

# Homeschool Handbook



A Comprehensive and Encouraging Guide for Homeschool Families.

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## Welcome to Your Ultimate Homeschool Guide

Homeschooling can feel overwhelming at times, but you're not alone. With the right tools and support, you'll be equipped to nurture a love of learning in your children and achieve your educational goals. Let this guide be your companion as you embark on (or continue) this rewarding journey. Here's to making your homeschool the best it can be!



“

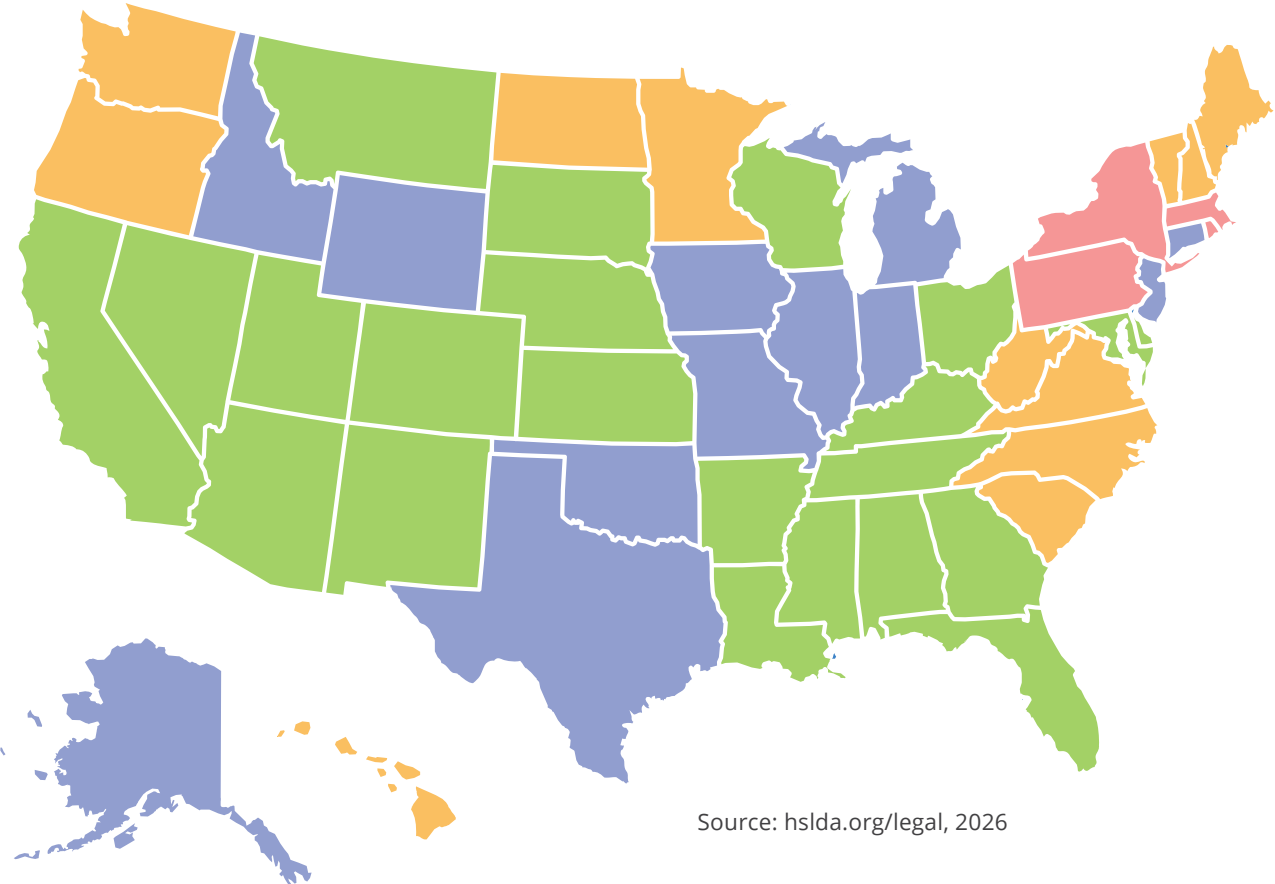
God didn't call you  
to homeschooling  
because you could  
handle it.

He called you  
because He could  
handle it.

Jamie Erickson

# Homeschool Regulations Map

Although homeschooling is legal in all 50 states, all homeschoolers should know their state’s homeschooling laws and file any necessary paperwork or meet additional requirements.



## REGULATION LEVELS

- No Requirements:** Parents do not need to initiate contact.
- Low Regulation:** Parents must notify schools.
- Moderate Regulations:** Parents must submit notification, test scores, and/or professional evaluation of student progress.
- High Regulation:** Additional requirements like curriculum approval, teacher qualification of parents, or home visits are required.

## LEGEND

- States requiring no notice
- States requiring low regulation
- States requiring moderate regulation
- States requiring high regulation

# HOW TO CHOOSE BETWEEN Teacher-Led and Student-Led Curriculum

When it comes to choosing homeschool curriculum, there are so many different styles and nuances between techniques that it can be difficult to know which direction to take. To help you decide which option is best for your children, here are a few key differences between teacher-led and student-led curriculum.



## Teacher-led curriculum may be better for students who:

- Struggle being self-motivated
- Like to be shown how to do something
- Need encouragement while problem solving
- Have trouble focusing on their own
- Struggle reading independently
- Want a parent involved in play or discovery time



## Student-led curriculum may be better for students who:

- Are independent
- Excel at being self-motivated
- Get bored with too much explanation
- Can problem solve on their own
- Are confident when reading
- Can entertain themselves for a long time such as during play time

## So, what's the difference?

The difference between teacher-led and student-led curriculum is who sets the pace, meaning who decides when new information is presented.

In a teacher-led curriculum, the parent determines the timing and quantity of new information presented. Students learn according to the teacher's schedule, with new content only available through the teacher's instruction. The teacher-led model is what almost every school across the United States uses. A teacher prepares content and presents it to students. Then, the students practice the content and are assessed on it.

With a student-led curriculum, new information is always accessible for students to learn at their own pace. This approach promotes independence, allowing students to explore new content without waiting for teacher instruction.

## Don't forget!

When trying to decide between teacher-led and student-led curriculum, remember that teaching style matters as well. Teacher-led curriculum like Horizons comes with a robust teacher's guide, but more preparation work is required for the parent.

On the other hand, with student-led curriculum, instruction is written into the student workbooks, like LIFEPAK. Teacher's guides are provided so parents can be involved if needed, but even then, there is less required of parents.

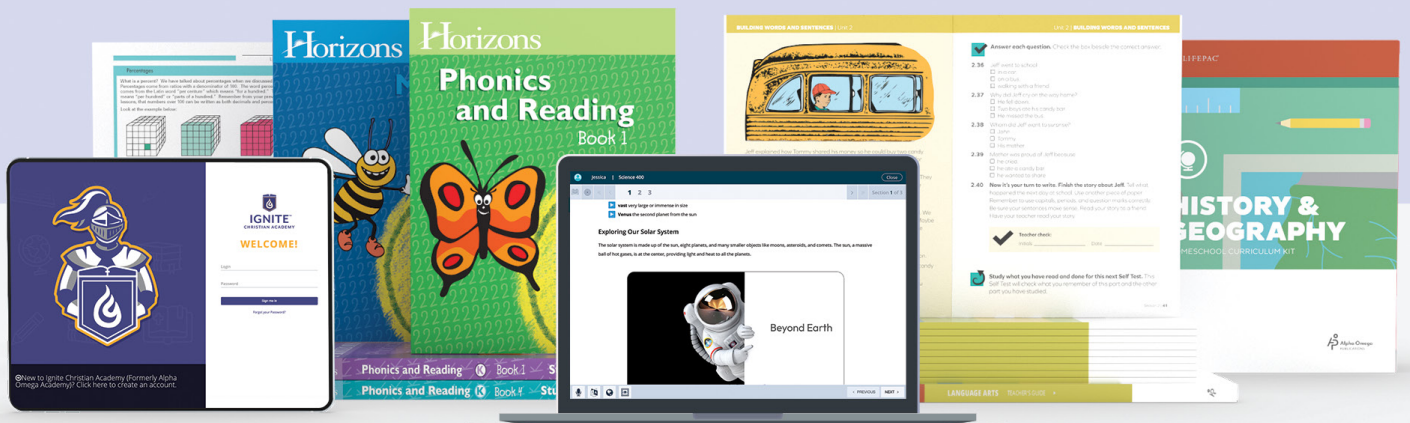
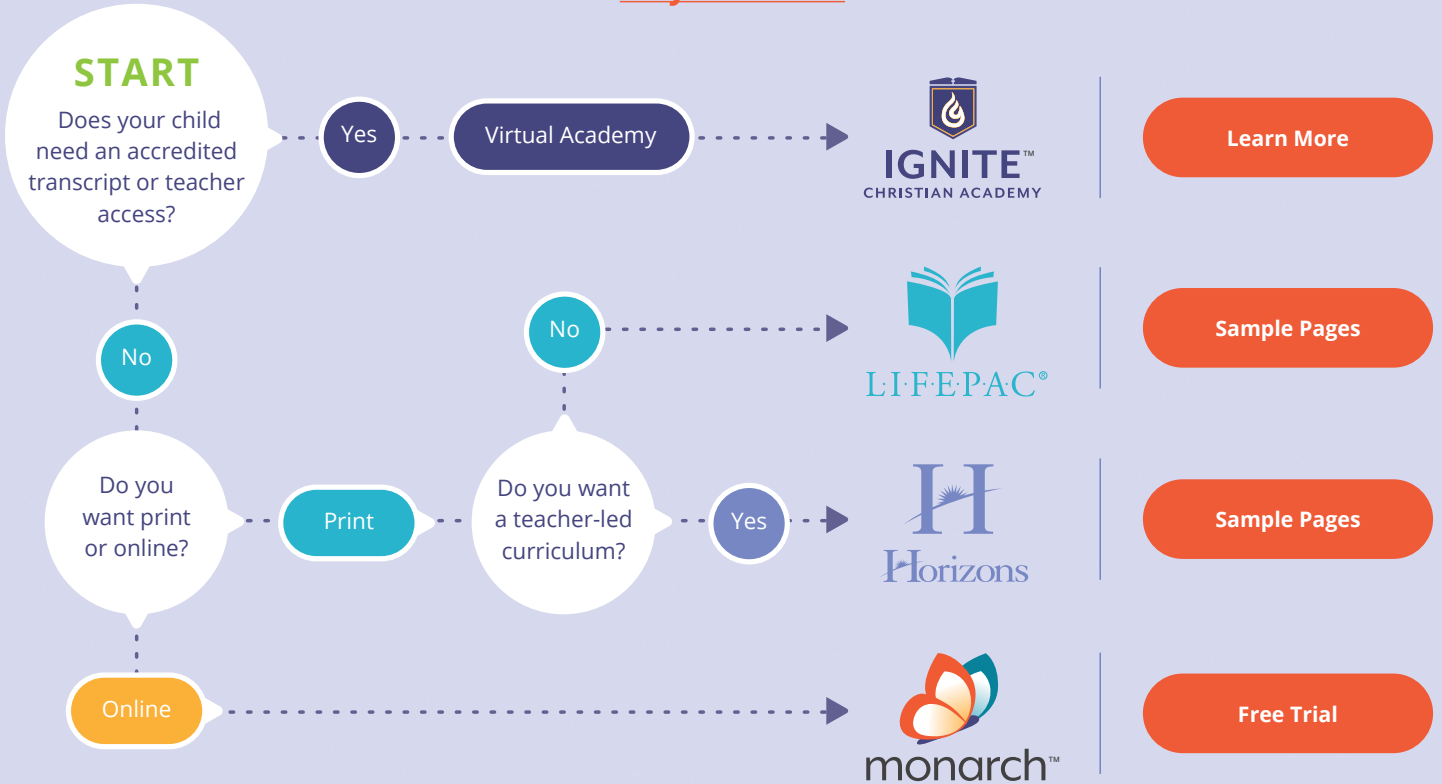
## Why choose one over the other?

As always, different children flourish with different styles. Depending on a child's skill sets and personality, one style may be more successful than the other. In the sidebar, review the characteristics you can look for in your child to decide which style may work best for you!

# Find Your Fit

Finding the perfect curriculum can be a challenge, but it doesn't have to be. Whether you prefer print or online curricula, or student-led or parent-led lessons, AOP has the perfect fit for your family. Discover the best curriculum for your child by using our easy flow chart. Then, explore ways to save using your state's unique options, along with appreciation discounts and Ignite Christian Academy's Refer and Earn program.

## Ways to Save >



# Four Advantages of Online Learning

1

**It's flexible.** No matter the time, place, or your child's preferred pace, online curriculum lets homeschoolers study when and how it is convenient for them. Monarch Full Access subscriptions from AOP take convenience one step further by providing complete access to 100+ courses for grades 3-12, allowing students to mix and match courses across grade levels to suit their individual learning needs in both core and elective courses.

2

**Students build professional communication skills every day.** Because email and instant messaging systems are mainstream forms of communication within the workplace today, learning to express thoughts in an orderly fashion is vital to success in the professional world. Monarch's built-in messaging system provides students with an opportunity to practice virtual communication skills as they encounter questions or concerns while completing coursework.

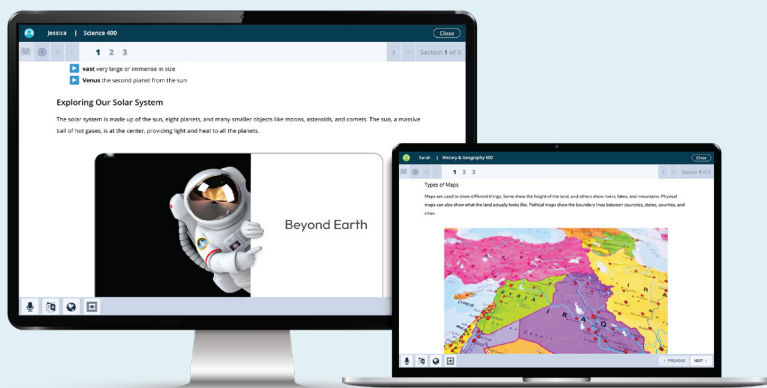
3

**Online curriculum provides immediate access to the latest information.**

As history happens and technology advances from day to day, there's no need to wait around for software updates or a new edition of your textbook. Online curriculum can be updated anytime, providing your child with constant access to the most up-to-date information.

4

**Recordkeeping is easy, and feedback is instant.** Online learning programs minimize clutter by storing student data digitally. In addition, Monarch makes life easier for everyone by automatically grading 85% of student work. This time-saving feature provides students with instant academic feedback and families with more time together.



Enjoy 100+ online courses  
for 30 days FREE!

Start Your Trial



# SURVIVING THE Homeschool Slump

During the gloomy months of winter, many homeschool parents describe a period that some call the homeschool slump. The excitement of the holidays has long since fizzled out, and depending on where you live, the cold may be keeping you inside and making you go a little stir crazy.

*No matter if you are a first-time homeschool parent or if you've been doing it for years, you may struggle with finding motivation during this slump, so here are a few ideas for how you can bring new life to your homeschool!*

## 1 TAKE YOUR SCHOOLING TO-GO.

Depending on where you live and what snow-pocalypses you may have to endure, this one might look a little different, but the idea is the same: get out of the house! Schedule field trips to museums, local service organizations, or even just to the library. A change of scenery can do wonders for inspiration during a slump.

## 2 EMBRACE INDEPENDENT WORK.

If you find that you are struggling more than your kids during a homeschool slump, embrace the wonder of independent work. To encourage the natural love of learning, consider your child's passions, and depending on the age, assign a project that requires a little bit of work over several days to cover a topic in-depth. You can also assign independent reading to nurture a love for a particular subject.

For younger school-aged children, consider implementing mandatory alone time for play. It's amazing the creative things children can come up with when they are given the time to become bored.

## 3 FIND STRENGTH IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

As more and more things go digital, it's easy to convince yourself that you are part of a community just because you follow a certain Facebook group, blog, or Instagram account.

While we love when our homeschool families connect with our community on social media, it is no substitute for good, old-fashioned fellowship where

hurting and struggling and real humans gather together to give support, even if that means just having a moment where yours aren't the only eyes that need to watch your kids.

Make time to connect with other homeschoolers in your area or invite family members, especially older family members, to be a part of your homeschooling. Intergenerational learning is an incredible blessing for those who have that availability.

## 4 REMEMBER AND REFOCUS.

Take some time—maybe when your child is doing independent work—to remember why you're doing this. During the homeschool slump, it's easy to question if homeschooling was the right choice or even to give up on yourself as a teacher. Remember that you have everything you need to be the best teacher your child could ever have. You chose to homeschool for a reason. What was it? Remember that reason and refocus on the bigger picture.



# Homeschool Field Trips

Homeschool Field trips are like a backstage pass to learning, letting you dive into subjects in a whole new way. Whether you're exploring museums, historic sites, or nature trails, these adventures make learning come alive.

**Aquariums.** Have the ocean come to you at a local aquarium. Your children will have a blast exploring a vast array of underwater creatures. Give them more than just an adventure by incorporating lessons about coral reef, habitats, the food web, oil pollution, and more.

**Historical Buildings.** Whether it's a designated landmark or notable home, history comes to life when you're able to visit the places where it actually happened.

**Factories or Businesses.** Tour a local factory or business and give your children a behind-the-scenes look at how things are made or jobs are performed.

**Indoor Play Centers.** Find a local play area near you to burn off some energy. Some popular options are trampoline parks, ninja gyms, arcades, and indoor playgrounds.

**Art & Pottery Studios.** Get in touch with your child's artistic side and paint a canvas or sculpt with clay. Don't forget to check the studio's calendar for special events or activities.

**Botanical Gardens.** Explore diverse plant collections year-round in indoor or outdoor curated gardens.

**Museums.** There are a ton of different types of museums that make learning fun. A quick Google search should pull up a list of art galleries, state, children, and science museums, and even planetariums.

**Local Government Buildings.** Take the civics lesson one step further with a trip to your local courthouse, or a city or state government building.

**Plays or Performances.** Look for high school plays, music performances for children, dance performances, and more.

**Ski Lodges.** Learn about the winter Olympics and enjoy a few snow sports with a trip to a ski lodge. If you live in or near an area that gets snow, enjoy the fresh air.

## MORE FUN FIELD TRIP IDEAS

- Go see an IMAX movie.
- Take a virtual field trip.
- Tour a civil service station, local farm, or post office.
- Explore a zoo.
- Find a local cavern or cave to explore.
- Go to the library for story time.
- Head to your local YMCA.
- Discover local nature center or wildlife area.

# Make Homeschooling More Affordable



## Embrace The Education Freedom Movement

New legislation is being passed regularly to empower parents to influence their child's education journey. Learn more about your state from our advisors and frequently updated videos to help you get started.



## Dual Enrollment with Ignite Christian Academy

Families who enroll their 11th and 12th grade students through dual enrollment with Ignite Christian Academy by AOP save an average of >\$20,000 compared to traditional college tuition.



## Refer & Earn

Learning is better with friends which is why existing students receive a \$750 credit toward the next year's Ignite Christian Academy tuition with each friend they refer.\* Bonus - each friend referred receives their own \$250 savings on their first school year's tuition.\*\*



## Service & Pastoral Discount

Military members, first responders, missionaries, and pastors are eligible for a 20% discount on AOP curriculum and tuition. Contact us to redeem this offer as our thank-you for your service.

[Learn More at aop.com/pages/financial-assistance](https://aop.com/pages/financial-assistance)

\*Referred student must mention who referred them at time of enrollment. Once assigned, referral credit cannot be transferred. Credits are assigned to the referring family's account once the referred student is full-time enrolled for the full school year with 4 or more courses and has completed their first school year.

\*\*Referred students will immediately have the \$250 credit applied that can be combined with the 10% discount for full year, full-time tuition.



# PRINTABLE Homeschool Resources



“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

(Jeremiah 29:11-13).

# GOAL tracker

"I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

PHILIPPIANS 4:13

**Big Goal**  
(i.e. To be healthier)

What Does It Look Like?

Steps to Get There

- 1
- 2
- 3

"I will" statement:





# RESPONSIBILITY *chart*

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord.

COLOSSIANS 3:23

	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 _____							
2 _____							
3 _____							
4 _____							
5 _____							
6 _____							
7 _____							
8 _____							





# WEEKLY GRATITUDE Sheet



"It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness."

CHARLES SPURGEON

## MONDAY

I am grateful for:

## TUESDAY

I am grateful for:

## WEDNESDAY

I am grateful for:

## THURSDAY

I am grateful for:

## FRIDAY

I am grateful for:

## SATURDAY

I am grateful for:

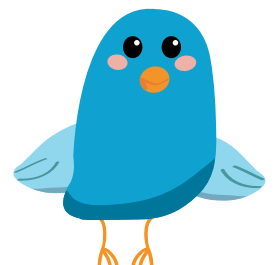
## SUNDAY

I am grateful for:

## 3 THINGS I DID WELL THIS WEEK

## PEOPLE WHO HAVE HELPED ME THIS WEEK

## FRIENDS AND FAMILY I'M GRATEFUL FOR THIS WEEK





# END-OF-YEAR HOMESCHOOL check list

Work through this checklist to make sure your homeschool year wraps up smoothly, and you can pick up again next year with ease.

## **Finalize recordkeeping.**

Document the following based on your state's requirements

- Attendance records
- Details of your child's curriculum (publisher, grade level, etc)
- Samples of your child's work
- Correspondence with school officials
- Portfolios
- Test scores



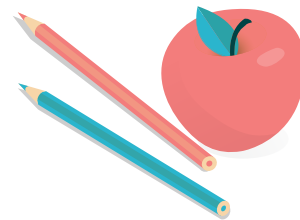
## **Give yourself a year-end review.**

Come August or September, your year-end review will be a leg up when you jump back into your homeschool routine.



## **Handout final grades (or your equivalent).**

Once your children have completed their last assignment, give them a report card, progress report, or other form of yearly assessment and review it together.



## **Celebrate progress!**

Show your children you noticed what they did and acknowledge the hard work it required. Another year accomplished is absolutely worth celebrating!



# THE SUPPORT YOU NEED to Thrive

We know homeschool is a journey like no other, and we're glad to be a part of it! That's why our favorite role isn't award-winning curriculum provider but homeschool expert. Let AOP build your support system and provide you with tools and resources to guide you in your homeschool adventure.



Download AOP's  
Homeschool Brochure

Look Inside

## We're Social!

Connect with us on social media.



Finding the right curriculum for your child is important, and our curriculum advisors are here to help.

Free LIFEPAC  
Placement Tests

Free Horizons  
Placement Tests



Tips for Success

Support Groups

Call us at

**800-622-3070**

or visit

**[aop.com/pages/curriculum](https://aop.com/pages/curriculum)**

to learn more or schedule a call.

We're happy to help you with any questions you may have about homeschooling!