

## Homeschooling Your Child

Now that you have decided that homeschooling is how to educate your child, get ready#the road ahead is a bit bumpy. Luckily, the rewards more than make up for it. Producing a child with a well-adjusted and well-rounded personality is no small achievement.

First of all, you should check out your state laws on home schooling. Some states need you to file an affidavit with the state's education department. There are basically 3 categories of homeschooling laws. These are 1) private school laws, 2) home education laws, and 3) equivalency laws. Find copies of your state laws. You may need to maintain a portfolio that records your child's educational progress. It is important to look into these legal requirements BEFORE you start homeschooling. Some States also stipulate that the parent or teacher have a minimum educational qualification.

Next, look around for a support group. Well-meaning friends may try to dissuade you. At the very least, they may raise questions that make you uneasy. A support group that consists of like-minded people will help insulate you from the criticism, pressures, and questions of regular school-goers. Many support groups organize fun events, like visits to the zoo, museum, tours of ice-cream shops, etc. And if your children hit it off with other homeschoolers, they will be able to build lasting relationships that don't fade just because a friend changes schools. These groups provide an important avenue of socialization for your child.

The next important thing to do is select a curriculum. Depending upon your method of homeschooling, you can choose various tools that aid you in this process. The internet is also a rich resource for homeschoolers. Do some research. Look into what material is available.

Set ground rules. Homeschooling requires a lot of self-discipline and a lot of hard work. Here is a list of some of the attributes you will need:

- \* Flexibility
- \* Eagerness to learn
- \* Hard work and effort
- \* Time and patience
- \* Discipline
- \* Enthusiasm

Consider why you want to homeschool. Your motives and your reasons will be important pillars on which the whole edifice of your child's lessons will depend. Also, consult with your child. Ask your child how he or she feels about being homeschooled.

Select or custom-make a curriculum that best suits your child. Record keeping is an important part of any homeschool. Look into different methods of record keeping. Set a schedule. Your child does not have to learn for 6-7 hours a day. Allow your child to dictate the time. Flexibility and fun are the two cornerstones of homeschooling. Do not try to stuff too many skills into a single term or year. Prepare a skill list. Make the child learn only the skills that he is ready for.

Gentle parenting is the secret to homeschooling successfully. Children can make great advances in learning and show more enthusiasm for their education. Surprisingly, they also often turn out to be well-balanced and well-informed when they are taught at home.