

Homeschooling: Is It Worth It?

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The many difficulties facing today's public school system has prompted many parents to consider alternatives for their children's education. Home schooling is one such alternative. It's no secret that public schools today are experiencing a number of problems that adversely affect the educational standard of their students. These problems range from bullying to drug abuse, alcohol abuse, crime, high dropout rates and more. In addition to lowering the educational standard, these problems expose students to the risk of physical, mental and emotional trauma that can adversely affect them for life.

Through home schooling, children and teens can escape many of the dangers of public schools and benefit from a quality educational experience. While home schooling may not be for everyone, many parents have found the prospect worth exploring as an alternative means of educating their children. In the U.S. alone, over 2 million students are homeschooled today; many of these homeschooled graduates have been successful in entering the colleges and universities of their choice to further their educational standing.

Why Homeschool?

The reasons for homeschooling are as diverse as the families choosing this option for their children's education. However, these reasons generally fall under one of these basic categories:

- Protection of their children from hostile school environment
- Poor educational standard of public schools
- Desire to provide more religious or moral education to their children

- Children have physical or mental disabilities that require more personalized and specialized training
- Safety and protection is a genuine concern of many parents who have children in the public school system. Many urban schools, in particular, have become dangerous environments for children and teens, due to the increase of bullying and violence. Other schools suffer from a poor academic standing, making it difficult for teens to receive the standard of education required for university studies or to obtain employment directly after graduation. With the separation of church and state, religious and moral education is sorely lacking in the public school curricula. Many parents are seeing the need for greater input in this area and it's evident that this input will need to come from the home environment.

What Does Homeschooling Offer?

Homeschooling offers parents the opportunity to be personally involved in their children's education, from the age of kindergarten through high school. Early learning education can even begin at baby or toddlerhood. As this education is generally conducted at home, children study and learn within a safe, supervised environment.

Parents of homeschoolers have greater freedom in choosing their children's academic curriculum, while still meeting the educational standard of the area where they live. In addition to academics, parents can also include extra activities within their children's curricula to round out their education. These activities may range from cooking to music training, sports, art, dance, computer training, martial arts and more, depending on their children's interests, abilities and skills.

Many children who are schooled at home are taught by their parents; others are taught by qualified teachers or tutors. Because the homeschooled environment is generally small, students receive more personal attention in their studies, enabling them to make greater

progress in less amount of time. It is not unusual for home schooled students to be more advanced in their studies than their public school peers. Unlike traditional schools with structured classrooms and time schedules, the home school environment may be less regimented with students having greater leeway in their school schedule and studies. At the same time, parents and teachers are expected to maintain a high educational standard, ensuring their students are learning and making progress in their academic studies.

Perhaps one of the greatest advantages of home schooling is the parents' freedom to include spiritual training as part of their children's education. Through spiritual training, children have the opportunity to learn positive attitudes and mindsets that will benefit them as they grow into adulthood. By incorporating both academic training and moral values into a child's education, he or she can profit from what both has to offer in establishing a successful career and future.

In order for children to profit from a homeschool education, parents and/or teachers must establish and implement a well-rounded educational program suited to their children's educational needs. Parents who are highly committed in this area will see that homeschooling is well worth the effort, reaping the educational benefits they seek.