



HOMESCHOOLING

IN LOUISIANA AND NATIONWIDE:
Research Facts and Other Important Concepts

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**HOMESCHOOL
LOUISIANA**
A Community of Christian Home Educators

Homeschooling—that is, private parent-led home-based education—is an age-old traditional educational practice that a decade ago appeared to be cutting-edge and “alternative” but is now bordering on “mainstream” in the United States. The United States recognizes that it is a legal and philosophical right of parents to home educate their children. There are about 2.4 million home-educated students in the United States, and it appears the homeschool population is continuing to grow (at an estimated 2% to 8% per annum over the past few years) (Ray, 2019; Redford et al., 2016). It may be the fastest-growing form of education in the United States.

Reasons for Home Educating

Most parents and youth decide to homeschool for more than one reason. The most common reasons given for choosing home-based education are the following:

- customize or individualize the curriculum and learning environment for each child
- accomplish more academically than in schools use pedagogical approaches other than those typical in institutional schools
- enhance family relationships between children and parents and among siblings
- provide guided and reasoned social interactions with youthful peers and adults
- provide a safer environment for children and youth, because of physical violence, drugs and alcohol, psychological abuse, bullying, and improper and unhealthy sexuality associated with institutional schools
- teach and impart a particular set of values, beliefs, and worldview to children and youth

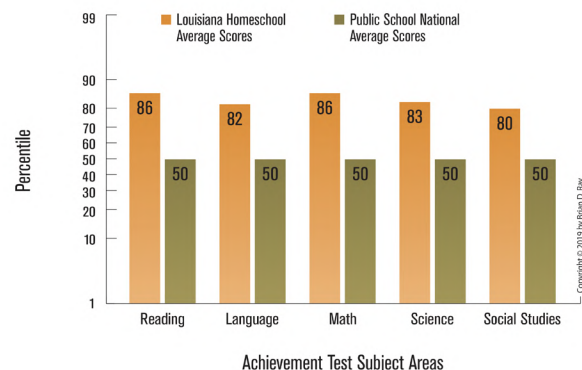
Academic Performance

A 2019 data analysis revealed that Louisiana private homeschool students are scoring at the 80th to 86th percentile across the subjects of reading, language, math, science, and social studies on standardized academic achievement tests. This is 30 to 36 percentile points above the U.S. public school average.¹

- Multiple studies by many researchers show that home-educated students across the United States average 15 to 30 percentile points above public-school students on standardized academic achievement tests (Murphy, 2012; Ray, 2013, 2017).
- These average high scores also show up in states that mandate achievement testing of all homeschool students. For example, homeschool students score at about (median) the 79th percentile in Oregon (Oregon Department of Education, 2014; Williams, 2014).
- Homeschool students score above average on achievement tests regardless of their parents’ level of education, family’s household income, child’s ethnicity (or “race”), or whether their parents were ever certified teachers.

¹ The data were from Ray, 2010; analysis by Ray.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF LOUISIANA HOMESCHOOL STUDENTS AND U.S. PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS



Note: These statistics are based on findings from the study, Brian D. Ray, (2010, February 3). Academic achievement and demographic traits of homeschool students: A nationwide study. *Academic Leadership Journal*, 8(1). Retrieved May 24, 2019 from <https://scholars.fhsu.edu/alj/vol8/iss1/7/>. Copyright © 2019 by Brian D. Ray.

- The degree of state control and regulation of homeschooling is not related to academic achievement (Ray, 2010). That is, where states control or regulate private homeschool education families more, the students do no better academically than where homeschoolers have more freedom.
- Whether homeschool parents have ever or never been government-certified teachers has almost no correlation with their children’s academic achievement (Ray, 2013).
- Home-educated students typically score above average on the college-admission SAT and ACT tests (Murphy, 2012; Ray, 2017).
- Graduates of parent-led home-based education are increasingly being actively recruited by colleges. College and university personnel have a positive impression of graduates of homeschooling (Gloeckner & Jones, 2013).

Social, Emotional, and Psychological Development

The home-educated are doing well, typically above average, on measures of social, emotional, and psychological development. Research measures include peer interaction, self-concept, leadership skills in adulthood, family cohesion, participation in community service, less substance abuse, and self-esteem (Medlin, 2013; Ray, 2017).

Homeschool students are regularly engaged in multiple social and educational activities outside their homes and with people other than their nuclear-family members. They are commonly involved in activities such as field trips, scouting, 4-H, political drives, church ministry, sports teams, debate teams, and community volunteer work.

Homeschooling Law and Economics in Louisiana

- In Louisiana (see www.homeschoollouisiana.org for more detail):
 - ➔ There are two ways to register as a homeschooler, (a) registered non-public, not seeking state approval and (b) home study.



- Under both options (above), the parent/guardian has the complete freedom to choose the curriculum best suited for their child.
- Homeschooling is privately funded and parent-directed education. It is not publicly-funded instruction that may take place at home, such as an online or virtual charter school.
- Legislative Issues Concerning Home Educators
 - Parental Rights: It is the fundamental unalienable right of parents to direct the upbringing, care, and education of their children.
 - Conscience Rights: Every individual and each family has the unalienable right to act and order their life according to their conscience.
- vote and attend public meetings more frequently than the general population,
- go to and succeed at college at an equal or higher rate than the general population,
- by adulthood, internalize the values and beliefs of their parents at a higher rate than does the general population, and
- are more politically tolerant than others (Cheng, 2014). That is, individual adults who were homeschooled are more willing than others to extend civil liberties to people who hold views with which they disagree.

There were an estimated 32,000 to 39,000 K-12 homeschool students in Louisiana during the spring 2018 (McQuiggan, et al., 2017; Ray, 2019), and it is likely these numbers have grown. Public school per-pupil expenditure in Louisiana during 2017-18 was \$12,030 (National Education Association, 2018), plus capital expenditures, plus research and development. Therefore, it is estimated that homeschool families saved Louisiana taxpayers \$384 million to \$469 million annually over the past two years, plus capital expenditures that the state did not need to spend on home-educated students.

Success in the “Real World” of Adulthood

The research base of adults who were home educated is growing; thus far it indicates that they:

- participate in local community service more frequently than does the general population,

NEED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOMESCHOOLING?

In Louisiana:

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Nationally:

Home School Legal Defense Association

P.O. Box 3000, Purcellville VA 20134
www.hsllda.org
 (540) 338-5600

National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI)

P.O. Box 13939, Salem OR 97309
www.nheri.org
 (503) 364-1490
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