

### **Accessing resources**

New home educators often ask about what resources or curriculum packages to use. Whatever you decide is up to you and should ideally be a good fit for your family and how your children learn. Start with taking a look at the Resources section on the HEN website if you would like some recommendations.

You don't have to spend a lot of money so it's advisable to start looking around for free or low cost materials. You don't want to spend a lot of money upfront only to find that what you purchased doesn't work well for your child. With so many great resources available for free online, at your library, in your home or out in the community, it is not necessary to make expensive purchases. YouTube for example is a fabulous resource as are the education sections of popular school and tourist attractions.

### **What HEN can do for you**

HEN provides information, support, advocacy and advice to home educators in Victoria. We are volunteer run and non-profit. Our committee is comprised of experienced home educators who are active in the home education community.

HEN can help you with understanding what you need to do as a home educator to comply with Victorian home education regulations. HEN members receive feedback on learning plans (when applying to home educate) and reviews.

We can also offer advice if you are experiencing difficulty with a school and are considering home education as a result. In more serious cases, HEN may provide an advocate to attend a meeting with you, if a HEN volunteer is available.

HEN is also at the forefront of advocating for home educator rights and freedoms, engaging in political activities and speaking to the media. We are experienced in campaigning and lobbying the government to ensure the best interests of home educators are served.

HEN publishes *Otherways*, the oldest and most widely read home education magazine in Australia. As a HEN member, you can opt to receive the print edition or the electronic version.

Visit the HEN website and have a look around. We have blog posts written by home educators sharing their experience, information and handy hints on complying with regulatory requirements, an updated list of events and more. You can sign up for a HEN membership on our website at any time.

We look forward to seeing you in the home education community and wish you and your family well!

## **Are you new to home education?**



With compliments of  
Home Education Network Victoria

[www.home-ed.vic.edu.au](http://www.home-ed.vic.edu.au)

HEN helpline 9517 7107



## **Welcome to the world of home education!**

Perhaps you have elected to home educate your child now that they are school age. Or you may have just withdrawn your child from school.

Whatever your reasons, it is important to feel confident and supported in your choice, and be armed with information that assists you with making the most out of your home education experience.

New home educators, particularly those who have had to withdraw children from school due to problems or a crisis, may feel overwhelmed or not sure where to turn. Unfortunately many families leaving the school system are often unsupported by that same system and are left with some confusion. HEN can help you with the accurate, most up to date information in accordance with legislation.

### ***What you need to know***

There are a few key areas new home educators should understand: your legal obligations as a home educator in Victoria; how to tap in to social and support networks; how to sign up to home education activities; accessing resources and what HEN can do for you.

### ***Your legal obligations in Victoria***

Our legal obligations are set out in the regulations pertaining to home education. The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) regulates the home education sector. VRQA is an arm of the Department of Education and Training (DET) and is responsible for home education applications, reviews and implementing the regulations in general.

If you have any questions about home education requirements, you can call VRQA on 9637 2806, or visit the website <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au> and follow the links to the homeschooling pages.

In Victoria, we do not have to follow any set curriculum such as the Victorian curriculum. How we choose to home educate is our decision: we get to choose our own resources and approach. This is very important for meeting a child's individual learning needs.

The regulations state that we need to cover the eight key learning areas of Maths, English, Science, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Languages, Health and Physical Education, and Technologies. You can apply for exemptions to some of the learning areas in certain circumstances.

For secondary school students, it is anticipated that, just as with mainstream school, the child's interests and areas of study will be a little more narrowed down.

### ***Tapping in to social and support networks***

The home education community is very diverse and there are a number of support and information groups. Most of the discussion and interaction takes place on Facebook. If however you do not use Facebook, HEN runs a phone helpline as well as responding to email queries. You are very welcome to use these channels to seek assistance.

The HEN website lists a number of meetup groups on our Groups page. Contact details for each group are provided, where you can ask any questions or arrange to attend the next meetup. Groups are run by home educating parents.

If you are a HEN member, you will be able to join the HEN members Facebook group. In addition, there are other Facebook groups such as a large Victoria-wide home ed community, as well as a group for families home educating teens. There are also many groups for different interests, approaches and differing learning needs.

### ***Signing up to home ed activities***

The HEN website has a section called Events where you can view everything currently on offer. These events and activities are usually organised or driven by a home ed parent. This is how activities are typically run in the home ed community. There are one-off workshops, term long classes and camps. To sign up, simply read the information for the event you like and make your inquiries or bookings from there. Other activities are advertised and organised on Facebook in the various home ed groups.

It may seem obvious, but one of your handy tools should be a calendar. You may find yourself with a lot of activities on the go, so a calendar entry which also notes when you must pay for an activity is a must!

Being proactive is a bonus here, and keeping close track of what is on offer. While it may be tempting to ask an organiser to keep you informed of an event, or future events, this is often impractical and difficult for someone to do, and so the onus is on the interested party to keep track of things themselves or search for any relevant information about an event. Be sure to check the Events page in a Facebook group if that is where events are organised!