group which usually involves moving too quickly and dealing with too many distractions.

Field trips can be directly tied into the child's own curriculum.

Volunteer service activities can be included in the family's regular schedule. Community service can be of tremendous importance in a child's development and can be a great learning experience.

Scheduling can be flexible, allowing travel during less expensive and less crowded off-peak times. This can allow for more travel than otherwise, which is a wonderful learning experience.

Children will be less likely to compare their own knowledge or intelligence with other children and will be less likely to become either conceited or feel inferior.

Religious and special family days can be planned and celebrated.

More time will be spent with people (friends and family) who really love and care about the children. Children will bond more with siblings and parents since they will spend more time together playing, working, and helping each other.

Feedback on children's work will be immediate and appropriate. They won't have to wait for a teacher to grade and return their work later to find out if they understood it.

Feedback can be much more useful than just marking answers incorrect or giving grades.

Testing is optional. Time doesn't have to be spent on testing or preparing for testing unless the parent and/or child desires it.

Observation and discussion are ongoing at home and additional assessment methods are often redundant. Testing, if used, is best used to indicate areas for further work.

Grading is usually unnecessary and learning is seen as motivating in and of itself. Understanding and knowledge are the rewards for studying, rather than grades (or stickers, or teacher's approval, etc.).

Children can be consistently guided in a family's values and can learn them by seeing and participating in parents' daily lives.

Children will learn to devote their energy and time to activities that THEY think are worthwhile.

Children will be able to learn about their ethnicities in a manner that will not demean. Children will be able to understand multiculturalism in its true sense and not from the pseudo-multicultural materials presented in schools which tend to depict others from a dominant culture perspective.

Children will not learn to "fit into society," but will, instead, value morality and love more than status and money.

Children do not have to wait until they are grown to begin to seriously explore their passions; they can start living now.

Children's education can be more complete than what schools offer.

Children who are "different" in any way can avoid being subjected to the constant and merciless teasing, taunting, and bullying which so often occurs in school.

Children with special needs will be encouraged to reach their full potential and not be limited by the use of "cookie cutter" educational methods used in schools.

Low standards or expectations of school personnel will not influence or limit children's ability to learn and excel.

Children will be safer from gangs, drugs, and guns.

Parents will decide what is important for the children to learn, rather than a government bureaucracy.

Family will not be forced to work within school's traditional hours if it does not fit well with their job schedules and sleep needs.