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Homeschooling Your Child

By Greg Lietz

You have decided that homeschooling is the way to educate your child and now you have to ready yourself and your kids for all the trials and tribulations that come with it. You know that the road ahead may be a bit bumpy, but the rewards more than make up for it. Homeschooling affords you a chance to produce a well rounded and well adjusted personality in your child that is by no means an easy achievement.

Obviously, the first thing you have to check out are your state laws regarding homeschooling. You must do this to determine if you have to meet any kind of state requirement. Most states need an affidavit filed with the State's education department that you are choosing to homeschool your child.

There are basically three categories of homeschooling laws. These are: private school laws, home education laws and equivalency laws. Find out about your state's laws and know what your obligations are to the state before you start homeschooling. For example, you may need to maintain a portfolio that keeps a record of your child's educational progress or you may be required to have a minimum educational qualification as a homeschool teacher.

After you have all the state documentation and other matters taken care of you can proceed to the next step. A good next step would be to look for a home school support group. A support group is good because say, if you live in a friendly or curious type of neighborhood, you're well meaning friends may try to influence your decision to home school. At the very least, they may put a lot of questions in your mind that have you making second thoughts. A support group that consists of like minded people will help support your decisions of your homeschool process and help downplay some of the criticisms, pressures and questions you will get from regular school goers. Many support groups organize fun events like visits to the zoo, museum, tours to the ice cream shop, etc. If your children hit it off with other home schooled kids in your group, they may be able to build lasting relationships with these kids that will not fade when their friends change schools. Home school support groups therefore provide an important avenue for your child's socialization.

The third item you need to do is to select a homeschool curriculum. Depending on the method of homeschooling, you may choose various tools that aid you in the process. The internet offers a rich resource for homeschooling information. Do some research and look into the many homeschooling materials that are available.

When you homeschool, you should set certain ground rules. Homeschooling requires a lot of self discipline and hard work to make it work effectively. Here is a list of some of the things to keep in perspective:

1. Eagerness to learn
2. Hard work and effort - work ethic
3. Discipline
4. Time and patience
5. Schedule flexibility
6. Enthusiasm

It really boils down to knowing why you opted for homeschooling in the first place. Your motives and your reasons to homeschool are important pillars on which the whole basis of your child's lessons and personal development plan depends. Consulting with your children to get their thoughts about curriculum choices, etc. is often helpful as well. Once you have every factor considered, select a curriculum or custom make a curriculum that best suits your child's educational and personal development needs.

Record keeping is an important part of homeschooling as it is your record keeping that will be looked at or scrutinized later when your child transfers into another school or enters college. Look into all the various methods of record keeping and set up a schedule to update your records every so often.

Your homeschool day does not need to be a long drawn out day. Allow your child to have a part in the daily classroom activities and to what extent of time is involved with each subject covered. Flexibility and fun are the cornerstones of homeschooling. Be careful not to overload too many skills into single term or school year as you can experience burnout or end up skipping over details of over skills you really should not.

It is a good idea to prepare a skill list for your home school. Make the child learn the skills he is ready for as your child matures educationally.

Gentle parenting is the secret to successful homeschooling. Often home schooled children make great advances in learning and show more enthusiasm than they would otherwise. Homeschool kids also turn out to be surprisingly well balanced and well informed when they are taught at home.

Greg Lietz is a freelance writer, internet businessman and homeschool parent. He offers homeschooling information at his website <http://www.home-schooling-info.com>.

Homeschool Info That Every Parent Needs To Know

By Low Jeremy

Homeschool is one of the alternatives considered by parents and educators to traditional schools. Although its effectiveness has not yet been proven conclusively, there are sectors that champion homeschooling because it provides a much more flexible process that can be adapted to a child's learning capability.

For now, most experts agree that homeschool can be the best alternative for students who cannot cope with ordinary school setting. This system is often given to students who find it hard to keep up with the lessons in class due to slow mental ability or those who have abnormalities and congenital defects that keep them from performing well in school.

Below are some of the information that one needs to know before considering a homeschool program for your child.

1. Lacking in social component

This is perhaps the number one argument against the homeschooling program. Because the child is taught at home, surrounded by people that they already know, they may have a problem dealing with people in their surroundings. This is especially true with children that have started the homeschool program at an age when they are still developing their social skills.

If your child is at this stage, better think twice before putting him or her in a homeschool program. Unless you can supplant a social component into his program, he will be missing so much in terms of learning how to interact with other people.

2. State laws in homeschool

You may not be aware of it but each state enforces certain rules and guidelines that parents and teachers of the homeschooling program should adhere to. Recognizing the potential effect of the program to the learning and performance of children, the government has chosen to regulate the program. Check with your local government offices for the laws and requirements.

3. Support Groups

There are support groups consisting of parents of children undergoing homeschooling program. Here you will find people who can help you establish a program for your child. They will also be able to provide you with first hand account of their experiences with homeschooling and will be able to advise you in case you encounter some problems.

4. Family involvement

Homeschooling will not only affect the life of the child who will be undergoing the program but also the lives of the people in the house. Not only will they have to cope with the schedule but also in a way help in the overall learning of the child.

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