

Diverse Outcomes for a Diverse Population

Findings About Homeschooled Adults from the Cardus Education Survey

Albert Cheng and Angela Watson | February 2025

Key Points

- The Cardus Education Survey (CES), conducted in the United States in 2011, 2014, 2018, and again in 2023, examines a range of outcomes for a nationally representative sample of adults aged 24 to 39. Presented in this report are the economic, mental-health, civic, spiritual, and family-formation outcomes for the group of CES respondents who were homeschooled for a portion of their primary and secondary education.
- Adults who were homeschooled are disaggregated into short-term homeschoolers (who were homeschooled one to two years), medium-term homeschoolers (three to seven years), and long-term homeschoolers (eight years or more) and compared to adults who were never homeschooled, controlling for a range of demographic characteristics.
- Top-line findings:
 - *Diversity in terms of time spent in homeschooling:* Adults who were homeschooled spent a wide range of time in that learning environment. Among them, 20 percent were homeschooled for only one year of their primary and secondary education, and 17 percent were homeschooled for all K–12 years.
 - *Educational attainment and employment:* Bachelor's and graduate degree attainment rates were similar between short-term homeschoolers and non-homeschoolers. But medium- and long-term homeschoolers were more likely than short-term and non-homeschoolers to have ended their education with a high school diploma or an associate's degree. For all three groups of homeschooled adults, the likelihood of being employed full-time and having a household income above the median was lower relative to adults who were never homeschooled.
 - *Mental health and well-being:* Compared to the other respondent groups, long-term homeschoolers exhibited the highest levels of optimism, gratitude, and life satisfaction. Long-term homeschoolers were also the least likely to “feel helpless dealing with life's problems” and to report symptoms associated with depression and anxiety.
 - *Civic behaviors:* Short- and long-term homeschoolers were more likely to have volunteered and given to charity in the past twelve months compared to medium-term homeschoolers and adults who were never homeschooled.
 - *Religious engagement:* Homeschooled adults were much more likely to report that they believed in God and life after death and regularly engaged in religious practices. The prevalence of religious belief and practice increased with the number of years spent in the homeschool sector.
 - *Family formation:* Compared to the other respondent groups, long-term homeschoolers were more likely to be married, had the lowest divorce rate, and had more children, on average.



CONTACT

Lynn Swaner
President, US
tel: 516-238-0845
lswaner@cardus.ca

CARDUS.CA

For the full publication, see Cheng, Albert, and Angela Watson. “Diverse Outcomes for a Diverse Population: Findings About Homeschooled Adults from the Cardus Education Survey.” Cardus, 2025. <https://www.cardus.ca/research/education/reports/diverse-outcomes-for-a-diverse-population/>.