

## The Pros and Cons Of Homeschooling

Homeschooling is the fastest growing phenomenon in America today. Every parent has the ability to weigh the pros and cons of homeschooling for their family. While we are homeschooling advocates, understanding the pluses and minuses of it can make the decision to homeschool that much better for the children.

Deciding to homeschool your children is no easy task and should be taken seriously. But there are some compelling reasons to consider, so take a look and decide for yourself.

### Homeschool Pros

#### 1. Homeschooling is more flexible.

No getting up at a certain time everyday and having lessons done on schedule if that is not the way you want to do it. Should you work late at night and need to get some extra rest in the morning, you will be able to with homeschooled children. No buses to catch and no lunches to prepare. Just rise when you and your kids are ready and begin class in a more leisurely manner.

#### 2. Your children can advance at their own pace.

If you are concerned about any of your kids needing extra attention and feeling like a formal school structure won't provide it, then homeschooling could be the answer. You can take your time teaching in the pace that your children are most willingly to learn with. Pushing them to excel beyond their current potential will only serve to frustrate them. Consider this a great reason to homeschool if you think any of your children might need additional attention for learning.

#### 3. You are the one to decide what interaction your child has with peers.

In the school system, it is an unknown who your child might encounter and what will go on between them. There is plenty of life ahead of your children for them to learn how to adapt to difficult situations. Being forced in with a group of children who treat your child poorly will serve little instructional purpose and is potentially damaging to your child's long-term self-esteem.

#### 4. If you want you can add religious instruction to your daily school routine.

No one will tell you otherwise and you have free rein to incorporate as much or as little religion into each day.

#### 5. There are more opportunities for homeschooled children to learn how to interact in our world.

Even trips to the store can provide valuable learning experiences while having fun with the family. The food pyramid can be taught in the grocery store. Science and lessons about insects can be taught in your backyard. Career options can be explored with trips to the doctor, dentist or auto mechanic. More diversity can encompass your children's lives just in living and doing what you do every day.

### Homeschooling Cons

Are there potential disadvantages to homeschooling? Absolutely! Studying these disadvantages can help you make the right decision.

#### 1. Burn Out

Burn out is a very real risk, particularly for the parent who bears the main responsibility for educating the child. It is crucial that this parent (usually the mother) schedule nurturing and renewing activities for herself, including down-time, EACH DAY. Don't be afraid to use the resources available in the community such as classes and activities for the kids. Develop, and rely on, a strong personal support network.

#### 2. Adult Social Isolation

Spending the entire day with kids can lead to social isolation from other adults. It needn't. Nearly every town has a homeschooling support group. Schedule outings with friends. Make opportunities for social interactions with friends.

#### 3. Financial Burden

The parent bears the full responsibility for purchasing educational materials for the child. Depending on the path chosen, these costs can be considerable. Purchased curricula are generally rather expensive. Costs can be reduced through extensive use of the library and careful planning.

The internet is a tool that should not be overlooked. There are many thousands of web sites offering worksheets, lesson plans and ideas for activities. Adopt a plan of strategic gift requests. Ask grandparents to give gifts that help meet some homeschooling needs: a membership to the Mineral of the Month club, for instance, or season tickets to the ballet.

#### 4. Parent May Have To Carry Cost Of Therapies

Services through the school system may not be available to the homeschooling parent, depending on the state and the local school district.

#### 5. Possible Legal Consequences

School districts have harassed parents who choose to homeschool children with special needs. The risk is slim, but real. Parents living in areas where the school system is known to be hostile to homeschoolers would do well to prepare themselves. Membership in the Homeschool Legal Defense Association could be useful. They will provide legal defense for parents who encounter legal difficulties related to homeschooling.

#### 6. Difficult Without The Full-time Commitment Of One Parent

Homeschooling is difficult without the full-time commitment of one parent. There are families that homeschool in their after-work time, but this is rare, and probably not workable for a family dealing with special needs. Having one parent available full-time can lead to some significant changes in terms of finances and scheduling (parents working opposite shifts, for instance).

Regardless of your decision as a parent, make your educational choice on solid pros and cons of homeschooling.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

#### About the Author

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