



Homeschooling

IN COLORADO AND NATIONWIDE

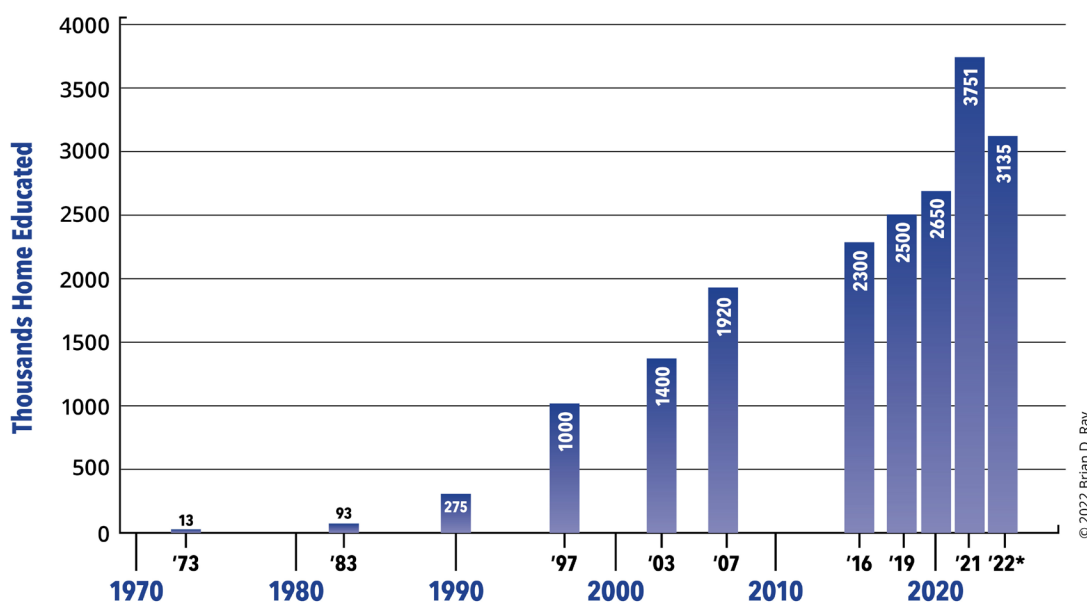
Research Facts and Other Important Concepts

by Brian D. Ray, Ph.D.



Parent-directed home education has been the principal model used to educate children for most of recorded history. Although cultural landscapes have changed over the course of time, the last several decades have seen a strong and steady resurgence of this solid approach. Today, home education may be the fastest-growing form of education in the United States, with approximately 3.1 million home-educated students across the country (National Home Education Research Institute, 2025).

GROWTH OF HOMESCHOOLING IN THE UNITED STATES

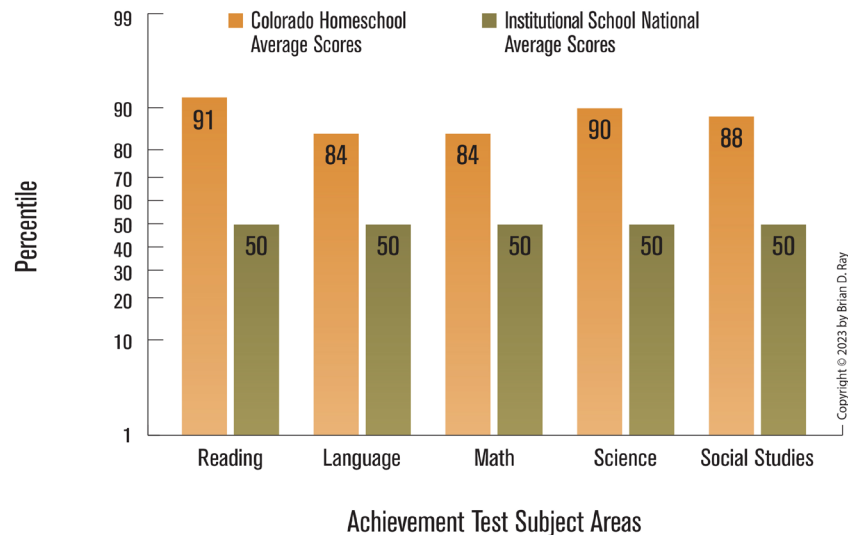


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COLORADO HOMESCHOOL ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The most recent data on Colorado homeschool students' standardized achievement test scores shows them to be doing very well. They score at the 84th to 91st percentile in reading, language, math, science, and social studies. This is 34 to 41 percentile points above the national institutional school average (see figure).

Academic Achievement of Colorado Homeschool Students and U.S. Institutional School Students



NUMBERS OF COLORADO HOMESCHOOLERS AND TAX SAVINGS

There were an estimated 54,000 homeschool students in grades K-12 in Colorado during the 2021-2022 school year (Ray, 2022). This represents a significant increase over the 2016-2017 year, and there was about five percent growth in homeschooling from 2023-2024 to 2024-2025 (Colorado Department of Education, 2025).

The average public school per-pupil expenditure in Colorado was \$14,489 in 2021-2022 (National Education Association, 2022). Therefore, it is estimated that homeschool families saved Colorado taxpayers approximately \$782 Million that year. In addition, taxpayers do not have to pay capital expenditures for home-educated students.

HOMESCHOOL LAW AND LEGISLATIVE CONCERNS

In Colorado, there are three options for homeschooling:

1. Establish a non-public home-based education program. Yearly, file a notice of intent with a school district in Colorado. Make sure to follow the Colorado law outlined in CRS 22-33-104.5.
2. Enroll in a Colorado-based independent school and follow that school's requirements.
3. Obtain a current Colorado teaching license. For more information, see [CHEC.org/how-to-homeschool-in-colorado/colorado-homeschool-law/](https://chech.org/how-to-homeschool-in-colorado/colorado-homeschool-law/).

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 have the unalienable right to act and order their life according to their conscience.

REASONS FOR HOME EDUCATING

Most parents decide to homeschool for more than one reason (Ray & Hoelzle, 2024; United States Department of Education, 2021). The most common reasons given for choosing parent-directed home education are to

- customize or individualize the curriculum and learning environment for each child;
- accomplish more academically in less time than in traditional schools;
- use teaching approaches other than those typical in traditional classroom settings;
- enhance family relationships to offer the greatest potential for directing the child's future;
- provide a natural and guided social and community life with peers and adults;
- provide a safe environment free from physical violence, drugs and alcohol, psychological abuse, bullying and racism, and improper and unhealthy sexuality;
- teach and impart values, beliefs, and a world-view to their children and young adults; and
- address special needs and individual learning challenges.

NATIONWIDE ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- Studies show that home-educated students average 15 to 30 percentile points above the national average on standardized academic achievement tests (Murphy, 2014; Ray, 2013; Ray & Hoelzle, 2024).
- Home-educated students typically score above average on the college admission SATs and ACTs (Murphy, 2014; Ray, 2017).
- Colleges actively recruit homeschool graduates. College and university personnel have a positive impression of homeschool graduates (Gloeckner & Jones, 2013).
- The parents' level of education and the family's household income are not notably related to the academic achievement of the home-educated (Ray & Hoelzle, 2024).
- The degree of state control and regulation of homeschooling is not related to academic achievement (Ray, 2010). Achievement test scores of homeschool students in states with higher regulation are the same as states with lesser regulation.
- Whether homeschool parents have ever or never been government-certified teachers is not notably related to their children's academic achievement (Ray & Hoelzle, 2024).
- These positive outcomes have been without tax funding (e.g., without ESAs and vouchers).

SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Research measuring peer interaction, self-concept, leadership skills, family cohesion, participation in community service, and self-esteem shows homeschoolers are doing very well. They are typically above average in social, emotional, and psychological development (Medlin, 2013; Ray, 2017).
- Homeschool students are regularly engaged in common social and educational activities including field trips, scouting, 4-H, political drives, church ministry, sports teams, debate teams, drama, music classes, art classes, apprenticeships, and community volunteer work (Hamlin, 2019).

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Academic Achievement of Colorado Homeschool Students and U.S. Institutional School Students

Need More Information About Homeschooling?

IN COLORADO:

Christian Home Educators of Colorado (CHEC)

PO Box 53, Elizabeth, CO 80107
(720) 842-4852
www.CHEC.org

NATIONALLY:

Home School Legal Defense Association

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

National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI)

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

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For more homeschool research and more in-depth interpretation of research, please contact:
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