

Roadschooling: The Latest Education Frontier?

Christine Lindstrom and her family have been a part of the roadschooling movement for the last three years. This relatively recent phenomenon has much in common with traditional homeschooling. The place of education, however, just happens to be on wheels.

When asked why she didn't think the public school system was the right option for her family, Christine, a teacher herself, cited the overemphasis upon testing, and the necessary strictness and oversimplification that comes with having large classes and few teachers.

Roadschooling, on the other hand, allows for much more freedom and creativity. Flexibility is one of the names of the game. The Lindstroms have chosen a year-round schedule for their children's schooling. This constant travel (with the family usually staying in one place for one to three weeks) allows for the creative integration of education not only with sites seen, but also with the traveling itself. For example, the Lindstroms recently used the Oregon Trail as their route, supplementing their online curriculum with such materials as the *Little House on the Prairie* book series.

Their online curriculum removes the need for bulky textbooks while providing guidance for the children's education. This set-up allows for flexibility and personalization for each child in the household. Some subjects can be taken by multiple children at the same time, while other subjects such as math can be individualized.

Extracurricular activities abound on the open road as well. For example, Christine mentions that her eldest daughter is

able to take dance lessons both online and occasionally in person. A fellow RV user created her own app to allow others on the road to get involved in the art.

However, organized group activities for children are the one aspect of roadschooling that Christine says is significantly lacking. No little leagues or running teams are to be found along the open road.

Despite the lack of organized sports, there exists a great sense of community among roadschoolers, which came as a welcome surprise to Lindstrom. Not only do people socialize at the campsite, but whole families sometimes travel together. Her children, as well, are very social. Whether chatting to a park worker or dropping in at church on a Sunday, they are more than ready to share their unique lifestyle with anyone ready to listen.

So far as legalities and registrations are concerned, Texas is the Lindstrom family's state of residency. In this lone star country, an organization called Escapees helps to make the Lindstroms' and other RV users' lives a little easier. One of their many services is to collect the family's mail and forward it to whatever address they happen to be staying at for a while.

While the lifestyle is certainly not for everyone, it's absolutely wonderful for those it suits. Christine Lindstrom admitted that should any of her children wish to take a more traditional approach to high school, the family would certainly settle down for a while. However, once high school was over, she and her husband would be back out on the road.

Traditional public and home schools have been around for years. However, with the ability to learn as well as live on the road a new way to schooling is opening up. Why not take the opportunity?

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[Image Credit: Pixabay]