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CALIFORNIA HOMESCHOOL NETWORK

Grapevine



June 1, 2025

**MESSAGE
FROM THE
PRESIDENT**



The year has ended and we take a few weeks to review the past homeschool year and start planning for the 25-26 academic year, at least for those who work the traditional September – June schedule. Much like homeschool families CHN also reviews and plans for the upcoming year.

The Board is busy working on many avenues of improvement for our organization to reflect the needs of the membership and the constant change in the modern homeschool arena. Of course the most recent major upgrade was totally designing and implementing a brand new website to benefit our members with up to date information, ideas and activities. If you have not visited the new website please do, you will be amazed.

One of our primary goals is to improve our opportunities for members to actively participate in the operational side of CHN. Yes, you can be part of the amazing comeback of CHN to become a major influence in homeschooling freedoms in the state. Believe us, the need for active state-wide advocacy groups like CHN will be critical to control the state in their attempt to control private education in the state. In fact, the current critical move by the state is to even control the ever so popular homeschooling Charter programs that could reduce the amount of funding available for non-classroom activities and require that all lessons provided at resource centers be taught by “credentialed” instructors.

Issues like the above will always be requiring research, investigation, analysis and of course action recommendations. In order to become a successful organization we will need to expand our influence among California homeschool families. YOU can be a part of that critical goal of CHN to protect our freedom to homeschool.

Volunteer opportunities for helping CHN are plentiful. Just a few areas where we need volunteers would include being part of the newsletter committee, become an Ambassador (more on that later next month), seminar host and or speaker, activity coordinator and a host of other awesome opportunities. Please take inventory of your talents and interests and seriously consider being part of the great CHN California Homeschool Freedom Team.

Not only will you be a contributing factor in maintaining homeschool freedoms in California, but I personally believe participating in volunteering for CHN and our goals will benefit you personally as well. Please do not hesitate to contact the Board by

— Marty

WE SEE YOU,



AB 84.

Protecting All Paths: Why California Homeschoolers Must Stay Informed About AB 84

By Windi Eklund, CHN Vice President

California is home to one of the most diverse and flexible homeschool landscapes in the country. Families can choose from several legal options to educate their children, whether through private home-based education, or enrollment in independent study programs.

At CHN, we support the right of each family to choose the educational path that best fits their values, lifestyle, and children's unique needs. But in order to preserve that freedom, it's vital that we all stay informed about legislation that may affect the broader homeschooling community, even if it doesn't directly impact our chosen path.

One such bill is Assembly Bill 84 (AB 84), which is currently under discussion in the California Legislature. While the bill specifically targets independent study charter schools, the broader implications concern us all. When one legal homeschool path is threatened or restricted, it sets a precedent that can impact the others. Today it may be charter school families; tomorrow it could be private home educators. We believe that informed families are empowered families. That's why we encourage every homeschooler in California to:

- Read the bill: Take a moment to [review AB 84](#) and understand what changes are being proposed and which communities could be affected.
- Research the ripple effects: Many homeschool families have friends or family in

of homeschoolers.

- Know your representative: It's important to know who represents you in the California State Assembly and Senate. Visit findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov to look up your legislators.
- Engage respectfully: If you have questions or concerns, consider calling your legislators, writing a letter or scheduling a meeting with your representative. Sharing your story and explaining how homeschooling has supported your family is a powerful way to contribute to the public dialogue.

At CHN, we remain committed to protecting all legal homeschool paths in California. No matter how we homeschool, we are stronger together. Let's continue to lift one another up and remain alert, informed, and united in support of educational freedom.





Learning Never Stops – Especially in the Summer!

By Windi Eklund, CHN Vice President

We call it homeschooling, but we're hardly ever home, learning happens everywhere! We're really worldschoolers at heart. One of the greatest joys of homeschooling is that learning doesn't follow a traditional calendar, it happens year-round, and often when we least expect it. During the summer months, many of us slow down a bit, spending more time at home, diving into hobbies, or just embracing the sunshine and unstructured play. But make no mistake, our kids are still learning, and often in the most magical ways.

Play is powerful. Whether it's building elaborate LEGO cities, staging backyard performances, crafting with duct tape and cardboard, or inventing new recipes in the kitchen, homeschool kids are constantly using their creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. And the best part? They're having so much fun, they don't even realize how much they're growing.

Summer is also a perfect time to daydream about new adventures. In our house, one of our kids' favorite summer traditions is planning our next family trip, usually taken in the fall when the rest of the world is back in school. That's one of the many perks of homeschooling: the freedom to travel when destinations are less crowded and often more affordable.

Over the years, our kids have planned some incredible learning-filled journeys.

attractions. We've explored the East Coast through the lens of early U.S. history, walked in the footsteps of founding fathers, and stood where monumental moments were made. They've crafted month-long theme park itineraries in Florida and planned tropical getaways to Hawaii packed with hikes, kayaking, and sunny science lessons about ecosystems, the water-cycle, marine life, and more.

These experiences aren't just vacations, they're immersive, unforgettable learning adventures led by our children's curiosity and passions.

So as summer kicks off, don't worry if your days look less "academic" than usual. Lean into the wonder. Celebrate the freedom. Let your kids play, plan, imagine, and explore. Because in a homeschooler's world, every season is a learning season!

Homeschooling Without Walls: Fun Summer Activities to Keep the Spark of Learning Alive

By Trina Rueber, CHN Secretary

As the school year winds down for many, homeschoolers have a unique opportunity to keep the love of learning going strong—without the pressure of textbooks and lesson plans. Summer doesn't have to mean boredom or brain drain. In fact, it's the perfect season to embrace a lifestyle of curiosity, connection, and exploration.

Homeschooling Without Walls means letting go of the idea that learning only happens at a desk. It's about discovering math in the kitchen, science in the backyard, and history on a family road trip. And during the summer months, this approach really shines.

means you can dive into summer adventures without worrying about “falling behind.” In fact, it’s the perfect time to test the waters with a more child-led approach. Let your kids follow their passions, explore new hobbies, or lead the way on spontaneous field trips—you might be surprised at how much learning happens when no one’s calling it “school.”

Here are a few **simple, fun, and educational activities** to help your family make the most of summer:

Nature Exploration

- **Backyard Biologists:** Grab a nature journal and head outside. Observe insects, birds, or plants. Take photos, draw what you see, or research species together.
- **Pond Dipping or Tide Pool Adventures:** A day by the water is the perfect chance to study aquatic life, ecosystems, and water cycles—without a worksheet in sight.
- **Stargazing Nights:** Learn constellations, track moon phases, or simply lie on a blanket and wonder at the universe.

STEAM Fun

- **DIY Science Days:** Make a volcano in the sandbox, build a homemade rocket, or try simple kitchen chemistry like baking soda experiments.
- **Tinker Time:** Build cardboard castles, design marble runs, or repurpose recyclables into new inventions.
- **Art & Engineering Challenges:** Try creating bridges with popsicle sticks or designing art from natural materials found on a hike.

Family Bonding & Field Trips

- **Local Field Trips:** visit museums, botanical gardens, historical landmarks, or community farms. These are great “sneaky school” moments that double as fun family outings.
- **Family Game Nights or Story Circles:** Play strategy board games, tell collaborative stories, or read aloud under the stars.
- **Themed Days:** Pick a theme (e.g., “Ancient Egypt” or “Outer Space”) and plan a day of crafts, snacks, books, and activities to match.

The beauty of homeschooling is that life and learning are intertwined. There’s no last day of discovery—just new seasons, new questions, and new memories to make. Summer is the perfect time to nurture your child’s curiosity, deepen family bonds, and find joy in learning outside the lines.

So, grab your sun hats, pack a nature bag, and let the world be your classroom. After all, the best kind of learning doesn’t come from checking off boxes—it comes from wondering, wandering, and doing—together.

Trina’s Craft

Looking for a special way to celebrate Father’s Day? Gather the kids and create a one-of-a-kind tic-tac-toe game using painted rocks! This simple yet delightful craft is the perfect mix of creativity and quality time—plus, it’s a gift Dad can enjoy over and over again. With just a few supplies and a little imagination, you’ll craft a game that’s both fun to play and easy to take anywhere.

The set in the following picture was lovingly created by my children (ages 4 and up) for our upcoming Father’s Day campout. They had a blast choosing the team themes —“Starry Night” versus “Orange Tent Under a Tree”—and each took turns painting their own unique rock designs while chatting and laughing together.





Another fun idea is to create personalized paperweights for Dad, adding a creative touch to his desk. My kids had endless fun coming up with silly rock puns, and the one shown here was a special collaboration between my two youngest, with a little help from their big sister.



to make memories together!

So, grab some rocks, bring out the paint, and let's make memories that will last far beyond the holiday!

Materials Needed:

- 10 smooth, flat rocks (roughly the same size)
- Acrylic paint or paint markers
- Paintbrushes (small detail brushes work best)
- Sealer or Mod Podge (to protect the paint)
- A small drawstring bag (canvas or cotton works great)
- Fabric marker or paint for the bag design
- Pencil (for sketching designs)

Step-by-Step Instructions:

1. Prep Your Rocks

- Wash and dry the rocks thoroughly to remove dust or dirt.
- If desired, paint a solid base color on each rock and let them dry.

2. Paint Your Game Pieces

- Divide the 10 rocks into two groups of five.
- On one set, paint "X" designs using a bold color.
- On the other set, paint "O" designs in a contrasting color.
- To make them extra cute, consider painting themed designs—like bees vs. ladybugs, stars vs. hearts, or cats vs. dogs!
- Let the paint dry completely before applying a sealer to protect your artwork.

- Lay out the drawstring bag and smooth it flat.
- Using a fabric marker or paint, draw a tic-tac-toe grid (3x3 squares) on one side of the bag.
- Let the paint dry completely before applying a sealer to protect your artwork.

4. Play & Store

- Once everything is dry, place your painted rocks inside the bag.
- When ready to play, simply use the bag as the game board!
- Store everything neatly inside for easy travel and fun on the go.

6. Decorate! (Optional)

- Paint the pencil shaft green to look like a stem.
- Add glitter, sequins, or draw patterns on your flower petals.
- Use markers to add detail or “veins” to your ribbon leaves.

Now you're ready for endless tic-tac-toe matches wherever you go. Enjoy!

CHN Virtual Mini Con 2025

August 9, 2025 - From 9:00am to 4:00pm

Below is a line up of what's coming up during the event.

Join us on Zoom for a mini conference. The mini con schedule:

9am – Welcome & Mini Con Project

10am – Homeschooling 101

1pm – Creative Homeschooling

2pm – Learning Styles

3pm – Family Activity

To get more information on the sessions, go to the new page on the CHN website at <https://californiahomeschool.net/chn-virtual-mini-con/>

Tickets are available for both members and non-members. Member price is \$25, and non-member price is \$50. Members need to log into your account to purchase your ticket. Purchase your ticket here: <https://californiahomeschool.net/product-category/mini-con/>

You will be emailed with your registration code to enter Zoom the day before the event, which is August 8th.

Upcoming Events:

Saturday June 14th at 11am

What's This Ambassador Thing All About?

Member/Ambassador only. Curious about becoming a local leader in California's growing homeschool community? Join us for this short info session to learn about our new California Homeschool Network Ambassador Program! We're looking for passionate volunteers to help organize park days, field trips, and community-building events in their counties. This session will explain what ambassadors do, how the program works, and how you can get involved to make a difference in your local homeschool community.

Our online Zoom workshops/sessions are small group meetings, which will not be recorded, but video and microphone are required for participation.



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Book club title "The Read Aloud Family" by Sarah Mackenzie

Kick Off Summer with a Heartwarming Read!

Join us for a special homeschool book club as we dive into ***The Read-Aloud Family* by Sarah Mackenzie**—a beautiful and inspiring guide to building deeper connections with our kids through the simple joy of reading aloud.

Whether your children are toddlers or teens, this book is full of practical tips, encouragement, and book recommendations that will spark meaningful conversations and create lifelong memories. It's the perfect way to start your summer reading with purpose and joy!

Let's read together, share our favorite books, and cheer each other on as we build a family culture rooted in story.

All homeschool parents welcome—bring your coffee, your heart, and your love for books!

Participants should read the introduction through chapter 4 for the first meeting, June 9th.

Choose Your Own Homeschool Adventure

Tuesday June 10th @ 7:00 pm

For new or exploring homeschool families

Feeling overwhelmed by all the homeschool options? Come join us for a lighthearted, interactive session designed to help you discover which homeschooling method best fits your family's personality, pace, and passions! Whether you're drawn to the freedom of unschooling, the beauty of Charlotte Mason, the structure of Classical learning, or something in between—this class will give you a playful peek into each style.

We'll explore real-life examples, bust common myths, and guide you through a fun “adventure map” to help you start your journey with confidence and joy.

Enrichment

Thursday June 12th @ 7:00 pm

This interactive workshop will inspire families to infuse learning into their everyday summer fun. You'll explore easy-to-implement STEAM projects, backyard nature challenges, and creative games that cover core subjects without feeling like school. Great for multi-age households—kids are welcome to join in the fun!

Building Magical Unit Studies

Tuesday June 24th @ 7:00 pm

Ever wondered how to turn ordinary subjects into immersive, curiosity-driven adventures? Welcome to the world of unit studies! In this session, we'll explore what unit studies are, why they make learning so engaging, and how to build them from scratch. Whether you're looking to create a short exploration or a deep-dive journey, you'll leave with practical tips, creative inspiration, and the confidence to design learning experiences that captivate minds of all ages.

Planning Your Homeschool Year with Purpose & Peace

Thursday June 26th @ 7:00 pm

Feeling overwhelmed by planning? This session will walk you through how to map out your year with flexibility, intention, and joy. We'll talk about choosing curriculum, creating rhythms vs. strict schedules, setting long-term goals, and leaving space for real-life learning. You'll receive planning tips and ideas to help you start the new year with clarity and confidence.

Members only Homeschooling Support Group

Saturday June 28th @ 11:00 am

CHN Members Only... Connect with fellow homeschool parents to share experiences, gain support, and talk through the day-to-day ups and downs of homeschooling life.

This is a small group workshop, which will not be recorded, but video and a microphone are required for participation.

**To view full details and register for any of these events, visit
our**

Upcoming Events Calendar

Delayed Academics: Key to Preventing Learning Problems

By Martin & Carolyn Forte of [Excellence in Education](#)

As children are pushed to achieve academic goals at earlier and earlier ages, the incidence of learning disabilities is growing at an alarming (some say epidemic) rate. There may be a host of root causes, from immune response issues to dietary and familial problems, but one factor is susceptible to immediate control by parents who choose to homeschool and that is the age at which traditional academic work is introduced to their children. One hundred years ago, it was common for children to enter school at age 8 or even later. Two hundred years ago, children were not even accepted in most schools until they could read. Today, in contrast, the most arduous efforts of our public schools cannot produce high school graduates who can compare favorably in knowledge and skills with the 8th grade graduates of 1900...

[READ THE ARTICLE](#)

JOIN US!!

A family membership is only \$30 for the year, and with your membership, you can join us for our member-only events and feel good about supporting and protecting homeschooling in California!



CALIFORNIA HOMESCHOOL NETWORK

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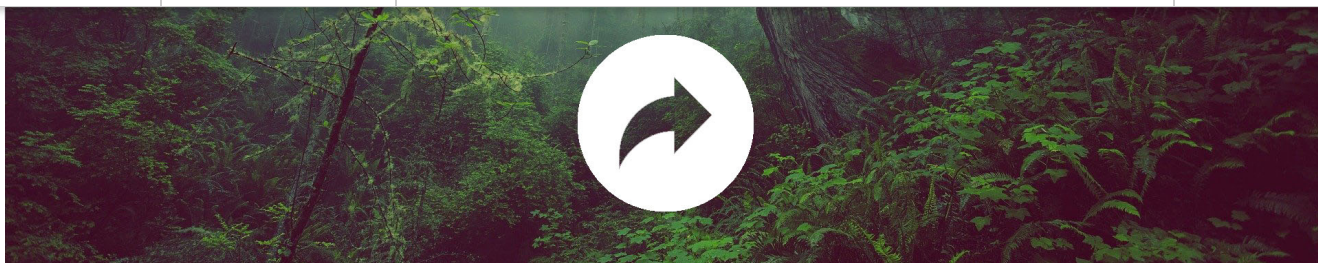
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