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# What to Consider About Homeschooling Your Child

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## MANHATTAN

-- Choosing to homeschool your child isn't as simple as just wanting to do it. Walter Schumm, professor of family studies and human services at Kansas State University, said parents who successfully homeschool their children must value it enough to be committed to it.

"It

takes a lot of commitment to do it, so you don't want to undertake it lightly," he said.

Schumm

and his wife have homeschooled all of their seven children, who range in age from 8 to 23. He said they chose to homeschool because they wanted to integrate spirituality into their children's subject material.

Religion is just one of the reasons why parents may decide to homeschool their children.

"Some

parents do it for safety. They are worried about the safety of their children in schools," Schumm said. "Another reason some parents homeschool is because they're concerned with the academic quality of their children's education. Others are concerned with peer pressure and moral values."

No

matter the reason for homeschooling, Schumm recommends parents have a connection with a support group if they decide to homeschool their children.

"If

you try to do it all on your own, you're going to risk burnout," he said.

Schumm

also said a support group helps to socialize the children.

"A

lot of people will mention socialization as a problem, but the homeschool group I'm familiar with in Manhattan makes sure to do a lot of things together," Schumm said. "We take the kids on field trips, and they do sports together, among other things. There are also group classes on art, music, chemistry, biology and other subjects. Socialization also includes getting along with adults as well as peers."

Schumm

said homeschooling is not for everyone, and parents should carefully consider it before taking on the challenge.

"Obviously,

some people may think they can't do it," Schumm said. "If both parents have to work full time, it would be a challenge. It's also important to think of what your child needs and if you're qualified enough to teach.

"However,

those who really want it have found a way. Single parents have homeschooled their children. Some parents who never finish college have also done a great job by teaching their children how to learn on their own and by using many of the excellent resources available for homeschoolers today."

Dale

Hawkinson agrees with Schumm that parents must first consider how committed to homeschooling they will be. Hawkinson, assistant specialist of education and personal development at K-State, has homeschooled all 11 of his children whose ages range from 6 to 27.

"There

are a lot of things about homeschooling that are difficult, just like any other life decision you make," Hawkinson said. "There needs to be a conviction rather than a whim to homeschool. It is difficult work to do."

More

information on homeschooling in Kansas is available from the state Department of Education at [http://www.ksde.org/outcomes/homeschool\\_link.htm](http://www.ksde.org/outcomes/homeschool_link.htm)