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**Everything that you ever wanted to know about
“HOMESCHOOLING “
is here.**

Homeschooling is the concept that helps children learn at their own pace and that helps the parents get the satisfaction that their child is progressing in a good way and getting the best possible education.

Homeschool, in simple words, is a school that is run by the parents just for their child. Parents design the curriculum especially for their child and apply various methods for teaching the child at home (instead of sending him/ her to an institution like a public or a private school).

However, there is a lot to understand and do before you actually take the important decision of homeschooling your children. The first most important factor to consider is the suitability of homeschooling for your children. As a responsible parent you would need to evaluate this based on a number of things (including the child's inclination towards homeschooling).

Some children might not be able to appreciate the concept of homeschooling and parents might find it impossible to homeschool such children. In such a case, parents themselves might find that homeschooling is not meant for their child and decide against it.

Often people draw comparisons between homeschooling and institutional schooling. And the conclusions differ from person to person. However, it's not just a matter of deciding which type of schooling is better for your child. You also need to check your own readiness for homeschooling your child. There are various factors that need to be considered for this e.g. do you have the time, patience and commitment that is required for homeschooling your child, are your finances in order? To some people, homeschooling might seem a simple job when they first think about it. But in actual it is not such a simple job.

In fact, you will really need to apply yourself to the task of homeschooling. There will be a lot of sacrifices that you will need to make (in terms of your personal life) as a parent who runs a homeschool. You will have to undergo a lot of learning yourself and plan and coordinate various activities for your homeschooled children.

However, several homeschooling methodologies are available to assist you and make things easier for you. Besides that, there are various tips that you can apply to turn your homeschool into a grand success.

There are a number of questions that you will need to ask yourself before you go ahead with starting a homeschool for your children. However, what you get is unparalleled satisfaction and joy as you see your children learn, grow and develop in front of your eyes.

Meanwhile, this e-book will try and answer most of your questions about homeschooling. It will also provide you guidance on various aspects of homeschooling, including ideas and tips on how you can make your homeschool a success story. The legal aspect of homeschooling is also discussed in this e-book. You will also find a compilation of misconceptions and the clarifications for them. In this e-book, you will find everything about homeschooling and the related topics.

So, just read on and benefit from this e-book.

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HomeSchooling: A Simple Concept

Let's start our journey into the world of home schooling. The first thing is to understand the underlying concept of homeschooling, what it is all about and what are the prime advantages around which this concept has been developed. So here you go:

Homeschool is a simple concept in which parents take complete responsibility for the education and overall development of the child. The complete education and development of the child (from a baby to a toddler and then later to a teenager) takes place in the home rather than in an institution (usually a private or public school). Hence, the home becomes the center of all activities of a child.

In a Homeschool environment, the parents evaluate the child's personality and design an educational path specially meant for him/her. Since the curriculum is designed according to the child's potential, the primary objective of true learning is achieved. The child is able to concentrate on the areas of excellence and interest rather than following a path that is same for every student in an institutional school. If a child is weak in any subject, he/ she can move at his/her own pace and finally overcome the challenge. In that sense, the child also learns how to overcome challenges

Another important aspect of homeschooling is love and attachment between parents, children and their siblings. Since parents are the primary influence to a child's development, homeschooling forms close bonds between parents and children. It is also seen that siblings too form loving bonds between themselves. Hence homeschooling allows a child to form close relationships with people of different ages rather than children of the same age.

A common misconception of homeschooling is 'isolation of children at home'. This is not true. Parents include field trips, sports activities and many other learning opportunities in a child's education. So, a homeschooled child is able to enjoy many activities which might not be possible for children in a public/ private school.

Thus, homeschooling is a way for many families to enjoy the company of their children all the time. It is a way to help the children grow physically, mentally and emotionally with their parents.

Homeschooling Is The Way To Go?

Now that we have an ideal about what homeschooling is and the concept behind homeschooling, let's check if homeschooling is really the way to go:

Every parent wishes that their children get the best education for academic learning. They want their children to grow physically, emotionally and mentally in a stress free environment.

But, are the parents able to achieve this through a public or private school? Are the learning procedures, followed in a public or private school, really good? The answer is 'no' (however, the opinion might vary from person to person). The burden imposed on the children in an institutional school does not help them in their overall development. The children are often seen to learn lessons for the exam. Less importance is given to long lasting knowledge.

With the growing popularity of homeschooling, parents are getting more and more convinced about the quality of education received by their child through a homeschool. Since homeschoolers have a benefit of one to one teaching, they learn at their own pace. So, the education is more knowledge oriented rather than exam oriented.

Most homeschooled children have the freedom to choose the subjects they want to study. They can decide the time of study and learn as long as they want. This does not mean that all the basic learning is not covered. The topics are served to the child according to the age and mental capabilities of the child.

Apart from the educational benefits, homeschoolers face the outside world with more confidence. In a homeschooling environment, the parents and many other adults of the family are involved with the children all the time. So, these children are often seen to adjust quickly with people of all ages. On the other hand, a regular school going child often interacts with his/ her peers only and may take time to adjust in a natural social environment.

Homeschooling is the best way to educate your child. However, it is up to you to decide on whether homeschooling is appropriate for your child.

Check Your Readiness To Start A Homeschool - Part 1

Checking the suitability of homeschooling for your child is one thing and checking your own readiness for homeschooling your child is another thing. And both are equally important. We have already talked about the suitability of homeschooling for a child; let's now check it from the other angle:

Here are some factors which you need to look at in order to decide on your readiness for homeschooling your child:

§ **Do you have the commitment required for running a homeschool?:**

Any successful business requires hard work and commitment. Homeschooling too requires commitment and hard work. The homeschool parent may need to sacrifice his/ her personal life. The parent has to always keep the homeschool as his/ her first priority.

§ **Do you have the time?** Running a homeschool effectively requires a lot of time. There are lots of activities which need to be planned for your child for a particular day. So you need to manage your time efficiently. If you have more than one child in your homeschool, running the homeschool is more than a full time job. You need to devote time to every child and plan the lessons accordingly. Running a homeschool is more than teaching the children with a couple of books. So, if you are very keen on homeschooling (on running it successfully), it is advisable not to have any other full time job along with it.

§ **Patience:** Patience is one of the pre-requisites for homeschooling. In a homeschooling environment, children and parents are together all the time (basically 24 hours a day). So just ask yourself if you are patient enough. You need to be patient if your child cribs or learns at a very slow speed.

These are the three most basic factors that you need to consider before taking the decision on homeschooling. However, there are a few other factors too (these include your keenness to learn, state of your finances, discipline and consent of each member of the family).

Check Your Readiness To Start A Homeschool - Part 2

Besides the three most basic factors (i.e. Commitment, Time, Patience) there are some other factors which you need to look at in order to decide on your readiness for homeschooling your child:

- § **Are you eager to learn new things?** A successful teacher is one who has the eagerness to learn new things. To run a homeschool effectively, you should have the urge to learn about new things. You need to gain knowledge on new topics which you want to teach your children. Along with that, you also have to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of your children. So, willingness to learn is essential if you want to run a successful homeschool.
- § **State of your finances:** It is a very important check for verifying your readiness to take up homeschooling of your child. Running a homeschool successfully requires a lot of dedicated time. So, the teaching parent would not be able to get into a full time employment or even work from home. Hence, you need to evaluate your finances before going ahead with the decision to homeschool your child.
- § **Do you have everyone's Consent?** : It is important that the parents and the child, both are ready for homeschooling. Discuss the various pros and cons of homeschooling with your spouse before starting with this project. Ask the child if he/ she is ready for having the entire education at home. The consent of the entire family is necessary in order to run the homeschool effectively.
- § **Discipline:** You need to be self disciplined in order to run a home school successfully. Children learn from what they see in their surroundings.

Running a successful homeschool requires personal sacrifice and commitment. Don't be discouraged if you are not able to answer all the questions of your child. There are various resources available on the internet which can solve your problem. Also, interact with people who are successfully running their homeschool. They might sometimes provide you valuable advice.

Misconceptions About Homeschooling

As is the case with almost every good concept, there are confusions and misconceptions about homeschooling too. Talking about misconceptions will also help you in gaining more understanding of the concept of homeschooling:

Homeschooling provides parents with an opportunity to spend quality time with their children. It allows the children to learn at their pace and style. Hence, it is gaining popularity amongst the parents and the children. But despite the growing popularity of homeschooling, there are many misconceptions about homeschooling among parents. Let's have a look at the three most common misconceptions associated with homeschooling.

1. **Isolation of children:** One of the most common misconceptions about homeschooling is the isolation of children at home. Many parents believe that children who do not go to an institutional school often become isolated at home and do not socialize with other children on a regular basis. However, this is not true. Homeschooled children attend various groups where they interact with other homeschooled children. Various fun and educational activities like field trips, sports events are organized for these children.
2. **Hours of study:** Since homeschooling does not define definite hours of study, many parents believe that children would not be able to cover all the subjects within a definite interval of time, as compared to the children who attend institutional schools. Though a lot of flexibility is exercised in the homeschooling environment, every homeschool parent designs the schedule of the child in such a manner that a homeschooled child is able to gain knowledge on all the subjects which are covered in institutional schools. So, it is not a problem really.

3. **Interaction with degree teachers:** Many parents believe that homeschool children miss interacting with degree teachers of particular subjects that are available in a public school. The knowledge provided by the homeschool parent on a particular subject is insufficient as compared to degree teachers of that subject. This is true to an extent. But homeschool parents can get their children tutored (if required) by specialized teachers.

How to plan the homeschool day

We will now take the concept further and talk about the ground work that you need to do. And planning the homeschool day is one of the most important tasks at hand:

Homeschooling involves the complete development of a child by his/ her parents at home. Since home is the center of all activities of the child, it is essential to plan your day for homeschooling effectively.

Here is a guide on how to plan your homeschool day effectively.

You should devise a plan for your homeschooling. The most important thing in your plan is the preparation of lessons on a weekly basis. Make sure that you have defined the number of hours for each lesson. This will help you check the status of lessons on a regular basis.

Plan the lessons according to the daily schedule of your child (i.e. the time when the child is most comfortable and fresh). For example if your child is a late riser then plan the lessons from mid noon. You should stick to the plan designed for your homeschool; however, a little flexibility is always healthy. But always start your homeschool on the time that you decide.

Another aspect to be taken care while planning your day is the interruptions caused by home services professionals. If you are planning to call a professional for some home services, call them during school times. And use it as a teaching opportunity by giving the children a short simple lesson about the service before their arrival. This will help you to convert a non academic lesson into some useful learning.

You should try to fit homeschool into the mainstream life. For example you can conduct history classes through a visit to a museum. This will make learning fun.

Finally, record your daily observations into your record book (log). This will help you track the progress of your child.

Success Secrets Of Homeschooling

“Yes, we now have quite a good understanding of homeschooling and we have verified that we are ready for starting a homeschool for our children. But what are the secrets for hitting success with homeschooling? “

Homeschooling can be fun for you and your children. But you need to work towards making homeschooling a success. Here are some tips which help you make your homeschool a success:

- § **Keep things easy:** Homeschooling can be successful if you keep things simple for yourself. Too many responsibilities of home and outside world can make your life complicated and make homeschooling difficult. If you take on too much of responsibilities, you will not be able to devote time on your homeschool children. Besides that, you should also keep the curriculum of your children simple.
- § **Interact with other homeschool mentors:** Interaction with other homeschool parents brings in a lot of confidence. You can implement various good points of their homeschool into your homeschool. Ask them for tips and advice. They would be happy to help you.
- § **Libraries:** Public libraries are the best resource for a homeschool. You can get various free copies of reference books, learning material, video and audio tapes from a public library. Hence, libraries provide you with access to a lot of materials that can help you in running your homeschool successfully.
- § **Keep a day off:** This is one good way to keep you and your children fresh. Instead of taking a long summer or winter vacation, take small frequent breaks.

§ **Research and clarify:** You should always research and clarify things whenever you are in doubt. For example if you are not comfortable on any topic which your child is interested in, read the topics online or from a book. This will help you in addressing your child's queries.

Just use these tips and homeschooling can be a rewarding experience for you and your child.

Homeschooling Methods

Here we get to the core of homeschooling i.e. the homeschooling methods...

Most parents, who are new to the concept of homeschools, have a simple picture of homeschooling in their minds. They believe that homeschooling means helping the children with their homework or watching them study their textbooks. However, homeschooling means a lot more than this. Homeschooling involves teaching subjects by different methods. Each teaching method is governed by a specific homeschooling philosophy.

Here are some popular teaching methods that are used in a lot of homeschools:

1. **Charlotte Mason Method:** This teaching method derives its name from the founder of homeschooling environment -Charlotte Mason. She wanted children to develop love for learning. Hence, she laid the foundation of a homeschooling program which was educational as well as entertaining. The Charlotte Mason method places great emphasis on arts such as classic literature, poetry and classical music. The books related to the Charlotte Mason method are available at the public libraries and can be used along with other educational tools.
2. **Eclectic Homeschooling Method:** This method is a mixture of various homeschooling techniques. Here the parents look at various homeschooling methods and techniques and develop their own curriculum according to the child's interest and mental level.

3. **The Montessori Method:** This method was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. Maria observed that children undergo sensitive periods. During this phase, the child repeats an activity until he/she feels satisfied. Hence, the repetition of the activity brings perfection. Montessori method uses books, toys and other educational materials to teach children. Hence, the environment is filled with artistic and scientific activities.
4. **Unschooling method:** Parents who use this method believe that learning begins at home. They believe that children learn the most from the everyday life. For example a walk to the park helps the child to learn about nature, playing with toys develop the child's imaginative skills etc. Proper implementation of unschooling method can be successful with any child.

These are the some popular teaching methods of homeschooling. However, there are a few other teaching methods of homeschooling - these include classical education method, unit studies approach and Waldorf education method.

Homeschooling: The Charlotte Mason Method

There are many teaching methods used to teach children at homeschools. As a homeschooling parent, you can choose any of the teaching methods which best suit your children. One of the popular teaching methods amongst the homeschooling parents is “The Charlotte Mason method”.

The name “Charlotte Mason method” comes from the founder of homeschooling environment. Charlotte wanted the children to have love for learning. So, the Mason method places great emphasis on arts such as classic literature, poetry and classical music and encourages children to study nature too. She encouraged children to read books (which she called living books) containing stories of real-life characters.

The approach employed in the Charlotte Mason method is observance, recording and narration. The normal academic lessons of this method are short and last for about half an hour a day.

At the completion of the lessons, children are supposed to go out in any natural surroundings like a park where they appreciate God’s wonderful creations like animals, trees etc. Various observations made by the children are then recorded in their living books.

Thereafter, the children read these short extracts daily and narrate them to their parents.

Charlotte Mason also believed that the development of moral values in children starts at home.

Hence, the parents are the best teachers to inculcate good habits in their children. The children often see their parent as their role model. So, the focus is on overall development of children.

Homeschooling: The Montessori Method

One of the most recommended teaching methods for children of all ages is “The Montessori method”. This method was developed by an Italian doctor, Dr Maria Montessori. She believed that learning is a natural and self-governing process. This method of teaching is popular among the public and the private schools too.

Let’s have a look at some of the salient features of the Montessori Method of teaching.

- § The children must be encouraged to do an activity freely. As long as the activity is entertaining, learning and does not hurt or offend anyone, the child must be encouraged to continue with the activity.
- § Every child goes through some sensitive periods in his/her life. These are some of the phases when the child develops strong concentration. In this period, the child continues with a particular activity until he/ she is completely satisfied. This helps the child gain knowledge and confidence.
- § The Montessori method emphasizes on prepared environment; an environment that is lively and relaxing. A warm and loving atmosphere encourages the child to participate in an activity. Hence the child is able to develop physically, emotionally and mentally.
- § One of the main advantages of homeschooling is practical life training. This is best implemented by the Montessori Method. The Montessori Method allows a child to practice a useful task repeatedly so as to achieve excellence.
- § Some of the common materials used in this teaching method are classified cards, word lists, puzzle cards, art cards, maps, music and more.

Homeschooling: The Unit Study Method

So, we have seen two methods that are commonly used in homeschooling. This (Unit Study) is the third method in line which is quite popular and is typical in itself:

Unit studies are an effective way of developing a love for learning. Here, a child studies all the subjects blended together around a common theme. Hence, the child is able to achieve in-depth knowledge about a particular theme.

This integrated approach includes art, language, math, geography, history and science. For example, let's take water as a theme. You can take water as H₂O (a chemistry subject)—but, it is also art (a beautiful waterfall), geography (location of the Caspian Sea or any water body), economics (water bill), etc.

Here is a simple way to plan unit study for your child:

The first and foremost thing in a unit study method is the selection of a topic. You should always choose a topic which is of interest to your kids. This helps the child to correlate things easily and efficiently.

Once the topic is selected, you need to decide on various factors like amount of time to be spent on the topic, depth of the topic to be covered, etc.

Gather information from the library, internet and collect books and craft supplies for the activities on the topic. Plan a detailed or a generalized schedule for your lessons. You can also keep a journal for your record.

Unit studies can be fun and advantageous. It enables a student to learn from different sources. Hence, children understand how different pieces of information from different subjects relate together.

Homeschooling: The Eclectic Method

The Eclectic Method of teaching is one which uses different approaches and methods of homeschooling to form a new philosophy of teaching suited to the child's temperament. For example, a homeschooling parent may use a pre-designed program for language, literature and mathematics and fill geography and history with field trips.

Hence, eclectic method of teaching is innovative and specially designed according to the interest of the child and his/ her learning style.

Since eclectic programs are designed by the homeschooled parent, the curriculum varies from child to child. Generally an eclectic homeschooling parent purchases a curriculum and remolds it according to the interest and the learning style of the child. Hence an eclectic homeschooler rarely uses a resource exactly as cited in the teaching practice.

Eclectic method of teaching focuses importance on outdoor trips to parks, libraries and museums. Trips to museums provide knowledge about country's historical past.

Eclectic parents are innovative and flexible. They are always in search of new material to provide their child with the best education. They know that each day is a new challenge for them.

Eclectic method of homeschooling offers many advantages to the child and the parent. Hence, it is one of the most popular teaching methods for homeschooling.

But, checkout the next method (the unschooling method), which is both interesting and effective.

Homeschooling: The Unschooling Method

One of the most unstructured methods of teaching amongst all the teaching methods and philosophies is the 'Unschooling' method.

This method does not have use curriculum or books. Here the parent introduces the education material according to the child's interest.

The unschooling parents believe that children learn and retain that which appeals to them the most. So, the homeschooled parent is always looking out for new materials.

A parent also gets cues about the child's interest by watching him/ her closely. For example, a child who frequently watches documentaries of planets and stars would be interested in astronomy. Similarly, love for gardening points to interest in Botany (a branch of biology). Hence, unschooling parents provide their children with educationally rich environment.

Since the unschooling method relates learning to interest, the parent should always take care that the child is relaxed and comfortable. Only a relaxed child can correlate various things which he/she sees and hears.

Unschooling method of teaching is popular amongst many homeschooled parents. It can be effectively used to impart education as the learning is generally long lived. However, the learning experience can be short lived if the child focuses on some other thing after a few days.

Where to get Homeschool Materials from?

So, there are a number of methods that are used for homeschooling (didn't think about that, did you?). But where do you get Homeschool material from?

With the growing popularity of homeschooling, a wide variety of homeschooling material is available in the market as well as on the internet. But you need to plan before you shop for homeschooling materials.

Here are some tips for planning your purchase of homeschooling material.

- § Children learn and develop their skills from the various things lying in your house. So, you should always start looking for homeschooling material at your home, before buying any material from the market. e.g. Measuring cups (used in kitchen) are a very good alternative to stacking beakers to teach math calculations and develop logical reasoning skills.
- § Since there are a wide variety of materials available in the market, always do a research and price comparison of various homeschooling materials. You can get a lot of information about various learning materials on the internet. So online shopping is one of the good ways to gather information and save money. If you are buying in bulk always ask for discounts.
- § You can access the public library and visit other homeschoolers for resource sharing. So instead of buying costly reference books and learning aids from the market, access a public library. You can also interact with other homeschoolers for resource sharing of costly items.
- § If you are new to homeschooling or if you are homeschooling a single child, buy learning materials in right proportion. You are not looking to overbuy or under-buy.

Planning Social Activities For The Homeschooled Child

Let's delve even deeper into the concept and learn more about how you can plan social activities for the homeschooled child:

One of the greatest concerns about homeschooling is lack of socialization. Here are some tips on planning social activities for your homeschooled child.

- **Homeschool Groups:** In each locality, there are a number of established homeschool groups which meet once or twice a month. Interact with them and organize various activities with them. Plan fun activities like music concerts or craft competition, swimming or volunteer work. This will allow the children to socialize among themselves.
- **Start A Group:** If you do not find any group in your area you can start your own group. Advertise your group. Contact other homeschool parents. You can even advertise your group on homeschool forums, websites or newspapers. This will help the children of one group to interact with the children from other groups.
- **Locations For Activities:** Plan activities in churches, community centers or parks. For example, if you are planning to organize a football game for all children in a group, the best location would be a park. Always schedule a particular day for the get together of various homeschool groups.
- **Plan A Rocking Birthday Party:** Birthdays are a special time for children. Plan for this special occasion and invite all of his/ her friends and family members to the birthday party. You can even choose a theme for the birthday party according to your child's age. Hence, the child will not feel isolated.

- **Invite Friends:** Encourage your home scholar to invite some friends at your home for a movie or dinner. This would not make the child feel left out.

Planning Outdoor Activities For The Homeschooled Child

Outdoor activities are essential for the complete development of a child. There are various outdoor activities for the homeschooled children that are educational as well as fun. But always remember to plan an activity according to the child's interest. Let's have a look at some innovative ways to have fun.

- § Bird watching sounds to be a boring activity .Isn't it? But you can make it an interesting family game. Collect all the members of the family and then play the interesting game of spotting a red color bird or a bird with a long beak. The person who spots the bird first is the winner. You can play this game in a park or while traveling to any place.
- § If your child has interest in planets, stars and other celestial bodies a visit to the planetarium would make your child happy. This activity enhances his/her knowledge too.
- § An inexpensive way of having fun with the whole family is fishing, sailing etc. Many parents believe that fishing helps the children to concentrate and relax.
- § Other outdoor activities like camping or bush walking help the child to understand the nature better.

Various Methods That You Can Use For Record Keeping

Record keeping is one of the important tools for homeschooling. It is a tool which helps you judge the progress of children. Hence, 'record keeping' keeps the past performance of the child recorded.

Record keeping also assists a homeschool parent to revisit, evaluate and accordingly create a plan for action (i.e. identification of focus areas etc). So it is essential to update the records daily. Records can be kept and updated using a number of methods.

Let's look at some methods of record keeping.

§ **Daily Planner:** This is one of the most used methods of record keeping. In this method, a schedule for the week is laid out. As the tasks in the schedule get completed, they are checked. At the end of the week, the plan is reviewed.

Outdoor activities like field trips or visit to the museum are also recorded in the daily planner. Hence, a daily planner helps to monitor the daily progress of the child effectively.

§ **Journal:** As the name suggest, a journal is a log used to record the daily activities of the homeschool. It can be kept by the teacher or the student.

§ **Portfolios:** Portfolios are generally used with unit study approach of homeschooling. It is a collection of the child's experiences and achievements.

Record keeping is important, no matter what method you choose for record keeping.

Homeschooled Child: The Socialization Issue

Socialization is one of the biggest issues which most homeschool parents come across. They are often asked the question-"Are you not concerned about socialization of your children?" It becomes difficult for most homeschool parents to answer this question.

Here are some ways which show how homeschool students learn socializing with other people:

- § Homeschooled children set good examples of conduct than the school going children. Since homeschooled children are always around their parents and other members of the family, they tend to have a better mannerism than the school going children. Sometimes school going children might get into bad company and become ill-mannered and rebellious. This is not a problem with homeschooled children.
- § Teamwork or working in groups is best seen among homeschooled children. The attitude of working in a team starts at home. A child aiding his/ her parents during daily chores is one of the best examples of teamwork in a homeschool.
- § People who are ignorant of homeschooling often believe that homeschooling is isolating children at home. This is not true. Parents often take their children to field trips, other homeschooling support groups, sports events etc. This helps the child to interact with other children and make friends.

Thus, homeschooled children equally compete with the public school children on the issue of socialization. These children are well mannered and interact with people of diverse culture and origin.

Homeschooling And The Law

Let's now move on to check if there is any law associated with homeschooling, and if there are legalities than how does one go about ensuring adherence to such laws:

With the growing importance and popularity of homeschooling over the past few years, parents are making a decision to homeschool their children. If you decide to homeschool your child, always opt to do it legally. You should be well versed with the laws for home schooling in your area as home schooling laws differ from state to state.

The basic idea behind the implementation of homeschooling laws is to differentiate between a homeschooled child and a child who does not want to study.

The procedure for the legal set up of a homeschool is quite simple. Generally, most states require a "notice of intent" by the parent before the start of a new academic session. Once the certificate is submitted the state does the required paperwork for you.

Most states legally assign a given grade level. So, it is necessary for the homeschooled parent to take standardized tests of the child. However, always remember to read the laws for home schooling in your state.

Legally setting up your homeschool will benefit you in the long run. So, consult other home schooling groups or advocacy groups before starting home schooling.

You can even view information about home schooling laws of your state, on the internet.

Economical Homeschooling

Homeschooling can be a satisfying experience for the entire family. Parents are assured that they are bringing up their children under their guidance, beliefs and convictions. However, it can be a costly project for some families (families which rely on incomes of two people- both parents- for their living). This is one of the reasons why many families, that have a limited income, often think twice before starting homeschooling. But don't be disheartened. Economical homeschooling is becoming one of the popular terms amongst the homeschooling community.

One of the most expensive parts of homeschooling is the curriculum and the books. The internet can be one of the best ways to find curriculum at a bargain price. Online auctions help you buy curriculum and books at a much cheaper rate. You should always make sure that the curriculum fits your teaching style as well as the child's learning style.

Another way to find resources at a cheaper rate is the Garage sales. These sales help you collect materials for craft and other science projects. You can look for various magazines and books related to homeschooling.

Libraries are also one of the good ways to reduce your homeschooling expenses. You can get specific teaching aids or books issued whenever you need them.

Homeschooling can be budget friendly provided you shop around and devote time to studying the requirements, before buying the homeschooling materials.

Do we know how many children are Homeschooled In USA?

With the growing popularity of homeschools among people, we often wonder about the total count of homeschool children in our society. Estimates of homeschooling children vary from state to state as there are no standard reporting requirements.

Many states in the United States of America do not require the homeschool to be registered. Since there is no registration involved, it becomes almost impossible for the government to count the number of children who homeschool.

In a homeschooling environment, parents often want to raise their child according to their needs. They want to inculcate morals, values, and ethics in their child along with the normal academic education. Hence, they want to avoid any interference in their school from the government (however, this is not true with every homeschool); hence making it difficult to count the number of homeschooled children.

Some political parties do not want the correct number of homeschools to be known accurately. The school systems often regard homeschools as a threat. If more and more people start to homeschool their children, the funds provided to the school would be affected.

However, there is evidence that the count of homeschools is significant and has risen substantially over the past few years.

You can often find websites, blogs, homeschool associations and many other resources on homeschooling. This too gives us an idea about the popularity of homeschools.

Hence, the trend is surely on the rise as more and more people realize the advantages of homeschooling.

Homeschooling For Children With Special Needs

This chapter of this e-book relates to children with special needs. You will see how homeschooling can benefit them:

We often come across children with special needs. These children express information in a way that is typical from the rest of the children. So educating these children in public schools becomes difficult. These children are best educated at home with one-on-one learning. For these children, homeschooling has become a good alternative to public schools.

You should not follow a school structure to homeschool children with special needs. Some parents try to follow the same structure, curriculum and learning style as that used in schools meant for children with special needs. You should let the child follow his/ her interest in a loving environment. Explore more about their interests. If the interest is in a subject or on a topic that is appropriate for them, help them gain an in-depth knowledge about that topic. Talk to a counselor if the interest does not provide appropriate learning or social experiences to the child.

Homeschooling your children with special needs may bring a number of stressful days. Patience is needed to handle such children. As part of their homeschooling, you can plan relaxing and refreshing outdoor activities e.g. visit to a park.

Children with special needs often need encouragement. If a child cannot pursue a career of their choice due to their disability, you should not discourage them. You should always encourage your children to dream about their career. You often find that children change their preferences as they grow.

Homeschooling children with special needs is a difficult task. But the satisfaction you achieve through homeschooling is more than a rewarding experience for you and your family.

What Are The Main Benefits From Homeschooling

Finally, let's check the benefits from homeschooling in detail. Here we will first see the main benefits followed by some additional ones.

Homeschooling is a wonderful way to be in close contact with your children. It is a way to achieve academic excellence. Homeschooling helps you instill ethics and values in your child. Through homeschooling, parents can help the child in developing problem-solving and decision-making attitude. The list of advantages from homeschooling is endless.

Let's elaborate on some of the major advantages of homeschooling:

Instilling Moral values and Beliefs: One of the major advantages of homeschooling is inculcation of moral values and beliefs in children. Moral values and belief help them become a better citizen and it also helps them overcome the tough times in their lives. Homeschooling is one of the ways to instill these values. Homeschooling allows the parent to knit all these values and beliefs into the curriculum they design for the child.

Understanding Relationships: The most important thing for most people is their family. Everyone yearns for a loving family - A family which has close loving bonds between the parents, children and the siblings. But as children move from toddler stage to teen stage, they sometimes become rebellious/ disrespectful. However this is not the case with most homeschooled children. In a homeschooling environment, children spend most of their time with the parents. Hence, they start treating their parents as role models and imbibe good habits from them.

Excellence In Academics: Children studying in an institutional school often focus their energies on learning for exams and hence the core purpose (i.e. knowledge) gets defeated. The curriculum designed for homeschooled children allows them to work at their own level in each subject. Homeschooling allows the children to move at their own pace and in their own style. These factors help the child excel.

These are the three main advantages of homeschooling. However, there are a few other additional benefits of homeschooling.

Additional Benefits Of Homeschooling

Besides the three major advantages of homeschooling (i.e. instilling moral values and beliefs, understanding relationships and excellence in academics) there are some other advantages too:

Relaxed and un-stressful learning methodology: It is often seen that children are unable to concentrate in a class due to lack of sleep. The effects of early morning and late nights (due to homework) often leave children distressed. Karen, a mother of two school going children, often describes her children as zombie. The children get up at 6:00 in the morning in order to catch the bus at 7:00 a.m. They come back around 3:00 p.m. They are awake till late in the night to do their homework or prepare for their weekly tests. This often leaves the children tired. This problem is not seen with homeschooled children. The homeschooled children are often relaxed. The children can move at their own comfortable pace. They do not have any pressure of performing at a test.

Parents As Teachers: Parents know the strengths and weakness of their child. Hence, they are the best teachers for their child. A classroom teacher may take months to know the child completely. By the time, the teacher understands the strengths and weakness of the child, the children move on to another grade.

Influence Of Peers: One of the serious problems in a public/ private school is the bad influence of students on each other. It is often seen that some children disrespect authority or use bad language in school. Even good children learn the bad habits when they are in their company. But in a homeschooling environment, the parents choose the company of their children.

Individual Attention: In a classroom, each child has little contact with the teacher. He/She is not able to get a solution to the problem as soon as it arises. While homeschool teachers directly interact with the student and help them with all their problems and queries. The children receive personal attention from their parents all the time. Learning is more from parent to child rather than from book to child.

What are the Disadvantages from Homeschooling?

Homeschooling has a number of advantages like close bondage of children with their parents and siblings, freedom to study at their own pace etc. Despite the numerous benefits of homeschooling, there are a few disadvantages too.

Let's take a look at some of the disadvantages of homeschooling:

Parents have to make a lot of sacrifices: One of the most significant disadvantages associated with homeschooling is that the parents who run the home school have to make a lot of sacrifices. Since the homeschooling parents are always with the kids, they do not get time for themselves. They do not have the luxury to enjoy for themselves. Another important sacrifice made by the homeschooling parents is foregoing of a full time employment in order to homeschool the children. This becomes difficult for families who rely on income of both the parents to run the family.

Cost: Homeschooling is a costly affair as compared to the free primary public education. The homeschooling parents are responsible for the purchase of books according to the curriculum designed for the homeschool child. Outdoor activities like field trips also incur high costs. Hence homeschooling sometimes becomes difficult for families who have a single source of income (but previously relied upon the income of both the parents to run the family).

Social Skills: Everyday interactions such as field trips, visit to the supermarket or the park are just some of the ways to develop social skills in homeschool children. But a child should also develop social skills like interaction with many children of similar age groups. This helps him/ her manage his/ her subordinates and peers while working in an office later in life. This is something that homeschooling cannot provide easily.

Though there are a few disadvantages of homeschooling, most homeschool parents find them insignificant in comparison to the benefits from educating their child at homeschool.

With this we conclude our learning on homeschooling. We hope that we were able to supplement your knowledge on homeschooling.