

# HOME EDUCATORS LIVING TO PLEASE OUR SAVIOR

## HELPS

### STATEMENT OF FAITH AND GUIDELINES

#### PURPOSE

HELPS began in 1991 out of a desire of home schooling parents to have a Christ-centered support network in the Warsaw area. The goal today is to assist members in their effort to raise mature, discerning, Godly young people in a home education environment.

#### STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe the Bible, in its entirety, is the inspired and infallible Word of God. There is one living and true God. God has existed for all eternity in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ was God come in human flesh, conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, being fully God and fully man, except without sin. All men are sinful in nature. Jesus Christ came and paid the penalty for man's sin through His substitutionary death on the cross and which payment was completed with His subsequent resurrection. Salvation is offered as a free gift to all. This gift must be accepted as an individual act of faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ alone and not through personal works. HELPS does not promote any particular denomination or individual doctrine.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Parents and guardians of their home-educated children who feel that their family can benefit by active participation in HELPS are welcome to join. A completed Membership Registration Form, signed Release, and the annual membership fee are required. We request all members to respect our Statement of Faith and to conduct themselves accordingly at all HELPS activities. As a member you may participate in field trips, classes, activities, and the use of the resource library. HELPS does not endorse any particular approach to home education because there are a variety of curricula, philosophies, and methods of implementation that allow parents to teach and children to learn in ways that are appropriate for their individual success. It is necessary for us to maintain a spirit of unity and support, encouraging one another in our individual approaches to home education.

#### LEADERSHIP

The leadership of HELPS is comprised of a team of volunteers who believe and adhere to the Statement of Faith. As part of this team a group of at least three (3) and no more than five (5) directors will govern and overlook the structure of HELPS. The directors will meet periodically to ensure that HELPS is adequately meeting as many needs as possible.

## VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering develops an organized working structure that promotes friendships among both parents and children, and distributes the work so we can do more together without risking burnout of a few. Volunteering is an essential part of our group, and members are requested to volunteer in any way possible.

## MEETINGS

Occasional meetings may be held throughout the school year, perhaps featuring special speakers or topics of general interest. Members will be notified via the newsletter about meetings, but non-members are welcome to attend as well. It is the policy of HELPS not to sponsor any meeting in which the speaker will be soliciting funds from our members. (delete this sentence: Due to homeschooling families' increasing involvement in a variety of activities, HELPS no longer holds regularly-scheduled monthly meetings.) We encourage members to take advantage of the activities we have available in order to meet and be encouraged by other homeschooling families.

## FIELD TRIPS/ACTIVITIES

Field trips and various other activities are for HELPS members only unless otherwise stated. Children must be registered and payments made by the designated field trip deadline. Refunds can only be given in the case of illness. In the event the group is charged whether or not a child attends, there will not be any refunds.

Please be prompt. We will not wait for those that are not on time. Due to safety reasons and/or the content of material being presented, some field trips will be limited to designated ages. When the number of adults who can attend an activity must be limited, the Field Trip Leader will coordinate which parent/designated adult will accompany the group to provide supervision. Please be considerate of these guidelines when applicable.

Children should be dressed in neat, clean, modest clothing that is appropriate to the activity. They are not allowed to run, play, or wander about. They are expected to be quiet when the guide is sharing and to raise a hand and be recognized before speaking. Children must not touch anything without permission. No gum or candy is allowed.

Except under the space limitations guidelines, a parent or designated adult must attend with his or her children, taking full responsibility for discipline. Any issues not addressed by the parents or designated adult will be addressed by the Field Trip Leader and/or HELPS Directors who will supervise at field trips. Anyone who causes a disruption to an activity will be asked to leave. All incidents will be reviewed by the Directors when a field trip has been disrupted or a child is exhibiting repetitive discipline problems. The Directors have the right to require that a child temporarily refrain from attending group activities until the child has developed the ability to be able to adhere to field trip/activity guidelines. Our goal is to honor Christ by representing the home school movement positively within our community and to maintain a good reputation with

the places we visit so that the HELPS group will be welcome to conduct other field trips to these places in the future.

Please review these policies with your child(ren) before each field trip/activity. The Directors welcome your ideas and assistance for activities and field trips.

In the event of inclement weather, the Field Trip Leader will determine if the field trip should be cancelled or rescheduled. Each family will be contacted by phone with any information as soon as possible.

#### RELEASE

All members are required to have a signed Release on file in order to participate in field trips or other activities. The Release is provided with each membership registration form and should be returned with such.

#### MEMBERSHIP LIST

All Members are provided with a private membership list. It is not to be publicized, distributed, or used for any reason other than the subject of home education or to make contact socially. The membership list is also available on the member-only section of the HELPS website. The name and grade of each child will be listed along with each family's information. The children's information will only be available on the member-only section of the website and not in hard copy. Each family has the option to opt out of the membership list that will be available on the password protected members-only section of the website. If you choose to opt out, you may do so on your member registration form.

#### WEBSITE

The HELPS website ([www.HELPSGroup.com](http://www.HELPSGroup.com)) is for the benefit of both members and non-members alike. It provides information to those new to homeschooling and those considering it. It is also an additional location for members to get information on field trips, other activities, and contact information for the directors and current members.

The members-only section of the website is password protected. The password is changed annually and is intended for current members only. It is not to be shared with non-members under any circumstances. The security of our member's personal information is of extreme importance to the group.

#### E-MAIL POLICY

When possible HELPS sends its newsletter and notices via e-mail to members. In order to protect the privacy of those who do not wish to have their e-mail addresses published, e-mails that a member wishes or needs to have forwarded to all members are to be sent to the designated mass e-mailing volunteer(s). E-mails are sent via blind carbon to prevent the disclosure of e-mail addresses.