

## Help! Should I Homeschool?

There are many things to look at in deciding whether homeschooling is right for your family. The most important thing is to pray for wisdom in making a decision. Then, do your research. The internet is a good place to start. Other families that are already homeschooling is another good resource.

There are as many reasons to homeschool as there are homeschoolers. They range from concern over the social aspect of traditional school (public or private), academic concerns (from learning struggles to high achievers), illness, family convenience, spiritual concerns and on and on. Whatever your reason for making this decision, there are things that you need to know in order to be successful.

First, homeschooling is legal in all 50 states. The laws vary and it is important for you to be familiar with the law in your state. A great resource is HomeSchool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA). To access their website, check the links on our homepage. HSLDA membership is something for you to consider. On the HSLDA website you see that:

*Home School Legal Defense Association is a nonprofit advocacy organization established to defend and advance the constitutional right of parents to direct the education of their children and to protect family freedoms. Through annual memberships, HSLDA is tens of thousands of families united in service together, providing a strong voice when and where needed.*

Second, there is no ONE right way to homeschool. While there are requirements for subjects to be covered and for high school graduation, one of the blessings of homeschooling is that you can adjust the curriculum to fit your student and family. So, your science class might not look the same as another family's science class even if you are covering the exact same material.

Some of the ways that homeschooling differs between families is in the amount of interaction you have with other homeschooling families. Some families do all their academic activities at home, with little or no interaction. Others get together with other families for non-academic subjects such as art or gym. Still others might be part of a co-op covering academic subjects. Others enroll their students in local or online classes for some of their academic subjects. (Mount Sophia would fall into this category for the classes). The important thing is to find a solution that works for your student and family.

As with anything that is valuable, it is important for you to count the cost. What is the cost of homeschooling? For the primary teacher, there is a loss of freedom. Teaching your children takes time - sometimes lots of time! There is time spent researching curriculum, planning lessons, teaching, and grading. There is also time spent taking your child to sports and music lessons and other activities that might otherwise have been offered in school.

The rewards? The rewards are great. You have the satisfaction of knowing that you followed what God was asking you to do. You have the satisfaction of spending time with your children and helping them to grow. You have the opportunity to share your faith and live life in the day-to-day with your family. You become part of a community that will help you and your children grow. You will be acquainted with your children's friends - and their friends' parents. You will be able to help your children explore the direction that God is leading them. You will have more flexibility with your schedule. You will get to know your children in a new way.