



*The way you wish you'd been taught.
Guaranteed!*

Homeschooling Resource Guide

A place to begin as you're getting started...

Sonlight Curriculum Ltd.
8042 S. Grant Way
Littleton, CO 80122-2705
(303) 730-6292

www.sonlight.com

Homeschooling Defined

“Homeschooling is parents deciding and directing the education of their children”.

At Home in America
[http://www.athomeinamerica.com/
Article_WhatsHmschlng.mv](http://www.athomeinamerica.com/Article_WhatsHmschlng.mv)

*“To instruct
(a pupil, for example)
in an educational
program outside of
established schools,
especially in the home”.*

The American Heritage Dictionary
[http://www.ask.com/reference/dictionary/
ahdict/72128/homeschooling](http://www.ask.com/reference/dictionary/ahdict/72128/homeschooling)

Home education is a tutorial method of education in which parents retain the responsibility for their children’s education. It is based in your home, but your classroom is the world! Home education is not something you “do”, but rather the way in which you “live”.

Judy Wnuk & Jill Evely (homeschool moms)

Homeschooling Considerations:

- **Commitment** – Fathers must be willing to respond to the extra demands of their time. Mothers must be willing to readjust lifestyles and attitudes. Both parents and children must be willing to persevere through the change in family routines and relationships.
- **Time and Energy** – To add teaching to your schedule, you will need to organize your home; divide the chores; delegate; and plan ahead.
- **Social Pressure** – Concerned, well-meaning family and friends will have varying ideas and attitudes about your decision to educate your children at home.
- **Expense** – The financial investment of home education varies widely with each family. Usually you spend what you have, and creativity supplies the rest.

Must Read:

Beechick, Ruth. ***The Three R's*** (3 booklets for K-3: *A Home Start in Reading, An Easy Start in Arithmetic, A Strong Start in Language*) (Grades K-3)

available at www.sonlight.com.com/KL01.html

Beechick, Ruth. ***You Can Teach Your Child Successfully*** (Grades 4-8)

available at www.sonlight.com.com/4T02.html

Tobias, Cynthia. ***The Way They Learn***

available at www.sonlight.com.com/RR102.html

Clarkson, Clay and Sally. ***Educating the Wholehearted Child***

Dobson, Linda. ***The First Year of Homeschooling Your Child: Your Complete Guide to Getting Off to the Right Start***

Griffith, Mary. ***The Homeschooling Handbook***

MacAulay, Susan S. ***For the Children's Sake***

Educational Philosophy

There are many approaches to teaching your children, all of which have pros and cons. Very few are purists in their approach; most find a comfortable balance of two or more teaching styles. Some veteran homeschoolers recommend finding one curriculum to use for your first year at least—preferably one that has good teacher’s manuals. After you have your first year behind you, you can branch out and mix and match to meet the unique needs of your students and your homeschool.

Traditional/Textbook—

Similar to the classroom experience many of us are familiar with from our own childhood. Includes graded textbooks or workbooks that cover each subject. Teacher’s manuals, tests, and record-keeping materials are usually available with the curriculum.

Some examples of traditional curriculum publishers:

A Beka Books www.abeka.com
Alpha Omega <http://www.aop.com/home/>
Bob Jones University Press www.bjupress.com

Unit Studies—

Topic driven units that intermesh history, literature, writing, science and other subjects around a common theme. With this approach, children of different ages can learn together, and many subjects are covered together.

Some examples of unit study publishers:

Five in a Row www.fiveinarow.com
KONOS www.konos.com
My Father’s World www.mfwbooks.com

Literature-Based/Living Books–

This teaching style relies on exposing children to great ideas found in classic literature. Relying heavily on the writings of Dr. Ruth Beechick and Charlotte Mason, this approach uses living books to make the subject come alive. Typically biographies, historical fiction, and great literature are used.

Some examples of literature-based publishers:

Beautiful Feet www.bfbooks.com

Greenleaf Press www.greenleafpress.com

Sonlight Curriculum www.sonlight.com

Classical Education–

The premise is that children move through different stages of learning, each requiring a slightly different approach. There is a heavy emphasis on the use of living books, study of logic and a chronologic look at history.

Some examples of classical publishers:

Calvert School www.calvertschool.org

Tapestry of Grace www.tapestryofgrace.com

Veritas Press www.veritaspress.com

Unschooling/Relaxed Homeschooling–

The opposite end of the spectrum from traditional homeschooling, this style recommends providing a variety of experiences and resources to stimulate a child's in-bred desire to learn. Promotes the idea of allowing children the freedom to pursue whatever interests they have, doing all their learning naturally in real-life situations.

Some examples of unschooling materials:

Delight-Driven Learning <http://home-educate.com/unschooling>

John Holt and Growing without Schooling www.holtgws.com

Is Homeschooling Legal?

Homeschooling is currently legal in all 50 states and in many other countries as well.

- Review current state laws and regulations regarding homeschooling as provided by the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)
<http://www.hslda.org/laws/>
- Compare to state regulation information provided on the A to Z Home's Cool Homeschooling site
<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/directory/Legalities.htm>
- Check out homeschooling laws and support options by USA regions as well as internationally <http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/regional/Region.htm>
- Research national and international as well as military organizations supporting homeschooling
<http://www.hslda.org/orgs/default.asp>

Do I need to be concerned about accusations of educational neglect? Will I be contacted by Child Protective Services (CPS) if I choose to remove my children from school?

- A member of the VA Child Protective Services answers some questions
<http://www.vahomeschoolers.org/law/cps.asp>
- A review of practical ways to avoid CPS investigations by a California attorney http://www.hsc.org/chaos/legal/articles/cps_referrals.php

How do homeschool students match up against their public school counterparts?

- On average, home school students in grades 1-4 perform one grade level higher than their public/private school counterparts.
- By 8th grade, the average home school student performs four grade levels above the national average. (*Scholastic Achievement and Demographic Characteristics of Home School Students in 1998*, Lawrence M. Rudner, Ph.D.) <http://www.hslda.org/docs/study/rudner1999/Rudner0.asp>

What standardized testing is available?

- Standardized achievement tests (grades 1-10)
<http://www.hslda.org/highschool/testing.asp#standardized>
- College Prep and Scholarship Tests (PSAT/NMSQT)
<http://www.hslda.org/highschool/testing.asp#collegeprep>
- College Entrance Exams (SAT/ACT)
<http://www.hslda.org/highschool/testing.asp#satact>
- College Level Exam Program Tests (CLEP)
<http://www.hslda.org/highschool/testing.asp#clep>
- GED (General Educational Development Test)
<http://www.hslda.org/highschool/testing.asp#ged>

Should I test my students? Take the time to read this very thorough article on standardized testing.

<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/articles/010499.htm>

Homeschoolers are currently admitted to hundreds of colleges in at least five countries. They enjoy the privilege of full scholarships at many selective colleges.

- What happens after high school? What options does my homeschooled student have?
<http://www.hslda.org/highschool/after.asp>
- Review a list of over 900 selective colleges known to have admitted homeschoolers.
http://learninfreedom.org/colleges_4_hmsc.html
- What steps do I need to take to get my student started on planning for college?
<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/olderkids/Ready4College.htm>
- One example of a scholarship program for homeschoolers:
<http://sonlight.com/2006-scholarship-winners.html>

The preceding resources are provided for information purposes only.

Sonlight Curriculum, Ltd. makes no warranties of any kind concerning the fitness of these resources to meet any educational or legal requirements. The responsibility for meeting practical and legal educational requirements rests solely with consumer. We strongly urge our customers to invest the time necessary to become familiar with the controlling laws concerning home education in their communication. Information on this subject can be found on the web at <http://www.hslda.org> and also by contacting your local homeschool support group. Don't know how to find a good group? Check out <http://www.nhen.org/>.

Homeschool Checklist:

1. Learn about home education

- ☐ Read suggested books, magazines and Internet articles
- ☐ Talk with others who are already homeschooling
- ☐ Attend local support group meetings
(find a local group at <http://www.nhen.org>)

2. Put your home education goals/desires in writing

- ☐ Write out a statement of purpose—why are we homeschooling?
- ☐ Consider 2-3 academic and spiritual goals for each child
- ☐ What do we ultimately hope to accomplish when we're finished homeschooling?

3. Locate a veteran home educator

- ☐ Check with a local support group
- ☐ Find someone who is willing to share the hows, whats, and whys about homeschooling

4. Consider how homeschooling will fit into your lifestyle

- ☐ Define the roles of each parent with respect to your homeschool
- ☐ List priorities—what will be set aside and what must be worked into your homeschool schedule
- ☐ Create a schedule—what days/weeks will you take off, how many days will you school

5. Choose and purchase curriculum for your school

- ☐ Carefully consider the various educational philosophies to discern which might work best for your family
- ☐ Request catalogs and review web sites for those programs that interest you
- ☐ Attempt to locate someone who has experience with the curriculum that you are considering
- ☐ Evaluate the cost of materials

6. Meet any state requirements

- ☐ Connect with a local homeschool support group—preferably one where some of the members live in your school district
- ☐ Contact your state homeschool organization for a knowledgeable review of your state's requirements
- ☐ Be sure to submit any necessary paperwork in a timely fashion