

12 Benefits of Joining a Homeschool Co-op

Homeschoolers have many good reasons to join a homeschool co-op. You may want to spend time with families with a similar education philosophy, to find friends for yourself and your children, to expand your child's educational opportunities, or just to have fun with other homeschoolers. Whatever your reason for thinking about joining a co-op, a homeschool co-op has many advantages for both parents and children.

Here are 12 great benefits, based on feedback from families who have participated in our co-op these last few years.

- 1. A homeschool co-op maximizes your limited time and gives you a break from teaching every subject.** If certain subjects are already being taught at co-op, you can spend your time at home teaching your child other subjects.
- 2. At a co-op you can draw on the expertise of other people to teach subjects you may dislike or be weak in.** Among a variety of classes, our co-op offers history, English and science each semester. So if you don't want to correct essays or possibly dissect a frog on your kitchen counter, co-op is for you!
- 3. Your student can take classes in subjects you may never even have thought of, taught by experts or parents passionate about those fields.** Over the years our co-op has offered Advanced Biology: Anatomy and Physiology, High School English, Art, Government and computer classes, all taught by "experts" in their field!
- 4. Students benefit by learning from someone else for a change, adapting to other teaching styles besides yours, and getting a little exposure to the "classroom" experience.** A co-op offers the opportunity for your child to sit under another's authority and be part of a classroom. Yet you are still the primary teacher of your children at co-op, so you still maintain control over your child's education. It's the best of homeschool and the best of private school!
- 5. A co-op can make homeschooling affordable because families share expenses.** Members have access to science lab equipment and other materials and supplies that normally would be too expensive for one family to afford, or everyone purchases books and materials in bulk to receive discounts or save on shipping. In addition, at our co-op, fees pay only for supplies, not salaries.
- 6. Some subjects are best taught in group settings, such as public speaking, drama, and P.E.** At a co-op your homeschooler will have access to an audience for performances and oral reports, or to lab partners for science experiments (*pictured left*). In P.E., elementary children learn those childhood favorites like Red Rover and Dodge Ball, while junior high and high school students play kickball and ultimate frisbee.

7. Co-ops provide accountability, so families are more likely to stay on track. This is really important for high school students trying to earn credits or families trying to find the time, or inclination, for science or creative writing.

8. Co-ops provide a healthy competition. Positive peer pressure from other students often helps their attitudes toward their assignments, and knowing students must share with others in the class provides the necessary motivation to do their best.

9. A co-op offers encouragement, support and guidance from other homeschooling parents and their families. Many parents are so relieved to find another parent going through the same issue or to talk with a parent who has already gone through a similar situation successfully. At co-op, you can spend your break time learning from others' experiences and sharing your own.

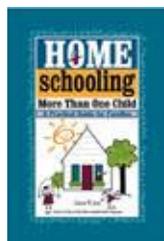
10. A homeschool co-op provides opportunities for friendships and socialization for your children. Since some teenagers, in particular, may feel they are missing the high school experience, a co-op may fill in the social gaps for your child.

11. Character growth is developed because children learn how to share, interact with peers in a group setting, and be a friend. Unlike a school, our co-op classes cross grade and age barriers, so students learn to relate and interact with others of all ages, not just their peer group. They learn all this with you nearby, but not necessarily with them every moment, giving them some independence in a safe, Christian environment.

12. A homeschool co-op provides a fun break from home that the entire family can look forward to each week. How many extracurricular activities can you say that about?!

Whether you join a co-op for social, educational or other reasons, the experiences are sure to benefit your entire family!

Adapted to represent our co-op and used with permission from:



About the Author:

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and homeschool co-op. For more information on her books and state history curriculum, visit her web site at www.carrenjoye.com.