

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES INTERESTED IN HOMESCHOOLING

Congratulations on your decision to investigate home schooling as a viable option for the education of your child! We hope this information will assist you in this important step.

A little about our Association: Foothills Accountability Association was formed in 1996 as a service to the Christian homeschooling community who chose to homeschool under the 3rd Option. We serve Oconee, Anderson and Pickens counties, and seek to provide true Biblical accountability that adheres to the *spirit*, as well as to the *letter* of the homeschool law. Our mission is to support homeschooling families and protect our ability under the law to diligently homeschool our children in a manner the parents deem fit.

This is not an exhaustive list and it's obviously prejudiced by our own experiences. You would be AMAZED (and overwhelmed) at the amount of resources currently available to homeschoolers, from conferences to curriculum, from magazines to support groups. DON'T GET DISCOURAGED OR OVERWHELMED! There is no perfect home school method or family. We are all unique, but we share one common goal: to provide the best education we possibly can for our children. Take it one step and one day at a time. There is help available if you have questions or concerns or just need advice on how to get started or keep going. Many of the home educators in this community volunteer their time to encourage and guide new homeschoolers. Praise God for their kind service! Foothills provides curriculum counseling, membership cards to use for discounts at bookstores, and also has a growing lending library where curriculum may be borrowed for the school year. Co-op classes are often available in Seneca and Clemson, and our checkoff meetings provide support and encouragement and help you stay on track. Here is some basic information to get you started:

LEGAL HOMESCHOOLING IN SOUTH CAROLINA

To homeschool legally in South Carolina, you must register with : 1- your local school district, and be accountable to them, **OR** 2- SCHAIHS (South Carolina Association of Independent Home Schools, **OR** 3- A "3rd Option" Accountability Association, such as Foothills. Foothills is one of many 3rd Option groups offering accountability to homeschoolers in South Carolina. A web search will yield a listing of other 3rd Option groups. You **MUST** be registered legally with one of the options listed in order to homeschool legally.

Once registered, these are the state requirements for all homeschoolers:

*1--You must homeschool 180 days per year. **Foothills requires that you complete the 180 days by May 31 of each year.***

2--You must teach five basic subject areas: Reading, Writing, Math, Science, and Social Studies. For 7th-12th grades, Reading and Writing is Literature and Composition.

3--You must keep a *planbook*, which is simply a diary or book or calendar where you record the work you have done with your child in each subject area each day.

4--You must also keep samples of the child's work (we recommend you keep all or almost all of the child's work in a box or folder and file it in case it is needed for the future)

5--Provide a semi-annual progress report (grade report, report card, or written evaluation).

6—Foothills offers two options for high school: College/ Technical School Bound, or General Studies. Parents must choose one of these two options for their high school child. College Bound students must have grades kept in numerical format, and keep 10 samples per subject per year in a portfolio to assist in college admission.

Additionally, Foothills members must also provide the following:

1--Members will attend two "checkoff" meetings per year: one in January and one in May, and bring the records listed above to the meeting. Our volunteers will check to see that all state required records are kept and homeschooling is being performed in a diligent manner.

2—New members will attend a one-time "new member orientation meeting" at a specified date where you will be provided curriculum information, recordkeeping help, and high school transcript assistance and counseling. This meeting is required for all new members to ease the transition to homeschooling and ensure that you will be comfortable at the first checkoff in January by knowing what to expect.

Legal Accountability groups, such as Foothills, and support groups are TWO DIFFERENT things. A support group is a group of like-minded homeschoolers, who have organized to provide supervised, positive socialization for their children, educational opportunities, and support and outreach to the homeschooling parent--the "fun stuff". Support groups in your area will connect you and your child to other homeschoolers. Membership is not required, but I strongly urge you to join one. *Even if you have support in your homeschooling through your church or family, the support and connections they provide is invaluable.*

To be successful at homeschooling you must be willing to:

----limit the amount of TV, videos, video games, and computer time, including evenings and weekends, for all ages. This includes Mom!--Many of us have friends or family who call during school time, interrupting the precious time

we have with our children. Although well-meaning, many do not understand that it is impossible to teach when we are on the phone. Gently explain that you will be glad to talk to them after school hours. If that fails, turn the phone off, or get an answering machine. TV and computer time should be doled out at privileges earned, not "rights"-incorporating this into a rewards system can be a great tool in motivating a reluctant student and in cutting down on bad attitudes and distractions.

-----having, or being willing to develop, a good relationship with your child, is crucial. This may take time, and will definitely take lots of love, prayer, and patience. In the beginning, homeschooling may be a drastic, although positive, change for him, and he may not know how to communicate this at first. He may test your authority to teach him. Be patient, and spend your first days really seeking to find out how your child learns, and what his specific needs are, but be willing as Christian parents to discipline and DISCIPLE your child. The parent has authority over the home, not the child. Pray that God will knit your hearts together in love and understanding.

-----have your student participate regularly in work (chores, laundry, yard work, cooking, etc.) and service for others. This is an excellent tool to teach responsibility, increase confidence by learning skills, and decrease selfishness. Whatever your reasons for beginning homeschooling, God led you here. He wants something greater for your child than the world can give—this is your first step into a larger world of discipling that will encompass every area of your lives. *Homeschooling is not just education. It is a way of life.*

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

***Tri-County Home Educators (TCHE):** 864-718-7473

www.tchehome.com ---Christian support group for Oconee, Pickens and Anderson counties--All events are parent volunteer organized.

***Easley Home Educators:** 864-843-1034, Website: www.yourservant.com

***Anderson Home Educators:** 864-375-0519,
Website: www.andersonhomeschool.org

***South Carolina Home Education Association:** 803-754-6425, email: SCHEA1@aol.com Website: www.schea.org---Support group for the whole state--organizes a yearly statewide convention with workshops, a vendor hall, etc.

BOOKS ON HOMESCHOOLING

Your local library has a wealth of information regarding homeschooling. Go and check out a few and learn about the adventure that awaits your family. Some popular authors include: Karen Andreola, Rick Boyer, Cathy Duffy, Debra Bell, Charlotte Mason, Ruth Beechick, Gregg Harris, and Mary Pride.

CURRICULUM

It is the parent's responsibility to provide curriculum. There is no perfect curriculum, but one of the blessings of homeschooling is our ability and desire to match the curriculum to the unique needs of our children. Every child is different. What works for one child in a family may not be as suitable for another. **One thing to remember: the cheapest curriculum is not necessarily the best. But the most expensive curriculum may not be the best choice for your child. Not all curriculum is created equal.** Most are 'on grade level' or 'above grade level', but some, unfortunately, are 'below grade level'. Using a curriculum that is below standard grade level work will not prepare your child for success in high school or college, or a return to public school. **Please choose wisely. Do not let your choice be dictated by price alone.** You need to educate yourself on the choices available by praying, reading, observing, asking lots of questions, and experimenting. You need to first ask yourself,

"Why am I homeschooling?

What are my goals for my child?"

Are you homeschooling because you wish to educate your child with respect to your Christian beliefs?

For academic excellence?

Or because you didn't like the child's teacher, or you think homeschooling is "easy"?

If you decided to homeschool based on the last two, you may have a hard way to go. For most of us, it is our dedication to the vision of raising families to be servants of Christ that keep us homeschooling through the tough times. It is not easy, but it is the most rewarding task you will likely undertake apart from raising children. **But homeschooling IS raising children. It is training them "in the way they should go."** It is difficult, but it is wonderful. We will be glad to help by showing you different types of curriculum available. If you find that the curriculum you have chosen is not ideal for your child's learning style, try another to find what works for your family! You can always sell used curriculum at the many used curriculum sales that occur locally or online. There are many sites devoted to buying and selling used curriculum.

HOMESCHOOL CURRICULUM SUPPLIERS

This is just a sampling. To find more (I think my search turned up over 22,000 sites) just go online and type in "homeschool", "homeschool curriculum suppliers", or "Christian homeschool curriculum", just to get started. The local support groups also offer Used Curriculum sales at the end of the school year. Some of our favorites are listed below:

***Timberdoodle:** 1-360-426-0672, www.timberdoodle.com

***Landmark's Freedom Baptist curriculum:** www.landmarkbaptistchurch.org

***Rod and Staff:** www.rodandstaffbooks.com

***Love to Learn:** 1-888-771-1034, www.lovetolearn.net

***Bob Jones University Press:** www.bjup.com

***Abeka:** 1-877-ABEKA, www.abeka.com

***Saxon Math:** www.saxonpublishers.harcourtachieve.com (this is their website for info and support, but Saxon Math can be purchased almost anywhere.—Compare prices!)

***Rock Solid**---discount homeschool supplies---rocksolidinc.com

***Rainbow Resource Center:** www.rainbowresource.com--includes links and information for new homeschoolers

There are so many others it is impossible to list them all! If after reading this brochure, you have further questions about homeschooling your child, you can call or email me (I strongly urge you to [email--briarwd@bellsouth.net](mailto:briarwd@bellsouth.net)).

Visit our new website for more info: www.scfoothillshomeschool.com. This website is under construction and new pages will be made available as they are completed.

****Homeschool forms for recordkeeping and info are available free on www.donnayoung.org.**