Texarkana Organization for Resolute Christian Homeschoolers

Membership Information Packet

This information packet contains the following items:

- FAQS
- Benefits of TORCH Membership
- Statement of Faith/TORCH Ideals
- TORCH Policies and Fees
- TORCH Code of Conduct
- Application Overview
- Application for Membership

FAQS

What is TORCH?
TORCH is a local homeschool support group serving Texarkana, AR/TX and the surrounding area. Organized and operated by parent volunteers, our mission is to support and encourage those pursuing the choice of homeschooling for the education of their children.

How do I become a member?
This packet contains an application for membership that must be completed and submitted for consideration. You will be notified after your application has been reviewed of your active membership status. You will be emailed your user name and password to gain access to the TORCH website if an email address is submitted during the application process.

What is a Co-op?
Co-op is short for cooperative learning. Participating members and children meet for various activities and socialization opportunities. Examples of co-op activities include:
Toastmasters, Art Class, 4-H, Keepers of the Home, Contenders of the Faith, and Science Clubs.
-parents are encouraged to volunteer to assist in clubs/classes and to submit ideas for future educational opportunities. If you have any questions, please contact LaRona Son- (903) 556-9520.

TORCH Website:
www.homeschool-life.com/tx/torch

Helpful Internet Sites:
www.crosswalk.com (homeschool tab)
www.homeschoolinformation.com
www.thsc.org
www.hslda.org
www.arkansased.org (school/homeschools)
www.familycouncil.org
www.youcanhomeschool.org
www.familyeducation.com

Texarkana Organization for Resolute Christian Homeschoolers

Statement of Faith

We believe in God, Creator of all things, and His Son Jesus Christ. We believe that Jesus is the sole mediator between God and man, and that there is salvation by no other means than by faith through the redemptive work of His Cross. We believe that sanctification in the life of the believer is through the indwelling work of the Holy Spirit, made possible through faith in the finished work of Christ.
TORCH is a Christian support group. Although we do not ask our members to sign a statement of faith, we do conduct ourselves in accordance with our beliefs. Discussions and presentations in meetings and informal settings will tend to reflect the religious nature of our group.

TORCH Ideals

- Subscription to a Biblical worldview
- Excellence in education
- Parental authority and responsibility in education
- Diligence in moral and ethical instruction
- Responsible citizenship

TORCH Board Members

President	LaRona Son	(903) 556-9520
Vice President	Ally Bolch	(903) 490-4576
Secretary	Kerry Eppinette	(903) 908-1388
Treasurer	Angelina Simmons	(903) 278-3603
Activities Coordinator	Kim Bragg	(903) 653-6204
Phone Tree Coordinator	Becky Teer	(903) 824-2117
Political Liason	Travis Holmes	(870) 830-9000

TORCH Policies

We believe that all members of TORCH plan an important role in the success of our group. All members are expected to participate in a Christ-like manner and edify one another during our events. The following list outlines the requirements/expectations of each member. Should you need more information about these guidelines, please contact a TORCH board member.

Family Fellowships and Programs- Open to TORCH member families and their invited guests.
Field Trips, Parties, and Special Events- Open to the children of TORCH family members who have met all the requirements set for that event (such as age, fee, sign-up, ect..) All guests must be accompanied by a TORCH parent that has invited them. That parent will be responsible for the guest throughout the entire event.
Teen Night and Spring Formal- Only open to TORCH members and their invited guests, and visitors who are considering membership in TORCH (potential members may attend up to 3 TORCH related events prior to joining).
TORCH Monthly Meeting- Open to everyone.
Cooperative Learning Clubs (Toastmasters, Art, Keepers of the Home, ect.)- Open to TORCH members and visitors who are considering membership in TORCH (potential members may attend up to 3 TORCH related events prior to joining.)
TORCH Board Meeting- Open to Board Members and invited guests. Any TORCH member may attend the first 30 minutes of a scheduled meeting to bring a matter before the Board.
Graduation and End of Year Program- Participation in ceremonies in open to TORCH member children who have met the requirements set for the event. Observing the ceremony is open to all TORCH members and their invited guests.
Fundraising- All fundraising activities must be approved by the Board. Members should submit a written explanation of the fundraiser, including what it will be, what it will finance, who will be in charge, and who will be expected to participate.
Board Members- Open to anyone who has been a member of TORCH for at least 1 year. Their nomination must be in writing by a current member. Self-nominations are acceptable. Each Board Member is elected to a one year term, and in automatically re-nominated unless (s)he revokes their nomination.
Incidents- Should anyone have a concern about an incident involving a TORCH member, (s)he should go to the member who caused the offense and try to clear the matter up with out retaliation. If the matter is not resolved, (s)he should submit a letter to the TORCH Board President detailing the incident and why (s)he is concerned. The letter should be limited to personally observed facts surrounding the incident and avoid ascribing motives or discussing personality and/or character issues. The President will bring the matter before the board at the next scheduled meeting, or via email if the meeting is more than 1 week away. 2 board representatives will arrange a meeting with all involved parties. If the person who wrote the letter refuses to attend, the matter will be dropped. After meeting with all involved parties, the representatives will take the matter back to the board to decide upon a course of action. All parties involved will be notified of the Board's decision within 1 week.

Secular Music/Electronic Devices- Due to our desire to glorify Christ and uphold a standard that recognizes differing levels of conviction regarding secular music, only Christian or instrumental music will be allowed at any TORCH sponsored event. This includes the sharing of music off personal electronics.

Public Displays of Affection- TORCH members are expected to abstain from all public displays of affection outside the individual family unit. This includes kissing, prolonged hugging, inappropriate touching, and sitting in laps. If there is any concern regarding behavior in this area, refer to policy #11.

Sexual Immorality- As Christians, the Lord holds us to a standard of sexual purity. If it becomes evident that a member participating in TORCH is involved in sexual immorality the following actions will be taken:

- If student pregnancy is involved, the board will seek to determine the nature of the pregnancy. If the pregnancy is the result of rape, the board will work with the student to continue involvement with TORCH.
- If it is clearly determined that a student has been participating in sexual immorality, the student will be suspended from all closed TORCH activities for 1 year. After the 1 year suspension, the student and their parents may petition the board for reinstatement to closed activities. The board will seek to determine at that time if the student has rejected a lifestyle of sexual immorality. If the student has not come to a point of rejecting that lifestyle, (s)he will not be allowed to participate in closed activities. If reinstated and the student has a second offense, that will be suspended permanently.
- If it is evident that a parent of guardian has chosen a lifestyle of sexual immorality, then the **Incidents** policies apply.

TORCH Fees

1. **Annual Dues-** $25 per family/per year. Due at sign-up, and yearly by the August meeting. Dues include access to the members area of our website, a printed membership directory upon request, and membership card which is printable from the website. Student membership cards can be used for discounts at participating local merchants.
2. **Cooperative Learning Clubs-** Fees for supplies, handbooks, ect.. will be the responsibility of each individual family and will be determined by the actual cost of participating. This will be determined by the group leader and will be announced as soon as determined.
3. **Miscellaneous-** There are several other activities offered that may require additional fees. These include, but are not limited to: Graduation, Spring Formal, parties, and field trips. The fees can vary based on the actual event, and fundraisers held. Most of all costs are stated upfront, however, due to the nature of some events, it is difficult for the person in charge to have an exact amount. All parents are expected to pay for the events in which their children participate. Should a problem arise, they should immediately contact the person in charge of the event to see if something can be worked out.

Let us use the policies as an opportunity to renew our commitment to excellence in our Home Education and to each other; and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24

TORCH
Code of Conduct

"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." 1 Peter 4:8

1. Adults and children will treat others with courtesy in speech and action. Members will be on time for field trips they choose to attend, or notify the field trip coordinator.
Honour all men Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King. 1 Peter 2:17

2. Children will also treat adults with respect as they act worthy of respect. Correction by a non-parent should be verbal only (no physical contact).
Adults – **Understanding is a wellspring of life unto him that hath it but the instruction of fools is folly. Proverbs 16:22**
Children- **Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded. Proverbs 13:13**

3. Parents are primarily responsible for the training of their children; children are to submit to their parent's authority.
Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. Ephesians 6:1-3

4. Adults and children will be positive representatives of Christ with modest appearance, in the care of public/others' property, and in abiding by host facility rules.
Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give non offense, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I pleased men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Method of Conflict Resolution:

1. Go to the person who offends you, calmly try to clear up the matter without retaliation.
Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. Matthew 18:15
2. If the matter is not resolved, children should speak with their parent and adults should speak with the parent of the child involved. (See #3 above).
But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. Matthew 18:16
3. If the matter has still not been resolved, the matter should be brought before the board as stated in TORCH policy #11, which will resolve the matter after hearing from both parties, separately or jointly, at its discretion based upon the principles above. Once the matter is resolved, all parties should refrain from gossip.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Matthew 18:17

Children's Code of Conduct

1. I agree to be nice to everyone when I am at park day or on a field trip.
2. I agree to use kind words to everyone when I am at park day or on a field trip.
3. When I forget, I will know because:
   a. My parent will remind me.
   b. A Field Trip Coordinator will remind me.
   c. Another adult will remind me.
   d. One of the other children will remind me.
4. When someone reminds me that I broke a rule, I will try to find a solution by:
   a. Explaining what I think happened.
   b. Saying sorry that I did something that offended someone, and
   c. Committing not to do it again.
5. When someone reminds me that I broke a rule, I will follow the Field Trip Coordinator back to my parents if we can't fix the problem.
6. I will obey my parents. I agree that Mom/Dad is the one who will give me my consequences.
7. I agree that if the Field Trip Coordinator brings me back to Mom/Dad, I will not be allowed to go back to the playground until we have a solution.
8. When we have found a solution, Mom/Dad can bring me back to the Field Trip Coordinator so I can come back to play.

Teen's Code of Conduct

1. I agree that only Christian music will be played at group sponsored activities.
2. I agree to avoid using any crude language or slang that could be offensive to others.
3. I understand that MVHSF teen activities are not a “dating service”. The purpose for teens to participate in activities is to be a group function, no socialize or learn with everyone, not to focus on deepening a relationship with just one person of the opposite sex. What activities I pursue with one person in my free time will be based upon my parents' standards.
4. I will consider others when I choose what to wear to group functions. It's better to be modest than to show off or cause someone to be distracted or offended.
5. When I have a conflict with someone, I will follow the steps of conflict resolution and commit to try to find a solution by:
   a. Explaining what I think happened.
   b. Saying sorry that I did something that offended someone, and
   c. Committing not to do it again.
6. If I am carpooling with leaders or other group members, I will cooperate by wearing a seat belt, not being distracting to the driver and agreeing to abide by their car rules.
7. I understand that if I am in repeat violation of the Code of Conduct that I may be subject to suspension from TORCH activities.

Texarkana Organization for Resolution Christian Homeschoolers

Application for Membership Overview

Please carefully read the following overview of the application process:

- The TORCH Board reviews applications for membership as they are submitted.
- Applications may be completed online at http://www.homeschool-life.com/tx/torch and payment may be made electronically through the website.
- Applications may also be downloaded and printed, or obtained from the treasurer at a regularly scheduled TORCH meeting.
- Completed applications, along with a check to TORCH in the amount of $25 for the annual membership fee, may be turned in at a TORCH meeting, or mailed to:

TORCH
PO BOX 3446
Texarkana, TX 75504-3446

- If you have any questions regarding TORCH or the application process, you may call Angelina Simmons at 903-278-3603.
- If an application is rejected, your membership fee will be returned minus the processing fee of $2 for online payments.
- All applicants are contacted by the Board following review of their application.

TORCH

Texarkana Organization for Christian Homeschoolers

Application for Membership

Personal Information: **Date**:_____/_____/____

Name(s)(Husband &Wife):_____

Address:_____

City, State, Zip:_____

Phone Numbers_____

Email Address(es):_____

If you are guardians of the children, please state the relationship to or right of authority here:

_____

_____

Family Business/Services:

_____

_____

Child(ren)'s Name(s)	Date of Birth	Grade Level

Has any child above recently been suspended from attending a public or private school? Y__N__

If yes, describe the terms of suspension (reason, duration, ect.) on back or on a separate sheet.

What are your reasons for homeschooling?

_____

_____

What are some of your family's interests or needs?

References:

Are you currently acquainted with any TORCH members? Y___N___

If "Yes", please list their name and indicate how long you have known them:

Church Information:

Name and address of the church you currently attend:

Statement of Personal Salvation Experience: (Use back or separate sheet if necessary)

Father:

Mother:

TORCH Agreement

Having read and understood the Statement of Faith, TORCH Ideals, Policies & Fees, and the TORCH Code of Conduct, I do here by commit myself to abide by and uphold them. Should I come to a place where I no longer meet membership qualifications or I can no longer abide by the policies of the group, I will voluntarily revoke my membership and notify the Board. (**The signature of all adults is required**.)

Father:_____

Mother:_____

Additional adult(s):_____

Other comments/Additional Information:

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

_____

_____