



Advantages and Disadvantages of Home-Schooling

By Judy Arnall

Advantages

- One-to-one teacher-child ratio.
- Your child's needs and your families needs always come first.
- Parenting style can fit your teaching and child's learning style.
- The curriculum can be tailored to the child's current interest.
- Children who are interested in what they learn retain much more material.
- Concepts can be covered when the child is ready for them, rather than when the school wants to present them.
- In many jurisdictions, parents will receive funding to offset the cost of sports, arts, supplies, toys, music, activities and lessons.
- Self-esteem is protected if the child is late-reader or has a learning disability.
- Friends are available of all ages, gender, religion and ethnic background.
- Efficient use of time provides a balance between play, sports, downtime, activities and bookwork.
- Child has more active times, snacks, breaks, whenever he needs them.
- Offers more choices in how the work gets done.
- The scope of topics can be customized. You can delve deeply or scratch the surface depending on interests.
- Less negative peer pressure.
- More time spent with family and siblings are what children up to age 12 need most.
- Parents know exactly what is in the curriculum and can apply concepts to daily activities in and out of home.
- Focussed time on home schooling provides attention, so the child can busy himself at other times to leave parents free to get their work done.

- Learning becomes part of life, and loved for its own sake. Learning is not confined to Monday to Friday, 9-3pm. Real, self-motivated, internalized learning takes place, any time of the day or night.
- Children learn to work cooperatively with siblings, rather than competitively with classmates, a skill more valued in the workforce.
- Children get out in the real world and their communities on a daily basis. They can explore their world with field trips any day or time they want, and where ever the interest lies.
- You know your child better than any teacher ever will. And this will continue.
- Child can go at whatever speed he wishes breezing through concepts he understands and taking more time to master concepts he finds difficult.
- Acceptable level of understanding material in schools is deemed 50%. Home-schooling can be 100% acceptable level of understanding as there are no time constrictions.
- It's exciting as when your child took his first step, to watch when he starts to read or the light-bulb goes on as he "finally gets it".
- Your child will not be using the word "like" every two seconds.
- The material can be custom presented to maximize your child's learning style.
- Technology makes it so easy to acquire any resources available in the world, to enhance learning: videos, internet, unit studies, email, etc.
- There will be no lunches to pack, notices to read, cheques to write, baking to provide, shopping for the teacher, school council meetings to attend, fundraising meetings to attend, fundraising to do, parent-teacher interviews to schedule and attend, newsletters to read, and none of the volunteering required. All the administrative time parents spend involved in their child's school can be funneled into the little time it takes to home-school.
- No assembling children to get out the door on cold winter mornings and driving them to school in your housecoat. No coaxing, bribing, or threatening them to get off the playground so you can drive them home from school.
- You no longer have to pay for swimming, music, and other lessons. You don't have to buy backpacks, lunch containers, lost mitts and hats, second pair of inside shoes, snow pants, or the coolest item your child absolutely must have, in order to be cool, only to have it lost by November.
- You are getting off the rat-race treadmill. No more "Hurry, hurry, hurry, we are going to be late!" Rather, the cry is "Please take your time. You can do it!" You will be enjoying a more relaxed life style.
- You can avoid the weekend and after school crowds at malls, parks, theatres, vacation spots, and everywhere else by going during the day when there are less crowds.
- You will have many good days – when the house is clean, you've accomplished a task and the children are getting along famously.

Disadvantages

- There will still be bad days – when the house is a mess, you're all still in pajamas at 5 p.m. and the children have been bickering all day.
- Family, friends, neighbors and stranger give resistance on your methods, philosophy and lifestyle.
- Confusion peaks in trying to navigate the "system" in terms of government requirements, regulations, and the myriad of choices to make in curriculum, philosophy and classes.
- Driving all over town to activities can be nerve jarring and expensive in fuel costs.
- Loss of full time income (although many families work part time).

Judy Arnall is a professional international award-winning *Parenting Speaker*, and Trainer, Mom of five children, and author of the best-selling, "***Discipline Without Distress: 135 tools for raising caring, responsible children without time-out, spanking, punishment or bribery***" She specializes in "**Parenting the Digital Generation**" www.professionalparenting.ca (403) 714-6766 jarnall@shaw.ca

Visit her homeschooling blog at www.unschoolingtouniversity.com