

So You Think You Want to Homeschool? 15 Points to Consider

1. **Are you willing to be totally responsible for your child's education?** You have been used to the schools selecting curriculum, teaching it, and evaluating your child. This will now be your responsibility alone.
2. **How long have you thought about this decision?** This is a major decision for your family. It should not be a snap decision made because you are upset with an incident at school. Have you asked God if home education is the right decision for you?
3. **Have you read and do you understand the Virginia law?** Which section applies to you? Be aware that religious exemption is a sincerely held religious belief against attendance at public school. Common reasons for home educating include disagreement with curricula, teaching methods, testing, or Family Life education, concern for safety issues, lack of character training, or wanting to avoid government entanglement. These are valid reasons to home school, but they do not constitute religious exemption. If you can think of any circumstance that would cause you to put your child back in public school, you do not have a religious conviction against school attendance.
4. **Have you allowed enough time for planning?** It takes time to plan and purchase a curriculum. You should allow time to do this if at all possible.
5. **Does your spouse agree with your decision?** Life could be miserable at home if you are not in agreement.
6. **Is your child in agreement with your decision?** While this is not a decision for your child to make, be aware of how his attitude could affect your success as home educators. If he is opposed, what steps will you take to overcome his opposition?
7. **Is your child reasonably obedient?** If you are having discipline problems when he is gone much of the day, what will it be like to be with him all day? Discipline problems can be corrected if you are willing to put forth much effort. This may need to be your first educational priority.
8. **Have you clearly thought through your reasons to home educate and can you explain them to others?** Write them down.
9. **Will you be able to deal with criticism from family members, friends, and school officials who do not understand your decision?**
10. **Are you willing to educate yourself in order to do a good job educating your child?** Reading about home educating is a MUST. Have you done enough reading to know the difference between the school environment and the home education environment? Home education becomes a lifestyle, not just an educational choice!
11. **Are you willing to spend the money to buy a curriculum?** This does not have to be expensive, but it will cost money that you may not be used to budgeting.
12. **Are you willing and able to re-order your schedule to give the education of your child your top priority?** You may need to curtail your family's outside activities. Some mothers work and home educate, but this is VERY DIFFICULT. Home education is not just something else to add to your schedule; it is a lifestyle!
13. **Are you willing to establish an environment in your home that is conducive to study?** Are you able to train your child to abide by a schedule of family and school responsibilities? Turn that TV off!
14. **Have you anticipated obstacles?** Think of things that will interrupt you and plan how you will deal with them. Some examples might be: babies in the home, illness, telephone calls, household emergencies.
15. **Are you committed long term?** You may be planning to keep your child out one year or twelve years, but putting your child back in school after a month because you are tired of home education is detrimental to your child and harmful to the home school movement. Please consider the effect you will have on others.

