



# Illinois Home Education

Home Education Information Booklet

Written and Edited  
by  
Karen Hoogland



*Illinois Home Education*

## **WELCOME!**

So you have decided to enter the world of home education...now what do you do?

Before I started to homeschool, I thought making the decision to homeschool was the most difficult decision I had to make, with regards to the education of my children. However, the tough questions came after my family actually delved into the world of home education. I was bombarded with questions from family, friends and even my own doubts. How would I know what my children were learning? What curriculum should I use? Should I use a curriculum? How much is this going to cost? Could I do this? Should I join some sort of support group? Will people think we are freaks? What should I make for dinner? Wait!! That last one is the ever present question in my house...but it really has nothing to do with homeschooling...or does it?

For my family, home education began as a way to maximize academics for my sons. As the years have passed, it has become more of a lifestyle. My family does not have set “school hours” or even “school days.” My sons have become accustomed to learning at all times of the day (and sometimes night) and



throughout all seasons of the year. Our family has taken vacations at times when most children are in school. We have had the opportunity to take those spur-of-the-moment trips to the local nature centers at very odd times.

Yet, if you speak with other homeschooling families, you will find that what every family does is a little bit different. The beauty of home education is the ability to tailor it to the child. The best advice I can pass on to my readers is the best advice I received: relax, read homeschooling books, magazines and websites; visit local support groups. Finally, remember that opinions offered are just that, opinions. Take what fits your family and toss the rest. Read on for some friendly suggestions for beginning this adventure.

~Karen Hoogland  
Illinois Home Education  
[karen@IllinoisHomeEducation.org](mailto:karen@IllinoisHomeEducation.org)



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## **A NEW BEGINNING**

### Things To Do First

One of the first things to do is to familiarize yourself with the Illinois State laws, as they pertain to homeschooling. There is a summary of the state laws in this booklet, on pages 6-7. Review the information there and then verify it with other sources. Another reliable source for Illinois state laws is *Illinois House* (<http://www.illinoishouse.org>). You will also find the current laws available at your local library and with the state and local departments of education.

### Many Options

There is no one "right" way to homeschool your children. In fact, even within a single family, there will be several methods of learning happening among children. If your children are coming into their homeschooling career with a background in traditional schooling, it is likely they will need some time to unwind from that type of setting. Some children need only a few weeks to unwind, others may need several months. Many families find it helpful to have a transition period, spending time reading, playing board games, exploring museums, journaling, volunteering or spending time on hobbies before plunging into homeschooling. Do not discount these activities simply because they do not seem like "school." Using traditional text books and methods is not the only way children learn!



## Homeschooling Styles

There are many different homeschooling styles. Some families choose one style. Others pick and choose. Here are some of the familiar styles:

**Traditional home study:** Select a packaged curriculum, and add your own customizing.

**Integrated unit study:** Math, language arts, history, etc. all integrated into the study of a single topic.

**Life study:** Learning through real-life experiences; family business, shopping living history, scouting resources, 4-H resources, etc.

**Eclectic:** Combine some or all of these styles to suit the needs of your children.

## Find Support

Look for support groups! Either online or in person, support groups will help you feel less alone.

Subscribe to one of the national homeschooling magazines; *Home Education Magazine* and *Homeschooling Today* are two excellent publications. Read some of the many books available on homeschooling (see a listing on the Homeschooling Books page).

Order catalogs - most curriculum providers are eager to send out catalogs. By gathering information, you will gather knowledge and confidence!



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## **ILLINOIS STATE LAWS**

Summary Outline of Illinois School Laws  
*As they pertain to private homeschools*

Teacher Certification: Only public school teachers must be certified. (Section 21-1)

Standard testing: Not required by statute

State accreditation or state recognition:  
Not required by statute

Compulsory attendance: Illinois annotated Code Section 26-1, Ages 7-17 years of age (both inclusive)

Subjects: Language Arts, Social Sciences, Math, Fine Arts, Physical Sciences, Physical Education and Health

Private home school visitations: Not required by statute

Alternative statutes allowing for home schools:

Section 26-1 "Any child attending a private or parochial school where children are taught the



branches of education, and where the instruction of the child in the branches of education is in the English language is in compliance with the Illinois compulsory attendance law."

If contacted by the state school officials, homeschoolers could submit a "non-public school registration" form to the local school district for the purposes of verifying that their children's private education is providing instruction as required by Section 26-1 of the Illinois State Statutes. This, however, is voluntary and not required by law.

See Pages 8 and 9 for sample letters for withdrawing a student from Illinois Schools and for requesting records be transferred from the old school to your new homeschool.

Illinois Home Education provides information on school laws as a service. This does not constitute legal advice. For further information on the laws pertaining to homeschooling within the state of Illinois, please visit the Illinois General Assembly website at <http://www.ilga.gov>.



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## ILLINOIS LAWS PART 2

### Sample Letter for Withdrawal:

Your Name  
Your Home Address  
Your Town, IL 60000

February 8, 2007

Mr. Principal  
Old School  
Old School Address  
Town Name, IL 60000

Dear Mr. Principal:

This is to inform you that as of today, February 8, 2007, our child, "Child's Name", will be withdrawing from attendance at "Old" School. "Child's name" will be enrolled at "Homeschool Name".

You will be receiving a letter from "Homeschool Name" formally requesting a Certified Copy of "Child's name" records.

(Here, you may want to put in a list of items you are returning to the school, along with a request for the return to you of any of your child's personal supplies.)

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Parents Name

Illinois Home Education does not, and will not, assume any legal responsibility for families who choose to use these letters. Several members of the group have successfully submitted similar letters to their school districts when withdrawing and/or requesting records be transferred. For further information on the laws pertaining to homeschooling within the state of Illinois, please visit the Illinois General Assembly website at <http://www.ilga.gov>.



## Sample Letter for Records Transfer:

Your Homeschool Name  
Your Homeschool Address  
Your Town, IL 60000

February 16, 2007

Mr. Principal  
Old School Name  
Old School Address  
Town Name, IL 60000

Dear Mr. Principal,

This is to notify you of the enrollment of "Child's Name" in "Homeschool Name" as of February 8, 2007.

In compliance with Chapter 1, Section 375.75 of the Illinois Administrative Code, we are writing to request that a Certified Copy of "Child's Name" records be forwarded to us. Your prompt assistance in this matter will be appreciated, as it will enable us to complete our files.

"Homeschool Name" is a private homeschool. "Child's Name" receives instruction in all branches of education in the English language as required by law. This instruction is in compliance with the requirements of the Compulsory Attendance Law, Chapter 122, Section 26-1 of the Illinois School Code.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Parents Names

It is suggested that the Letter for Records Transfer be delivered to the school via certified mail with a Return Receipt. This will provide a record to you, showing who signed for the envelope.



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## SUGGESTED BOOKS

*These are some of the many books available on homeschooling and curriculum materials. Most of them are available through your local library.*

***Homeschooling The Early Years: Your Complete Guide to Successfully Homeschooling the 3- to 8- Year-Old Child*** by Linda Dobson

***Homeschooling Handbook: From Preschool to High School: A Parent's Guide*** by Mary Griffith

***The Unschooling Handbook: How to Use the Whole World As Your Child's Classroom*** by Mary Griffith.

***Home Learning Year by Year*** by Rebecca Rupp

***The Homeschooling Book of Answers: The 88 Most Important Questions Answered by Homeschooling's Most Respected Voices*** by Linda Dobson (Editor)

***Homeschooling the Teen Years: Your Complete Guide to Successfully Homeschooling the 13 to 18-Year-Old*** by Café Cohen

***Homeschoolers' College Admissions Handbook: Preparing Your 12- to 18-Year-Old for a Smooth Transition*** by Café Cohen

***A Catholic Homeschool Treasury: Nurturing Children's Love for Learning*** By Rachel Mackson & Maureen Wittmann



***Designing Your Own Classical Curriculum*** By Laura M. Berquist

***The Ultimate Guide to Homeschooling*** by Debra Bell

***Home Schooling: Answers to Questions Parents Most Often Ask*** by Deborah McIntire and Robert Windham

***The Homeschooler's Guide to Portfolios and Transcripts*** by Loretta Heuer

***What Your Sixth Grader Needs to Know*** by E.D. Hirsch, Jr  
Grade volumes available for kindergarten through sixth grade.

***Books to Build On: A Grade-by Grade Resource Guide for Parents and Teachers*** edited by John Holdren and E.D.Hirsch, Jr.

***Core Knowledge Sequence: Content Guidelines for Grades K-8*** Available from the Core Knowledge Foundation at [www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org).

***The Prairie Primer*** by Margie Gray  
Utilizes the ***Little House*** series of books.

***Considering God's Creation*** by Sue Mortimer and Betty Smith.

***Around the World in 180 Days*** This is a multi-level study which covers history and geography. A student book and teacher book are available.



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## **SCOPE & SEQUENCE**

*What should my child be learning this year?*

This is one of the questions many homeschoolers ask. There are several resources available to help answer it.

### ***Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE)***

View the Illinois Learning Standards online at <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/Default.htm>. This site provides a listing of standards for the subject areas of Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Development & Health, Fine Arts and Social/Emotional Learning. Each subject is broken down into various levels (elementary, junior high and high school), with goals and standards listed.

***World Book provides a Typical Course of Study*** for pre-school through grade twelve. This is available online at <http://www.worldbook.com/wb/Students?curriculum>. The World Book scope and sequence provides a concise breakdown of specific topics to be covered in the areas of Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Health & Safety and Language Arts.

***ABeka Book*** offers a detailed Scope and Sequence at <http://www.abeka.com/Resources/PDFs/ScopeAndSequence.pdf> (type in the entire URL). The booklet covers preschool through grade twelve, providing detailed information on not only the basic subjects, but also several others, including Geography, Bible Study and foreign languages.

[www.IllinoisHomeEducation.org](http://www.IllinoisHomeEducation.org)



***Content Standards and Scope and Sequence***

<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/materials/Content.htm>

This site provides a listing of online resources for various study plans. Be prepared to spend a lot of time here!

***Bob Jones University Press*** offers a detailed Scope and Sequence at

[http://www.bjup.com/resources/overview/04\\_05\\_scope\\_sequence.pdf](http://www.bjup.com/resources/overview/04_05_scope_sequence.pdf)

***Trivium Pursuit Suggested Course of Study***

[http://www.trivumpursuit.com/articles/suggested\\_course\\_of\\_study.htm](http://www.trivumpursuit.com/articles/suggested_course_of_study.htm)

*Books on What to Teach:*

***Home Learning Year by Year: How to Design a Homeschool Curriculum from Preschool Through High School*** - by Rebecca Rupp

***The Well-Trained Mind: A Guide to Classical Education a Home*** by W.W.Norton There is also a coordinating website for this book at <http://www.welltrainedmind.com>.

***Designing Your Own Classical Curriculum: A Guide to Catholic Home Education*** by Laura M. Berquist



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## **SERVICES OFFERED**

Illinois Home Education (IHE) are ongoing service projects. It was started by our family as a service to the homeschool community in the state of Illinois.

IHE offers several services to the community:

IHE provides information to those seeking to learn more about home education in the state of Illinois.

IHE provides website design and website hosting for Illinois home education groups. IHE will provide free space on its servers to local organizations in need of these services.

IHE also offers tutoring in basic computer skills, web design, local area networking and computer repairs. We do offer onsite servicing for those within a reasonable driving distance. Contact us for pricing on these services at [services@IllinoisHomeEducation.org](mailto:services@IllinoisHomeEducation.org)

The effort is a family affair. Karen (a.k.a. "Mom") handles most of the web writing and much of the design. She also tinkers with graphic design. She has many years of experience as a writer, editor, web designer and "computer geekess" tutoring. (For non-homeschooling related sites, visit <http://www.kzhdesign.com>.)

Tim, the oldest son of the family, is responsible for maintaining the office computer network and also completes some of the web design. Tim has had his own computer

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services business for the last three years; you may visit his sites at <http://www.hobhq.com>. Tim also works at Moraine Valley Community College as a computer technician; he will be completing two Associates Degrees in 2008.

Jeff and Doug, known as the "little brothers," help by working on graphics, programming and testing. As of this writing, Jeff is a full time student at Moraine Valley College (he is completing his last year of high school and first year of college at the same time). Doug is a high school freshman; he plans to attend Moraine in another year or so.

David, husband and father, supports our efforts by being our number one cheerleader! He may not always understand the techno-geeky conversations, but he does enjoy using the computer his sons have built for him.

We host some of the sites created with GoDaddy. Other sites are hosted on our private servers which were built and continue to be maintained by Tim. Tim is diligent about maintaining and upgrading our private servers.

To find more home education information online or to learn more about the services offered by IHE, visit our site at <http://www.IllinoisHomeEducation.org>.

Thanks for reviewing our booklet. For information, please contact us at [info@IllinoisHomeEducation.org](mailto:info@IllinoisHomeEducation.org).

~The Hoogland Family  
10/17/07



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[www.IllinoisHomeEducation.org](http://www.IllinoisHomeEducation.org)

This booklet was written and produced as a service to the Illinois Homeschooling community. This booklet may be reproduced, with the proper credit given to the author. Copies may also be downloaded from the Illinois Home Education website.

K.Z.Hoogland

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Updated October 17, 2007