

Are You Intimidated about Homeschooling High School?

Vicki Tillman 7SistersHomeschool

The first thing you need to know about homeschooling high school is this:



Now that you know that important fact, let's look at some common fears that intimidate parents who are starting to homeschool high school!

1) "I'm afraid of failing if I homeschool my high schooler!"

That's okay to feel intimidated or afraid of failing. If you don't allow the fear to paralyze you, you can use it to motivate you to:

- Learn all you can
- Build a support system (like being part of Homeschool Iowa)
- Include your teens in the process of learning and planning

In a way, homeschooling high school is sort of like having a "paying job"- all the learning you do is sort of like the "professional development days" at work!



2) “I’m afraid my teens won’t get into college or be able to get a real job!”

This is something you do not need to fear! College acceptance and jobs are part of the homeschool graduates’ lives.

More and more colleges are homeschool friendly. In fact, some colleges actively recruit homeschool high schoolers because they have found that our teens tend to perform well academically and become leaders on campus. They are a positive influence for other students and help build a good reputation for the school.

- There was an article in Stanford University’s alumni magazine explaining how much they are enjoying homeschool students on that campus.
- I recently interviewed the retired Associate Provost of Murray State University who encouraged our teens to apply. She said that her state college is a “homeschool friendly” campus. Murray State University is typical of most colleges these days.

Colleges love homeschoolers...and so do employers. Many employers have found that homeschool graduates tend to be:

- Honest
- Hardworking
- Good team players
- Willing to lead

Tip: Keep transcript and diploma, occasionally these are needed. Also, joining HSLDA is a good idea, in case you ever run into any issues in this area.



3) “What about socialization?”

Somewhere along the line, it’s likely that you will run into someone who asks this question: *What about socialization?*

As my friends, Marci and Aurie at Snarky Homeschool Moms say, "Do you even know what socialization means?"

Let's look at the actual definition:

"Socialization" is a term used by sociologists, social psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and educationalists to refer to the lifelong process of inheriting and disseminating norms, customs, and ideologies, providing an individual with the skills and habits necessary for participating within his or her own society. Socialization is thus "the means by which social and cultural continuity are attained."

Dictionary.com gives a similar definition:

"a continuing process whereby an individual acquires a personal identity and learns the norms, values, behavior, and social skills appropriate to his or her social position"

With that in mind, think about this: isn't that EXACTLY what we homeschooling parents do with our children? One of the reasons many of us homeschool is so that we can teach our children:

- How to live our lives healthily (spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially) in our current society
- For those of us who are religious: how to understand our faith and communicate in Christlike ways with people of other ideals
- How to practice good manners, compassionate attitudes and service as a lifestyle

Therefore, I would say that homeschooled kids have the BEST chance at good socialization, and the [research bears that out \(this was actually my graduate research\).](#)

You might feel better if you create your own elevator pitch/mission statement about socialization. Then memorize it. Maybe something like this:

- *"My children are socialized through the gospel, family, church and community organizations to be healthy spirit, soul and body and to become good people, leaders and valuable contributors to society. How about YOUR kids?"*



3) “I’m afraid I don’t know enough to educate a high schooler!”

Well, let’s face it. You don’t.

Neither do many of the parents of the estimated almost 2 million homeschooled high schoolers in America. That hasn’t hindered our teens from receiving quality educations!

Homeschool high schoolers succeed in subjects beyond their parents’ expertise in ways that actually enhance their skills for life and college preparation.

When we homeschool parents don’t know enough about a subject our teens need to learn we get creative!

Here are a few ways that homeschool high schoolers earn necessary credits when they have parents who don’t know enough:

- We learn the subject with our teens
- Online live and online self-paced courses
- Co-ops (you share something you know, other moms share what they know)
- Homeschool group classes
- Community college courses



4) “I’m afraid my teen needs more than just me as a teacher!”

Sometimes that might be true. Sometimes your homeschool high schoolers might need a fresh teaching face in their lives. That’s okay!

You are the perfect homeschool teacher for your homeschool high schooler in whichever courses you and your teens agree that it is a good fit. It is perfectly okay to find a different teacher for bad-fit courses. Just because you’re homeschooling doesn’t mean everything is up to you.

There are so many options for teens to receive the education they need. So, really, as you homeschool your high schoolers, you are changing roles. You become less "the teacher" and more "**the resource manager**" and "**accountability partner**".



How to Reduce Intimidation:

Help for Homeschooling High School

You need some dependable ways to make sure you are well prepared for education during the teen years! Here are some ways to boost your confidence:

1) Prayer

As 7Sister Kym always says: *Pray first, last and always.*

This is obvious. The Bible gives us clear instruction to seek His help on our projects. Homeschooling high school is a BIG project. You need His wisdom and guidance as you plan the course of your teen's education.

Check out these verses:

- In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and he will direct thy paths. *Proverbs 3:6*
- Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts will be established. *Proverbs 16:3*
- A man's heart plans his way: but the Lord directs his steps. *Proverbs 16:9*



2) Include your teens

Your teens are old enough to help plan their homeschool high school experience. Don't leave them out in setting goals, developing schedules, choosing curriculum and planning activities. When your teens are involved in the process, they will have more ownership of their education and more motivation for their schoolwork!

Let's get started with these questions to ask your teens if you want to have sure-fire success in your homeschool high school.

- **What are their goals (in high school, in life)?**

If they don't know yet, think about some Career Exploration next year. In the meantime, ask them these questions. If they do know, ask these questions and ask how their answers can work towards their goals.

- **What do they dream about? What do they want in life?**

...easy school assignments? ...to stretch their knowledge base? ...to play professional soccer? ...to get married and have a family? For any of these goals, you can build some of your reading choices, experiences and discussions to include preparation.

- **What are their interests?**

...video games? ...music? ...math? ...computers? ...knitting? ...biology? ...reading? ...sports? ...service? There are ways to leverage their interests for electives or extracurriculars for the transcript. We'll talk about it in our parents' self-paced how-to course: Homeschool High School: You CAN Do It! Also, there are lots of posts on helping teen discover and invest in their interests at 7SistersHomeschool.com

- **What are their learning styles?**

...love to read? ...love hands-on? One of the cool things about homeschooling high school are there are so many ways to earn the credits they need for the homeschool transcript. They can use textbooks, read real books, log hours, take online or college classes. SO many ways to learn the way they learn best.

- **What are their strengths?**

Teens should take some of their high school courses and use them to build strengths. Which courses would your teens like to “level-up”? In which subjects might they want to earn extra elective credits so they have time to build a strength?

- **What are their weaknesses?**

Teens should not be ashamed of their weaknesses. We all have them! High school is a good time to respect that fact. Ask your teens:

Which courses must be completed at a simpler level due to academic struggles? Or for college-bound teens, which subjects do they need to bolster so that they are college-ready?

When you include your teens in planning the homeschool high school years, things go so much better!

- **What character traits would you like your teens to have incorporated in their personalities?**

While you can't force good character on your teens you can expose them to role models in life and in reading, you can model for them the type of person you'd like them to become, you can give them opportunities to serve - both in short term opportunities and with sustained responsibilities.

- **What kinds social skills and etiquette do you want them to be comfortable with?**

How do you want them to manage themselves in settings with friends, families, youth group leaders, co-op teachers, bosses, or college professors?



How do you find the resources you need to homeschool high school?

Here are three tips to get you started finding resources and choosing curriculum for your homeschool high schoolers.

Tip #1: Remember, there's not ONE right way to homeschool high school

So if you run into a publisher or homeschooler who says they have the ONE right way to teach a subject, just understand that they are confused. Then do what is right for your homeschoolers!

Tip #2: Stick to your goals and choose curriculum that matches them

There are so many choices for curriculum so it is easy to get distracted. It is a wise idea to remember your goals. For instance, if your teen is college-bound, most curriculum should be presented at college-prep level or higher or should be "leveled up" by logging extra activities, projects and papers.

Most curriculum publishers aim for college-prep level textbooks.

Or if your teen wants to study psychology in college, it would be best to choose psychology courses and other social science courses as electives and not spend too much time on Advanced Physics or Marine Biology. (Unless, of course, your teen has extra time and just wants to do that.)

Then pick the level level of rigor that meets your teen's needs:

- For instance, a teen who has learning difficulties or is not headed for college does not need to use curriculum that has college-prep rigor (unless they want to do that). You can choose curriculum at an "average high school level" (we call that level 2), such as Pearson Education's Pacemaker curriculum.

Tip #3: Ask your community what they like

One of the best gifts you can give yourself is to join some homeschool communities. If there are local homeschool groups, that's a good place to start. We also love Facebook groups.

When you meet with local homeschool parents, ask what curriculum they have used and what they liked and didn't like about it. You don't have to use what they use, but they can give you good data to help you decide.

On Facebook groups, post the same question and get ready for lots of good feedback!

Here are some of our favorite groups:

- Homeschool Iowa (and Homeschool Iowa Discussion Group)
- 7SistersHomeschool
- It's Not That Hard to Homeschool High School
- Simply Homeschool
- Blue Collar Homeschool
- College Discussions for Homeschoolers

Don't forget you can choose your format, too!

You can use textbooks, co-ops, group classes, online classes, tutors, college classes, log hours, read real books! SOOOO many choices.

May you and your teens LOVE your homeschool journey. Let's keep in touch, okay?

