



HOMESCHOOLING

Homeschooling (also known as home education and home-based learning) is the education of children at home instead of in a public or private school. Instruction is typically overseen by parents and may be provided by parents, a consortium of parents, tutors, or the internet. Some districts will also allow homeschooled students to take courses at the local public school. The U.S. Government recognizes homeschooling as a right. Therefore, some form of homeschooling is allowed in all U.S. states.

State laws pertaining to homeschooling vary greatly. Therefore, it is important to consult your state and your local district before beginning a homeschooling program. Because all states have compulsory attendance laws, it is important to let your school district know you plan to homeschool. There are different registration requirements that your district may require. For example, you may have to file a notarized affidavit that promises that you will make sure your child meets your state and district's homeschooling requirements. Some states vary on whether standardized testing and documentation of schooling hours or a "portfolio" is required to obtain a high school diploma. In 2014, the state of Pennsylvania enforced an amendment to the homeschooling statute to include a new law, Act 196, which eliminates submission of portfolios for review by a superintendent and administration of standardized testing in 3rd, 5th, and 8th grades as requirements for obtaining a Commonwealth-issued diploma. Instead, Act 196 now requires more significant accountability on behalf of superintendents to ensure appropriate education is being implemented. Act 196 also gives parent-issued diplomas the same educational status as Commonwealth-issued diplomas.

Most states (including Pennsylvania) allow parents some control over deciding what to teach in a homeschool. A homeschool may emphasize a particular topic, including religion. Many parents choose to adopt the curriculum used by their local school. In Pennsylvania and many other states, parents may borrow copies of the

school district's materials to use in the homeschool program. In Pennsylvania, these materials are provided free of charge. Materials may also be obtained from the library, online, or purchased.

If your child has been identified as needing special education, there may be additional homeschool regulations that apply. For example, in Pennsylvania, parents must show that the homeschool program addresses the specific needs of the child, and the program must be approved by a teacher with a state special education certificate or by a licensed clinical psychologist or certified school psychologist. This can be achieved by utilizing additional resources to create an IEP (Individualized Education Plan), ISP (Individualized Service Plan), or SEP (Student Education Plan). Districts in Pennsylvania may choose to provide special education services to homeschooled students, but they are not required to do so.

Most states, including Pennsylvania, do have some mandatory courses that homeschooled students must take. These typically include spelling, reading, writing, science, geography, social studies, math, and health and safety. Some states offer a state-recognized graduation diploma for homeschooled students. In states that offer this (including Pennsylvania), there will be specific courses required for graduation.

Some parents join homeschool consortiums or cooperatives. These are groups of families who all homeschool their children. The children may meet on occasion for group instruction, which is provided by one of the parents or a selected tutor, and/or to go on field trips or to participate in extracurricular activities. In addition to exposing the children to different "teachers," this gives homeschooled children the opportunity for social interaction.

Social interaction may also happen at the local public school through extracurricular activities. In Pennsylvania and some other states, homeschooled students must be allowed to participate in clubs, musical groups, athletics, and other school district opportunities to the extent they are otherwise eligible to take part (for example, trying out for and landing a role in the school play).

Related Articles:

- [State Standardized Testing](#)
- [Graduation Testing](#)
- [Public Schools](#)

- [Charter Schools](#)
- [Private and Parochial Schools](#)
- [Private Tutoring](#)
- [Non-Educational Placements](#)

Additional Resources:

- [PA Overview of Homeschooling](#)
- [Homeschooling in Pennsylvania: A Fact Sheet](#)
- [Teaching My Child with Special Needs, from the HSLDA](#)

The Center for Autism Research and The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia do not endorse or recommend any specific person or organization or form of treatment . The information included within the CAR Autism Roadmap & trade; and CAR Resource Directory & trade; should not be considered medical advice and should serve only as a guide to resources publicly and privately available . Choosing a treatment, course of action, and/or a resource is a personal decision, which should take into account each individual's and family's particular circumstances .