

Welcome to the newsletter for homeschool group leaders

Homeschool Leader

written by Carol Topp, CPA

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Mission statements

Mission statements are a concise way to state your organization's purpose. They help focus and clarify the goal of your organization. Mission Statements must do two things:

1. Tell others who you are and
2. Remind you of what your focus should be both now and in the future

WHO and WHAT, but not HOW

A mission statement answers two questions:

WHO are you? Are you defined geographically, by religious affiliation, by age of students, by skills or styles or by curriculum choice? Who is your target audience? Parents, kids, athletic students, musical students, high school students? etc...

WHY do you exist? Is it to encourage parents, support students, offer information, offer opportunities, promote homeschooling, influence legislation?

A mission statement does not answer the HOW question (How do you accomplish your purpose?). The HOW question would be a description of your activities, such as: hold classes, run a sports program, organize field trips, etc...The description of your activities should be in another statement called a Program Statement.

Tips in Writing a Mission Statement

- Use words like: try, seek, influence, or encourage.
- Keep your mission statement short. Ideally one sentence or about 50 words.
- Be accurate. Do not make your purpose unattainable or sound loftier than you can accomplish. Your organization cannot be all things to all people.
- Put your mission statement everywhere. Put it on letterhead, posters and on a sign at every board meeting.

To read some sample mission statements for homeschool groups visit my website

www.HomeschoolCPA.com and go to the Articles page for an article titled *Writing Your Mission Statement*.

Read my blog,

www.Homeschoolblogger.com/HomeschoolCPA.

My web log (blog) is not a typical day-in-the-life-of-a-homeschooler blog. It is written to homeschool leaders like you and has

entries on nonprofit organizations, homeschooling, leadership, and even a smattering about taxes and personal finances (basically anything a homeschooling CPA might be interested in!) Some recent entries include:

[Co-op Director for a Day](#) I served as co-op director when our two main leaders were out with sick children. What could go wrong?

[Is it a homeschool group or Mary Poppins?](#) Homeschooling takes on a new flavor when you hire someone like Mary Poppins to teach your children.

[Does a student's earning affect financial aid?](#) One homeschool group shared this information with their members about college financial aid.

NEW! NEW! NEW!

Progress on my upcoming book: I've sent my book *Homeschool Co-ops: How to Start Them, Run Them and Not Burn Out* to the publisher on February 20, 2008. They tell me I should see a proof of the book in 7-8 weeks, so that will be about mid April. The book should be available for purchase on Amazon around mid May.

Can't wait? Read a sample chapter on the book's website www.HomeschoolCo-ops.com

Midwest Homeschool Convention: I will be presenting two of my favorite workshops at the Midwest Homeschool Convention March 27 and 28, 2008 in Cincinnati, Ohio. I'll present each workshop on both days of the convention, so you'll have two chances to hear each workshop:

- **Starting a Homeschool Co-op** and
- **Wanna be a WAHM (Work at Home Mom)?**

I hope to see you at the [Midwest Homeschool Convention!](#)

Profile on Leaves of Learning in Loveland, Ohio

Every issue of Homeschool Leader will feature a homeschool group from various places around the US. You may get ideas for classes, vision statements, structure or activities from these profiles.

[Leaves of Learning](#) is a family homeschool resource center. They offer a wide variety of classes for homeschool students from age 6-18 four days a week. Founder Diana Osborn has a huge heart for helping to keep homeschooling affordable. She worked at LoL as a full-time job for several years before ever taking a paycheck. Now even though her children are all homeschool graduates she continues to serve as LoL's Director for a fraction of the salary she could earn elsewhere.

I've been familiar with LoL for several years and I think they are unique in several ways

- Leaves of Learning is an eclectic group that really works. Homeschoolers come from all walks of life, styles and backgrounds at LoL. It seems to be a strength, not a distraction at Leaves.
- They offer a wide variety of classes and dedicated teachers that return year after year. LoL even started summer classes! Learning never ends! Here's a sampling of classes:

- Manga Drawing
- Teen Choir
- Sign Language
- Fun with Mythology
- My Dear Shakespeare
- Calculus
- Video Production
- Let's Get Cooking
- Personal Fitness
- CSI Detective

- Leaves is not a volunteer-teacher, but a paid-teacher organization. This relieves a homeschool parent a few hours a day or

even a few days a week. All the teachers are employees with benefits such as sick leave.

- Leaves foster a real love of learning because they promote a respectful, nurturing environment, small class sizes and caring facilitators.
- There is a very positive attitude toward all students. Here's what they say about teenagers: "Our experience with teenagers has been that they are delightful and cooperative when they are listened to and treated with respect."

This is a quarterly newsletter written by Carol Topp, CPA for homeschool group leaders. Thanks for reading!