

RESEARCH FACTS ON HOMESCHOOLING

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General Facts and Trends

- Homeschooling – that is, parent-led home-based education – is an age-old traditional educational practice that a decade ago appeared to be cutting-edge and “alternative” but is now bordering on “mainstream” in the United States. It may be the fastest-growing form of education in the United States. Home-based education has also growing around the world in many other nations (e.g., Australia, Canada, Hungary, Japan, Kenya, and the United Kingdom).
- There are about 2 million home-educated students in the United States. There were an estimated 1.7 to 2.4 million children (in grades K to 12) home educated during the spring of 2010 in the United States. It appears the homeschool population is continuing to grow (and it was at an estimated 2% to 8% per annum over the past few years).

Reasons for Home Educating

- Most parents and youth decide to homeschool for more than one reason.
- The most common reasons given for homeschooling are the following:
 - customize or individualize the curriculum and learning environment for each child,
 - accomplish more academically than in schools,
 - use pedagogical approaches other than those typical in institutional schools,
 - enhance family relationships between children and parents and among siblings,
 - provide guided and reasoned social interactions with youthful peers and adults,
 - provide a safer environment for children and youth, because of physical violence, drugs and alcohol, psychological abuse, and improper and unhealthy sexuality associated with institutional schools, and
 - teach and impart a particular set of values, beliefs, and worldview to children and youth.

Academic Performance

- The home-educated score, on average, 15 to 30 percentile points above public-school students on standardized academic achievement tests. (The public school average is the 50th percentile.)
- Homeschool students score above average on achievement tests regardless of their parents' level of formal education or their family's household income.
- Whether homeschool parents were ever certified teachers is not related to their children's academic achievement.
- Degree of state control and regulation of homeschooling is not related to academic achievement.

Social, Emotional, and Psychological Development

- The home-educated are doing well, typically above average, on measures of social, emotional, and psychological development. Research measures include peer interaction, self-concept, leadership skills, family cohesion, participation in community service, and self-esteem.
- Homeschool students are regularly engaged in social and educational activities outside their homes and with people other than their nuclear-family members. They are commonly involved in activities such as field trips, scouting, 4-H, learning cooperatives, political drives, church ministry, sports teams, and community volunteer work.

For more homeschool research and more in-depth interpretation of research, please contact:

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