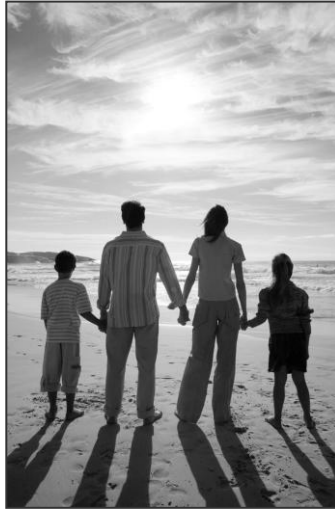


SOCCO

South Orange County Christian hOmeschoolers



2023-2024 SOCCO Handbook

Families supporting families
who are pursuing independent home education
with a Biblical worldview.

All your children shall be taught by the LORD and great shall be the peace
of your children.

Isaiah 54:13

A member of the CHEA support group network
Review entire packet and return required forms to the address provided.

What is SOCCO?

SOCCO is a support group for Christian families located in South Orange County, California who are educating their children at home with a Biblical worldview independent of public programs.

What is SOCCO's purpose?

We exist to provide a place where these families can support one another in their homeschool journeys from preschool through senior high school. We strive to...

- "Walk in a manner worthy of the LORD, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." Colossians 1:10
- Disciple our children through home education as they grow in capability and stature
- Support one another in raising children who are spiritually rooted, socially adept, and academically excellent

We encourage each other as we do this without the use of government funding, charter school programs or full-time enrollment in private schools. **Families are eligible to join if they are home educating all their children from a Biblical worldview and either file a California private school affidavit or use a private school program to file the private school affidavit.**

What are the benefits of membership?

- Access to the private, members-only website for scheduled activities, local happenings, resources, questions, and anything helpful to members while honoring our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Member-led activities & services (such as: field trips, in-home classes, holiday celebrations, community service, park dates, mom's meetings)
- Discount to HSLDA membership

What do I need to know about being a member of SOCCO?

The following pages will help you to understand SOCCO's guidelines and ideas about faith, home education and interacting in our group. Please read the next few pages carefully as you consider being part of SOCCO.

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS

SOCCO Statement of Faith

~We believe in one God as having eternally existed in three persons, the Holy Trinity: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19)

~We believe in the deity of our Lord, Jesus Christ, being fully God and fully man, His virgin birth, His sinless life, His miracles, His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, His bodily resurrection, His ascension and His personal return in power and glory, and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. (John 1:14)

~We believe that salvation is offered as a free gift, by personal faith in the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ alone, and not by works of man. (Eph. 2:8-9)

~We believe that all men are sinners and are in desperate need of God's saving grace through Jesus Christ. (Rom. 3:23, 6:23)

~We believe the 66 books of the Bible are the written Word of God, divinely inspired and inerrant throughout. Its assertions are factually true. That all scripture is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

~We believe the Bible is the supreme authority, not only in all matters of faith and conduct, but in everything it teaches. Its authority is not limited to spiritual, religious or redemptive themes but includes its assertions in fields such as history and science.

Independent Home Education for Christians

Children are a gift from the Lord (Psalm 127:3) and as such, parents have the authority and responsibility to discipline, nurture, train, and educate their own children, not only spiritually but also academically and socially. (Deut 11:19, Prov. 22:6). Home education provides a Biblical institution for teaching children, with parents as the main teachers. Specifically, because independent (or private) home education falls under the same laws as a private school in the state of California, it allows families the freedom to teach from a Biblical worldview, using Christian curriculum and discipleship. Home education from a Biblical worldview can be accomplished through the blessings and provision of the Lord, by Christian families seeking to glorify Him.

Government funded programs for home educators (i.e. charter, CHEP and government ISP's) fall under the same laws as public schools. Families who home educate under the control of the government, by law, cannot teach Christian doctrine as part of their home school, directly or indirectly, according to the California State Constitution, Article 9, Section 8. Families using government programs are receiving various types of support from the state for their children's education. SOCCO's private website, and the fellowship we enjoy, exists to provide a place where Christian families independent of government programs can support one another with their God-given resources.

SOCCO is a Member in Good Standing with CHEA & HSLDA. SOCCO support group is a member of the Christian Home Educator's Association of California (CHEA) support group network, and a discount group of the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA). Following the mission and recommendations of both CHEA and HSLDA, SOCCO is available to families who are currently not using any government education programs. If you have a unique educational situation, please feel free to reach out to us.

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS

Guidelines for SOCCO Events, Classes & Group Activities

In keeping with SOCCO's purpose as stated above of supporting families as they homeschool and recognizing that some collective principles in a group setting are necessary we provide the following guidelines for our group.

Parental Responsibility Guidelines

At least one parent is required to be with their children at every SOCCO event. Parents are responsible for their children at all times and are expected to keep their children in sight at all times. Parents are responsible for supervising and correcting their children's behavior and for their child's safety upon arrival and for the duration of the event. If a parent cannot directly supervise each of their children at an event, they are expected to ask another adult to assist them in supervising their child. Responsible mature high school students may be allowed to attend classes and events without their parent present with permission of the teacher or event coordinator. We desire to foster an environment where each of us has an attitude of consideration of others, humility, and cooperation in how we choose to behave.

Membership Requirements

Members are required to read through this handbook each year and will be asked to sign documents stating they have read and agree to follow the membership guidelines. Members are required to privately home educate all of their school age children. If your family has an extenuating circumstance, please contact SOCCO leadership prior to completing the membership application.

Group Activity Guidelines

Members who have agreed to and signed the statement form are allowed to lead, coordinate, or host a SOCCO sponsored event or group activity. SOCCO sponsored events (including but not limited to field trips, park days, classes and group activities) are ones that are reserved exclusively for its members. Grandparents and other extended family members are welcome at SOCCO events as long as they are included in the head count as appropriate. The behavior and safety of any guest who accompanies a SOCCO member are the sole responsibility of that member.

One of the benefits of our group events is the wonderful face to face interactions we get to have with one another away from usual distractions. With that in mind, members and their children are asked to use discretion with the use of electronics at group events, park days, and classes. If members choose to use electronics of any kind, please be aware of those around you and only view or listen to group appropriate content. Teenagers and children who are using electronics at a SOCCO event must have permission from their parents to do so and may not share the content with others without the permission of the other parents.

Members are expected to respect the facilities we use for our group event. All equipment (i.e. playground, tables, etc) should be used properly and all litter should be properly disposed of before leaving the facility. Members will be asked to assist in the clean-up of the location at every event. Members are asked to be thoughtful of other groups who are sharing the use of a facility such as a public park. Older kids should be cautious when they are playing on a playground near younger children. Members are asked to remind their kids of the importance of respectful conversation in group situations.

Any event posted by a SOCCO member that is open to non-members must be posted as such on the community website. Any event that is not SOCCO exclusive is the liability of the person coordinating, posting, and/or hosting it.

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS

Dress Code Guidelines

We desire to offer a gracious environment that encourages dress that is respectful and suitable for those at the group event. Please choose dress that encourages an atmosphere for learning and discourages unnecessary distractions.

We encourage student and parent responsibility for maintaining an appearance that supports a group environment from a Biblical worldview as ultimately parents are responsible for a child's dress at group events.

In addition to SOCCO's dress code guidelines, members are expected to abide by any additional guidelines provided by a facility we are using including a member's church or private residence.

Class Guidelines

Members may register their students for classes through SOCCO. Class payments are given directly to the teacher and SOCCO does not collect class payments. Please be respectful of the teacher's time and energy. Please notify the teacher as soon as you can if you know your student will not be in attendance for a particular week. Parents and students are expected to be respectful of the household rules when we are meeting at another member's home for classes.

Members who wish to teach a class will be asked to complete the teacher application in addition to the membership application. Any teacher, leader, coordinator or host who is not a member of SOCCO will be asked to read and sign a teacher's application available from the SOCCO board. Teachers are responsible for collecting class payments.

Health Guidelines

If you or your child is ill, please refrain from attending any SOCCO event, class, or field trip. Do not attend if you or your child has a fever, or another contagious symptom. Refrain from attending until your family has been fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medicine and free from any diarrhea for at least 24 hours. Please use your best judgment and consider that others may have compromised health.

To protect families who have food allergies, please do not offer food directly to a child without the parent's permission. For potlucks, please be prepared to share the ingredients in your dish.

Field Trip & Event Guidelines

All field trip and event reservations will be filled on a first-pay, first space available basis. Payment is due on or before the designated deadline and secures the reservation. Members are not allowed to just show up at an event that requires an RSVP. Failure to attend an event or field trip (a "no-show") will forfeit that member's payment. All field trip or group activity attendees should be punctual and strive to arrive early. A family that arrives more than 9 minutes after the stated time risks losing entrance into the event and the group may proceed without them. Upon arrival, members should proceed immediately to the event or field trip coordinator in order to sign in. Members should not assume the coordinator knows they are there. Attendees are to let the event coordinator know ASAP of the need to cancel a reservation so that someone on the waiting list can be informed. If the event coordinators know far enough in advance, payment may be able to be refunded upon the cancellation (assuming the coordinator and SOCCO will not be charged for the reservation).

Parents and their children will follow the directives of the docent or authority in charge of an event. If the event coordinators, SOCCO host (ess), or event authority asks a member to change behavior, they will do so graciously. If anyone is asked a second time, the request would be for that family to leave the event and to graciously comply.

As a group of Christians interacting with the community, SOCCO is a witness of our Lord Jesus Christ. Members behavior, obedience, order, and respect for others and property should be exemplary.

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS

Online Guidelines

Posting Guidelines

All postings on the SOCCO website are to be kept in accordance with the purpose of our group. Members can choose which forums on the website they would like to be a part of but each family must be subscribed to the Admin forum. The following guidelines are further elaborations specific to postings, though not completely exhaustive.

- Postings can be any offer of support on any subject that is helpful to Christian families pursuing private home education and honoring to our Lord Jesus Christ.
- If a subject matter in any post directs site-users to ideas or venues that are secular, controversial, or falls outside SOCCO's purpose, the posting should alert readers to any possible conflict that may arise. (e.g. evolution-based venues, programs that are not exclusive to private home schooling, religious activities that are outside of our statement of faith, etc.)
- SOCCO members are in different places on their homeschool journey. Encouraging Christ-centered, private home education and cultivating a safe place to receive mentoring in independent, Biblical home education should be the primary concern of all postings and responses to postings.

Administrators and moderators retain the right to delete a post as deemed necessary. Continual disregard for the posting guidelines and purpose of this group could result in banning, for the protection of our members, if necessary.

All site users should remember these scriptural principles when posting.

- *Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.* Ephesians 4:29
- *Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.* Colossians 4:6
- *Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.* 1 Thessalonians 5:11

SOUTH ORANGE COUNTY CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLERS

Opportunities to Serve

SOCCO's leadership board consists of coordinators and advisors who have committed to lead SOCCO throughout the year and are all volunteers. We desire each member family to serve under one of these coordinators in the area that fits them best. The Coordinators Chart and the Volunteer Job Descriptions are published each year on the website. Members will be asked to select 3 possible jobs and 1 will be assigned to them. In the spirit of Acts 4:32 please prayerfully consider how you can best contribute to SOCCO with their God given talents, time, resources and gifts. We understand that there are many choices of how your time can be spent so we appreciate you considering how you can help support SOCCO. There is no offer to help that is too small and all volunteers are greatly appreciated.

Following is a description of the coordinators:

Administrative Coordinator

The Administrative Coordinator(AC) acts as the first point of reference for outside inquiries in to the group regarding membership and other matters. The AC will also work with the board to make sure the interests of the group are being met and that we are striving to meet our goal of supporting those who choose private, Biblical homeschooling along with making sure our policies and procedures are updated and used. The AC also supervises the Special Projects Club (SPC). SPC serves our community in various ways including planning & leading family events and service projects.

Family Support Coordinator

The Family Support Coordinators schedules occasional activities for mom's to be a time of refreshment, fellowship, encouragement and/or idea sharing. They also plan family activities a few times a year. They are available to offer resources and guidance to individuals, if desired.

Park Days & Classes Coordinator

The Park Days & Classes Coordinator oversees and facilitates the scheduling of classes and park days.

Field Trip & Events Coordinator

The Field Trips & Events Coordinator plans regular field trips & events throughout the year that incorporates various areas of learning for multiple ages. These activities create greater opportunities for fun, fellowship, and learning about our Lord and His Creation. Any member who would like to plan a field trip or event should gain board approval through the field trips & events coordinator then be prepared to plan and lead the event.

Service Opportunity Coordinator

The Service Opportunity Coordinator plans service opportunities throughout the year that encourages the members of the group to serve in multiple area and support missionaries in our community.

Release of Liability

As a Christian group, we seek to follow the Biblical mandate that disallows bringing charges against Christian brothers in civil courts. (I Corinthians 6:1-8) We also seek to be good stewards of the resources and blessings that the Lord has provided. We have never had an instance of injury or damages being charged to the group. Yet we believe it is best to be sure that all members understand our position prior to any mishaps.

We are a loosely organized not-for-profit group of Christian families. The leadership is made up of those who have volunteered their time to organize activities for the group. Participation in any event is strictly voluntary, with no member ever being required to attend a particular meeting or event. Neither our group, nor its leaders, nor its members are liable for any injuries or damages, nor any illness, whether connected with a SOCCO event or not.

At every event, parents are responsible for their own children. Occasionally a member will desire for his children to attend an activity with another adult family member or member of the group. In this case, the parent needs to inform the host/sponsor of the event who is responsible for their child. Children are never allowed to attend any function without being accompanied by and supervised by their own parent or their designated adult. We suggest that if you find it necessary to send your child to an event with another adult, it be one who is comfortable enough with your child to correct them if necessary. For classes, it is at the discretion of the instructor if they will take this responsibility for your child without your attendance to the class.

Any special guests (grandparents, relatives, out-of-town friends, etc.) who accompany members to any event are under the sole responsibility of that member for behavior, damages, injuries, etc.

It is expected that any member or his children or guest who damages property or who causes injury, either willfully or through neglect will take personal responsibility for his actions. However, our group will not be involved in any way in such situations. Any person, whether member or not, who has such claim will be directed to discuss the offense individually with that party he believes to be responsible. The outcome of such a problem is out of the realm of this group's responsibility. If the parties cannot handle such disputes individually, we will expect that they will follow the guidelines of Matthew 18 through their own churches and church leadership.