

# How Churches Can Support Homeschool Groups



HSLDA Group Services is committed to cultivating flourishing communities for local homeschooling families and groups. Because of the close involvement that many of our members have with their local church, we frequently receive questions about how churches can help support homeschool families. Here are a few ideas to get you started!



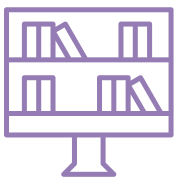
## Co-ops

Open up your church building to be available to host co-ops during the week. Your staff can even help lead these co-ops! This provides a great starting point for outreach to your local homeschool community. **Note:** *You will need to decide what kind of rent agreement you have with the homeschool co-op, as well as determine if your church's insurance covers the co-op. If it does not, the co-op may need to find insurance for their group. HSLDA partners with NCG Insurance ([homeschoolinsurance.us](http://homeschoolinsurance.us)) for homeschool group coverage.*



## Mentoring Program

Create a mentoring program that matches experienced homeschool families with families new to homeschooling. Encourage the more experienced homeschoolers within your congregation to share their wisdom. You can even reach out to homeschool groups nearby to participate (visit [my.hsllda.org/groups](http://my.hsllda.org/groups) to find homeschool groups near you). As more and more families hear about this program, it could also be a great opportunity for evangelistic outreach to the community.



## Resource Center

If you have space, open up your church building as a resource center for homeschool groups. Buy things like curriculum, science equipment, and good computers with program software to loan out to homeschooling families that are struggling to obtain them. You could even set up art stations, classrooms, or hands-on learning rooms within the church building for homeschool groups and families to use throughout the week.



## Support Homeschooling as a Normal Educational Choice

While homeschooling is a well-established, successful educational option, it is still frequently perceived as a fringe choice by many. By recognizing and treating homeschooling as a normal option for parents to choose for their children, you will empower these families. Though some churches have a different established educational option such as a private school, do not treat homeschooling as competition or a step backward. Every family is different, and the same schooling options do not work for everyone. Rather than opposing or ignoring homeschooling, treat it as a valid option.



## Schools

All states have options for establishing a nonpublic school, and in a lot of states (e.g. Michigan, Tennessee, Maryland, and Alabama), the regulations governing religious schools give more flexibility than standard private schools. One option to serve families is to create hybrid school programs, which can be a great resource to help new families transition into the world of homeschooling or provide support for current homeschoolers. Talk with an attorney in your state to find out about options for religious schools, or contact the Herzog Foundation ([herzogfoundation.com](http://herzogfoundation.com)).



## Spiritual Counsel

Homeschooling families, new or old, often need extra prayer. Whether they're learning to navigate a new system of schooling, or learning how to deal with teens, there are new challenges around every corner. Offer these families spiritual counsel and cover them with prayer regularly. Depending on the number of families within your congregation, Homeschool Outreach could become a new part-time paid position, or it could be added to the responsibilities of an elder or deacon.



## Tutoring Service

Set up a tutoring service at the church, or as a part of your children's discipleship ministry. This resource can be used and appreciated by all children at the church, not just homeschoolers. Provide a place for kids to learn and grow together in a safe environment. Note: In some states, church employees are required to meet background checks before helping with children's education. There might be some denominational requirements as well, so be sure to check before starting up a tutoring service.



## Information Night

Most churches have members from all different walks of life, and one type of schooling does not fit all. Talk to your members and those in your local community to create a panel of families who have chosen different schooling options. Host an event where everyone can come and hear the different options available to them and the personal testimonies of those who have tried each of them. Check with HSLDA to see if we can send a representative to speak at such events. This can also help overcome the stigma that may be associated with different schooling options.



## Financial Support

Many families would like to homeschool, but they just can't afford to. Your church might be able to partner with families to help them buy curriculum, sign up for online courses, or hire a tutor. This option may lead to charitable appeals to your church membership, to live out Acts 20:35 in an educational context.



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Director of Group Services

These are just a few things that your church can do to support homeschoolers and homeschool groups in your congregation and local community. If you have questions about any of these, or just want to know more, our director of group services Darren Jones would be happy to speak with you on the issue! Contact us at [groupservices@hslida.org](mailto:groupservices@hslida.org) or call **(540) 338-5600** to set up a meeting or ask further questions.