

Is Hybrid Homeschooling The Wave Of The Future?

Forbes, Mike McShane, 21 May, 2018



Homeschooling is on the rise in America. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, from 1999 to 2012 the number of homeschooled children more than doubled, from 850,000 to 1.8 million. According to EdChoice's 2017 Schooling in America survey, while currently around 3 percent of students are homeschooled, around 7 percent of families would homeschool if they could.

- 5 For many families, the costs and obligations related to homeschooling are simply too burdensome. Some parents don't have the confidence in their own abilities to teach every subject to their children. Others cannot devote themselves to homeschooling full-time. Perhaps most of all, many homeschooling families want their children to socialize with other children to learn how to share, cooperate and get along with others.
- 10 Enter hybrid homeschooling, a model where children split their time between homeschool and a more traditional schooling environment. This could be three days at home and two days at school, two days at home and three days at school, part of the day at home and part of the day at schools, or a variety of other options.

15 Many of the organizations that provide education to children outside of the home are quick to argue that they should not be classified as "schools." Part of this is regulatory, as they often do not sit for the state-prescribed number of days or follow the practices of full-time schools. But part of this is also to retain the primacy that parents have in shaping the education of their children. The "school" is secondary; the home comes first. [...]

20 Hybrid homeschools are particularly interesting for two reasons. First, they blur the lines around what we consider a "school." With the proliferation of new technologies and resources, it is much easier for families to get high-quality materials and instruction for their children in a wide range of subjects. It is also easier for families to network with each other and find opportunities to collaborate.

25 At the same time, many families still want something resembling a traditional school experience. Hybrid homeschools leverage new innovations while satisfying parents' desires. More than anything, they cause us to ask questions about traditionally organized schools (both public and private): Why keep a tight leash around learning? Can we leverage outside resources better to improve the quality of education that children receive? What role should parents play in shaping what children learn? [...]