

What Does Holistic Earth Based Homeschooling Look Like?

As teachers and parents we are often pressured to disregard the “other” aspects of learning in favor of a group of core standards. If you look at the educational guidelines for your region you will find that most have a list of core standards for education and most of these are academic in nature. When people write to us about the [Earthschooling](#) program many of the questions we receive are academic in nature and when parents talk about feeling they are not “doing enough” it is often based on academic measurements.

At [Earthschooling](#) we have created our own holistic list of core standards that include not only academics but also health, temperaments, movement, outdoor education, rhythm, lessons that teach to the Head, heart & hands, vertical and horizontal alignment in the curriculum, community support, mentoring, and a natural environment.

See the chart on the next pages to find out more...

	Definition	Benefits	The Science	Earthschooling
Outdoors	Activities that encourage children to get outdoors & spend educational time in nature	<p>Improves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Emotional Development *Physical Development *Mental Health *Societal Well Being *Work Performance in the Classroom *Mental Stability * Communication Skills *Motivation *Attitudes About the Environment *Memory *Self Reliance <p>Decreases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Stress *Anxiety 	<p>In a study done by the <i>Office for Standards in Education</i> in the UK says, "...learning outside the classroom contributed significantly to raising standards and improving pupils' personal, social and emotional development." -- Other various studies show more than 11 specific benefits including better grades, better health, decreased stress levels, increased motivation, better attitudes about the environment, better overall behavior, enhanced communication skills, etc.</p>	<p>Earthschooling has an entire 100 Days of Nature Walks program and encourages kids to get outside with every activity. Most handwork and crafts are done with materials the child finds outdoors.</p>

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Natural Toys, Supplies, Environment & Clothing	Made from cotton, wool, wood and other natural products	Connects students with their learning materials, teaches them respect for materials and quality over quantity and on a subtle level nurtures their health through the touch, sight, sounds and smells of nature	See this article HERE that talks about the importance of natural materials in education. – “Numerous studies over the past 30 years have linked exposure to nature with improved human health and well-being.” – Science Daily, April 8, 2015	Earthschooling focuses on the use of natural toys and tools in the curriculum.
Health	Students must get enough sleep & be allowed a 3-day rhythm in their learning process. Their temperament should be taken into consideration as well as any allergies or nutritional needs. -- Children can start learning about natural healing from the	In a speech called Knowledge of Health and Illness given by Rudolf Steiner, the founder of Waldorf Education, he emphasizes how important this knowledge is for parents and teachers and says, “The education that has arisen from the holistic understanding of the world has to be far more comprehensive than many forms of education available today. Above all, it has to be far more closely linked to the knowledge of human beings as a whole.”	In the book, <i>School, Health and Nutrition for all</i> a number of researchers combine many studies and their own knowledge to show that, (i) disease affects education throughout childhood; (ii) improving children’s health and nutrition brings substantial benefits for education; (iii)	Earthschooling provides recipes for healthy snacks as well as lessons for healthy movement with every curriculum package.

	<p>time they are five-years-old. At that stage, introduce children gently to some of the natural plants in their backyard or simple healing herbs they can grow at home. We will serve spearmint and hibiscus tea during snack time. As the child grows they are able to incorporate more advanced concepts into their curriculum. Children can be taught reflexology, iridology, aromatherapy, nutritional healing and much more. Including natural healing as part of a parent/teacher education and as part of your child's curriculum</p>		<p>improving health and nutrition brings greatest benefits to the poor and most vulnerable; and (iv) health and education reinforce one another." There are an equal number of studies that show the link between good sleep and education: Chad Minnich, of the TIMSS and PIRLS International Study Center says, "I think we underestimate the impact of sleep. Our data show that across countries internationally, on average, children who have more sleep achieve higher in math, science and reading. That is exactly what our data show"</p>	
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Temperament	Consider the child's temperament, the temperament of the teacher and the temperament of the season. For example, a melancholic student will need more order and direction and in the season of the phlegmatic winter lessons naturally become more focused on inner work and are taken at a slower pace.	Nurture's understanding between siblings, students, parents and children and teachers and students. Helps everyone see what unique ways of learning and communication are most effective for them and those around them.	Rudolf Steiner gave many lectures on the importance of being aware of the child's temperament in the classroom and said, "it is clear that to guide and direct the temperaments is one of life's significant tasks. If this task is to be properly carried out, however, one basic principle must be observed, which is always to reckon with what is given, and not with what is not there... Instead of asking what the child lacks, in order that we might force it into him, we must focus on what he has, and base ourselves on that."	The Earthschooling curriculum incorporates temperament into its schedule and designs each lessons to appeal to every temperament.

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Movement	Specific movement based in the natural development of the child, designed to support their coordination and brain-body development. Natural movements	Encourages: *Ease of Learning *Retention of Knowledge *Memory	“Teaching with the Brain in Mind” author Eric Jensen cites two studies by Dolcourt and Slavin and says, It’s truly astonishing that the dominant model for formal learning is still “sit and git.” It’s not just astonishing; it’s embarrassing. Why do we persist when the evidence that lecture alone does not cut it is so strong.”	Using Eurythmy as part of your program is a perfect fit for a holistic education because it covers the areas of MOVEMENT, RHYTHM, ALIGNMENT and HEALTH. Eurythmy is not only a fantastic tool for integrating movement and influencing enhanced coordination and brain function, it is also a way to keep the body healthy and balanced on the physical plane.

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Alignment	<p>he term <i>aligned curriculum</i>, refers to an academic program that is (1) purposefully designed to facilitate learning, (2) free of academic gaps and repetitions, and (3) aligned across lessons, courses, subject areas, and grade levels. Teachers base what they teach on consistent learning expectations or considering what students learned in previous grades and will need to know in subsequent grades – this builds on itself and weaves a beautiful coherent educational tapestry.</p>	<p>Alignment Brings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Consistency *Rhythm *Predictability *Fewer challenges to the student *Clear path to learning 	<p>See this article about alignment HERE</p>	<p>All of the Earthschooling curriculum packages are aligned with each other as well as with the core standards of your state.</p>

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Rhythm	Following a natural rhythm based on the rhythm of the day, the week, the seasons and the year	Rhythm Brings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Peace *Harmony *Comfort *Reliability *Trust 	Read this article about Rhythm HERE and these studies about the science of rhythm HERE – “Sleep disordered breathing can hamper memory processes in children, according to a new study. The research, which will be presented at the <i>Sleep and Breathing Conference</i> (16 April 2015), found that disrupted sleep had an impact on different memory processes and how children learn.”	The Earthschooling curriculum is based around many significant rhythms – the rhythm of the year, the seasons, the day, and the child’s needs

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Head, Heart & Hands	Balancing the intellectual “head” work with stories and activities that connect to the child’s spiritual “heart” while allowing them to learn many things through “hands on” experiences		Read about the scientific importance of this balance HERE - “Our data indicate that it is not necessary to assign huge quantities of homework, but it is important that assignment is systematic and regular, with the aim of instilling work habits & promoting autonomous, self-regulated learning,” said Javier Suarez-Alvarez, graduate student, co-lead author with Ruben Fernandez-Alonso, PhD, and Professor Jose Muniz. “The data suggest that spending 60 minutes a day doing homework is a reasonable and effective time.”	

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Community	Community support as well as a program that reflects the community around you is important in creating a natural harmony in your curriculum.	Community Adds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Additional Skills *Additional Input & Ideas *Support *Positive Encouragement 	“Community fosters growth, growth leads to exploration, exploration yields inspiration and inspiration paves the path to curiosity, passion and purpose. That's why building a sense of community in schools is crucial — that process alone is the root of all academic, personal and social momentum.” – Russel Held, July 10, 2019	The Earthschooling forum is a protected, monitored, and safe community for all members.

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Inner Work	Time taken to reflect each day on one-self so that your best self can go forth and teach the student each day.	Inner Work Brings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Balance *Wisdom *Harmony *Peace *Calm *Focus 	Read this scientific study about the importance of inner work HERE - A study from the Max Planck Institute for Cognitive and Brain Sciences and the Technische Universität Dresden found that even being around a stressed person, be it a loved one or a stranger, has the power to make a someone stressed in a physically quantifiable way.	The Earthschooling curriculum provides inner work ideas for the teacher and the student.