

Introduction To Homeschooling



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The Washington Homeschool Organization (WHO) is a statewide, non-profit membership organization. Its mission is to serve the diverse interests of home-based education in Washington State. WHO is nonpartisan, nonsectarian, and nondiscriminating in its views of homeschooling and participation in its activities

Hello,

We are so pleased that you are considering homeschooling! Homeschooling is an effective and successful alternative to public and private education. Homeschooling allows parents to tailor their child's education to his or her needs, interests, talents, and abilities. And the teacher-to-student ratio can't be beat!

There are many reasons to homeschool in addition to the obvious educational ones. Most families find that socialization is a strong reason to homeschool. It provides opportunities for interaction with many people of differing ages and backgrounds, unlike so-called traditional educational settings.

An unexpected benefit of homeschooling is the close family relationships that develop because of the increase in time spent together. This time allows communication to flourish and enables parents naturally to pass on their values, ethics, morals, and beliefs to their children.

To help you assess whether homeschooling will work for your family, the Washington Homeschool Organization (WHO) has put together this packet of information. Additional information can be obtained at the WHO website, www.WashHomeschool.org. Following, you will find:

- Home-based Instruction in Washington (basic information)
- Advantages of Homeschooling
- Alternative Education Programs and Home-based Instruction
- Declaration of Intent (information and sample form)
- Part-time Enrollment Rights for Homeschoolers
- Resources About Homeschooling

The Washington Homeschool Organization is dedicated to disseminating information about homeschooling, connecting parents with homeschooling resources, and protecting homeschooling rights. If you appreciate what we do, help us continue to help homeschoolers: support homeschooling in Washington by joining WHO.

Sincerely,

The WHO Board

Advantages of Homeschooling

Here are just some of the advantages you might want to think about as you are considering a homeschooling lifestyle. This is only a partial list. Any homeschooling family could come up with more items for the list. We hope this list sparks your thought processes and helps you with your decision.

1. Parents are with their children all day.
2. Parents know and understand their children and are influential in their lives, even as they enter the teen years.
3. Homeschooling prevents premature parent-child separation, avoiding inappropriate pressure on children.
4. Children are allowed to mature at their own speeds, no “hurried child” syndrome.
5. Parents and other adults are the primary role models for homeschooled children.
6. Homeschooling provides positive and appropriate socialization with peers and adults.
7. Homeschooled children are largely free from peer pressure.
8. Homeschooled children are comfortable interacting with people of all ages.
9. Homeschooled children view adults as an integrated part of their world and as natural partners in learning.
10. Family values and beliefs are central to social, emotional and academic development.
11. Family life revolves around its own needs and priorities rather than the demands of school.
12. Homeschooling creates and maintains positive sibling relationships.
13. Homeschooling promotes good communication and emotional closeness within a family.
14. Research shows that the two most important factors in reading and overall educational success are positive home influence and parental involvement; homeschooling provides both.
15. A child’s natural thirst for learning is nurtured, not squelched, and learning becomes a lifelong joy.
16. Each child’s education can be tailored to his or her unique interests, pace, and learning style.
17. Homeschooling children have time to pursue their special interests and talents.
18. Homeschoolers enjoy unlimited educational resources; the world is their classroom, and resources abound in the community.
19. Homeschooling provides a high adult-child ratio for the student.
20. Homeschooled children become independent thinkers who are secure in their own convictions.

Home-based Instruction in Washington

On May 21, 1985 the Home-Based Instruction Law (RCW 28A.200) was adopted.

Compulsory Education

Children between the ages of eight and eighteen years old must attend the public school in which the child resides for the full time the school is in session unless the child is either attending an approved private school, is enrolled in an extension program or an approved private school, or is receiving home-based instruction. If a child under eight has been officially enrolled in public school, the parent must formally withdraw the child to homeschool. The Home-based Instruction Law affects children eight to eighteen years.

Public School Alternative Learning Programs or Parent-partnered Programs

The purpose of alternative learning (Washington Administrative Code 392.121.182) is to provide support to school districts for the operation of programs that recognize and address the diverse needs of students for courses of study provided in a non-traditional learning environment. Each student is considered a full time equivalent student for enrollment and state funding. Public School Alternative Learning Programs (PSALP's) or Parent-Partnered Programs (PPP's) are for students who are not home-based instruction or private school students.

Qualifying to Homeschool

Home-based instruction must be provided by a parent who is instructing his or her children only. In addition, one of the following four requirements must be satisfied:

1. The student is supervised by a certificated teacher. There must be a minimum of an average of one-hour contact per week with the student being supervised by the teacher.
2. The parent has either earned 45 college level quarter credit hours or the equivalent in semester hours.
3. The parent has completed a parent qualifying course in home-based instruction at a post-secondary institution or a vocational-technical institute.
4. The parent has been deemed qualified by the superintendent of the district in which the student lives.

Declaration of Intent

A declaration of intent to homeschool must be filed annually. It declares to the superintendent that the listed child(ren) will be homeschooled. This form can be obtained from the WHO website or the school district office. It may be turned in to any school district that will accept it; it does not have to be given to the home district. It must be filed annually by September 15 or within two weeks of the beginning of any public school quarter, trimester, or semester. The form includes the name(s) and age(s) of the child(ren); the name, address, and signature of the parent; and the date. If the parent has chosen option 1, above, homeschooling under the supervision of a certificated teacher, that must be noted on the form. See "Declaration of Intent" and a sample of the form in this packet for more information.

Annual Testing

Children who are being educated under the Home-based Instruction Law must be evaluated annually. There are two options for satisfying this part of the law.

1. A standardized achievement test approved by the state board of education and administered by a qualified individual, or
2. An assessment of the student's academic progress which is written by a certificated person who is currently working in the field of education.

Test results are part of the private homeschool record; no one else receives a copy. A list of those who provide test or assessment services is on the WHO website, www.WashHomeschool.org.

Required Subjects

The law states that instruction will consist of planned and supervised instructional and related educational activities including a curriculum and instruction in the basic skills of occupational education, science, mathematics, language, social studies, history, health, reading, writing and spelling and the development of an appreciation of art and music. The 1993 legislature passed House Bill 1209, Washington State's Education Reform Bill. Children receiving home-based instruction are exempt from this legislation.

Hours of Instruction

The hours of instruction are to be equal to the total hours per grade level established for approved private school. However, when determining the nature and quantity of instruction (this is, how to teach and for how long), parents should know that:

The legislature recognizes that home-based instruction is less structured and more experiential than a classroom education. Therefore, these provisions of the nature and quantity of instruction shall be liberally construed.

Record Keeping Requirements

Parents need to keep copies of the annual test scores or the written assessment and immunization records. Beyond that, parents decide which records to keep that relate to the instruction and educational activities they have provided. If a student enters a public or private school and if asked, the parent must provide copies of their annual test results.

High School Credit and Diploma

Credits can be granted, transcripts created, and a diploma granted by homeschool parents. Other options are available to homeschool students through accredited courses of study and a variety of well established commercial curricula. However, if the student plans to transfer to a public or private school, it is strongly recommended that parents contact school staff to determine the school's policy regarding transfer credits and high school completion. This planning is also recommended for technical schools, colleges and universities.

Home-based instruction students do not receive a Washington State Diploma.

The Washington Homeschool Organization hosts an annual homeschool graduation. Details are listed on the WHO website, www.WashHomeschool.org, in the early spring of that year's ceremony.

Homeschoolers in the Public Schools

Homeschoolers may take "courses" at the public school on a part-time basis. A "course" is defined as any instructional curricular service or activity. They may also avail themselves of ancillary services. These are defined as co-curricular services or activities. Some examples are counseling, testing, hearing tests and speech therapy, etc. While participating at the public school for part-time courses or for ancillary services, homeschoolers remain under the home-based instruction statutes.

Family Rights

The homeschool law states:

Parents who are causing their children to receive home-based instruction shall be subject only to those minimum state laws and regulations which are necessary in ensuring that a sufficient basic educational opportunity is provided to the children receiving such instruction. Therefore, all decisions relating to philosophy or doctrine, selection of books, teaching materials and curriculum, and methods, timing and place in the provision or evaluation of home-based instruction shall be the responsibility of the parent except for matters specifically referred to in Chapter 28A.225 RCW

Declaration of Intent Frequently Asked Questions

The Law, RCW 28A.200.010, Home-based instruction -- Duties of parents.

Each parent whose child is receiving home-based instruction under RCW 28A.225.010(4) shall have the duty to: *(1) File annually a signed declaration of intent that he or she is planning to cause his or her child to receive home-based instruction. The statement shall include the name and age of the child, shall specify whether a certificated person will be supervising the instruction, and shall be written in a format prescribed by the superintendent of public instruction. Each parent shall file the statement by September 15 of the school year or within two weeks of the beginning of any public school quarter, trimester, or semester with the superintendent of the public school district within which the parent resides or the district that accepts the transfer, and the student shall be deemed a transfer student of the nonresident district. Parents may apply for transfer under RCW 28A.225.220;*

1. Why file a declaration of intent?

1. A declaration of intent form is required by law to legally homeschool children between the ages of 8 and 18.
2. It informs the school district that it is no longer responsible for the education of your child.
3. It protects you from any truancy prosecution.

2. Who files the declaration of intent?

The parent or legal guardian of the student who will be homeschooled files the declaration.

3. Where do I get a declaration of intent? Where do I file it?

Contact the superintendent of schools of the school district in which you reside and request a declaration of intent to homeschool. File the declaration with the superintendent of your home school district only. No other department or program within the district should receive your declaration form. You will find the address at the bottom of the form.

4. My district's declaration of intent asks for more information than is shown on the example form. Do I have to provide it?

No. Any information you provide that is not on the above form is optional.

5. What does, "...supervised by a person certificated in Washington State..." refer to? Do I need to be supervised by a teacher?

No, you are not required to have a supervising teacher. A supervising teacher is one of the four ways you may qualify to homeschool under the Home-Based Instruction Law. IF you are qualifying to homeschool by using the services of a supervising teacher you must indicate that on the declaration of intent. You do not need to supply any information about that teacher.

6. Do I need to provide proof to the school district that I am qualified to homeschool?

No. Further, there is no provision in the law that allows school district to request this information.

7. Do I need to meet with district personnel concerning my decision to homeschool or to file my declaration of intent form?

No. You are in no way obligated, nor can the district require you to discuss your decision to homeschool with them.

8. Will my school district accept the declaration of intent at any time?

It is at the discretion of your school district to accept a declaration of intent that is filed outside of the deadlines of September 15th, or within two weeks of the beginning of a school quarter, trimester or semester.

Declaration of Intent to Provide Home-Based Instruction

This statement must be filed annually by September 15 or within two weeks of the beginning of any public school quarter, trimester, or semester. Send this form to the superintendent of the public school district within which you reside, or the district that accepts the transfer.

Public School District: _____

Address: _____

A parent who intends to cause his/her child or children to receive home-based instruction in lieu of attendance or enrollment in a public school, approved private school, or an extension program of an approved private school must file an annual declaration of intent to do so in the format prescribed below:

I do hereby declare that I am the parent, guardian, or legal custodian of the child(ren) listed below; that said child(ren) is (are) between the ages of 8 and 18 and as such are subject to the requirements found in chapter 28A.225 RCW Compulsory Attendance; I intend to cause said child(ren) to receive home-based instruction as specified in RCW 28A.225.010(4); and if a certificated person will be supervising the instruction, I have indicated

this by checking the appropriate space.

Child(ren)'s Name(s) Age

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

The home-based instruction will be supervised by a person certificated in Washington State pursuant to chapter 28A.410 RCW.

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Street Address: _____

City, State Zip: _____

The Law,

RCW 28A.200.010 Home-based instruction — Duties of parents.

Each parent whose child is receiving home-based instruction under RCW 28A.225.010(4) shall have the duty to:

(1) File annually a signed declaration of intent that he or she is planning to cause his or her child to receive homebased

instruction. The statement shall include the name and age of the child, shall specify whether a certificated person will be supervising the instruction, and shall be written in a format prescribed by the superintendent of public instruction. Each parent shall file the statement by September 15 of the school year or within two weeks of

the beginning of any public school quarter, trimester, or semester with the superintendent of the public school district within which the parent resides or the district that accepts the transfer, and the student shall be deemed a transfer student of the nonresident district. Parents may apply for transfer under RCW 28A.225.220;

Alternative Education Programs and Home-based Instruction

1. Some public alternative education programs have the word “homeschool” in their title. How do I know if I’m homeschooling, or in a public alternative education program?

The public alternative education programs (with increased oversight) are modeled on one of the ways we legally homeschool, namely, qualifying to homeschool by using a supervising teacher who meets with your child(ren) on an average of one hour a week.

You are probably in a public alternative education program if: you registered your child for the program on school district forms; you are meeting in a public school building; school district personnel (the teachers) are supervising or assessing your child; you have access to district curriculum materials, libraries, computers, etc.; your child has an alternative learning plan; you keep records on hours spent on academic pursuit at home; your child is assessed by the school personnel; your child is expected to take the WASL; and records are being kept at the school on your child.

If the district is receiving full funding for your child, then you are in a full time enrollment alternative education program. If you don’t know for sure, ask your district if they are receiving Full Time Enrollment (FTE) funding for your child.

2. My school district’s alternative education program is not demanding about religious curriculum, logging hours, essential learning requirement goals, student’s alternative learning plan, etc. Is this legal?

Some school districts are not in compliance with the alternative learning experience requirements or rules, WAC 392-121-182 or the state laws. Eventually these programs will conform with the WACs.

3. What concerns WHO about Public School Alternative Learning Programs?

These programs are being targeted at homeschoolers almost exclusively. In some districts, public school students are not eligible.

Evidence suggests that some school districts are deliberately misinforming parents interested in homeschooling as to their legal homeschooling option under Home-based Instruction and then misdirecting them to public alternative programs as their only “homeschooling” choice.

These alternative education programs present a professionally supervised and government regulated form of “homeschooling.” This redefinition of the term homeschooling to include supervised public education causes confusion among the general the public, the press, and government representatives about the true nature of independent homeschooling.

Information and Resources

The Washington Homeschool Organization web page, www.WashHomeschool.org

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) – the law – www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/ses.htm

Home-Based Instruction Law – RCW 28A.200

Private School Extension Programs – RCW 28A.195.010

Home-Based Instruction Parental Responsibilities – RCW 28A.225.010(4)

Home-Based students not subject to Goals 2000, WASL or Essential Learning Requirements – RCW 28A.200.010

Washington Administrative Code (WAC) – code to administer the law – www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/ses.htm

Alternative Learning Experience – WAC 392-121-182

OSPI’s Report on Alternative Learning Experience Program,
www.k12.wa.us/LearnTeachSup/Alternative/alestudy.pdf

Your Part-Time Enrollment Rights

Part-Time Enrollment is Guaranteed for Homeschoolers

Our state law guarantees part-time enrollment privileges for your homeschooled student in the public schools for any course or ancillary service that he or she would normally be qualified for. Part-time enrollment allows you to take advantage of public school programs without giving up your home-based, or homeschooling, status under the law. RCW 28A.150.350 Part-Time Students -- Defined -- Enrollment Authorized, section (2) is the law that guarantees part-time enrollment for privately schooled and homeschooled students.

The WACs, or rules, that administers the Part-Time Student law are in Chapter WAC 392-134 Finance -- Apportionment for Part-Time Public School Attendance. It details how part-time enrollment is administered. Of interest to homeschoolers are three WACs in that chapter:

- 1 WAC 392-134-010 Attendance Rights of Part-Time Public School
- 2 WAC 392-134-020 Provision of Educational Program to Part-time Public School Students -- Reports -- Sites
- 3 WAC 392-134-030 Compliance With Rules as a Condition of State Funding

The Attendance Rights WAC states very clearly part-time enrollment must be allowed. The Provision of Educational Program WAC states that courses must be provided to part-time students at the same level and quality as for full time students. And the Compliance With Rules WAC talks about the financial penalties the district must bear if it does not allow part-time enrollment.

If you have any trouble obtaining your part-time enrollment rights, you may want to take the law and rules discussed here to your district's administrators and school board (who will be especially interested in the penalties, WAC 392-134-030) and demand your enrollment rights. If part-time enrollment is still denied, we hope you will go to your state representatives and senators and complain loudly that your school district is denying you your rights.

Visit the WHO Website - WashHomeschool.org for Teaching Video & Audio on a Variety of Topics

- Introduction to Homeschooling by the WHO Board
- How to Homeschool High School by Janice Hedin
- Exploring College Admission by Janice Hedin
- A Homeschooler's Guide to High School Grades, Credits and Transcripts by Lee Binz
- Straight Talk about College by CollegePlus
- Vision More Than Just Sight by LeAnn Riegel, O.V.T.
- Homeschooling a Large Family by Amy Beckstead Leonard
- Homeschool Testing in Washington State by Val Howard
- Homeschooling and Public School Alternative Learning Programs What Are the Issues?
by Janice Hedin & Val Howard

Books

- How to Set up Learning Centers in Your Home by Mary Hood, Ph.D.
- Five in a Row & Before Five in a Row by Jane Claire Lambert
- The Science, Art, and Tools of Learning by Marilyn Howshall
- Dumbing Down Our Kids by Charles J. Sykes
- The Way They Learn by Cynthia Ulrich Tobias
- The Unschooling Handbook by Mary Griffith
- Honey For a Child's Heart by Gladys Hunt
- Books Children Love by Elizabeth Wilson
- Great Books for Boys by Kathleen Odean
- Teach Like Your Hair's on Fire by Rafe Esquith
- The First Year of Homeschooling Your Child by Linda Dobson
- The Teenage Liberation Handbook by Grace Llewellyn, she also co-wrote Guerrilla Learning with Amy Silver.
- For the Children's Sake by Susan Schaeffer Macaulay
- Homeschooling for Excellence, How Children Learn, Dumbing Us Down, Teach your Own, Learning all the Time, Instead of Education and How Children Fail by John Holt
- College without High School by Blake Boles
- The HomeScholar website and books by Lee Binz (homeschooling high school and transcripts)
- Anything by Ruth Beechick
- Educating the Whole Hearted Child by Sally Clarkson
- 100 Top Picks for Homeschooling by Cathy Duffy
- Homeschooling Our Children, Unschooling Ourselves by Allison Kee
- Why Don't Students Like School by Daniel T Willingham
- The Well Educated Mind and the Well Trained Mind by Susan Wise Bauer
- Why Gender Matters by Leonard Sax
- A Mind at a Time by Dr. Levine
- Home Grown Kids, Better Late than Early & The Successful Family Handbook by Raymond and Dorothy Moore
- Homeschooling for Excellence by David and Micki Colfax
- The Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling by Debra Bell
- Fundamentals of Home Schooling by Ann Lahrson-Fisher
- The Core by Leigh Bortins
- Leadership Education: The Phases of Learning by Oliver and Rachel DeMille
- Core Knowledge Series by E.D. Hirsch, JR
- Brain Integration Therapy by Diane Craft
- The Unprocessed Child: Living Without School by Valerie Fitzenreiter
- Challenging Assumptions in Education by Wendy Priesnitz (2000, The Alternate Press)
- The Book of Learning and Forgetting by Frank Smith (1998, Teacher's College Press)
- Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling by John Taylor Gatto (rev. 2002, New Society Publishers)
- In Their Own Way by Thomas Armstrong (rev. 2000, Jeremy P. Tarcher)
- Better Than School: One Family's Declaration of Independence & Child's Work: Taking Children's Choices Seriously by Nancy Wallace
- Deschooling Society by Ivan Illich (1971, Harper & Row)

Engage Learning with:

- Legos
- Wood blocks
- K'Nex
- Firing toys
- Hot Wheel cars and tracks
- Any type of construction sets
- Marble runs
- Big tub filled with rice/beans and measuring toys
- Large waterproof table cloth
- Magnets
- Measuring tools
- Math manipulative
- Hands on science supplies
- Play foam
- Art supplies
- Play dough
- Music instruments and cd's
- Wall maps
- Globe
- Microscopes
- Telescope
- Mindstorm robotic
- Collections of rocks, bugs, shells, money etc..
- Reference books
- Field guides
- World Book Encyclopedia
- Biographies
- Dictionaries
- Visual dictionaries
- Puzzles
- Art books
- Documentaries
- KEEP BUILDING A LIBRARY OF GREAT BOOKS
- Activities books
- Books on cd or on iPod
- Camera
- Pretend play toys and games
- Foreign language resources
- Cookbooks
- Baking supplies
- Poetry books
- Etc...

Board Games

- Which Way USA - geography
- Top Secret Adventures - geography
- Where in the Worls - geography
- Count Down - math
- Yahtzee - math, critical thinking
- Equate - math
- Pigs - math
- Blokus - strategy
- Mancala - strategy
- Monsterpocalypse - strategy
- Parcheesi - strategy
- Stratego - strategy
- Settlers of Catan - strategy
- Pentago - strategy
- Phase Ten - critical thinking
- Traffic Jam - critical thinking
- Age of Mythology - strategy and history
- Name Chase - history
- Risk - strategy
- Scrabble - spelling, reading and math
- Bananagrams - spelling, vocabulary
- Apples to Apples - reading, vocabulary
- Life - life skills and math
- Cash flow for Kids - finance
- Any version of Clue - critical thinking
- Chess - critical thinking
- Checkers - critical thinking
- Brain Box - any subject
- Rook - strategy and math

Outdoor Activities

- The library
- Zoo
- Science Centers
- Nature Centers
- Children museums
- Farmer's markets
- Art Museums
- History museums
- Bookstores
- Children Theater
- Aquariums
- Parks
- Nature walks
- Visit your area like a tourist
- Hikes
- Gardening, yard work
- Etc...

Catalogs

- Rainbow Resource Center
- Sonlight
- Timberdoodle
- Edmund Scientific
- The Great Courses
- Lego Education
- Home Science Tools
- Children Bookshop (store)

Magazines

- Ranger Rick (animals)
- Zoobooks
- Highlights
- Cricket (language)
- Popular Science, Popular Mechanic
- Kids Discover (different subject every issue)
- God's World News (current events from a Christian perspective, elementary age level)
- Top Story (current events from a Christian perspective)
- Club House (Christian magazine)
- How It Works (high school level)
- The Economist (current events, high school level)
- The Wall Street Journal

WHO MEMBERSHIP FORM

WHO is a nonprofit organization. Membership is open to all interested persons. Funds from the membership will be used to further the organization's purposes. Members gain free admission to the annual Homeschool Convention for their entire family, are eligible for special offers and products, and have voting privileges for all elections of the organization.

Mail a check or money order for the appropriate amount with this completed form to:

WHO, PO Box 66960, Seattle, WA 98166

Or join online at www.washhomeschool.org

Date _____

Parent's Names _____

Family Membership \$40.00*

Address _____

Donation \$ _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Total Enclosed \$ _____

County _____

*A family for these purposes is defined as 2 adults and dependent children.

Telephone _____

Email _____

All communication is done by email

Volunteer Positions

<input type="checkbox"/> Homeschool Convention	<input type="checkbox"/> Marketing
<input type="checkbox"/> Homeschool Graduation	<input type="checkbox"/> Advocacy
<input type="checkbox"/> Answering Homeschool Questions by Phone	<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Articles for the Newsletter
<input type="checkbox"/> Answering Homeschool Questions by Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Website Assistance