

Homeschool vs. public school

[Education](#), [School](#)



Final Essay Home Schooling: From Home to Harvard We're all familiar with the popular images of homeschoolers in America: Extreme fundamentalist families shutting out all other points of view. These stereotypes are touted freely by the popular media and conventional schooling experts alike. But they have little to do with the realities of homeschooling for most families today, and are rarely backed by factual data. The average home-schooled student scored “ 81 points higher on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than did the general population in 2000”. (Winters) At the National Spelling Bee in 2000, the top three winners were home-schooled. Studies show that, “ home-schooled children also tend to score higher on basic skills testing than do public school children”. (Winters) According to the Wall Street Journal, “ Evidence is mounting that homeschooling, once confined to the political and religious fringe, has achieved results not only on par with public education, but in some ways surpassing it. ” (Reider) However, one subject continues to surface whenever the issue of home schooling arises.

Public school administrators, teachers, and parents are all concerned about whether home schooling can be considered a good process of education. Therefore, I intend to prove that home-schooled children are properly socialized, fully educated and college admissions increasing acceptance rates of home schooled applicants prove that they're prepared for the next level of education. Supporters of public schools maintain that public school students learn to work well with others, including those of differing backgrounds, and that they can achieve greater independence by attending public school.

Negotiating the communal spaces of schoolyard, classroom, athletic field, and laboratory prepares them for “real world” experiences, they contend. Critics of home schooling believe that home-schooled children miss out on these important opportunities. Without the chance to interact with those of diverse backgrounds, critics are concerned that home-schooled students will fail to appreciate and understand one of the core values of American life: to tolerate and appreciate the differences between cultures or groups and among individuals.

They fear that isolation breeds intolerance, prejudice, and even fanaticism. In response to such criticism, proponents of home schooling answer that home-schooled children have plenty of social opportunities. The National Home Education Research Institute conducted a study and found that “an average home-schooled child participates in 5.2 activities per week outside the home”. (Dr. Brian Ray) These children are involved in music, dance, drama, and art classes, visit museums and zoos, and join home-schooling groups or local churches. They form athletic teams and compete in home-school tournaments.

They participate in book and foreign language clubs, scout groups, and have pen pals. In fact, home school participants believe that, because “the average time spent “in class” can often be compressed to about half a day, home-school students have more time available to them than do students in public school to pursue special interests”. (Golden) These activities may include practicing the piano, learning lines for a play, or studying ballet. Being a home-schooling student opens up many hours in a day do be able to

do specific things they would not have been able to do if they had attended public school.

Advocates of home schooling maintain that in the process of participating in outside activities, home-schooled children benefit by socializing with people of all ages, not just those of their peer group (Stevens 35). They note that the world does not consist of people who are all the same age and that students are at a disadvantage if they spend their day with their peers. One home-schooling researcher claims that home schooling “ reduces that degree to which children find themselves constantly and obsessively being compared to, and comparing themselves with, other children their age.

(Gaither) A home-schooled child’s days, he believes, are more like the “ real world” than that of students in public school. Research conducted on the socialization of home-schooled children lends support to the arguments of home-schooling advocates. Home schooled children are found to be as well adjusted as public school students when measuring “ aggression, reliance on others, perception of support from others, perceptions of limits to be followed, and interpersonal relations amongfamilymembers. ” (Lines)

Another study indicated that home-schooled children had less behavioral problems than children attending public school.

Supporters of home schooling will often “ turn the tables on their critics, pointing to the negative influences present in public schools”. (Kranzow) In particular, a sizable percentage of home-schooling parents worry about the “ wrong kind” of socialization found in public schools and keep their kids at home primarily for that reason. They believe the prevalence of illicit drugs,

alcohol, smoking, and premarital sex undermines the moral principles taught at home. They fear the negative influences of peer pressure and want to protect their children from American pop culture.

As a result of the recent growth of homeschooling in the US, colleges and universities have received an increasing number of applications from homeschooled students. Admissions offices have found it necessary to assess whether and how their admissions requirements should be modified to allow fair review of the credentials submitted by homeschooled students. It is estimated that “ 50% of homeschooled children attend college, the same percentage as children educated in public schools”. (Klicka) But are these students skilled enough to compete successfully with conventionally-schooled students in the college setting?

Klicka concludes that homeschoolers and traditionally educated students demonstrate similar academic preparedness for college and academic achievement. Through my research on the homeschooling process, I have discovered that home schooled children’s test score and their home school “ portfolios” have impressed many colleges, most of them prominent or ivy league. Each year Harvard University takes up to 10 applicants who have been homeschooled. “ In general, those kids do just fine,” says David Illingsworth, senior admissions officer at Harvard University.

He adds that the number of applications and inquiries from homeschoolers is ‘ definitely increasing. ’”(Klicka) The students' average scores were typicality in the “ 70th to 80th percentile, with 25% of homeschooled students enrolled one or more grades above their age-level peers in public and private

schools". (Klicka) Peer groups have less influence on this population than they generally have in lives of those who are educated more traditionally, while faculty members looked to play a critical role in the transition to college process, above and beyond the role they play in the lives of more traditionally educated students.

One might contest that, whether at a public school or in a homeschooled environment, grasping the learning material can be difficult for a child due to teaching style and their coordination with learning. Much of this is due to teaching style and its coordination with learning style. Because it's extremely difficult to teach in a way that best fits each student, a child may be "left in the dust" due to the lecturing of the teacher according to the majority of the students learning style.

Homeschooling, on the other hand, allows flexibility to define a curriculum that still meets the requirements, yet takes into account the best learning style for the child. Generally, educational success tends to be measured in academic achievement. If this standard alone were applied to home schooling, most people would agree that home schooling can be a successful alternative to public school. In terms of academics, sociability and the higher level of education, the home schooling process has indicated through test-scores evidence and increasing acceptance rates by college admissions to be a highly effective method of education.

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