

You Can Homeschool!

Through High School



Benefits of High School at Home



Homeschooling through high school can be a wonderful journey with your teen. These four years span the transformation from awkward adolescent to accomplished, confident young adult. During this time, you have the opportunity to reinforce family relationships, guide your teen as he practices good decision-making skills, and provide support as he learns to stand firm against pressure to conform to undesirable standards.


In addition, the flexibility of homeschooling allows young people to spread their wings and explore their interests to a much greater extent than their traditionally educated peers.

Homeschooling gives the gift of time—extra time to practice a musical instrument or train for the swim team. Time to write the novel she has bouncing around in her head. Time to start his own business or do an internship. Time to serve the community and church. And time to deepen family bonds.

We invite you to consider the option of homeschooling through high school. You probably have many questions, and even a few concerns. Hopefully, this booklet will help address those.

www.hslda.org/highschool

This booklet is just a *starting point*—for even more information and a wide range of helpful resources, visit our **Home-schooling Thru High School** web page at www.hslda.org/highschool.

The  indicates that specific related resources can be found at www.hslda.org/highschool/YCHLinks.



Before the bell rings

WHAT ARE YOUR TEEN'S EXPECTATIONS?

What are yours? Take some time to thoughtfully discuss this important decision and how it would work in your family. Consider together the pros and cons of homeschooling through high school. Share the reasons you believe homeschooling is the best choice for him or her right now and together write down your vision and goals for the high school years.

CAN I REALLY TEACH HIGH SCHOOL-LEVEL COURSES?

Yes, you can! Depending on the curriculum you choose, most of the preparation may have been done for you. Teacher guides, CDs, DVDs and videos, lesson plans, unit studies, tests, and quizzes are available from most

publishers. As alternatives to teaching high school courses yourself, you can hire a tutor, enlist the aid of another family member or a friend, use an online or video course, enroll in a distance learning course, sign up for a high school co-op class, or take advantage of dual enrollment.

No one is an expert in everything! In the subjects you feel shaky on, you can learn right along with your student. By providing an example of what it means to be an independent learner, you are teaching your teen lessons that will last the rest of his or her life.

IS THERE HELP AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE?

Absolutely! Many local and state homeschool organizations lend support to those

teaching high schoolers. Classes and activities for homeschooled high school students are offered in many areas.

On the Homeschooling Thru High School website (hsllda.org/highschool), HSLDA has gathered a wide variety of resources to help you prepare for navigating the high school years. And be sure to read HSLDA's *Home School Court Report* column, "Getting There," which provides information and encouragement for those just beginning as well as those finishing the high school journey.



The Domenech Family

Confidence for the future

I remember when we started homeschooling back in 1985. I wondered if I could keep homeschooling once we reached high school. I wanted my children to be in a healthy atmosphere, spiritually and emotionally, but could I really prepare them for college and a future career?

We used a combination of the University of Nebraska's Independent Study High School and our local community college for our high school program. Benjamin, the oldest of our four children, attended the College of William and Mary on a full-tuition academic scholarship. Emily, our second-born, graduated from the University of Virginia. Following in their footsteps, Ellis, our second son, is studying history at George Mason University. He received a four-year Army ROTC scholarship and swims on GMU's Division 1 team. Our youngest, 14-year-old Florence, is enjoying her 8th-grade Calvert School lessons, which are a great preparation for high school.

If you feel God is calling you to continue homeschooling during the high school years, let me encourage you—you can do it, with His help. Though we've had the typical ups and downs of homeschooling life, I can look back on the results of my daily work with our children, and have confidence that He's prepared them for whatever the future holds.

— Jeanne Domenech

About 95% of home-school graduates are glad that they were homeschooled.

Approximately 82% of homeschool graduates would homeschool their own children.

Of 812 study participants (formerly home-educated) who had children age 5 or older, 74% were already homeschooling.

Dr. Brian Ray,
Homeschooling Grows Up,
HSLDA, 2003.

If you are an HSLDA member, our high school coordinators are available to answer your questions by phone and by email.

WHERE DO I FIND CURRICULUM?

Talk to veteran homeschooling parents in your area for tips. You can find many resources at state homeschool conferences, at curriculum fairs, in catalogs, in homeschooling magazines, and on the internet. 📖

HOW DO I DEVELOP A 4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL PLAN?

Your teen's post-high school goals are the primary consideration when planning out a high school program—he may need your help in discovering his interests, skills, and possible future vocational goals.

Most students fall into one of three main categories: college bound, not planning to attend college, or

interested in applying to selective colleges. To determine what high school courses your student needs, refer to HSLDA's online brochure, *Developing a Plan for High School: Sample 4-Year Plans*. To help you determine your student's current academic level, you may want to use a standardized achievement test or a curriculum provider's placement test (often free). 📖

If you are withdrawing your student from a public or private school, follow the above steps and also ask the school for your teen's current transcript.

To help you develop a four-year plan for high school, check out college entrance requirements and state high school graduation requirements. 📖

WHAT ABOUT TRANSCRIPTS AND A DIPLOMA?

A transcript is a concise record of your student's high school courses. Begin creating a transcript for your teen in 9th grade (or whenever he or she completes the first high school-level courses) and then simply add to the transcript upon completion of each high school year. 📖

Simplify your recordkeeping by using software or a handbook such as *The High School Handbook* by Mary Schofield or *Homeschooling High School* by Jeanne Gowen Dennis. 📖

A diploma is a document that bears record of the completion

Finding the "homeschool specialists"

I thought I could only homeschool through middle school because I thought I was responsible for teaching every subject. However, I discovered that just as high school teachers specialize, I could send my children to "homeschool specialists"—other moms who had a passion for a particular subject and the knowledge to teach it. In fact, one mom—a science teacher with a well-equipped lab and experiments that really worked (unlike mine)—inspired my daughter to become a registered nurse.

We also used the local community college for several classes, which showed my children that college wasn't scary and that they were ready for it.

— Jane Choi

of a prescribed course of study. In most states, the homeschooling parent can award a diploma. HSLDA's legal department has answered the most frequently asked questions regarding homeschool diplomas at hslida.org/highschool/diploma.asp.

HOW DO I TEACH HIGH SCHOOLERS ALONG WITH YOUNGER CHILDREN?

There are many ways to address this challenge. Try focusing on your younger students while your high schoolers are completing assignments, taking online courses, or attending classes outside the home. If your younger children take naps, use this time to give attention to older students. As time permits, enlist older students as teaching assistants for the

younger children. Writing out assignments for each child the night before will give a smooth beginning to the day.

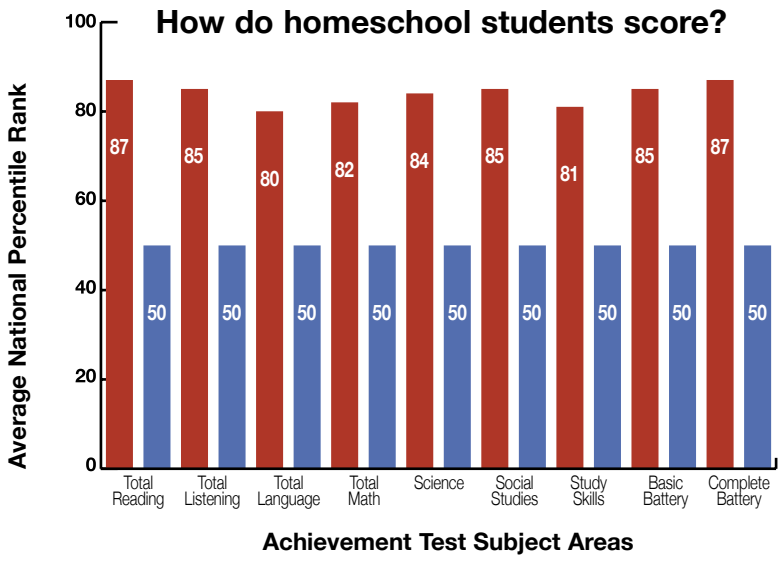
Depending on the maturity and academic level of your high schoolers, some subjects can be combined and taught to students in different grade levels at the same time. However, careful attention should be paid to maintaining high school-level work for the older students.

As your high schooler progresses, one of your goals will be to inculcate ownership of his education. Under your guidance, and with prompting as necessary, he should grow in his ability to learn independently and handle researching, studying, and writing.

Homeschool K-12 National Average Scores

Public School K-12 National Average Scores

Dr. Brian Ray, *Home Schooling Achievement*, HSLDA, 2001.



A photograph of two young women sitting outdoors, laughing and talking. The woman on the left has long dark hair and is wearing a blue top. The woman on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a pink floral top. They are both wearing blue jeans. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with greenery.

What kind of memories will my teen have?

Are you wondering whether the choice to homeschool means your teen will miss out on the exciting experiences and fond memories you remember from your high school days? Make a list of the activities that are important to your student and the experiences you would like him to have. Then read on and see if homeschooling doesn't provide as many or even more opportunities than a traditional school environment for your high schooler to learn and grow!

WHERE WILL MY STUDENT FIND FRIENDS?

Your high schooler can find friends in many of the same places other kids find friends—at church, in your homeschool support group, and through extracurricular activities such as 4-H, Scouts, a part-time job, community volunteering, music lessons, theater productions, debate,

and on and on. Extracurricular activities will also help round out your teen's education, providing opportunities for developing leadership skills, communication skills with multi-age groups, and a heart for ministry.

WHAT ABOUT THE PROM AND GRADUATION?

Your teen can build special high school memories with friends and family. Creative options include attending a local high school prom as a guest or working with a support group to host a "homeschool prom" or formal banquet.

For graduation, you might host your own ceremony or combine resources with other families for a joint graduation ceremony, held at a church or public facility with a reception. Or you may opt to celebrate this milestone in another way—a special trip, an art show, a concert, an original play, a party, or a barbeque honoring those who have impacted your student's life.

Be sure to check out the many options for homeschool events and graduation supplies online.



"Many homeschooled teens supplement their education with community college classes, taking over the direction of their education much earlier than other kids their age."

Fox News, "First Wave of Homeschoolers Comes of Age,"
April 5, 2002.


Making memories

A co-op provided friends for our son and a support group for me. Homeschool classes were an introduction to the classroom environment—learning in a group and from a lecture. Community college provided more classroom experience and counted as both high school and college credit. Basketball, baseball, and bowling teams met the need for sports. Our son is now doing very well at Cedarville University in Ohio and loves the college experience.

— Penny Gole

HOW CAN MY TEEN PARTICIPATE IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS?

With more and more families choosing to homeschool through the high school years, new opportunities for participation in high school sports are becoming available. Options include:

- **Public school teams**—Check to see if your state has equal access laws which allow homeschooled students to try out for spots on local public school teams.
- **Private school teams**—Contact local private schools to see if they permit homeschooled students to try out for their teams.
- **Homeschool teams**—New teams are being organized throughout the country by homeschool groups and parents. Check out state-by-state resources online. 



what kind of memories will my teen have?

Homeschoolers “are the epitome of Brown students,” says Dean Joyce Reed. “They are self-directed, they take risks, and they don’t back off.”

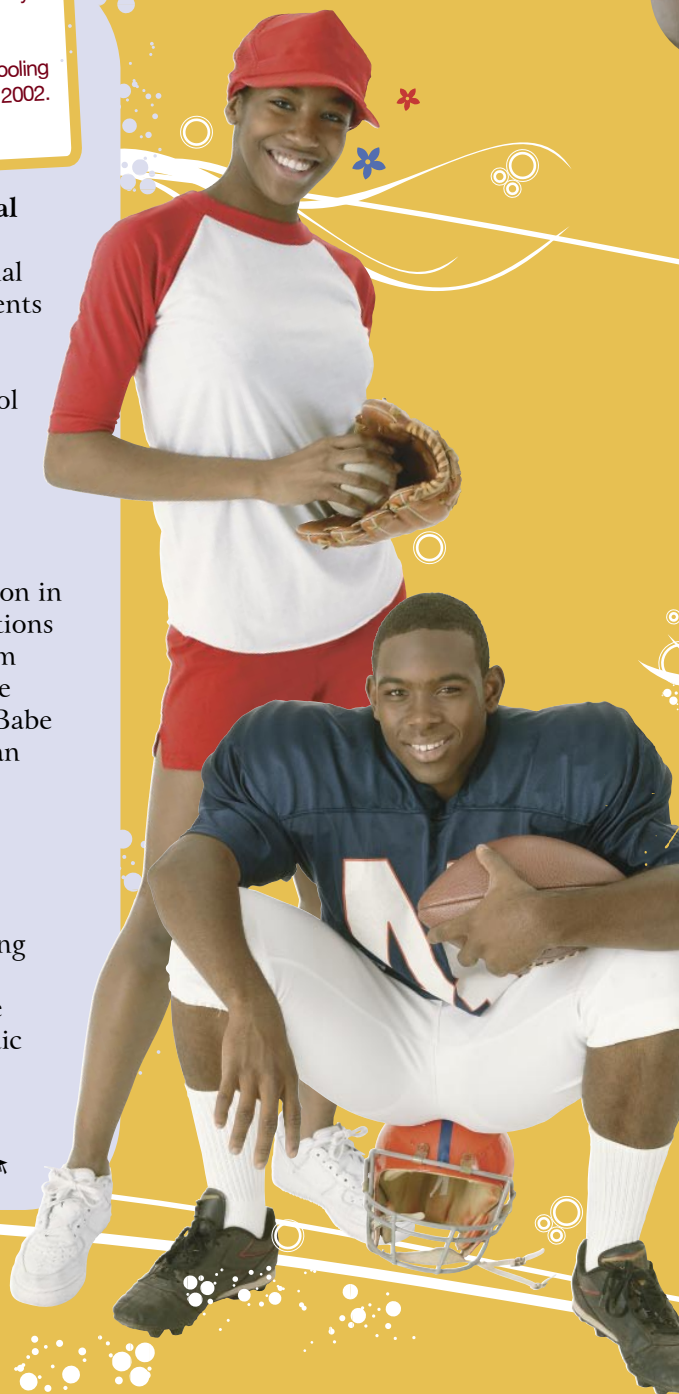
Brown Alumni Magazine, “Homeschooling Comes of Age,” January/February 2002.

- **National and regional homeschool sports associations**—National and regional tournaments are increasing, as are organizations offering support for homeschool teams. For a listing, visit our landing page. 🎓

An excellent alternative to school sports is participation in community sports associations such as neighborhood swim teams, YMCA, YWCA, the Amateur Athletic Union, Babe Ruth League, and American Legion Baseball.

WHAT ABOUT SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS?

If your teen plans to play college sports, start thinking ahead so you can ensure that she complies with the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligibility requirements formulated specifically for homeschooled students. 🎓





WHAT IF MY TEEN DOESN'T WANT TO BE HOMESCHOOLED?

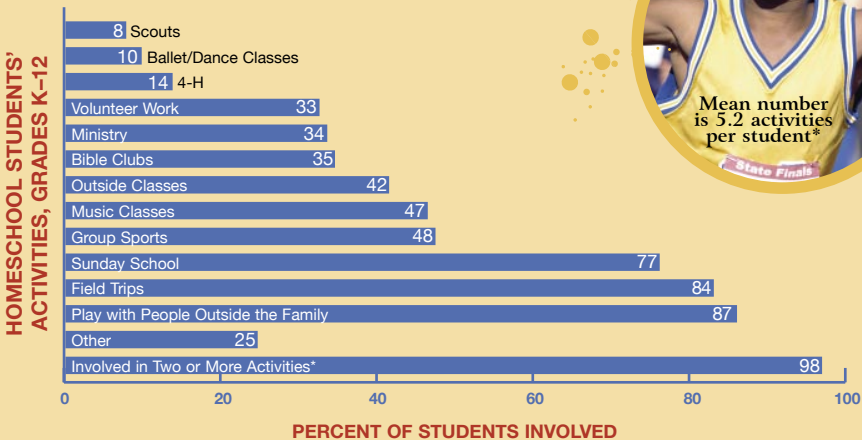
Don't be discouraged if your student wants to attend a school outside of the home. Some teens tend to concentrate on what they think they are missing instead of considering the many advantages of high school at home, such as a flexible schedule, time to devote to subjects of personal interest, the ability to begin college-level work while still in high school, and opportunities for internships.

If your young person misses classroom interaction, consider having him or her take a course with class participation either online, at a homeschool co-op, or at a community college. Encourage your homeschooled teen to get involved in extracurricular programs and activities such as sports, theater, debate, choir, and volunteer work.

Many homeschool graduates later say that even though they were reluctant to be homeschooled at first, they are now glad that their parents persevered and stayed the course.

If you have a reluctant student and need some encouragement, visit our landing page for links to a number of great articles. 🎓

FIG. 2: HOMESCHOOLERS' ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT



Footnote: (Ray, 1997) * Participation in 2 or more of the 12 activities does not include "other activities." See Table 8 in study.

Life after high school



Occupations of the home educated.

	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Farmer, farm manager.....	14	.3
Homemaker, home educator.....	383	7.3
Laborer.....	68	1.3
Manager.....	127	2.4
Military.....	68	1.3
Office worker.....	313	6.0
Operator of machines.....	8	.2
Owner small business/restaurant, contractor.....	129	2.5
Professional 1 (e.g., accountant, RN, artist).....	359	6.8
Professional 2 (e.g., minister, doctor, college teacher).....	103	2.0
Protective service.....	21	.4
Sales.....	91	1.7
School teacher (but not college).....	82	1.6
Service worker (e.g., hair stylist, janitor).....	179	3.4
Technical (e.g., computer programmer, draftsman).....	232	4.4
Tradesperson (e.g., baker, mechanic, carpenter).....	80	1.5
Full-time student.....	2573	49.0
Other.....	417	7.9
Total.....	5247	100.0

WHAT ABOUT COLLEGE?

The first wave of homeschool graduates has already proven itself in community colleges and universities across the nation. Many admissions officers are familiar with homeschooling, and some institutions even post their homeschool admission policies on their websites. Colleges want focused and motivated students who love learning. With accurate transcripts, proper documentation of their high school experiences, and the appropriate college entrance test scores, homeschooled applicants are welcome at most post-secondary schools.

A great way to maximize your student's chances of acceptance is to visit college websites and check out their minimum high school credit requirements. Take these into consideration as you

plan out your student's high school program. 🎓

Homeschooled students also have many opportunities to earn college credit while still in high school through dual enrollment, distance learning, Advanced Placement (AP) courses, and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests. 🎓

WHAT IF MY STUDENT DOESN'T GO TO COLLEGE?

Encourage your teen to develop his interests as much as possible during high school, and provide him with opportunities to take classes in a variety of subjects. Career testing can help your student investigate possible career choices. Start with career resources found online or at your local library. Check our website for suggestions. 🎓

An apprenticeship or internship is a worthwhile experience for any student. A homeschooled student may have the flexibility to work several hours a week with a professional in an area that interests him. Sources of possible internships may be acquaintances and friends, local businesses, nonprofit organizations, and political campaigns. 🎓

Different paths

One thing we have noticed in our journey with our five oldest children is that they each are unique with different interests, and they take different paths to attain their goals.

Some of our kids have earned a college degree by finding creative ways to afford college—our second daughter received a full scholarship to a small Christian college, and our second son's appointment to a military academy came with a full scholarship. Our kids have also pursued alternatives to college that are much less expensive and still accomplish their desired goal.

— Brad and Fawn Winsted

Benefits of HSLDA membership



WHY SHOULD I BECOME AN HSLDA MEMBER?

As a member of Home School Legal Defense Association, you are joining 80,000 homeschooling families across the country in support of homeschool freedom. HSLDA gives you 24/7 legal protection of your right to homeschool. Other member benefits include email updates on homeschool legislation, discounts with retailers nationwide, and a variety of homeschool resources.

Your membership fee helps not only your family, but the entire network of homeschooling families across the United States. HSLDA represents families to their school districts and in court, lobbies for favorable state and federal legislation, and speaks out in the media in support of homeschooling.

Another advantage of membership is HSLDA's support during the high school years. Wondering how to make academic decisions, juggle your schedule, stay motivated, or seek specialized help? As an HSLDA member, you can receive personalized assistance from our high school and special needs coordinators. Even after your students have graduated from high school, HSLDA will represent them in the workplace and in college if they encounter discrimination because they were homeschooled.

WHY CONTINUE MY MEMBERSHIP WITH HSLDA WHEN HOMESCHOOL LAWS ARE SO FAVORABLE IN MY STATE?

The privilege to homeschool is a hard-won victory. If we do not remain vigilant in protecting our freedoms, we will lose them. Because laws in one state can impact laws in other states, we need to stand together to preserve the right to homeschool for our grandchildren.

HOW DO I JOIN HSLDA?

Visit hslda.org/join or call 540-338-5600.

We needed HSLDA, personally, twice in 13 years of homeschooling. However, even more important is that they are protecting our freedoms every single day.

— Laurie C.

We joined HSLDA about 18 years ago to help support other homeschoolers who were in "difficult" states. The day a social worker showed up on our doorstep, we understood just how powerful it was to have the attorney deal with it and not to be alone.

— Collin and Margie A.

HSLDA means confidence and protection to our military family of nine while homeschooling for nine years on three different continents, and in three countries and three states.

— Michelle F.



HSIDA

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