

# A Guide to Homeschooling:



What to Expect When Your Child  
is in Charge of their Education

From the Professionals at:

Deep Root Center

A stylized black tree root system graphic with several main branches and many smaller, intricate roots extending downwards.

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*What to Expect When Your Child is in Charge of Their Education*

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**Welcome! You are likely here for one of two reasons:**

A. Public School has not worked out for your family, and you are ready to leave because you know your child can succeed in the right environment.

B. Your family is dedicated to unschooling (free-range or self-directed learning)

In either case, Deep Root Center can help.

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## **Deep Root Center Background Info**

Besides our non-coercive, self-directed [in-person program](#) at our Canton facility, Deep Root Center also provides fee-based [one-on-one consultations](#) and, as an extension of that service, will offer [DRC-Pop-ups](#) - 2 day-a-week opportunities at host venues in the Massena area beginning in the Fall of 2024 - where young people can socialize, work together on collaborative projects, and get mentoring support.

Whichever service you choose, we offer expertise in writing homeschooling documentation and general support to find resources, set goals, and pursue a self-directed education. This process is totally individualized for each child and family.

Self-directed learning is a completely different educational paradigm than most ever experienced. We invite parents and guardians to travel along this unique journey with their kids to explore the world on a whole new level that celebrates each individual - their interests and aspirations.

We are here to hold your hand through the entire homeschool/free-range/unschooling experience - whether your child is a member of one of our facilities, joins our Pop-Ups, or is homeschooling exclusively at home

# An Overview of Homeschool Requirements

## Three Documents:

- Letter of Intent (LOI) - This is a letter that informs the school that you are homeschooling your child. It is usually sent to the school with the IHIP. Occasionally, in certain circumstances, it is sent before the IHIP.
- Individualized Home Instruction Plan (IHIP) - This is your child's plan submitted to your school district. It includes all of the subjects per NYS requirements with a narrative description of what your child will explore in each - with resources listed.
- Quarterly Progress Reports (four per year - the dates of submission are listed on the IHIP) - These are narratives of what your child has done for each subject over the previous ten weeks. (Some districts require a chart with progress grades - S, U, F. We know which ones.) At the end of the year there are also annual assessments that we can guide you through.

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**Finishing High School** - three documents that show compliance for high school completion - provided by DRC as part of our homeschool completion package.

- Home-school diploma - blank template - completed by parents.
- Transcript - includes classes, projects, & activities as a home-schooler and high school classes completed at a previous school - with credits - no grades or GPA.
- Letter to the District Superintendent asking them to write a letter of completion, including the statement: this is a certification of compliance in accordance with New York State home-school regulations Section 100.10. This letter is not pertinent unless the student is applying directly to college.

# Supporting your Self-Directed Learner

## The first step is to understand that Learning is Natural & School is Optional

Every individual is a brilliant natural learner with strengths, challenges, interests, and an internal timeline, which means the artificial developmental schedule based on age and grade level makes zero sense. No child can be behind - only on their very own schedule.

Once you learn something, you can't lose it. Yes, if you don't use a particular piece of knowledge for a time, you may have to dig for a few seconds to find it - but if you really learned it, it will always be there in the depths.

Even though the world is constantly changing, the knowledge considered vital 100, 50, 25, 10, or even 5 years ago is still taught - through memorization and dissemination from teacher to student, and deemed valid and current! We know that following interests and aspirations and working collaboratively in a diverse multi-age group with a trusted mentor - instead of competitively in a coercive setting is much more conducive to learning what we truly need as a society.

We want kids to understand that learning is fun and based solely on curiosity, creativity, exploration, and discovery - not rote memorization.

Hence, there is no specific curriculum for this approach. We don't recommend purchasing a curriculum-based program. We do suggest getting a library card for your child. Your local library is an invaluable resource.

Workbooks and free apps or websites (such as Khan Academy, CK-12, or Universal Class) that are grade-level based can be used - non-linearly - they can jump around from one concept (one grade level) to another. Or, if they want to take a specific class from beginning to end, they can do that too. The world is wide open for exploration. Always follow the child's lead.

Playing Games (gaming or traditional), using learning apps such as Khan Academy, PBS Kids, or CK-12, watching YouTube video tutorials, reading (books, comics, or graphic novels), drawing, painting, crafting, developing story-lines for computer games and then creating them, writing fan fiction stories based on their favorite series, cooking, baking, researching a hyper-fixation (animals, trains, world cultures, etc), building with Lego (Manga-tiles, Lincoln logs, etc.), nature studies, erecting cardboard cities, playing with toy cars and trucks, racing, running, and chasing around the yard (hide & seek or tag), stick play, tearing apart a computer, car, or ... and putting them back together - this list of projects and activities can literally include anything the child is interested in. **It doesn't have to be labeled "educational" to be a valid learning activity. Everything counts!**

The above are the types of activities and projects we ask parents to observe and list for us to write in the quarterly progress reports.

## The General Benefits of Self-Directed Learning

- Kids are generally happier (more content and less anxious)
- They are more creative and are motivated to follow their ideas to their natural conclusions.
- They feel empowered to make decisions and will learn that the simple act of making choices will always have consequences (beneficial, neutral, or harmful)
- Kids are less fearful of change or new ideas.
- They understand that life can get messy and that making mistakes is a natural part of learning.
- They have a profound understanding of who they are and what they like.
- They are not afraid to go after something they think will be good for them or their community.
- They recognize that learning is a fun, lifelong process.

**Trust that your child knows exactly what they need.** Let them explore the world and follow their curiosity. They will show you what they are good at and what they are interested in learning about. And then, just try to keep up with all the awesomeness that will transpire.

**Have Fun!**

Fees



Deep Root Center  
Pop-Ups & Consultation Fee Schedule

Drop-in Fee \$8/day each child	IHIP & Letter of Intent Package \$60	Quarterly Reports \$50/ea	Additional Home-school Support 1st 1/4 hr. free then \$50/hr	High School Completion Package \$75
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# Resources:

## Learning apps:

Khan Academy - <https://www.khanacademy.org/>

CK12 - <https://www.ck12.org/student/>



**PBS KIDS**  
Educational games and videos from Curious George, Wild Kratts and other PBS KIDS shows!  
[pbskids.org](https://pbskids.org)



**Math Games, Math Worksheets and Practice Quizzes**  
Math games online that practice math skills using fun interactive content. Over 1000 free skill testin...



**Crash Course**  
Crash Course is one of the best ways to educate yourself, your classmates, and your family on YouTube!  
[Crash Course](#)

## Resources available through North Country Library System - all you need is a library card



**kanopy**  
Stream Movies & TV

<https://www.kanopy.com/en/login>



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