

Challenges in Bringing Children Home

If you are bringing your children home for the first time, you can expect challenges. You might experience some of the following:

1. You aren't used to having them at home. You have to be willing to change your habits. Home schooling isn't something you add to your life. It IS your life!
2. They aren't used to being there, either. Give them time to adjust. Remember: each year in a traditional school = 1 month of adjustment at home. Don't despair. Remember your commitment. Don't be faint-hearted.
3. Children who have spent eight hours a day with their peers are going to need adjustment time. Don't expect your school to be all roses from the start. They may resist or resent your teaching. They may rebel against it. You'll hear, "That's not the way Mr. So-and-So did it!" They may talk about how bored they are or how they miss their friends. Don't react impulsively to this attitude, but remember who's in charge. Take time to pray and ask the Lord to guide you. Plan time with selected friends and with your home school group.
4. Remember, that you, too, are peer-influenced and you will have to adjust. Don't be pressured by family and friends to use certain methods or materials. Take your time!
5. If you are taking your child out of a bad learning situation, no matter what the age, expect a time of healing. Many of you are saving your children from a bad educational experience. Don't immediately put them into the same situation at home (i.e. similar type of curriculum). Take time to heal. Children who are burned out or who have wounded spirits need healing time.
6. Develop a routine rather than a schedule. Children respond well to routine, but you'll burn out quickly if you try to stick to a rigid schedule. You're NOT a school. You don't have to finish before the bell rings.
7. Enlist the help of your spouse. You're in this together just as in everything in your marriage. Children, particularly, boys, tend to be more inclined to cooperate with Mom when Dad is involved in the educational experience. When Dad is involved, the children realize that this is a really important undertaking.
8. Trust God to guide you. Proverbs 9:10: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Start there. Everything else will fall into place. When you think you're about ready to quit, remember Noah Webster's definition that academics are secondary to a godly character.
9. Relationships are key. This is the time to build, or rebuild, relationships with your children. You're going to know them a lot longer as adults than you do as children and you want them to like you when all this schooling is over! Take time to have fun and build a bond with them.
10. Remember to pray for your children, your planning time, your curriculum choices, your discipline – both for your children and yourself! Remember God, your Father, the Master Teacher, will guide you and teach you. You are not in this alone.