Helping Homeschoolers in the Library
Part 1

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Who am I?
Today’s Agenda

• Homeschooling myths and facts
• A brief history of homeschooling
• Get to know homeschoolers (philosophies, trends, schedules)
• Homeschooling laws in NJ
• Support groups and other ways to connect with homeschoolers
Part 2 Agenda

- Policies and services
- Programming
- Collections
Why Libraries Don’t Work with Homeschoolers

- Don’t know much about homeschoolers and homeschooling
- Past attempts didn’t work out
- Concerns about how working with homeschoolers might impact the library
- Limited staff, funding, and other resources
Homeschooling Myths
Myth #1: Homeschoolers believe the same things, operate in the same ways, and get along with each other.
Myth #2: Homeschoolers are primarily conservative Protestants.
Myth #3: Homeschoolers are a bunch of hippies.
Why People Homeschool

From *Homeschooling in the United States: 2003* by Daniel Princiotto and Stacey Bielick

http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2006/homeschool/
John Holt and the Unschooling Movement

- *How Children Fail* (1964)
- *How Children Learn* (1967)
- *Growing Without Schooling* (1977)
- Child-led learning
- Experiential
- Real work
Conservative Protestants Homeschooling

• Raymond and Dorothy Moore in the late 1970s
• James Dobson and the *Focus on the Family* radio show in the early 1980s
• Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)
Conservative Protestants are a large percentage of the homeschooling population, but even they don’t necessarily share the same beliefs.

Catholic homeschoolers are probably the fastest-growing segment of the homeschooling community.
Not Just for Christians Anymore

- Other religious groups with significant homeschooling populations include Pagans, Jews, and Muslims.
- Just because a family is religious does not mean religion is a major reason they homeschool.
Other Philosophies and Trends

- Children who have special needs
- Classical homeschoolers (*The Well-Trained Mind*
- Charlotte Mason homeschoolers
Other Philosophies and Trends

• Objectivist homeschoolers
• Military homeschoolers
• Artist homeschoolers
• Eclectic homeschoolers
Homeschooling Laws

- Education laws are governed by states
- Homeschooling is legal in all 50 states, but regulations vary widely
Homeschooling in NJ

• FAQs from NJ State Department of Ed: http://www.state.nj.us/education/genfo/faq/faq_homeschool.htm

• Never quote law, always refer
Homeschooling in NJ

- NJ regulations are not cumbersome
- Parents must notify school board that they are homeschooling
- The school board isn’t required to supervise or assist, except to provide services to students with special needs
Curriculum Options

• No curriculum
• NJ curriculum
• Packaged curriculum
• Online/correspondence courses
Curriculum Options

- Unit studies
- Create-your-own curriculum
- Enrichment or community college classes
- We’ll discuss this more in the second session when we talk about collections
The Homeschooling Year

• NJ doesn’t require a particular schedule or number of hours of “seat time”
• Follow the school calendar
• Homeschool year-round
The Homeschooling Year

• Create a calendar based on family needs
  – religious considerations
  – medical needs
  – travel or special projects
  – Business

• Some follow no calendar at all
Daily Homeschooling Schedules

- Schoolwork in the morning/outings in the afternoon
- Chores in the morning/schoolwork in the late morning and early afternoon
- Schoolwork in the evenings or at night
- Some do no organized “seat work”
Finding Support Groups

- ENOCH (Education Network of Christian Homeschoolers of New Jersey): www.enochnj.org
- CHNJ (Catholic Homeschoolers of New Jersey): groups.yahoo.com/group/CHNJ/
- Homeschool World: www.homeschool.com/groups/NJ.html
- Try Google (town or county + homeschool)
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