

Helping Others Prioritize Education (HOPE) Guidelines

Philosophy and Purpose

HOPE is a secular community of homeschooling families who are encouraged to be respectful and supportive of the diversity of their fellow group members. While we may differ in homeschool style, race, religion, life philosophy, political views, and family composition, we all share common goals: to foster a love of learning, encourage friendships, and provide a sense of community for our families. To achieve these goals, all members of HOPE are expected to read and be aware of our group's guidelines. All participants in HOPE activities are expected to abide by the HOPE Code of Conduct and any related policies.

Core Expectations for Members

- Speak to one another with courtesy and respect and be conscious of how your actions affect those around you.
- Be responsible for your own behavior and your children's behavior at all HOPE activities to ensure that the environment is fun as well as safe.
- If a conflict arises, resolve differences privately and politely between the involved parties.
- Do not engage in behavior that could jeopardize the safety or well-being of other members or damage the privileges or reputation of HOPE.

HOPE Code of Conduct

Adults

Parenting at HOPE Events

Parents are expected to supervise their children at each activity, unless previous arrangements have been made with another responsible parent or guardian (and the host, if applicable). It is neither expected nor desirable that adults discipline children other than their own except in emergency (urgent) situations. If an issue arises with someone else's child, discreetly bring it to that parent's attention. If the parent is not immediately available, respectfully remind the child of the applicable rule(s) and update the other parent as soon as possible.

Member to Member

Please communicate courteously and respectfully with fellow HOPE members whether in person or electronically (i.e. responding to other's posts online or in private communications about HOPE). Always assume the best of tone and intentions, especially in online communications.

Our group's Facebook and Website pages are a wonderful member resource with the purpose of keeping everyone informed about our numerous HOPE activities. The pages are moderated to help ensure everyone has a positive online HOPE experience. Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Any posts that violate this policy will be deleted by admin and the Member will be suspended.

Member Privacy

Please respect other members' privacy! Our Facebook and Website pages and the members on them should never be used/contacted for personal gain such as business promotions. For privacy as well as safety concerns, use proper etiquette on other outside social media as well, such as personal Facebook pages, Instagram, Twitter, etc.:

- Attain parental consent when posting a HOPE-related photo of members.
- Avoid gossiping and making disparaging remarks about HOPE and/or its members.

Smoking and Alcohol

Do not smoke or consume alcohol at child and teen HOPE events. At family events and adult HOPE activities, it is expected that adults who choose to use alcohol and tobacco do so legally, responsibly and with consideration for others. For events at a private residence, please get the host's permission before you bring alcohol.

Children

To keep HOPE events fun and safe, please remind your children to follow these rules at all HOPE activities:

- Speak politely and respectfully to both children and adults.
- Show tolerance, compassion, and respect for all families.
- Be careful and respectful of others' property and homes as well as public property like parks and facilities.
- Do no harm! Aggressive behavior, physical and verbal abuse will not be tolerated. (e.g. No yelling, spitting, hitting, biting, swearing, name-calling, teasing, taunting, or offensive gestures)

Preteens and Teens

Teens are beyond cool! Please remind your teen that they are now officially role models and younger HOPE members will emulate them. At official HOPE events, teens should:

- Exercise good judgment and refrain from the use of profanity.
- Adequately cover their important body parts and avoiding clothing with offensive words or images.
- Refrain from extended kissing, intimate hugging, or any suggestive behavior at HOPE events. People can feel uncomfortable around other people's "public displays of affection".
- Along with parents, explore conflict awareness, bullying, sexual harassment, gossip, and how to be part of the solution instead of the problem.

Restrictions

Minors may not possess any weapons at HOPE events unless requested by the event organizer for a specific purpose (e.g. pocket knives at a camping clinic).

Sick Policy

Please show consideration for the well-being of all our HOPE members by preventing the spread of illnesses. Any member (child or parent) who has any of the below symptoms or has exhibited them within 24 hours preceding an event should refrain from attending a HOPE activity:

- Fever of greater than 100 under the arm or 101 orally.
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or any non-allergic rash.
- Viral or bacterial conjunctivitis or "pink eye".
- Any confirmed viral infection, bacterial infection or communicable illness, unless the member has been taking an antibiotic for 48 hours prior to the HOPE activity.
- Lice: Please do not attend any HOPE events until an effective treatment has been completed.

Guest Policy

With the exception of Park Days, HOPE events are only open to current HOPE families. However, you may bring the occasional guest to an activity with the approval of the coordinator or host of the event. The following points apply to HOPE members and the guest they bring to events:

- The person bringing the guest is responsible for ensuring that the guest understands and abides by the HOPE Code of Conduct and other policies.
- Any guest who is repeatedly brought to an activity may be encouraged to join the group or the member inviting the guest will be asked to stop inviting that guest due to liability concerns.
- Due to liability concerns, the guest may not be someone whose membership has been restricted/suspended/revoked.

Conflict Resolution Guidelines

Disputes Between Children

HOPE expects that parents will help equip their children for dealing with the inevitable personal conflicts that will arise in life. Children should attempt to work out differences with each other in a positive manner, seeking the guidance of their parents when necessary. Ideally, most conflicts will be prevented by attentive parenting practices at HOPE events.

Disputes Between Adults

HOPE expects that adult members will resolve disputes in a private, mature, and respectful manner. There are always two sides to a situation so members should focus on finding effective solutions, not placing blame. Remember, positive resolutions help everyone involved move forward.

If you have a disagreement with a fellow member, start with the following steps:

- Determine your primary concerns and what you wish to resolve.
- Contact the member(s) involved directly. Discuss your concerns and seek a cooperative outcome. Do not blame or attack.
- If emailing, consider your tone and reread or “sleep on it” before sending.
- Respond respectfully to replies and strive to improve or resolve the situation.
- Once the issue is resolved, put it in the past.

Additionally, we recognize that it is natural for people to discuss personal matters with close friends, but please use care to avoid “gossiping” or intentionally spreading negative information and complaints about members among the group. A rule of thumb is to always talk TO a person to resolve conflict instead of talking ABOUT a person to those not involved with the conflict.

The Board has no interest in policing member interactions, but there is an obligation to protect the positive HOPE atmosphere that families expect and enjoy as members of this group. If a personal conflict between members begins to affect the health and cohesiveness of the group as a whole, it may result in the involvement of the HOPE Board.

Contacting the Board about a Code of Conduct Violation

Successful resolution depends on a mutual willingness to discuss and fix a dispute. If a conflict has escalated and has not been resolved despite sincere attempts, or if one or more parties believe a serious Code of Conduct violation has occurred, then that situation should be brought to the attention of the Board.

Step 1: Contact the Board at HOPESandhills@yahoo.com with an explanation of the problem and what steps have already been taken to resolve the problem.

Step 2: The Board will request further documentation from all parties involved, review the information, and determine the next step(s) that will help resolve the dispute.

Step 3: If it is determined that Board involvement is necessary, the Board may take one of the following actions:

- Send a written warning to adhere to the Code of Conduct
- Notify a member of any necessary disciplinary action (e.g. repair damages, etc.)
- Mediate or arbitrate if members cannot resolve differences
- Restrict, suspend, or revoke membership privileges. In extreme instances, the Board has the right to restrict, suspend or revoke membership without warning. In accordance with HOPE Bylaws Article II, Section 4 membership dues are non-refundable.

Please recognize that not all behaviors or situations deemed inappropriate can be foreseen by any Code of Conduct. There may be situations not specifically addressed in these materials that could be considered a violation of HOPE policy and these instances will be reviewed by the HOPE Board of Advisors as needed.