

AN INTRODUCTORY GUIDE TO SELF-DIRECTED EDUCATION (SDE)

BY GALILEO

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WHAT YOU'LL GET IN THE SDE GUIDE

This SDE guide is created to give parents, educators and everyone interested a taste of what it means to be in charge of their educational journeys. Like adults, children have their own unique interests and aspirations. Therefore, this guide will serve as a sneak peak into the world of education where a kid is the main decision maker. The family is merely there for support and to help the self-directed student get access to resources.

INTRODUCING: SELF-DIRECTED EDUCATION

All knowledge is created equal.

This idea breaks down the traditional "fixed" frame of thought that certain knowledge...like academic knowledge for example, is somehow "better" or "more valuable" than other kinds of knowledge. All human knowledge has value and merit as given to it by the person utilizing that knowledge for a purpose or when given a particular circumstance.

Let's play "Would You Rather?"

If you had to make a presentation on the spot, what would be more useful: algebra or presentation skills? Let's say you were.. Stuck in the wilderness, which would you rather have: survival skills or an A+ on your History paper? This is just to say that different knowledge has its merits in the variety of situations we may encounter.

AN OVERVIEW OF SDE

NON-FORMAL, RELAXED HOMESCHOOLING + SDE/ UNSCHOOLING

GOAL

To instill lifelong love of learning

STYLE

Personalized/ individualized

ONUS

On students

HEIRARCHY

None - Partnership

METHOD

As little or much structure as needed/ desired

PACE

Set by the learner to his or her need/ desire

MATERIALS & TOPICS

Interest-based, chosen by the learner, relevant to current reality and culture

DIRECTION

Depth & breadth chosen by learner to his/her satisfaction, variable sources of information

HOW DO PEOPLE PRACTICE SDE?

✓ SCHOOL-BASED

physical or online

✓ HOME-BASED

physical/online resources

✓ CENTER-BASED

physical/online resources

✓ COMMUNITY-BASED

physical or online

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WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

1. Understanding the SDE Mindset

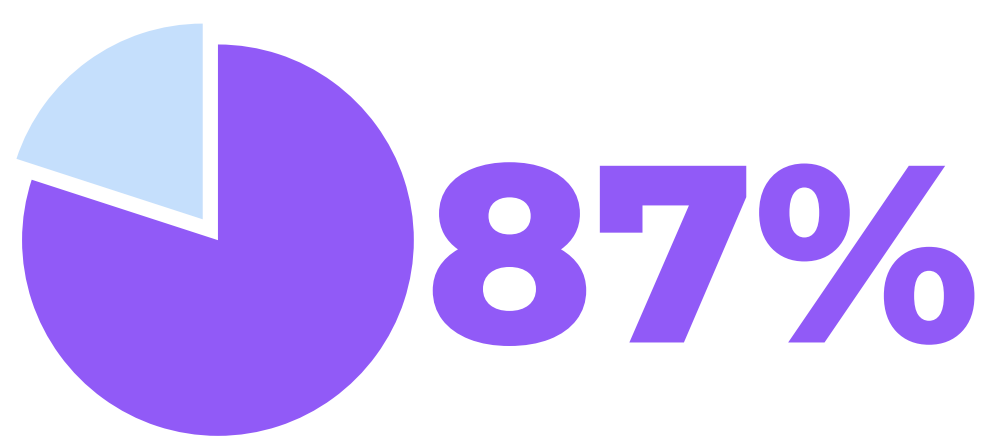
2. Common misconceptions about SDE

3. Deschooling: what it is and how to start

4. The final checklist: are you ready for SDE?

SDE MINDSET

Having the right mindset means working towards change. This means that you need to experience social, emotional, and psychological development to truly shift your ideas. Let's start with this fun fact:



of peer-reviewed studies on social, emotional, and psychological development show homeschool students perform statistically significantly better than those in conventional schools (Ray, 2017).

The way parents talk about ability and learning can have powerful effects on their kids' beliefs. Below are three ways parents can instill a growth mindset. And remember, developing a growth mindset in yourself and in your kids is a process that takes time. Have a growth mindset about developing a growth mindset!

- **Recognize your own mindset:** Be mindful of your own thinking and of the messages you send with your words and actions.
- **Praise the process:** Praising kids for being smart suggests that innate talent is the reason for success, while focusing on the process helps them see how their effort leads to success.
- **Model learning from failure:** When parents talk positively about making mistakes, kids start to think of mistakes as a natural part of the learning process.

**GROWTH
MINDSET**
Is Freedom

Persevere in the face of failures
Effort is required to build new skills
Find inspiration in others success
Embrace challenges
Accept criticism
Desire to learn
Build abilities

**FIXED
MINDSET**
Is Limiting


Avoid challenges Give up easily
Threatened by others success
Desire to look smart
Effort is fruitless
Ignore feedback
Fixed abilities

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SDE

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SDE

"SDE IS GOING TO RUIN MY CHILD."

CHOICE AND OWNERSHIP OF THEIR LEARNING JOURNEY TEACHES KIDS TO BE RESPONSIBLE.

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MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SDE

"MY SDE CHILD WILL ONLY PLAY VIDEO GAMES AND WATCH SILLY VIDEOS ALL DAY!"

A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS HEALTHY TECHNOLOGY LIMITS.


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Video games are great for improving memory, problem solving, and social skills when playing live. Videos can be silly and used to "veg out," which the human brain needs to process information. They can also be very informative! Feeling the right amount of screen time in your family will come naturally.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SDE

"CHILDREN AREN'T MATURE ENOUGH TO DIRECT THEIR OWN LEARNING AND SCHEDULE."

CHILDREN ARE BORN WITH AN INNATE CURIOSITY AND LEARN EASILY FROM DAY ONE!


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Children can do more than you expect if given the chance and the tools. Students enjoy responsibility and develop an intrinsic motivation to learn. They build independence, while knowing they have learning partners in their supportive families

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SDE

"TRADITIONAL SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN DOING THIS FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THEY MUST BE DOING IT BASED ON SCIENCE AND DOING SOMETHING RIGHT."

SCHOOLING AND ITS METHODS WERE NOT STUDIED BEFOREHAND AND HAVE CHANGED LITTLE SINCE ITS ORIGINS.

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Traditional schools have only been around since the late 19th century, less than 150 years. Top-down government schooling was not based on any science or psychology when schools began. The current schooling model was based on conformity and control for the needs presented in the industrial revolution, which is the basis of the Prussian schooling model used today.

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT SDE

"WHAT IF MY CHILD DOESN'T STICK TO ANYTHING OR FINISH PROJECTS THAT THEY START?"

IT IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUNG LEARNERS TO BE FREE TO EXPERIMENT & TRY OUT DIFFERENT PROJECTS & INTERESTS.

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Learners will float between things before stumbling upon a topic or hobby that really sparks their passion. This is an opportunity for your child to know themselves better, their strengths and weaknesses, and where their interests lie. What does your child stick with? What do they finish? This is a good place to start.

DESCHOOLING

Deschooling first requires a mindset shift. This shift is an active process where students and families intentionally reframe their understanding and thinking on how education and learning occurs.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY:

1. Your family's rhythm: is it working for you and your child?
2. The learning paths for your children: is everyone still happy and engaged?
3. Priorities for you and your family now: have there been any changes in your beliefs or values?
4. What are your needs right now and in the near future?
5. What are your child's needs now?
6. What would you like to change (if anything)?

Deschooling is a passive process, or a transition, experienced by students and families when they leave traditional schooling methods for self-directed learning.

Generally, these two processes happen simultaneously and both require patience with yourself and your learner. During the deschooling process, individuals need to relearn how to be responsible for their time and activities.

It may be similar to a pendulum swinging for your family, moving back-and-forth between minimal control and organization to intense "self-directed" schedules. The equilibrium point will take time to find and may recalibrate itself over time.



WHAT DESCHOOLING MIGHT LOOK LIKE IN YOUR FAMILY:

- Planning some activities together as a family
- Cycling, hiking, trying out a new recipe, trying new things (pottery, robotics, building a treehouse, electronics), reading, playing, or watching movies - the options are endless!
- Reflecting on what you did that day, how it felt and whether to change something for tomorrow
- Watching and listening to your children
- Any other activities (or lack thereof!) that will give your family time to discover what sparks your interests

THE SDE CHECKLIST

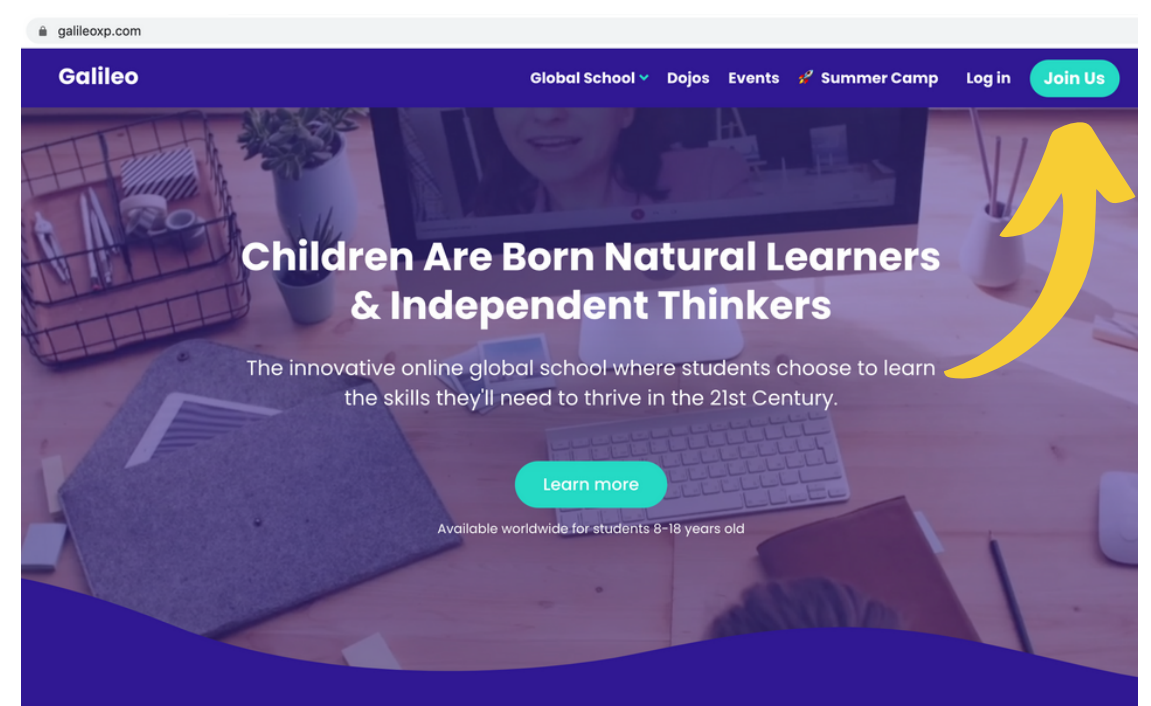
- ☐ I am mindful of my anxieties as they come up around education.
- ☐ I feel confident that SDE is in line with our family values and lifestyle.
- ☐ Our family can have fun while learning life skills.
- ☐ We see failure as a learning opportunity.
- ☐ We take pride in constructive feedback.
- ☐ I keep myself accountable to complete tasks.

At Galileo we are hopeful that one day the world will be full of self-directed learners! You've taken the first steps to fostering lifelong, passionate learners in your family and we're so glad you chose to do so with us.

The [Galileo Learning Network](https://galileoxp.com) is 100% free to use. This is where you'll find the complete guide to SDE written by experts in the field. You can start SDE with your family right away by joining the community of learners.

Visit us at galileoxp.com to learn more about SDE, the self-directed model we have put in place for the children of tomorrow, and how to connect your kids with things they love.

Happy Learning!



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