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Homeschooling Increased 75% in Last Ten Years

<http://www.homeschoolfamily.com/post/2009/01/06/Homeschooling-Increased-by-75-percent-in-Last-Ten-Years.aspx>

If you have been considering homeschooling, let that public school indoctrinated peer pressure kick in... From WND:~ A homeschooling movement is sweeping the nation ~ with 1.5 million children now learning at home, an increase of 75 percent since 1999. The Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics reported homeschooling has risen by 36 percent in just the last five years. "There's no reason to believe it would not keep going up," NCES statistician Gail Mulligan told USA Today. A 2007 survey asked parents why they choose to homeschool and allowed them to provide several reasons. The following are the most popular responses: Concern about the school environment, including reasons such as safety, drugs or negative peer pressure ~ 88 percent A desire to provide religious or moral instruction ~ 83 percent A dissatisfaction with academic instruction at other schools ~ 73 percent Nontraditional approach to children's education ~ or "unschoolers" who consider typical curriculums and standardized testing as counterproductive to quality education ~ 65 percent Other reasons, such as family time, finances, travel and distance ~ 32 percent Child has special needs (other than physical or mental health problems) that schools cannot or will not meet ~ 21 percent Child has a physical or mental health problem ~ 11 percent Parents who report that they homeschool to provide religious or moral instruction increased from 72 percent to 83 percent from 2003 to 2007. Above all other responses, parents cited providing religious and moral instruction as the most important factor in the decision to teach their children at home (36 percent). The second most important issue was concern about the school environment (21 percent), while the third reason was dissatisfaction with academic instruction at other schools (17 percent). Research has shown the positive effects of homeschooling through the years. While some critics say teaching children at home may stunt their social growth, studies indicate homeschooled students fare well or better than public and private school students in terms of social, emotional and psychological development. Additionally, homeschoolers earn higher marks than peers who attend public schools. Academic Leadership, an online journal, cites findings from at least three nationwide studies across the United States and two nationwide studies in Canada. "The home educated in grades K to 12 have scored, on average, at the 65th to 80th percentile on standardized academic achievement tests in the United States and Canada, compared to the public school average of the 50th percentile," it states. Three studies also show that demographics, income and education level of homeschooling parents are generally irrelevant with regard to quality of education in a home setting. On average, homeschoolers in low-income families with less formal education still score higher than state-school averages.

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