



The Quick Start Guide to Homeschooling in Iowa

Almost everyone beginning the homeschool adventure feels a bit overwhelmed, facing an unfamiliar path. The good news is you're not on this journey alone!

Homeschool Iowa is here to help!

Resources we offer:

Homeschool Iowa Website: homeschooliowa.org

- Details and tool kits for all 5 Iowa homeschool options
- Iowa Homeschooling Options Comparison Chart
- *Start Homeschooling*, a 10-page step-by-step guide
- Homeschool Iowa Regional Representatives:
 - Experienced moms who can answer your questions
- Explanations of various homeschooling styles and tools
- Information about homeschooling special needs students and access to our Special Needs Advisors
- Guidance for homeschooling high school, accessing college courses, and preparing transcripts
- Referrals to homeschool co-ops & groups across the state
- Referrals to homeschool supervising teachers in Iowa
- Homeschool Iowa Lobbyist and Advocacy Team
- Homeschool Iowa Blog – and more!

Homeschool Iowa Annual Events:

- HI Conference, with inspiring speakers and exhibits
- HI Graduation, a service for homeschooled students
- HI Capitol Day, an educational and advocacy event
- HI Leader Retreat, providing resources and networking

Homeschool Iowa Social Media Pages:

- Facebook & Instagram @homeschooliowa
- Statewide Homeschool Discussion Group on Facebook
- Homeschool Marketplace Group on Facebook

Homeschool Iowa Membership:

- Email newsletters with homeschool event calendars
- Access to special resources on our website Member Portal
- Discounts and access to Homeschool Iowa events
- But, most importantly, your Homeschool Iowa membership makes you a partner in efforts to encourage and equip Iowa homeschoolers and to promote and protect homeschooling in Iowa. Look for the Join Us page on our website!

How to get started:

1) Define WHY you want to homeschool:

- Begin with a simple foundational statement about why you believe homeschooling is best for your family.
 - Need some help or clarity? Check out the reasons why others have chosen to home educate their children in our online *Start Homeschooling* guide (www.homeschooliowa.org/start-homeschooling).

2) Learn HOW to homeschool under Iowa laws:

- In Iowa, the compulsory school attendance age span is 6-16, determined on September 15th of each school year
- In this state, we have a wide variety of educational options for our children, including options that have no public school involvement and options that allow you to homeschool while also having access to public school classes, activities, and/or programs through dual enrollment.
 - If you DO want public school access, you'll file a Form A and either
 - arrange for licensed teacher supervision from a privately-hired or public-school-provided teacher OR
 - submit annual assessment results at the end of the school year.
 - If you DO NOT want public school access, you can use one of the options that does not require reporting or have supervision and testing requirements.
- Visit our website for a comparison chart that clearly defines the differences between each of the five homeschool legal options in Iowa.

3) Choose WHAT homeschool approach you will use:

- Decide upon the homeschooling method that will work best for you and your student. You'll find a list of the most common approaches in our online *Start Homeschooling* guide.
 - Consider your child's learning style and your family dynamics
 - Select educational materials based upon your choice
 - Remember that, if what you start with doesn't work well, it's okay to change and try something different.

4) Relax and Explore:

- Relax! Homeschooling is a journey with a lot of twists and turns. You don't need to have your child's complete education plan from NOW until they graduate figured out before you start.
- Be reassured in knowing that there is no single "perfect" way to home educate, and you can continually make adjustments.
- Spend some time talking to experienced homeschoolers, reading about home education, visiting curriculum websites, and deciding what you want your homeschool to look like.
- Use our listed resources to help your adventure start out well!

