



BCHLA NEWS

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Newsletter of the BC Home Learners' Association

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BCHLA
BC Home Learners'
Association

By Homeschoolers
For Homeschoolers



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BCHLA Positional Statement

In light of recent clarification in provincial legislation and communications regarding distance education/electronic programs for home-based students, the BCHLA Board of Directors has felt the need to specifically define the organization's focus and to explain our position regarding home learning in BC. This defined focus is as follows:

1) BCHLA was formed as a volunteer, grass-roots, provincial voice for those who wished to educate their children apart from and with no interference by the provincial school system or government expectations. It has always been and will continue to be our first calling to defend, justify, and maintain the legislation which awards parents this legal right (i.e., Part 2, Div. 4, Sec.'s 12 and 13 of the BC School Act, hereinafter called simply Sec. 12 for brevity) and to act as a liaison between the government and Sec. 12 homeschoolers.

2) We affirm that parents who have home-based students enrolled in a distance ed/electronic program provided and funded by the Ministry of Education through the public and independent school systems have made a large and lifestyle-affecting decision to keep their children within the home atmosphere for their studies. Much of the day-to-day activities and operations in these homes will be no different from those that occur in the homes of children registered under Sec. 12. However, we must acknowledge that current legislation in BC makes clear and fundamental distinctions between these two situations.

3) Because of these clear distinctions, and because home-based students are covered under the regular sections of the BC School Act, and independent home-based students are covered under the Independent School Act, BCHLA would be in a legally conflicting situation to participate in advocacy on behalf of distance ed/electronic program home-based students. If the parents of publicly- or independently-enrolled home-based students experience conflict within their chosen program, we advise that they deal

directly with their program officials or Ministry of Ed/Distance Ed officials (or Independent School officials) to find solutions.

4) Support for publicly- and independently-enrolled home-based students and their parents will continue to come from BCHLA in the form of clear and objective information on current legislation, practical help for learning at home in our newsletter articles, and links and/or contacts to Distance Ed personnel and policies via our website. We also support the current atmosphere of educational choice in BC.

5) We feel that BCHLA Directors and Regional Representatives must be Sec. 12 homeschoolers in order to adequately represent our mandate. Regular membership is not defined – in fact, you don't even have to homeschool to support BCHLA by membership. If your family enrolls in a distance education/electronic program and would like to support the liaison work BCHLA does in maintaining Sec. 12 as a viable educational option as well as receiving the helpful newsletter, we welcome your membership. We do ask that you please understand our limitations as far as advocacy is concerned in that situation.

We, the Directors, have made these decisions based upon BCHLA's purpose of inception, which was the creation of Sections 12 and 13 of the School Act. In the years that have followed, the choices available to those who desire to educate their children at home have become greatly varied. In order for BCHLA to maintain its focus in providing the Section 12 homeschooler with a provincial voice, it has become necessary for us to keep our focus directed to the grass-roots ideals which were formed during the Association's beginnings. We respect the individual education decisions that each family makes, and ask that each of our members, therein, extend the same to our Positional Statement as it stands.

BCHLA Board of Directors, March 19, 2004

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Online Newsletter for BCHLA!

You can now get our newsletter right on our website! It will be put on the site up to a week *before* the mailed copy gets to you! All BCHLA members who have internet access will be able to register at our newsletter site to download a PDF copy of each newsletter, as well as have access to archived copies of *BCHLA News*. You can read it online, print out the whole newsletter, save them all to a disk, print only the pages you need - whatever suits you best! For the remainder of this year, everyone

will be mailed a newsletter as usual, but you can also get it online and try it out. Next year, we'll ask you to choose to receive either the online *or* mailed copy on your registration form. If you are a BCHLA member, hop on over to our newsletter site and register today! Our Fall '04 issue is archived already, and this issue has been loaded up and is waiting for you!

<http://bchla.bc.ca/newsletter/>



President's Pen

As many of you are already aware, a recent communiqué, dated January 2, 2004, entitled, "Clarification on Distance Education - Electronic Programs", was issued from the Ministry of Education and will be used in conjunction with a number of school audits which will be taking place throughout the province in the next few months. The information contained within this document makes a clear distinction between those who are "enrolled" in public DEL programs, and those who are "registered" with either a public or independent school. The contents of the communiqué holds nothing new with respect to the policies outlined in the B.C. School Act. However, what is different is the clarity with which it was written. The intention of the communiqué is to restate the ministry's policy on distance education - electronic programs (DEL's).

The background for the document explains that "the increase in programs has led to a great deal of variety and innovation in delivery practices in school districts" and that "some programs are not interpreting the legislation and policy as it was intended." There has been a problem with misinterpretation regarding;

- the terms "homeschooler and home learner" being used by

DEL programs,

- Distributed Electronic Learning programs' (DEL's) use of religious materials,
- the role of parents as teachers.

As per the Ministry, a lot of confusion has arisen due to the fact that some distance education (or DEL) programs are called "programs for homeschoolers or home learners." They go on to state that, "there are clear differences between students enrolled in a distance education - electronic program and children who are registered as homeschooled by their parents." Those who are enrolled are considered "students" by the Ministry. It is also noted that, "If a district receives full funding for a student, the student is not being homeschooled."

When we look at the portion of this document that pertains to the use of religious materials we find the following, "In the public school system, a student's entire educational program must be secular. As with all public schools, distance education - electronic programs must comply with the legislation as set out in Section 76 of the School Act." Schools that do not adhere to this are not working in compliance with the School Act. It is further stated that, "Districts must ensure that students are not using religious materials or resources as part of the educational program and that parents are not being reimbursed for using religious materials or resources with students." The exception to this rule is if the student is doing a comparative religious unit

With respect to enrolled independent school distributed electronic learning (DEL) students (again we see the word "student" being used) the independent school/authority is responsible for their educational program. As per the Independent Schools information from the Ministry of Education website, "Independent schools/authorities must ensure that their programs are in compliance with the Independent School Act. There are no prohibitions regarding programs being of a religious nature in the Independent School Act (other than the parameters established in the Independent School Act Schedule, section 1). In addition, independent school DEL programs must meet the criteria established in the Independent School Provincial Distributed Electronic Learning (DEL) Program Standards." You can find this information at the following link: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools/indschl_del_stdnt/

The January 2, 2004 communiqué goes on to explain that "The

(Continued on page 3)

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The Profile: Heidi Molendijk

Heidi Molendijk was born and raised in BC and now resides in the Lower Mainland near Vancouver. Heidi and her husband have five children and have been teaching them at home for six years.

Heidi has been involved with her local support group in various positions ranging from director to executive committee member in charge of meetings, guest speakers etc. She has also represented her local support group as a volunteer at the B.C. Homeschool

Convention and for the past year has operated in the capacity of Regional Representative for BCHLA.

"I always love chatting with people on the phone or in person about home education and look forward to working with the current President and board in upholding the cause of BCHLA to protect the family's freedom to educate children at home and maintain the province's progressive home education legislation."

President's Pen (con't)

(Continued from page 2)

parent's role in a distance education - electronic program is as a facilitator for student learning; they do not replace the British Columbia-certified teacher's role. The parent is not responsible for the primary planning, teaching, assessing or reporting of the student's educational program." This statement falls in line with another that reads, "parents may assist in facilitating the learning process, but are not the teachers."

In the portion of the document that identifies "Homeschooled Children" we read, "Children who are homeschooled must be registered in a school district or independent school. These children are not defined as students in the School Act." As well, "Homeschooled children's education programs are the responsibility of their parents or guardians. A homeschooled child is registered, not enrolled, in either a school district or in an independent school."

The decisions we make regarding the education avenue we take with our children must be very carefully thought through. Our choices are based upon individual preference and what is deemed best for our children.

No matter how we view the government's stand on education in the province of British Columbia, the laws and regulations are clear. Whether or not a particular school, in a particular school district, is following through with the legislation as it stands, is a matter for those who monitor these programs. However, knowing full well what is expected of us, depending on whether our children are "registered" or "enrolled," is something we all need to reflect on. Do we take this information and draw from it, or do we seek avenues to avoid the constraints that may apply to our situation? The choice is yours to make. We just need to ask ourselves, "To whom am I accountable?"

The Ministry of Education has informed BCHLA that this communiqué will be posted to their website after the audits have been completed. In the meantime, if you have any questions regarding this document, DEL programs, or the legislation as it applies to those who are enrolled in DEL programs, please contact Tanya Twynstra, Manager, Distance Education and Online Learning, Assessment Department, at

(email) Tanya.Twynstra@gems5.gov.bc.ca or
(tel) 250-356-7039.



Starting a Support Group

How can I get my child to become more interested in writing stories? Why isn't this math program working like I thought it would? Where could we go on a field trip? Who can I talk to about my day? Many of us are very familiar with these type of questions and have found the answers through participation in a local support group.

Support groups are an irreplaceable form of socialization and encouragement for homeschoolers. Monthly meetings, guest speakers, field trips, co-op's, swimming and skiing classes are just some of the activities that allow us the opportunity to connect and interact with each other as well as the community around us.

Usually a few moms find it necessary to get together once in a while to share their day and have a good heart-to-heart. It is from these impromptu gatherings that many of our province's regional support groups have been formed.

Organizing a support group may seem like a daunting task. However, it is not that difficult and can prove to be truly rewarding when everyone takes part in making it work.

The dynamics of the group can be simple or based on a more planned approach. Whatever format is decided upon, there are a few areas of thought you may want to give consideration to.

1. What will our name be?

Try to think of something that will be a true representation of your group.

2. Where will we meet?

Sometimes a local church or public library will allow the use of their facilities. Rates will depend on where you go. Some groups meet in members' homes. It is always beneficial to find a building that is wheelchair accessible.

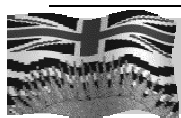
3. Do we want to register as a non-profit group?

This would involve registering with the provincial government and does involve a cost. It would usually only need to be considered for larger groups.

4. What will we charge for membership?

You may want to take into consideration what it might cost for

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Ministry Notes

Registration Stats:

Student enrollment and home school registration stats are collected annually and published in late January on the Ministry of Education website. Here are the stats for the last 5 years for home school registration. For stats going back to 89/90, see the Independent Schools site at (put all on one line in browser address window)

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools/home_school/hs_stats.pdf

Year	99/00	00/01	01/02	02/03	03/04
Public School	518	373	311	355	285
Independent School	4021	3769	3351	3334	3045
Total Homeschool Registration	4539	4142	3662	3689	3330

Current year's stats have been gathered from Ministry of Ed website pages. See BCHLA site for links (Red Letter News page).

BCHLA also has a graph on-site (in PDF format) that visually shows homeschool registration stats from 1989/1990 to present day. You can view it at <http://bchla.bc.ca/regstats2004.pdf>

From www.bcedonline.com:

BCed Online is an umbrella organization whose goal is to build strong and mutually beneficial partnerships between school districts and their district administrators, teachers and their specialist organizations, independent schools, post-secondary institutions, government and the private sector. BCed Online is in its infancy and will be officially launched at the "Building Online Communities" conference on April 19th/20th.

The role of the organization is broad-based and provincial in scope. BCed Online will provide leadership in the development and management of online content, including courses and learning objects. It will act as an advocate for learners, teachers and administrators by seeking to inform and influence government policy and programs for online learning. It will demonstrate leadership in providing professional development opportunities for educators engaged in online learning activities. It will provide a single access point for communication and coordination of activities involving the private sector. Finally, it will develop and implement research frameworks and research projects designed to effectively evaluate online learning content and activities.

A draft strategic plan for BCed Online is public at: http://bcedonline.com/about_us.htm

GREAT RESOURCE SUGGESTION!

N. Bomske wrote us to say, "I read *Homeschooling Today*. It is a bi-monthly magazine. It is more than a wonderful resource. It has very encouraging articles as well as Art and Music Appreciation sections. It also contains student book studies in a ready to use lesson format for a variety of ages. Although it is primarily Christian in content, it would be beneficial and very helpful for many homeschoolers. I know that it has assisted me more than I can count."

Home School Graduate Chosen for Winter Games!

A homeschool graduate, Nils Erzinger (age 21), from Penticton, B.C., was recently chosen by Okanagan Junior Hockey Referee-in-Chief to represent Okanagan hockey officiating at the B.C. Winter Games in Port Alberni, February 26-29, 2004. Nils refereed one game and lined four others. He enjoyed seeing Port Alberni and all the athletes.

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Registration vs. Enrollment in BC

Homeschooling	Distance Education - Enrolled Student		
Registered Child (Under Section 12) ↓	Paper-based Program (enrolled in one of 9 Distance Ed. schools) ↓	Electronic Programs (currently 28 programs, including the electronic programs offered through the 9 Dist. Ed. schools) ↓	Independent Schools DEL Pilots (Anchor Academy, Christian Home E-School, Kelowna Christian, Self-Design Learning Community, Traditional Learning Academy) ↓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> not enrolled in a school does not follow Ministry of Ed. curriculum parent-lead no BC certified teacher no Dogwood <p>-Must register by Sept. 30 of each year</p> <p>-Must provide an "educational program" which is up to the parents to design and administer</p> <p>-Various options for continuing on to higher education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> follows rules as set out in legislation and DE order monitored by ministry audits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complies with school act and Distance Ed - Electronic Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Follows BC Curriculum > Teacher lead > Monitored by ministry audits > Must meet required areas of study and graduation requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> comply with DEL Educational Program standards DEL teacher standards DEL administration monitored by the Inspector of Independent Schools

This chart is based on a Ministry of Education visual flowchart which is posted on the Distance Ed. site at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/technology/2004_de_visual.pdf (It's long, but you can also find a link on the BCHLA site, <http://bchla.bc.ca/redletter.html>). It aids in seeing the differences between the home-based educational choices available in BC and the requirements for each.



Resources for Homeschoolers

There are many great resources readily available for homeschool families. Support groups are the first and best resource - at the very least, they offer encouragement, wisdom, and advice that comes from experience, and at the most they may offer member families co-op courses, field trips, helpful newsletters, sports teams, or lending libraries. Attending (or starting!) a local support group can make a big and positive difference to your home education journey.

Books will be your next best resource. The modern homeschool movement has birthed a plethora of great books on many pertinent subjects. Learning and teaching styles, great literature for children, legalities, encouragement, philosophies, methodologies, planning and recording, field trip ideas, - the list could go on, but suffice it to say that anything you need to know about homeschooling can be found in a book somewhere! Check your local library or do a search at an online bookstore to come up with plenty of titles to choose from.

Speaking of libraries . . . Your local library can be one of your greatest allies in resource collection. Some libraries will offer to find books for a homeschool mom on a certain subject, geared to a certain grade-level or age group. Call ahead, and then come and pick up your stack! If your library does not offer this service, see if a representative of your local support group could approach them with this suggestion. It can be a great help to mothers with younger children in tow.

There are several magazines devoted to homeschooling. These kinds of resources are nice because they bring fresh, new ideas - along with a healthy dose of inspiration - each month or two. Get one or two subscriptions for yourself, or borrow them from your local or support group library. To cut costs, you could share a magazine subscription with a close friend. BCHLA's brochure has some magazine suggestions listed. If you don't have a brochure you can: ask your local BCHLA Regional Rep for a copy; e-mail or write us; or print it out online at http://bchla.bc.ca/bchla_brochure.pdf

Community groups and/or events are superb learning activities. Sports clubs, community service groups, theatre groups, 4-H clubs and exhibitions are all very educational. The less obvious opportunities might include serving in a retirement home, operating a small business at a local farmer's market, or "apprenticing" for a day at Dad's place of work (providing all safety precautions are taken into consideration, if pertinent).

Most communities have museums with incredibly helpful and energetic staff ready to answer children's questions. Visiting your own city's local tourist attractions is a great way to learn the history, culture, and industry of your area. Take a few field trips, especially with the younger children, to local businesses and community to expand their horizons and teach them how communities work and grow. Nature hikes or walks through

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Resources (con't)

(Continued from page 5)


game reserves or bird sanctuaries can make interesting additions to a nature notebook.

You own home is a resource just waiting to be tapped! Children can learn cooperation, patience, and responsibility as they learn to keep their spaces neat, help with household tasks, and live and work together as a family unit. Even if your yard is not big, a small plot of land for some kind of a garden is a huge learning resource for children of all ages. Pets teach responsibility and caring for something other than yourself - even if the pet is a goldfish or a lizard!

Even when funds are low, economical ways of acquiring resources are available. Borrowing is the first thing that comes to mind, but sharing things - like a magazine subscription or bigger items like microscopes or a classical book set - might be an option between two families who are close. You can get some neat software for almost free on some websites, paying only the shipping charges. (Be careful, though, as sometimes by the time you pay exchange, you might be able to pick up the same software at a store for close to the same price.) There are whole books written on the subject of homeschooling economically - borrow one from your public library to jump-start your imagination.

The internet is another reasonably inexpensive resource. Internet service provision is highly competitive these days, and you should be able to find some good rates for your household's needs. Educational sites or sites on specific topics are literally a few seconds away through an inquiry at a search engine or directories such as Google, Yahoo, or LookSmart. If you don't have a computer at home, most public libraries have computers available for you to book some time when you need it. You can read online, print information out, create worksheets and puzzles, browse art galleries, visit other places, and interact with other homeschoolers all over the world!

Homeschool resources are all around us, sometimes overlooked because they are such "normal," everyday things or occurrences. Often, all it takes is a bit of creativity to see the educational value in the everyday events and people in our lives. When creativity lacks, support groups step in! Call a fellow homeschooler or two for some inspiration (be respectful of lesson hours for the homes you contact) or chat it up at a coffee night to get others' ideas and help. There are many homeschoolers who have gone before you - allow them be your brainstorming and research group. Don't worry about leaning on them; they once leaned on someone, too! ☺



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GREAT RESOURCE SUGGESTION!

The BCHLA Resource Booklet has listings of BC, Canadian, and US educational resource suppliers, periodicals, special needs resources, consultants, and registering schools. It also includes articles from various sources on homeschooling to-day. An invaluable resource to home educators **for the low cost of \$8.00!** To order, send an \$8 cheque or money order to: BCHLA, c/o #8 - 4800 Island Hwy. N., NANAIMO, BC V9T 1W6

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When home is the school, there's time for extras

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You may still be able to view the article at the following URL:

CLICK HERE , LIVE LINK ↓

<http://www.workopolis.com/servlet/Content/qprinter/20040312/HOMESCHOOL12>

Home Grown Goals

by Becky Ross



I traveled to BC at the beginning of May this year from my home just north of Edmonton, Alberta. Just a few days prior to my leaving we had endured yet another Alberta spring snow storm; so as I drove down the driveway from our farmhouse I noted with some disgust that our large garden patch was still covered with a great deal of snow.

Travelling towards the mountains we encountered another snowstorm making driving conditions treacherous with low visibility and slippery road conditions. Passing through the mountain we began to notice signs of spring; small leaf buds, green in the grass. As we traveled further the leaf buds turned into leaves and the grass held bits of flowers. A few more hours of driving and we were greeted with trees in blossom. When we arrived at my brother's home in Vancouver he proudly gave us a tour of his garden, which boasted growing vegetables and flowers in full bloom. We had traveled from winter, through spring and into full-blown summer in one day! It struck me how wonderful and diverse this earth is.

I thought of my children. I see each child as a wonderful, unique gift; each with their own talents and gifts; each at a different point in there learning and understanding each my responsibility to nurture and nourish. So much potential in each of them - some talents hidden under snow, others just starting to bud.

How can we help our children to sprout, leaf out, reach up and blossom? Just as we plan for our garden, planning for our children's growth comes about as we set goals. Goals can be thought of as the place to which we want to go. Setting goals for our children helps them develop, grow and see their progress. For home schoolers goals are the way to growth.

Goal setting may seem like an abstract idea to many but it is really very easy, it just takes a little initial time and thought. Start by making a massive list for each individual child. (No two children are the same; no two lists will be either). Consider your hopes and dreams for your child, where their talents and gifts lie, what will be expected of them from the world in order for them to be successful? My list for my children could go on for pages. It would include: obedient, respectful, respected, can read well, well read, honest, desire to learn, willingness to serve others, curious, capable, play the piano well, willingness to work, can cook supper, positive attitude, independent, competent mathematically, good problem solving skills, communication skills, etc. Don't be intimidated by the size of your list, you will work on it bit by bit. Just let your imagination go and put it all down.

Now you are ready to make specific goals for your child. You need to consider developing their strengths as well as those areas that are difficult for them; pushing them to improve where they are weak and helping them develop those gifts that each has been given to be stewards over. I like to consider different areas as I set goals for a child to facilitate well-rounded development. Consider setting goals in these areas: academic, spiritual, cultural, life skills, character development, talents and interests. As you go through your wish list choose one goal to work on in each area. Write down this goal with a clear, detailed description.

Example: My daughter Elyse enjoys poetry and often plays with rhyming words. A goal in the Cultural area could look like this:

Goal: Elyse will grow in her appreciation of poetry and will develop her poetry writing skills.

When you have clearly identified and described the goal set out the steps you need to take in order to reach the goal. Detail each step, answer what, where, when, how. Deciding on the steps and then set a time daily, weekly, etc., for them to be done.

For example:

Step 1. Pull together books of poetry from the family library. Purchase a good poetry anthology.

Step 2. Elyse will find a poem that she likes daily, copy it into her copy work notebook and read it aloud to the family.

Step 3. Elyse will choose a poem to memorize during memory work time each morning. As one poem is committed to memory she will choose another.

Step 4. Elyse will learn 4 new styles of poetry this year and will create poems in each style.

Step 5. Elyse will compile a book of her own poetry.

The last thing left to do is to follow through. Keep these goals in an accessible place for referring to often so you will not forget. A good idea is to integrate them into the needs and everyday experiences of the family. But still life is rarely without droughts, floods or even the occasional unseasonal snowfall. When one goal is not working, modify, prune, enrich, and keep going.

"Our responsibility is to rise from mediocrity to competence, from failure to achievement. Our task is to become our best selves. One of God's greatest gifts to us is the joy of trying again, for no failure ever need be final." *Thomas S. Monson*

Our children are precious gifts and we have the honoured responsibility to nurture and nourish them into the wonderful people they are here to become. Setting goals helps us focus and refine our efforts to do so.

Becky Ross has been home schooling her family of 6 children, ages 5 to 15, for the past 10 years. Over the past few years, through her company Home Grown Education, she has begun to share her secrets on being an efficient and effective home schooling mother.

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Support Group Lending Libraries

One of the neatest things a support group can do is start a members' lending library. It might seem like a big task, and while it does take a bit of organization, it's not as hard as it might seem at first. Even a relatively small group can put a library together fairly easily!

The first thing you need to decide is what kind of library do you want? What will the focus be? This is especially important for smaller groups. To start their library, a group might want to concentrate on getting the classic homeschool "how-to" and encouragement books that have stood the test of time - books like those written by Raymond and Dorothy Moore, Charlotte Mason, Mary Pride, Greg Harris, John Holt, John Taylor Gatto, and others. These books can be a valuable asset to a beginning library, as these are the kinds of books people want to read, but may not be able to buy many of for their own bookshelves.

Some support group libraries stop there, but you can continue to grow a library into other areas. You might add some great reading literature for children, such as the GA Henty series, *Little House* books and other sets of that sort, all the classical literature titles, Sower Series, or whatever you group thinks is pertinent. You could add curriculum catalogues, review books (such as Mary Pride's *Big Book of Home Learning*), self-contained unit studies for members to borrow, books on how to tutor, learning styles, teaching tips, and even parenting books. The final scope depends upon members' time, commitment, storage arrangements, and group focus.

So how *do* you store all these books? If the library is small enough,

you could store it in Rubbermaid bins and take it to the meeting place each month. Once it grows a bit, one member of the group might volunteer to store the books and have "library hours" available. It would be optimal to be able to store them neatly on bookshelves at the monthly meeting place. Transporting books tends to add to their wear and tear much earlier. Some groups have a room in a member's home, a church or a public facility where they meet and can keep their books there, sometimes in a locked book cabinet, if needed. In this case, books can be signed out one month and returned at the next meeting.

And where do the books come from? Groups members can donate books that they feel they don't need right on their own shelves anymore. You can do some fundraising activities to support book purchases or ask for monetary donations towards the library costs. You might consider a small addition to your group's yearly membership fees to fund the library. Then set aside that money to pick up great resource books at used curriculum fairs so you don't buy everything brand new and you spend that designated money wisely. Consider that you should also need to purchase labels, library cards and pockets, date stamps, and possibly shelves or bins for book storage.

A lending library can be a great service to newcomers to home education. There are so many places to go for resources that it can be a great relief to know that they can read some good information for free (or the cost of a support group membership) and with easy access. Even if your group is small, consider starting a lending library to serve your members - new and old alike!

Starting a Support Group (con't)

(Continued from page 3)

room rental, guest speakers, newsletter printing and distribution, library materials, etc.

5. Will the meetings be open discussion or planned?

Sometimes a meeting that allows people to talk freely about personal issues is much appreciated. Other times, a guest speaker will have a lot to offer regarding a chosen topic.

6. Do we want to have a website?

You may know someone who is a webbie and would love to put together a site for your group. This is a great way to keep your members up-to-date on group activities as well as providing a place for people to submit information such as "Wanted/For Sale Curriculum," "Special Activities Updates," "Information Links," etc.

7. Do we need or want a committee?

- Group liaison: to be the contact person and chair meetings.
- Secretary: to take minutes and prepare a contact list.
- Treasurer: to manage bank account, write cheques, prepare financial statements.
- Newsletter editor: to type and prepare newsletter which can be paper based and sent by mail or put on a computer file and sent by email. (Sometimes this job can be done by one of the member's children who would like to help with the group.)
- Field trip coordinator: to organize field trips, prepare sign-up sheets, take payment for events that involve costs.
- Librarian: to maintain group library, catalogue books, keep track of items borrowed, take in overdue fines if applicable.
- Phone tree: to call members if changes need to be made to meetings,

field trip dates, etc.

8. What will our membership application include?

Along with names, birth dates, and contact information you may want to include a section where people can:

- fill in their children's learning style and/or curriculum used so it can be placed in the contact list (this might help others from your group connect with a person who is using a style or materials that they may want to ask questions about),
- share their ideas on what kind of topics they would like to discuss throughout the year,
- share their ideas as to what kind of guest speakers they would like to hear,
- list the books that they would like to see in the group library,
- express interest in helping with group activities.

Also, will there be a statement of faith that needs to be signed or will your membership be all inclusive?

After you get set up, remember to let BCHLA know that there is a new support group in your area and send us contact names and a group synopsis. This enables us to provide information to those in your area who are looking for a group to join.

Being part of a support group can add a whole new dimension to your homeschooling experience. If you don't belong to a group yet, see if there is one near you by checking at <http://www.flora.org/homeschool-ca/bc/support.htm> If there isn't a group in your area, give some thought to starting one. It may require a little time and effort but the benefits are well worth it.

BCHLA

*A history of parents
growing with our
children and with each
other.*

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Ad Fees & Schedules

Up-Coming Deadlines:

- Spring 2004 deadline is March 19, 2004
- Summer 2004 deadline is July 15, 2004
- Fall/Winter 04/05 deadline is October 15, 2004

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- 10 % off for discounts for non-members
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All ads must be prepaid and received by the submission deadline.



Meet Us Online!

Check out the BCHLA website for current information on home learning in BC, help with getting started, quotes, statistics, studies, discussion groups, articles, links, and now our online newsletter! *Recent updates, including a list of independent schools that register homeschoolers!*

<http://bchla.bc.ca/>

BCHLA also hosts a provincial e-mail list to connect BC home educators. Use it to ask homeschooling questions, get important updates between newsletters, and see how others teach their kids across the province!

<http://bchla.bc.ca/maillist.html>



BCHLA Needs You!

BCHLA is looking for people to serve as Directors and Regional Representatives.

In September 2004, a number of our directorship terms will be finishing. Two of these directors will re-stand, 2 will not, and one is under consideration. As well, we continue to seek someone to fill the position of Newsletter Editor.

We also require Regional Reps. throughout the province to reach out to the support groups in their region, make people aware of educational issues in British Columbia, and encourage membership in our association.

If you feel that you would like to help in one of these areas, or if you would like more information, please phone 604-466-3098 or send an email to info@bchla.bc.ca. We would love to hear from you!

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GREAT RESOURCE SUGGESTION!

G. Beesley, homeschool mom from Prince George, writes:

"I recommend *Homeschooling the Middle Years* by Shari Henry. It's a guide to homeschooling the 8-12 yr. old, and has easy quick reference sections on curriculum choices, community access, backyard science, Mum's sanity in juggling it all and lots more."