

Ashley Small

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Final Argumentative Essay

Homeschooling: Breaking the stereotypes

Ever since the homeschooling movement in the 1970s there have been many negatives inflicted on this style of education. In fact, earlier in the 20th century it was a violation of laws to homeschool and every student was required to attend public schools authorized by the government. Although anti-homeschooling advocates claim the negative stereotypes, they are mostly myths that are not true in most cases. One must evaluate the statistics of whether these myths are true and must also consider the reason as to why the parents decided to homeschool the children in the first place. Homeschooling is a choice and a lifestyle, and although it may not be fit for everyone, the discrimination against it should not be present. Despite the number of stereotypes, homeschooling allows for social interaction, rigor in assignments, and the ability to prepare for higher education.

With the establishment of homeschool groups and other activities, homeschooled students are very socially active and involved contrary to popular belief. The stereotype looks at the homeschooled individuals as awkward or unable to interact with other people. According to Calvert Education in their article “Homeschooling Pros and Cons” published 2018, they point out how homeschoolers have different socialization, but not in a negative way. While explaining how homeschoolers socialize differently, Calvert states, “For one thing, homeschoolers do not have the same exposure to peer pressure and bullying, both of which are tied to poorer academic performance and lower self-esteem. Parents often decide to homeschool because they do not want

their child's values to be defined by their peers or for their children to face social ridicule or bullying. In private or public schools, the pressure to "fit in" or achieve a perceived level of social status among classmates can be quite great." This shows that in the end, by avoiding the negative surroundings of bullying and peer pressure, homeschoolers have the benefit when it comes to socializing. In fact, they have multiple opportunities that allow the students to be part of their own activities and groups, giving them a social experience. This is proven in the article "Revisiting the Common myths of Homeschooling" by Michael Romanowaski on January 1, 2006. He states, "Homeschooled children are involved in numerous activities outside the home with peers, children of different ages, and adults (Ray 1999). On the average, homeschooled students are involved in 5.2 activities outside the home, with 98 percent engaged in two or more (Ray 1997). This range of activities includes scouting, dance classes, group sports, 4-H, and volunteer work, demonstrating that homeschoolers are not isolated from the outside world." Although the popular thought of homeschoolers is being isolated from the world and not surrounded by other peers, this is simply a myth in order to discourage the education practice. In fact, in the overall picture, homeschoolers will benefit more positive social interaction than those who attend public schools.

Another pro for homeschooling would be the high academics they obtain and high motivation to learn. The mentality of limiting the student to what the parents know is common, and although this can be true in some cases, many homeschooled students are above average in their academic performance. Studies have been done to prove this myth wrong, showing that regardless if the parents had a teaching certificate or not, home school students have a higher academic level than average classroom students. This comes from flexibility to learn what they want in different ways. There is more flexibility to learn on outings as well such as the library or museums allowing the students to grow a stronger passion for learning since they are pursuing

areas of interest. It also allows them to spend more time on subjects they aren't as fluent in and less time in those they easily get- in other words, they can go at their own pace. This is contrary to the public-school system where there is no child left behind; therefore, those who grasp the subject end up being held back while waiting on the remainder of students to understand the concepts. Everyone learns in their own different way, thus homeschooling would actually be a better option since it is more customizable and personable. According to the article "Home Schooling: Is home schooling a viable alternative to traditional classroom-based education", "...because of the freedom that a home-based education provides, home schoolers are more self-motivated and independent than their peers." (National Education Association, 2006). By being self-motivated, there are statistics showing how home-schooled students are above average on standardized test including the SAT and ACT. In the article "Revisiting the common myths about homeschooling", it states, "Homeschooled children generally score at or above the national averages on standardized tests. The ACT publisher reported scores of 1,926 homeschooled students from the graduating class of 1997. These students scored higher than the national average in English, reading, and the overall composite of the ACT. However, there was little difference regarding reasoning skills (Ray 1999). Evidence indicates that homeschooled children learn the 'right' things without attending public schools." (Romanowski, 128). Through this we can see that the stereotype and belief that homeschoolers are limited academically is broken. Statistics show that through more self-motivation and passion home schooled students show higher academic level than those who attend the traditional classroom-based education.

Lastly, homeschoolers are more prepared and capable for higher education than what popular beliefs lead on. The main argument regarding this is the different learning style and environment. The concern that those students will not fit in with the other students is popular as

well. However, studies have found that home school students don't have this effect when entering college classrooms. In fact, according to Romanowski, "...homeschoolers who went to college demonstrated no significant social skill deprivation from their homeschool experience. In addition, leadership skills among homeschooled students was substantially higher than their counterparts from the private and public high schools. Finally, homeschoolers exhibit a strong work ethic and high moral values, which play a role in their success in college (Klicka 2003). The reality is that homeschooled children can learn effectively and succeed in college without experiencing traditional forms of schooling."(Romanowski, 128). Claims say without a high school diploma or standardized test score it makes it difficult for those home-schooled students to attempt a higher education. As stated previously, home school students have been studied and show a higher academic level when observing standardized test. Also, contrary to popular belief, colleges are very supportive to homeschool students and offer ways of admissions as well as scholarships to help those students. In the article, "Revisiting the common myths about home school", "Not only do colleges and universities boast that their place of learning is supportive of students who have largely been homeschooled, but universities actively recruit homeschoolers.[and] help them plan for college admission and tuition costs, and even offer special scholarships for homeschooled students." (Romanowski, 128). Overall, studies show yet another stereotype is wrong when in fact the reality is the contrary. Homeschool students are taught in a different way that enhances their skills in certain areas such as self-motivation and leadership. Because they are strong in these areas, they can adapt normally to the classroom setting of colleges and universities.

Looking at a few of the stereotypes that are placed upon homeschoolers, there is evidence showing how they are only myths and not reality. From lack of social skills academic success to capability of adjusting to college environments, there is proof that homeschooling does not

disadvantage students. In fact, it can end up benefiting the student in the long run. The students are taught the way that fits them, there is flexibility to enhance on their strengths, and they are also saved from the negative impacts of other students such as peer pressure and bullying. I personally was homeschooled through a private school institution in Florida. Many people looked down on my studying type however, it was the best thing that happened to me. Like many homeschool parents, my parents saw that I was not challenged in school and was being held back so others could catch up. They saw the flaw in the public-school system and wanted a better education for me. Through homeschooling, I became more advanced in my academics and would not be where I am today without it. Not to say that homeschooling is for everyone. It is a commitment to make. However, the style of learning does not give the students a disadvantage; therefore, it should not be discouraged by others and instead it should be encouraged and accepted as a personal choice and preference.

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