

## CCP Virus Puts Strange Spotlight on Homeschooling

Nicole Russell

April 15, 2020

Since the CCP virus has forced millions of children to stay home from school, it's forced Americans to place an unusual spotlight on education—in particular, home school.

With stay-at-home or quarantine measures in place, what other choice do parents have but to try to educate their children from home, typically with some kind of e-learning in place? Ideologues have started to participate in supporting or criticizing educating kids at home during this pandemic.

A Salon piece bemoans the fact that people who had always been homeschooling saw this pandemic as a silver lining, a chance to convince others to do the same.

“While the public experiences a health calamity, the homeschooling movement sees a big opportunity,” the article subtitle reads.

After including quotes from supporters of homeschooling, the author writes about how bad it would be if this lifestyle choice were to continue:

“[E]xperts warn that any growing popularity of homeschooling as a result of the pandemic will likely worsen education for students and pose serious problems to the economy and the nation's social well-being.”

The author concludes with the many downsides: homeschooling isn't feasible for most parents, the benefits are few, that parents lack knowledge of how to teach, and that it's expensive.

Before the CCP virus, homeschooling had been growing slowly in the United States. I homeschooled my four kids for six years; we all enjoyed it and my kids learned plenty. Still, approximately 90 percent of parents sent their kids to public or private school before this current crisis. It's a bit strange even for Salon to sound the alarm on something parents are having to do by default or due to mandates from local officials to close schools.

They're not the only ones concerned though. In June, Harvard Law School is officially hosting a “Homeschooling Summit” to advocate against homeschooling. An education expert at the Cato

Institute, Corey DeAngelis, flagged the event, and I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't read about it for myself.

According to the information online, "The focus will be on problems of educational deprivation and child maltreatment that too often occur under the guise of homeschooling." The education experts will have a panel on "Reform Proposals," such as regulatory oversight and even a possible ban.

Reading both the Salon article and about the Harvard homeschooling summit raises the question: Why is arguably the best university in the United States so worried about something Salon thinks backward, impossible, and expensive?

For starters, it's a bit silly to overreact about the potential for a huge spike in homeschooling following the CCP virus pandemic. I predict there will be a slight increase in homeschooling because some families will want to continue that lifestyle, but generally speaking, it's true that it's just not tenable for most families and they will put their kids back in school when they can.

To sound an alarm about homeschooling right now when families are forced to embrace it just doesn't make sense. Regardless of whether or not homeschooling deserves all the sudden bad press, an attempt to advocate against it to the point of banning it is completely asinine.

I've not been particularly overjoyed with the online schooling my children are doing via their public school district, but when we homeschooled consistently for years, that was an entirely different experience. Homeschooling when one has a prepared curriculum, experience, co-ops, support, and other essentials is hugely different to how parents are educating their kids now in the midst of this health crisis.

Of course, homeschooling is a luxury, but it's a choice many families make, and make work by cutting out other niceties. Either way, just because it's a luxury, doesn't mean it should be looked at with disdain. Even all the other claims Salon made, that it's expensive, or untenable, or not beneficial are either bunk or irrelevant.

It wasn't my experience that homeschooling was all that costly, it's certainly feasible if your family plans their life around it, and it's incredibly beneficial to children who learn at a different pace, who have learning disabilities, or just want to embrace a certain lifestyle or curriculum. To rail against it because only a few choose the lifestyle is like lambasting the existence of Lamborghinis because you'll never be able to afford one: Who cares?

Homeschooling has its pros and cons just like any education system, but to see the way the CCP virus has highlighted it now among the progressive left is as fascinating as it is absurd.

Most of their concerns are short-sighted, illogical, and will never come to fruition, because the reason people are homeschooling now is due to a health crisis that hopefully will never occur again in our lifetimes. Even then, the hearty criticism seems biased, unwarranted, and often plain wrong.

Homeschooling has always been a right and that should continue, CCP virus or not.