

The Knowledge House Guide to:

# 12 REASONS TO HOMESCHOOL

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Home education was something that pioneer families did out of necessity. Today, there are as many different reasons to homeschool as there are homeschooling families. The majority of parents who homeschool are concerned for their children's spiritual and character development as well as their social and academic welfare, while also appreciating the aspects of family togetherness and parental involvement.

**1. Spiritual Conviction** - Martin Luther warned that if the Holy Scriptures were ever removed from education, "schools will prove to be the gates of hell." Those strong words were spoken in 1537, but consider what is taking place in schools today – drugs, gangs, shootings, sexual abuse and immorality, not to mention secular humanism and evolution taught as fact. God commands us to bring our children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (Deut. 6:5-9; Prov. 13:20; Prov. 22:6; Jer. 10:2; Rom. 12:2; Isa. 54:13; I Cor. 15:33; Col. 2:8; James 3:13-18.) For Christian parents who believe in the authority of the Bible, this should be reason enough to homeschool. See also: <http://www2.whidbey.net/jmboyes/warn1.htm> - an online book *Why Public Schools Aren't For Christians*

**2. Family Togetherness** - Homeschooling enables families to spend more time together, which nurtures family relationships. Homeschool families have the opportunity to develop a depth of understanding and a commitment to one another that is difficult to attain when family members spend their days going in separate directions. Children will develop strong bonds with siblings and parents as they spend lots of quality time together learning, playing, working, and helping each other. Birthdays and other family days can be celebrated in special ways.

**3. Parental Involvement** - Homeschooling allows parents to limit the influences of bad temptations, false teachings, and negative peer pressure. The parents, not a government bureaucracy, decide what is important for their children to learn. Discipline and interaction take place within a consistent moral framework set by the parents, not by disconnected teachers. Children learn to respect their parents' authority while gaining an appreciation for the skills and wisdom which parents can impart. Parents can be sure their children have a firm foundation of morals, values, and knowledge before sending them into the world. It's the parents, rather than strangers, who get to spend the better part of each day with their children and have the joy of watching their progress. As a side benefit, homeschooling gives parents an opportunity to continue their own learning alongside their children.

**4. Academics** - Homeschooling allows children to learn at their own pace, not too slow or too fast, at a level that is appropriate to their developmental stage. No preconceived agenda is in place to force children ahead or hold them back. Learning is more efficient since methods can be used that suit a child's particular learning style, personality, and interests. This means that homeschooled children can receive a superior education tailored specifically to their needs rather than tailoring the child to meet a state curriculum standard. Homeschool parents can be sure their children are getting a thorough instruction in the basics without having to worry about the latest educational fad. Research shows that one-to-one tutoring is the most successful method of learning. The individualized attention that homeschooled children receive has many advantages over a classroom setting in which one teacher tries to meet the needs of many children. Unnecessary busywork, for example, can be avoided. Homeschooled students will be motivated to acquire long-term knowledge because they enjoy learning rather than merely studying to pass a test. Also, they can do more in-depth studies of subjects that interest them.

**5. Personal Safety and Emotional Well-Being** - Homeschooling enables you to more closely monitor the overall safety and well-being of your children without having to worry about accidents, strangers, bullies, gangs, drugs, and random violence. Children who are "different" in any way can avoid being subjected to the constant and merciless teasing, taunting, and bullying that so often occurs in school and makes them feel inferior. Thus, homeschooled children develop more self-confidence without the constant fear of criticism, embarrassment, or failure.

**6. Socialization** - The definition of "socialize" is "to make fit for companionship with others; make sociable." It does not mean spending every day confined to a classroom in competition with 25 or more children from the same age group and socio-economic background. In a natural setting, children spend their daily lives with babies,

elderly people, and everyone in between. Homeschooled children get plenty of socialization from neighborhood kids, church groups, volunteering in the community, and other outside activities. They can learn about the real world by being a part of it, without needing artificial settings to provide exposure. For example, while teachers are preaching multiculturalism in the classroom, homeschooled students are out in the field experiencing other cultures. Thus, the social interactions of homeschoolers are more varied among people of all ages, races, and situations in life. This diversity gives them a much healthier and more realistic view of society, rather than being segregated and feeling alienated from the real world. Consequently, you won't find any "generation gap" or peer dependency among homeschoolers.

**7. Reduced Peer Pressure** - Children are young and innocent for such a short time, but in public school they are often forced to grow up too fast. Homeschooled children on the other hand are exposed to much less pressure in terms of clothing styles, music, language, and interest in the opposite sex. Children will learn to value morality and good taste rather than materialism and "fitting in" with the crowd. In fact, overly extensive peer contact during childhood can cause undesirable peer dependency. Freedom from peer pressure encourages self-confidence and independent thinking. Thus, homeschoolers often have a better self-concept than their public schooled peers and are free of the cliquish behavior that is so commonly found in schools.

**8. Less Stress** - By being nurtured within a close-knit, loving, stable family environment and not being thrown out into the world at too early an age, homeschooled children are able to develop naturally at their own pace to their fullest intellectual potential and emotional maturity. They can concentrate all of their energy on learning, serious thought, and creativity, without their minds simultaneously being worried or preoccupied by peer pressures or other problems. Homeschoolers are able to thrive, because as growing children they are not weighed down by the stresses brought on by the outside world. In addition, the mad morning rush hour of getting ready for school and hurrying out the door to catch the bus can be eliminated, which reduces everyday stress on both mom and kids.

**9. Flexibility** - Homeschooling allows both parents and children to take advantage of flexible scheduling for work, travel and leisure. This means that you can create your own timetable and do not have to follow a traditional school calendar. You can arrange your days around family and personal needs, fitting studies in when and how they best work for you. Family members will not be forced to work within regular school hours if it does not harmonize well with their job or sleep requirements. Vacations, field trips, and other outings can be taken on a much more frequent basis, and planned for off-peak times when the crowds are smaller and the costs are lower. Likewise, homeschooling provides the freedom to go for a walk, stop and smell the flowers, watch a bird build its nest, linger at the park, etc. without having to watch the clock.

**10. Environment** - Contrary to popular opinion, public schools are not a normal learning environment. They are too institutionalized and too crowded, taking away the child's private life and not giving children any time to just be themselves. Homeschoolers on the other hand are nurtured in a relaxed, positive atmosphere surrounded by family and friends who naturally love and care about them. Home learning is integrated into daily living, not limited to certain hours of the day. There are no limits on the places where you can go to learn, whether it's a museum, the woods, a seashore, or even the mall. Homeschooled children are able to enjoy plenty of time outside in the fresh air instead of having to spend the greater part of their day cooped up in crowded classrooms. They will feel more in touch with the seasons, the weather, and the often overlooked miracles of nature this way.

**11. Life Skills** - Homeschooled children can obtain valuable practical knowledge and gain important life skills by participating in their parents' daily lives, as well as by spending time with and learning from extended family members. Similarly, homeschooling provides an opportunity to get out into the community, encouraging wholesome activities such as volunteer work and other character-building skills that are not generally taught in schools. Home educated children, because they spend so much time out in the real world, are better able to relate to adults and children of all ages. They get to meet people of many nationalities, from a wide variety of backgrounds, with all kinds of life experiences to learn about.

**12. Time** - Homeschoolers tend to lead a less hectic lifestyle with long, uninterrupted blocks of time for writing, reading, thinking, dreaming, playing, or working. This encourages focus, concentration, creative thinking, and independence. Home education makes additional time available for personal pursuits, hobbies, and extracurricular enrichment activities. Opportunities for field trips, specialized classes, and private instruction in art, music, etc. are virtually unlimited. Children can learn about things they are interested in, at a time in their lives when they are ready to learn. Homeschooling also leaves extra time to participate in volunteer community service activities, which provide another great learning experience.