

Welcome to the HOMESCHOOLS Yahoo group.

This email loop exists as a way to unite home educators in the area, and to share information about community or group activities that provide educational opportunities in NW Arkansas, NE Oklahoma, and SW Missouri. Any local homeschooling family is invited to join this group, as are veteran homeschoolers and others who support home education.

The loop is hosted by Northwest Arkansas Christian Home Educators Association (NWACHEA). This does NOT mean that you must be a member of the NWACHEA group to belong to the HOMESCHOOLS loop – in fact, in fact, we welcome anyone with an interest in homeschooling. What it does mean, however, is that the guidelines of this community were established with input from the leadership of NWACHEA, and are based on the principles outlined in NWACHEA's Constitution and Articles of Faith (see the "Join" tab at <http://nwachea.org/> for more details). The moderators volunteer their time on NWACHEA's behalf, and defer to the authority of the NWACHEA Steering Committee in regard to the policies and direction of the group, which helps to maintain a consistent vision for this community.

Hosting by NWACHEA also means that some activities announced through the Yahoo group (for example, co-op classes) may be open only to members of NWACHEA. Other events, such as spelling bees, require an entrance fee for non-members. We will attempt to identify these types of activities when they are announced. If you are not a NWACHEA member and are not sure about some events, please be sure to ask if membership is required.

Other support groups in the area are invited to post information about their activities; please be sure to identify the group, and give contact information for those who may want to learn more.

This is an open discussion list, meaning all messages are distributed to the entire list (currently, 700+ members). Every member can post messages and replies. Please use common-sense caution about sharing things in a public forum, particularly any personal or family information. We do ask that members do not post another person's personal information (such as phone numbers, home address) without specific permission to do so. A good rule of thumb is never to write anything in a group email that you would not write on a postcard. When in doubt, it is always wiser to send these types of things in a private email.

Discussions are not limited strictly to topics related to home education. There is so much involved with caring for and teaching our families. Homeschool parents have experience and wisdom to share – not only about academics, but social, spiritual, and cultural activities, and a variety of other areas that help us care for our families and one another. Prayer requests are ALWAYS welcome, as are questions for other parents.

Please take a moment to look over the group guidelines, which appear on the next pages.

The original founders of this group appreciated the following statement that comes to mind as we consider the strength of our community: "We can work together and prosper as wise men and women, or we can work separately and perish as fools." (author believed to be Martin Luther King, Jr.)

We invite any questions or suggestions from members. It is our desire to see this community continue to grow.

Group moderators are:

Amy Calhoun – calhounclan4@yahoo.com
Beth Gildner – GildnerMom@gmail.com

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GROUP GUIDELINES

The HOMESCHOOLS group guidelines have remained consistent for a long while, and we have no plans to change them substantially. Those guidelines are:

1. PARENTS only may post messages to this list. Of course, parents may inform the loop of their children's activities (such as plays, recitals, symphony orchestra performances, etc.) We love children, and want to hear what is going on in their lives.
2. Please be specific with your subject line. Many people read subject lines and delete if not interested. We ask that your post not be extremely *long*... if you post long messages, most people will not read them. There can be a lot of impact in a few carefully chosen lines.
3. Please do not post items that would be offensive to others. The moderators reserve the right to determine what is offensive, and those messages will be deleted without notice. In extreme cases, a member may be removed from the group.

Please try to keep things on an encouraging note. We can discuss issues without becoming hostile, and look to Scripture for the answer if we disagree. Please handle personal disagreements privately, so as not to embarrass anyone. We should all remain teachable.

4. Please do not submit "forwarded" type items. There are certain things we do not want sent in: warnings about different companies, lovely stories from the Internet, and many-times-forwarded emails that you received from friends or relatives. We have to consider all these items fictitious, because we do not have time to verify the posts or their sources.

Passing on false information – even unknowingly, and with the best intentions – is irresponsible and potentially damaging to others. Many people tend to believe that everything they read is true, particularly if it comes from a trusted source, but that is not always the case. If YOU are unable (because of time or other circumstances) to personally check the accuracy of the information you pass on, please do not ask or expect others to do so after the fact.

Note:

* We want members to look forward to receiving emails from this Yahoo group. Many of us simply don't have the time to read a collection of miscellaneous stories and articles, and because of this, we encourage you to send personal messages.

* Forwarded items can contain *viruses* from the original sender. Therefore, regardless of the subject, please do NOT FORWARD any email to the loop. We suggest that you COPY text from the original message, then paste it into a new email from yourself. This will also eliminate all the computer coding that comes with forwarded items.

5. You may recommend different web sites that you've found to be helpful and other things that are appropriate. Just be careful in what you recommend and double-check links to be sure that they are accurate before sending your email.

6. Classified ads may be sent to the loop. The ad will be distributed to the membership of the loop.

* In the subject line of your email, please list *FS* which is FOR SALE, then list the item/items.

* If you would like to purchase something, please list *WLB* which is for WOULD LIKE TO BUY, then list the item/items.

* We ask that you only post your items ONCE A MONTH. We also ask that you not send more than 2 POSTS PER DAY.

Disclaimer: Post items at your own risk; NWACHEA and the group moderators are not responsible for any problems in your transactions. Please be honest and give full information about your product (edition, date, condition, etc.).

Intent: The intent of this email loop is NOT to be a curriculum swap. The intent is to be for sharing local news and announcements. The classified ads are welcomed in order for our membership to share and help one another.

7. Businesses – whether operated at home or otherwise – are not permitted to advertise. The ONE exception is for homeschooling-related products or services (see #8 below).

Business owners are invited to add a website address/contact info and a brief description of products or services offered at the end of any post. You may also respond to a specific request for information (e.g, “I am looking for a Tupperware consultant. Please contact me if you know one.”) but we ask that you please not post unsolicited messages advertising the products you sell. The vision of the loop is not to include a large amount of commercial advertising.

We do have many homeschoolers who own home businesses. We encourage members to patronize businesses owned by other homeschool families. Information on the businesses owned by NWACHEA members is included in the NWACHEA Member Directory. The membership form provides a place to give information about your business.

A separate Yahoo group has been started for homeschool families who wish to advertise their business and/or support those owned by fellow homeschoolers. This group is NOT affiliated with HOMESCHOOLS. It can be found here: http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/NWA_HS_Business/

8. We do allow vendors – companies or individuals who sell educational curriculum, books, or supplies – to join this group, to promote the products to offer and help our subscribers by making their materials known.

In addition, messages that promote INSTRUCTION are welcomed on this group. In the past, some business owners have insisted that posts related to paid instruction (such as piano and art lessons, ballet, karate, and other classes) should not be allowed. We make a distinction between someone who offers teaching, and those who would like to advertise goods through the group. A teacher's "commodities" are instruction and expertise, not a manufactured product that could be purchased from other sources.

9. Guidelines for political emails:

It will quickly become apparent on any email group that not everyone has the same ideas or the same way of seeing things. While this can be frustrating, we ask members to approach political posts as:

- * A chance to learn;
- * An opportunity to share with other people your questions, your ideas, your insights and how you arrived at them;
- * A means of creating a greater bond of community among local home educators.

The "HOMESCHOOLS" group has established the following guidelines in regard to political posts so that reasonable discourse may be enjoyed by all. Without trying to limit members' judgment and flexibility, the following will NOT be tolerated:

- * Posts that attack the MOTIVATION or INTENTIONS of others for their views.
- * Posts that attack the CHARACTER of others.
- * Posts that attack the INTELLIGENCE of others.
- * Posts that are PARTISAN RANTS.
- * Posts that are an invitation to DEBATE politics, or that generate especially controversial discussions.

Your moderators ask that any emails on political topics be informative messages that direct subscribers to web sites or events where they have the option of pursuing the information or not. We reserve the right to define what is offensive, and to ask for an end to discussions that create too much division or controversy.

10. Rights Reserved: The moderators of the loop reserve the right to limit or delete any message or thread that becomes a problem. In addition, any member who consistently violates the guidelines will be moderated – meaning that each new post will have to be approved before it is distributed to others – and in extreme cases, may be removed from the group.