

- **What if my child wants to play sports?**

Home schooled students are eligible to participate in township or community sports. Organized sports such as soccer, softball, baseball, basketball, roller hockey, and tennis are often offered by home school groups. Other students prefer to take lessons in karate, swimming, and fencing. Some private schools allow home schooled students to participate in their sports programs if the student is attending a class.

- **What about socialization?**

Socialization begins in the home, where each child must learn to interact with parents and siblings first. Character is shaped in children before they leave the home. Home schooled children are often involved in sports, community programs (like 4-H), co-ops, home school or community bands and choirs, and educational field trips. Many also volunteer their services at nursing homes or schools for the mentally challenged. Attending church provides multiple programs and youth groups for children. Home schooling more closely resembles the "real world" since, as adults, we routinely deal with people of varying ages. It also helps prevent peer dependency that occurs in a single-age classroom. However, there should always be a greater emphasis on academics than on socialization.

- **How are diplomas issued?**

A parent, as their child's teacher, may create a diploma at the completion of high school. Some curricula and correspondence schools provide diplomas or certificates of completion. A home school student may also take the GED (Graduate Equivalency Diploma). Colleges gladly accept the portfolios and essays of home schooled students as proof of high school completion equivalency.

- **Do home schooled students go to college?**

Most home schoolers go on to college and do very well. Because of their drive, self-motivation, and involvement in extra-curricular activities, home schoolers are accepted at even the most prestigious colleges and universities.

- **What if I have legal problems resulting from home schooling?**

Many families choose to join the HSLDA (Home School Legal Defense Association). For more information, go to <http://www.hslda.org>.



Outside the Bank

Shopping in Wilson's Mercantile



Visiting the Historic Houses of Odessa, DE

What is the G.C.C.H.S.A.?

The acronym stands for the Gloucester County Christian Home School Association, which is a group that serves home schoolers in Gloucester County, New Jersey, and its surrounding counties. Families join as members and, as such, are afforded the benefits of the group. The group is governed by parents elected to the General Board of Trustees. Children in grades 7-12 can also serve on the Jr./Sr. High Board.

Statement of Purpose

The GCCHSA is an association of Christian parents who have chosen to educate their children at home, believing that this is their Biblical responsibility. The purpose of the GCCHSA is to provide information, support, encouragement, activities, and field trips that would enhance the education of their children.

Becoming a Member

To join the GCCHSA, obtain an Application form from the website (<http://gcchsa.org>). Requirements include filling out the application form, signing a Statement of Faith, being a member of a local church that agrees with the GCCHSA Statement of Faith (or providing a written testimony of salvation), and paying annual dues.

Activities and Benefits

Parents are encouraged to become involved with GCCHSA activities. The GCCHSA provides a variety of activities and events, including educational field trips, sports and physical education activities, annual standardized testing (Iowa Achievement Tests), literary recitals, parent support meetings, mom's night out, and graduation ceremonies. There are also separate activities for Jr./Sr. High students. Information regarding GCCHSA, local area, state, and national home school events are provided in a monthly newsletter, the Patchwork Paper. As well as practical benefits, being a member of the GCCHSA offers intangible benefits such as enrichment and edification of families by the friendships formed within the home school community and encouragement from other home schoolers.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

- <http://gcchsa.org>
- <http://www.hslda.org>
- <http://enochnj.org>
- Internet search for "home school"



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Serving Christian Home Schooling Families in Gloucester County and Surrounding Southern New Jersey Counties

<http://gcchsa.org>

What is Home Schooling?

Home schooling is the process of educating school-aged children at home rather than at a school. It is one of the fastest growing trends in education in the United States.

Societies have practiced home schooling for centuries. In North America, home schooling was widespread until the mid-1800s, when compulsory school attendance laws and the development of professional educators came together to institutionalize education. Some preeminent historical figures who were home schooled include several presidents, such as George Washington, John Quincy Adams, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Other home schooling successes in American history include Thomas Edison, Gen. Robert E. Lee, Booker T. Washington, and Mark Twain.

Although home schooling was practiced in a limited way after the 1870s, it was not until the 1960s that this practice claimed attention from a large number of parents and educators, giving credence and national presence to the growing home school movement.

Home schooling means learning outside of the public or private school environment. The word "home" is not really accurate, and neither is "school." For most families, their "schooling" involves being out and about each day, learning from the rich resources available in their community and environment and through interactions with other families who home school.

Essentially, home schooling involves a commitment by a parent or guardian to oversee their child's educational development. There are almost two million home schoolers in this country.



Aboard the ferry to Fort Delaware on Pea Patch Island



In Fort Delaware's School Room



Even a home school mom gets involved in firing the cannon!

Forge in the blacksmith shop



Why Home School?

Parents choose to home school their children for a variety of reasons, including:

- a wish to provide religious instruction and to impart a certain set of beliefs and morals
- higher academic performance through one-on-one instruction
- the ability to develop stronger parent-child relationships
- the opportunity to escape negative peer pressure, including drugs, through more controlled interactions with peers
- the opportunity for children to interact with children in a variety of age groups as well as with other adults
- an inability to pay private school tuition
- dissatisfaction with public education/ curriculum
- the lack of discipline in public schools
- concern about the environment and safety of schools and a desire to provide a physically safer environment in which to learn

Frequently Asked Questions

• Is it legal to home school in New Jersey?

Since 1993, the practice has been legal in all 50 states. Regulations for home schooling vary widely from state to state. Some states require a state-approved curriculum, conduct home visits periodically, and require that home schooling parents be certified teachers. Others only require that you keep a child's portfolio of schoolwork and have it evaluated by a certified teacher at the end of the year. Still others, like New Jersey, may not require a parent to have any contact with the state and have no minimum educational standards for the home schooling parent. (See NJ Legislature N.J.S.A. 18A:38-25.) For more information, go to <http://www.enochnj.org>.

• Do you have to be a certified teacher to home school your children?

A parent does not need to be a certified teacher to home school in New Jersey.

• What types of curriculum are available?

The most common option is a traditional textbook curriculum, usually self-explanatory and/or containing teacher guides and additional resources for assistance. Another option is a textbook curriculum delivered via CD for computer, or a DVD for television in which the child becomes part of a video classroom. Families desiring a strong measure of structure should consider curricula offering pre-planned lessons and a well-defined course of study, perhaps even considering enrolling in a satellite school or on-line school offering ongoing counseling, oversight, and grading of material. Families desiring less structure might consider a unit study program or perhaps even developing their own curriculum from resources available at home and in the community.

• How do I find curriculum?

Curriculum can be viewed at annual curriculum fairs, such as those sponsored by ENOCH (Education Network of Christian Homeschoolers of New Jersey) and CHAP (Christian Homeschool Association of Pennsylvania). It can also be purchased directly from a publisher or supplier (e.g., A Beka Book, Bob Jones) or a satellite school (e.g., Christian Liberty), or can be ordered on-line from a distributor such as Christian Book Distributors.

• Are there alternatives to teaching the more difficult subjects like algebra, geometry, and chemistry?

Children can be tutored one-on-one by other parents or older students who are proficient in these subjects. A parent or other educator may offer to teach an advanced course to a group of students in his/her home or other location. Also, students may choose to take a course at a co-op, private school, or community college.

• What is a co-op?

A co-op is a group of students that meet weekly to enrich their learning through elective and special interest courses, usually taught by parents of the children involved. Creativity and individuality are stressed in these classes in an atmosphere that encourages social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth and development of the child as a whole.

• What testing services are available to students?

Many home school groups offer yearly standardized testing such as the Iowa or Stanford Achievement Tests to its members. Qualifying parents can also administer these tests at home to their children. All parents can administer the California Achievement Tests. The PSATs and SATs can be taken at regional high schools.

Jr./Sr. High students leading VBS on the beach in Ocean City, NJ

