

Questions to ask about any support group you're considering joining

1. Is the group a Support Group or a Co-op? Some people use these terms interchangeably, but there is a difference.
 - A Support Group is two or more families working together to support, encourage and equip each other in their homeschool experience. They may offer a moms night out, field trips, spelling bees, park days, end of the year programs, science fairs, used curriculum sales, standardized testing or other types of events.
 - A Co-op is two or more families working together to fulfill their common educational goals. This could be two families getting together to study Spanish or 50 families pooling their efforts to offer many different kinds of classes or group opportunities like band or sports.
 - The groups in your area may vary quite a bit – in size, in the level of involvement, and in focus.
2. What are the requirements for membership? Don't underestimate the cost in terms of time and energy.
 - Is there a time commitment? Are you required to attend all the meetings or organize an activity or a class?
 - Is there a spiritual commitment? Are you required to sign a statement of faith?
 - Is there an educational commitment? Are you required to use a particular curriculum or a certain teaching method?
 - Is there a financial commitment? What are the annual dues? Are you required to participate in fundraisers?
3. How is the group run?
 - Is there a single leader, elected officers, or an appointed board?
 - How are members involved in decisions?
 - What are the fathers' roles? Are dads involved at all? What percent of dads attend events?
4. Is the group affiliated with CHAP? Is the group affiliated with HSLDA?
 - You'll want to make sure the group has access to legal and legislative information, as well as events happening around the state.
5. Does the group have any written information available?
 - Statement of faith
 - Bylaws
 - Sample newsletter
 - Website
 - Membership form
6. What are the ages of the children who attend the group's activities?
7. What activities are scheduled? Ask about the days and times these activities take place. Consider your transportation needs and driving distances, as well as your family's current schedule (i.e., nap times, dad's work hours).