

Home Schooling Q & A

Q. How many people are home schooling in the United States?

A. The best estimate (1999 timeframe) is approximately 1.23 million home schoolers (estimated margin of error is +/- 10%). Probably 1.5 million in 2006.

Q. How do home-schooled children's academic achievements compare to those in public schools?

A. Home schoolers out-perform their public school peers by 30 to 37 percentile points across the subjects on standardized achievement exams.

Q. How can parents teach their own children? Is teacher certification required?

A. Studies show that teacher certification for home-schooling parents has no effect on the child's learning to exceed public educated children.

Q. How much education does a parent need to successfully home school?

A. Another way of stating this question is "Does the parent's education level predict student achievement?". For public schoolers, studies show that the parent's educational level and the student's achievements are directly related. The higher a parent's education, the better the public student's achievements. For home-schooled children, studies show that the student's achievements (which are significantly better than public schooled children) are *not* related to the parent's education level.

Q. Isn't home schooling just another avenue of escape by white people from school integration? How will minority families/students achieve proper education if all the whites leave public schools?

A. Studies show that racial segregation is rarely the reason that American parents are selecting home education as an alternative to public education. Also, Dr. Ray's studies show that minority families who themselves have selected home education have children who do as well as whites in student achievements.

Q. Isn't home schooling mostly made up of high-income families? How will the poorer income families achieve proper education except in the public education system?

A. Studies show that family income level has no impact on a child's achievements in home schooling. Those families with annual incomes less than \$15,000 compared with six other higher income groups (up to those with over \$100,000/year income)

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have children achieving the same higher percentile ranking above public educated children (over 35 percentile higher).

Q. How much money is involved in home education?

A. The average annual cost of home education is estimated at \$546/child. The current national average for public education is \$5325/child (*ten times the cost of home education with less results*). Shouldn't every local, state and national politician hear about these results and look at encouraging more parents to home educate their children as alternative to the national crises facing America? That's the question the reader must answer.

Q. What about socialization of home schooled children? Are they being sheltered from "the real world"?

A. Home-schooled children are involved in many social activities outside the home including the community as well as religious events. The average home-schooled child is involved in over five (5) activities outside the home. Most home-schooled children are so socially adjusted (mature beyond their age) they find themselves participating in many more events with people older than they. The home-schooled Jesus of Nazareth found himself in this situation (Luke 2:46-47). The present design of the educational system of America does not incorporate the best interest of the family. The push for earlier entrance into formal education is actually detrimental to the desire and ability of the child to accomplish learning in the future. The present system actually inhibits proper socialization of the child. Positive and principled sociability is firmly linked to the family (the source of self worth). Negative "me-first" sociability is born from peer group association and fewer, meaningful parental contacts.

Q. How much state regulation is required of home schooling families to ensure the child gets properly educated?

A. This question is basically one of parental *accountability*. The fifty States have laws that vary considerably regarding education. Some have very low regulations regarding education and the necessity for parents to contact the state regarding their child's education. Others have moderate regulations and require the parents to send notification, test scores, and/or professional evaluation of student progress. Still others have high regulation and require parents to send notification, achievement test scores and/or professional evaluation, plus other requirements such as curriculum approval, teacher qualifications of parents, or home visits by state officials. The real question should be "*Is government regulation necessary for high achievement?*". Studies show the answer to this question is NO!

A comparison of states with low, moderate and high regulations on home schooling shows no impact on home school achievements. More bureaucracy is not

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the answer. In fact, the existing costs of public education management could be lowered if more parents were encouraged to home school their children. This is another good point for public policy makers to understand and act upon.

Q. How many home schooled children can make it in college? Are they really able to learn the difficult courses necessary for college preparation (i.e., science and mathematics)?

A. Studies show that once they graduate from high school, home schoolers closely parallel their public school counterparts, whether they pursue more formal education or enter the job market. Approximately 70% of both home schoolers and public schooled children attend college. In fact, many home schoolers are beginning to take college courses prior to graduation from high school because they master material quickly and nothing in the system is holding them back from progressing onward to more challenging curriculum of interest.

CONCLUSIONS

The answer to the decline in American education and society lies partially in restructuring the educational system. The government-sponsored monopoly on education must give way to a parent/family-centered system. The decision where to educate and at what time to begin formal education must rest with the parents. Any sincere investigation will reveal that *a life of learning* was (and is) the heart of Jewish heritage and was instilled by Jehovah (“Hold on to instructions, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.” Proverbs 4:13). Learning constitutes the very core of the heritage that Jewish civilization has bequeathed to the Church. Some say that many Jews believe studying is the highest form of worship. They have long been called the “people of the Book”. The Greeks learned in order to comprehend. The Hebrews learned in order to revere. The subject of a proper education is a vast discussion and has tremendous implications on the future generation. It is imperative that parents attune themselves to their responsibilities regarding the next generation. God has a plan, a plan to prosper us and not harm us. A plan to give us hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). See Home Schooling Briefing which illustrates above data on home schooling.