

# Homeschooling Your High Schooler: Through Graduation & Beyond

The thought of homeschooling through high school can be daunting, but it doesn't have to be. My goal is to turn that fear into hope and excitement. In truth, the formative teen years are the best time to take full advantage of everything homeschooling offers.

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## 1. Know Your "Why"

Your purpose determines your goals, plans, and focus. It narrows down your curriculum choices and opportunities.

- **Ask your student:** Involve them in a multi-day conversation about their own goals.
- **Passion-Driven:** If they have a specific talent, focus their path toward graduation by emphasizing those interests.
- **Exploring Talents:** If they are unsure, maximize their opportunities to explore hidden talents while fulfilling requirements.

## 2. Relationships First

Homeschooling is deeply relational. Studies show that a parent's income or education level doesn't significantly impact outcomes; students succeed because they spend time with a loving parent.

- **The Mentoring Model:** This one-on-one approach is the best system for learning.
- **Partners on a Team:** Help your teen own their education and see you as a partner.
- **Prioritize Connection:** Always put the relationship over academics. A failure within the safety of a loving family often teaches more than nagging ever could.

## 3. Develop a Personalized Plan

You are not bound by a traditional schedule. You can develop a plan specific to your student's identity, whether they are an athlete, a developer, or have a deep interest in animals.

- **Think Outside the Textbook:** Use apprenticeships, independent learning, dual enrollment, and volunteer work.
- **Flexible Timing:** Consider a 5-year plan for late bloomers or a compacted schedule for those ready to graduate early.
- **You Are in Charge:** You determine the details of graduating your senior.

## 4. Document Everything

Most life learning fits into five areas: Language Arts, Math, Social Studies, Science, and Electives.

- **Keep Records:** Document volunteer work and extracurriculars for job and college applications.
- **Graduation Requirements:** As a homeschooler, you determine graduation requirements, not the state.
- **Valid Credentials:** You can print your own diploma and transcript. They are legally valid—your student earned it!

## 5. Planning for College & Beyond

College is not the only path, but if it is the goal, start planning early.

- **Research Admissions:** Most colleges have specific homeschool instructions on their websites.
- **Testing Options:** Many schools go by GPA instead of tests. You can also earn credit through CLEP and AP testing.
- **Alternative Paths:** Entrepreneurial work, technical schools, and apprenticeships are often better options for some students.

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### Important: Understanding Accreditation

The term "accreditation" is often used incorrectly. Most colleges and businesses do not actually require it.

- **No GED Needed:** Homeschoolers should never be required to take the GED.
- **NCAA Eligibility:** Homeschoolers can be eligible for college sports through the NCAA without an accrediting body.

### Learning Styles & Intelligences

Encourage your child's natural strengths by recognizing how they learn best.

- **Visual & Auditory:** Learning through sight and sound.
- **Kinetic:** Learning through movement. High schoolers still benefit from hands-on experiences like science experiments and history projects.

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### Yearly Reviews: County vs. Umbrella

While the county school system is an option, I recommend using an **Umbrella** for middle and high school students.

- **Supportive Guidance:** Umbrellas provide accurate information and understand that it is legal for you to graduate your own student.
- **Accurate Information:** The county system may not tell you that you have the jurisdiction to set your own graduation requirements.

