

Lowell Interactive Network for Kids (L.I.N.K.) - General Information Packet

This document was created to make the most commonly requested information about L.I.N.K. Membership and Policies conveniently accessible for both New Member Applicants and for Current Members. Please read through this information thoroughly and feel free to contact us at main@linkhomeschool.org if you have questions.

Contents

L.I.N.K. Homeschool Co-op: Items in this section apply to all L.I.N.K. Members

1. Statement of Purpose 2
2. Statement of Faith 2
3. Membership Requirements 3
4. Membership Process and Responsibilities 3
5. General Policies 4-5
6. Code of Conduct (Behavior Expectations) 6

L.I.N.K. Thursdays: Items in this section apply to L.I.N.K. Thursday Participants

7. L.I.N.K. Thursdays Requirements 7
8. L.I.N.K. Thursdays General Policies 8
9. Disciplinary Policy 8

Field Trips and Special Events: Items in this section apply to all L.I.N.K. Members

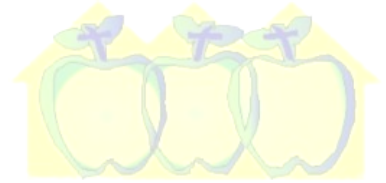
10. Field Trip and Special Event Etiquette 9

TeenLINK: Items in this section apply to all L.I.N.K. Members

11. TeenLINK Policies 10

L.I.N.K. "Lingo"

12. Glossary of L.I.N.K. Terms 11



Statement of Purpose:

L.I.N.K. (Lowell Interactive Network for Kids) is a Lowell-area support group and enrichment class opportunity. We are a network of exclusively Protestant Christian families who have chosen to educate our children at home. The purpose of this group is to provide information and encouragement to area homeschool families and provide educational, social, and cultural opportunities to member families. All activities of this group will be planned and carried out in a manner fitting Christian principles.

Statement of Faith:

We Believe:

- ❖ The Bible (66 books), in its original text, is the only inspired (God-breathed), infallible inerrant Word of God. The Bible contains the standard after which we are to model our lives. --John 1:1, Romans 15:4, II Peter 1:21, II Timothy 3:16-17
- ❖ There is one God who is eternally existent in three equal persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. God is perfectly holy, righteous, and sovereign. --John 1:1-5, 10:30, 17:1-5, Philippians 2:6-11, Colossians 2:9-10, Hebrews 1:3
- ❖ The Creation of man was a direct act of God, not evolution. --Genesis 1:26-27
- ❖ In the virgin birth and full deity of Jesus Christ. --Matthew 1:18, Luke 1:26-35
- ❖ Man is sinful by nature. --Romans 3:23, 5:12
- ❖ In the vicarious death of Jesus Christ alone for our sins. --Romans 4:25, Hebrews 9:22
- ❖ God's love for mankind was the motivation for Christ to come and die for us. --John 3:16, Romans 5:8
- ❖ In His bodily resurrection. --Luke 24:5-7, 24:37-43, John 20:27
- ❖ Jesus is the ONLY way to eternal salvation. Salvation from sin is by grace alone through faith alone in Jesus Christ--Acts 16:31, John 3:36, 14:6, Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5, Acts 16:31
- ❖ The enabling power of the Holy Spirit is necessary to live the Christian life. --John 6:63-65, 16:13-15, Acts 2:4
- ❖ In the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death. --Genesis 1:26-27, Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 139:13, Psalms 8:4-7, Exodus 20:13, Amos 1:13, II Kings 17:17-18, Psalm 106, Proverbs 24:11-12, Isaiah 1:16
- ❖ The marriage of one man and one woman is a sacred institution. Marriage and families are ordained and defined by God at creation. --Genesis 1:27-28, 2:20-24, Malachi 2:14-16, Matthew 19:4-6
- ❖ Parents have the God-given responsibility for the care and training of their children. --Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 6:4-7, Psalm 84, Ephesians 6



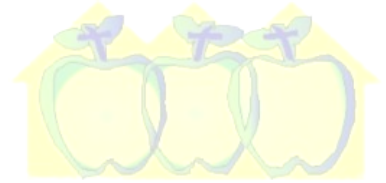
Membership Requirements:

- ❖ Parents must be Protestant Christians who are in full agreement with our Statement of Faith.
- ❖ At least one legal parent or guardian must **PARTICIPATE**. The children participating must also be homeschooled. Families must help to coordinate at least one special event each year. Failure to fulfill this commitment may be factored into the consideration of future Membership Applications or Renewals. (Some volunteer functions may fulfill the special event obligation.)
- ❖ At least one adult family member must **ATTEND** the annual meeting, which is held each spring.
- ❖ **PAY** the membership fee.

Membership Process and Responsibilities:

L.I.N.K. is blessed by each of its member's families. Each brings their own unique personality, gifts, and abilities.

- ❖ To obtain and maintain membership in L.I.N.K., families are required to complete the L.I.N.K. Membership Application and be Protestant Christians who are in full agreement with our Statement of Faith.
- ❖ Upon receipt of the application form and membership fee, New Member Applicants will be contacted by a L.I.N.K. Board Member to begin the interview process. After completion of the interview, background checks, reference checks, and prayer, the family will be notified of their membership status. Note, the interview process may take several weeks to complete.
- ❖ The \$25 annual membership fee is due at the time of Member Application. If you apply after January 1st, the membership fee is prorated to \$15. If you are applying after June 1st, the \$25 membership fee will cover the remainder of the current year and the full following year (September 1st - August 31st) if your application is accepted.
- ❖ Membership fees and L.I.N.K. Thursdays' tuition fees must be kept current. A minimum deposit of \$50 is due at the time of registration. Any remaining balance is due by the first day of class.
- ❖ Membership in L.I.N.K. requires the participation of at least one legal parent. The children participating must also be homeschooled.
- ❖ If participating in L.I.N.K. Thursdays, each family must help with teaching/assisting and clean-up. A parent must remain onsite at Alton Bible Church during all three class hours.
- ❖ Note: L.I.N.K. Thursdays' membership will not exceed 160 attendees (adults and children).



General Policies:

As members of a Christian support group, our behavior and conversation are expected to add to and not detract from the body of Christ, this group, and/or its members. If you are unsure of the meaning of any policy, please feel free to ask. The Board retains the right to determine any appropriate measure necessary to uphold the character and integrity of the group.

Board Meetings: Due to the financial and personal matters discussed, board meetings are closed to non-board members. If you would like to make an appearance or presentation to the board during a regularly scheduled meeting, please contact the board president.

Golden Rule: Treat others as you would like to be treated. Show respect to each other. If you have an issue with someone, take it to him or her. If they do not listen, take someone as a witness and for help. Please refrain from participating in gossip. If you are unable to resolve a problem, please go to the Board. L.I.N.K. values and respects honesty and integrity.

Honor Christ: Jesus Christ is to be honored at all L.I.N.K. functions. All L.I.N.K. activities should be covered in prayer, both collectively and individually, and followed with appropriate, Christ-glorifying actions.

Illness: Please be considerate of others. If your children show symptoms of any illness, do not bring them to any L.I.N.K. activities or L.I.N.K. Thursdays. However, please remember we need you. If for some reason you cannot make it to a function, please call the person responsible for the event A.S.A.P. If you must miss teaching a class, please try to help your partner in covering your class during your absence. Please consider an acceptable replacement (another L.I.N.K. parent or your spouse).

Improper Materials: No illegal substances, alcohol, or anything that may be considered a weapon is allowed at any L.I.N.K. activity.

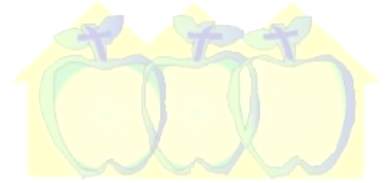
Language: No foul or coarse language or jokes will be tolerated by anyone. This includes taking the Lord's name in vain. We value and expect honesty and integrity in conversation and in deed.

Music: In a spirit of deference, consideration must always be given when determining the type of music played and what volume.

Parent Participation: Membership in L.I.N.K. requires the participation of at least one legal guardian. Except for chaperoned Teen L.I.N.K. events, children may not be left unattended by a parent or another L.I.N.K. parent who is willing to be responsible for oversight.

Prayer: We will pray at L.I.N.K. Thursdays' morning assembly, and before all L.I.N.K. activities and meals. Teachers are also encouraged to pray before classes. L.I.N.K. has an active prayer chain. Prayer requests and praise reports may be sent out through our prayer coordinator.

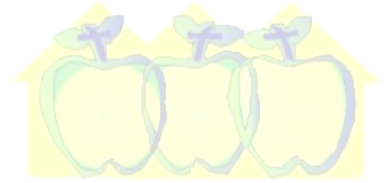
Privacy: The information in our directory is for use by its member families only, with the possible exception of information found in the L.I.N.K. business listing. We ask that you respect some members' desires to keep their personal information private. Please do not share any information from the directory with any outside individuals or organizations without permission.



Promptness: Please be prompt to all L.I.N.K. events. Please try to arrive 15 minutes early as we will begin or leave on schedule. The impression we make on others is part of our testimony.

Respect Alton Bible Church: Show respect for the church building we are blessed to use and for other people's belongings. Alton Bible Church has requested we honor the "no solicitation" policy that they have inside the church building. If you are fundraising or selling something, please do so on a table in the gym or outside the church building after securing permission from the L.I.N.K. Board.

Weather: If the Lowell Area Public Schools are closed due to inclement weather, we will NOT meet. If they are delayed because of the weather, we will still meet on time. There may be other times in which the Board may decide to cancel classes or events. Notification will be sent at that time. For outdoor activities where you are concerned about the weather, please do what you feel is best for your family.



Code of Conduct (Behavior Expectations):

In light of both L.I.N.K.'s Statement of Purpose and Statement of Faith - namely that L.I.N.K. is a network of Protestant Christian families who educate their children at home, and all activities and functions of L.I.N.K. are to be planned and carried out in a manner fitting Christian principles (L.I.N.K. Bylaws, Art. 2, Sec. 1&2) - it is imperative that every individual in attendance at any and all of L.I.N.K.'s activities and functions commit to the following basics of Christian conduct:

- I will be respectful of God and His Word. I will not take any derivative of God's name in vain. I will not disrupt any reading of scripture, prayer, or time of worship.
- I will be respectful of the Statement of Faith, I will in no way attempt to discredit or contradict it.
- I will submit to program and facility rules. Students will follow the directions of the L.I.N.K. Board and parents teaching the classes.
- I will be courteous, kind, and gentle. I will speak politely, share, and work out disagreements with calm dialogue. I will never use physical violence.
- I will have a good attitude. I will participate in classroom activities without complaining or arguing and be a good sport during competition.
- I will take care of the facility. I will only use things I have permission to use. I will walk unless in the gym and use appropriate volume. I will clean up after myself. Parents will supervise their children.
- During all L.I.N.K. activities and functions, I will present myself and dress according to my biological birth gender.
 - Exceptions may be made for classes and events where members are acting as historical figures or characters in a drama production.
- I will indicate my biological birth gender on my application form and will refer to myself with the corresponding pronouns.
- During all L.I.N.K. activities and functions, I will use the bathroom that corresponds with my biological birth gender.
 - Children under age 5 who need assistance using the bathroom may use whichever bathroom corresponds to the birth gender of the person who is helping the child.
- I will refrain from gossip, slander, and profanity. I will not talk about others in any negative way. If I have a conflict with another person, I will follow the Matthew 18 model of conflict resolution. In the spirit of Christian love, I will do my best to refrain from words that others in the community consider profane. I will not use social media to bully or complain.
- I will abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use during all programs or affiliated events.



L.I.N.K. Thursdays

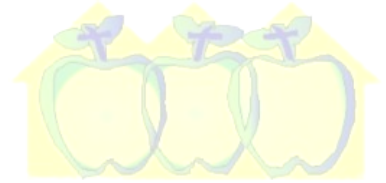
L.I.N.K. offers two, ten-week semesters of cooperative academic and enrichment classes on Thursday mornings (8:45 AM - 12:00 PM) which is called L.I.N.K. Thursdays. Participation in L.I.N.K. Thursdays is optional. We are all about learning, enhancing our individual homeschool programs, networking with other parents, and giving our kids unique experiences that a larger group affords. We meet at Alton Bible Church in Lowell, Michigan, on the corner of Lincoln Lake and 3 Mile, but we serve families from as far away as Clarksville and Greenville.

L.I.N.K. Thursdays only work through a cooperative effort. An adult from each family is expected to teach or assist with two classes each semester, according to their gifts and abilities. Many of our strong parent friendships have developed through working together to offer wonderful classes. While they usually still choose to teach, members holding Board and leadership positions are not required to teach because of the scope of their responsibilities. Third parties are sometimes brought in to teach their particular expertise. Additionally, each adult generally has one "free" class hour to get to know the other parents, work on their own lesson plans, etc. Parents are required to remain onsite at Alton Bible Church during all three class hours.

Please note that L.I.N.K. Thursdays classes are intended to supplement members' homeschool curriculum, not replace it.

L.I.N.K. Thursdays Requirements:

- ❖ **PREVIEW DAY:** It is important that New Member and First-Time L.I.N.K. Thursdays applicants have exposure to the L.I.N.K. Community and the L.I.N.K. Thursdays program prior to being registered for classes. New requirements, as of May 2022:
 - New Member and First-Time L.I.N.K. Thursday Applicants must attend a L.I.N.K. Preview Day. Email main@linkhomeschool.org to set this up.
 - Your L.I.N.K. Thursdays Registration Form will be temporarily held in the order in which it was received. It will not be finalized until the Preview Day requirement has been met.
 - If your oldest homeschooled child is younger than 5 years old (by August 31 of the current program year), we invite you to join as a General Member, which gives you access to field trips, parties, parent events, field day, and more.
- ❖ **PARTICIPATE:** L.I.N.K. Thursdays is not a drop-off program and is entirely parent-run. Plan to attend all ten weeks of the semester unless illness or extenuating circumstances prevent you from doing so. With Board approval, a family may meet their teaching requirements with a suitable substitute who agrees with our Statement of Faith, passes a background check, and will respect our homeschool mindset.
- ❖ **CLEAN** the church building as assigned, typically up to two times per semester.



L.I.N.K. Thursdays General Policies:

Finances: Classes must be paid for by the first day of classes unless other acceptable arrangements have been made with the treasurer. Receipts for L.I.N.K. Thursdays' expenses must be turned into the Treasurer by the last day of the semester for reimbursement.

Student Participation: Teens who come to L.I.N.K. Thursdays, but are not taking classes every hour, will be assigned to study hall, the buddy program, or helping in the nursery or a classroom.

Tag-Alongs: L.I.N.K. families who provide care for small children or homeschool children other than their own are allowed to enroll those children in L.I.N.K. Thursdays if the child's parents or legal guardians have signed waivers, and submit their child to our rules, regulations, and Statement of Faith.

Disciplinary Policy:

If a student or child is being disruptive, not following instructions, and/or not following the guidelines, the following steps need to be taken, preferably by either the parent (if they are in the class) or the teachers.

1. Begin by simply correcting the child.
2. If the behavior continues or escalates that same day, take the child aside or out of the room and explain what is expected of them. Tell them what they need to be doing and explain the consequences of misbehavior.
3. If on the same day the negative behavior continues, one of the teachers will need to take the child to their parent and explain the behavior. We do not wish for the parent to become defensive with the adult who brings the child to them.
4. If the behavior continues and/or becomes a chronic behavioral problem, the parent(s) will be informed that the child is not able to continue taking that class for the rest of the term, and there will be no refund given.
5. If a student's behavior is intentionally or recklessly dangerous, belligerent, or blatantly disrespectful, immediate removal of the student is appropriate. The student should be taken directly to a Board member. The Board will take up issues with the parent(s) and take appropriate measures. The Board retains the right to expel any child or family from one or all L.I.N.K. Thursdays classes. It also retains the right to revoke L.I.N.K. membership at any time.



Field Trips and Special Events

Field Trip and Special Event Etiquette:

As homeschoolers, we are looked at with critical eyes. People want to know what we are about and if we are different from the rest of the world. As a Christian group, we aren't just representing homeschoolers, we are representing Christ. We want to shine for Him! Please read and be aware of our event guidelines:

Attendance: It is a privilege to partake in a field trip, so we are asking that if you are unable to attend a field trip that you have registered for, please notify the coordinator as soon as possible so arrangements may be made for someone to take your place.

Disciplinary Policy: We understand that children will misbehave or just have a bad day occasionally; however, if this is not corrected and inappropriate behavior continues, these measures will be followed:

1. First-time offenders will receive a warning.
2. Second-time offenders will not be allowed to attend field trips and special events for one month.
3. Third-time offenders will not be allowed to attend any field trips or special events for one full year.
4. Dangerous, belligerent, or blatantly disrespectful behavior may result in immediate expulsion from field trips for a set amount of time deemed appropriate by the Board.

Courtesy: Please be attentive, courteous, polite, and prepared with good questions for our tour guide. Remember to thank the tour guide at the end of the field trip. We encourage all families to follow up with a thank you letter. What an added blessing to our host!

Fee Payment: If there is a cost involved with a field trip or special event, the fee must be paid at the time of your registration, unless otherwise specified by the field trip coordinator. Please do not consider yourself registered for a field trip until you have paid the fees. Those first to pay will be the first to be registered. Refunds because of your cancellation are dependent upon your giving proper notice of not being able to attend, the refund policy of the field trip destination, and /or if there is someone on the waiting list who is willing to step into your place.

Promptness: Please arrive 15 minutes before a field trip is to begin. This provides us the opportunity to give last-minute instructions and to get organized before entering the facility quietly.



Teen L.I.N.K.

The purpose of Teen L.I.N.K. is to provide additional social activities for L.I.N.K. teens in a secure setting and will, in all they do, glorify the name of God.

Teen L.I.N.K. Policies:

Chaperones: There will be a minimum of two parent chaperones at each event. Additional chaperones are necessary for larger groups. It is preferred that chaperones come from multiple families. Chaperones will interact with the teens throughout the event and not just sit on the sidelines visiting.

Event Approval: All events will be board-approved.

Group Participation: Teens should come prepared to participate in the events scheduled and will not be allowed to wander off to unsupervised areas.

Participation: Teen L.I.N.K. is limited to L.I.N.K.-member teens. Students who are not yet 13, but are in seventh grade or higher, may participate at their parent's discretion, considering the younger student's general maturity and keeping in mind that one student's misbehavior could result in the discontinuation of Teen L.I.N.K. for everyone.



“L.I.N.K. Lingo” Glossary of L.I.N.K. Terms

Blessings Table: Each week of L.I.N.K. Thursdays there is a table set up for people to give away items they are clearing from their homes. These items are available for anyone else who may desire to take them home at no charge. This has proven to be a great way to share outgrown clothes, school resources, and many other things. A volunteer packs up the leftover things at the end of the day and donates them to a local thrift shop.

Board Member: A member of L.I.N.K. that has been nominated for the position and approved by the membership through a vote of confidence, who then takes on administrative duties in order to keep the L.I.N.K. group active and available.

L.I.N.K. Storage Room: A room in the church basement to store our supplies, including a plethora of classroom aids, files, dry-erase boards, paper products, paint smocks, musical instruments, coffee cart, and various class-specific items. Cleaning supplies are also kept in this room.

Cleaning Schedule: Each family participating in L.I.N.K. Thursdays will be scheduled to help clean the church building after classes on one or two Thursdays each semester. The building is divided into cleaning zones, with one family assigned to each zone each week. There are tubs with cleansers, cloths, and an instruction sheet stored in the L.I.N.K. Storage Room. The vacuums, brooms, and dust pans are found there as well.

General Member: General Members are part of the L.I.N.K. Community but do not participate in L.I.N.K. Thursday classes. They may participate in any other L.I.N.K. event or function (Age or gender restrictions may apply to some events.).

Hire a Teen: This specifically applies to the day your family is assigned to clean the church building. If you would rather pay a teenager \$10 to clean than do it yourself, you can make those arrangements. You will be charged a \$15 fee if you leave without cleaning on your assigned day and the Board has to do it for you.

Fall Presentation Night/Spring Year-End Showcase: These events provide the opportunity for students (either individually or with their L.I.N.K. Thursdays class) to share what they have been learning during the school year. They may present on stage or have a table display in the gym. Friends and family are invited to attend. This is a great opportunity for students to practice public speaking as well as to receive a little encouragement and kudos for all their hard work. These events are open to ALL L.I.N.K. members, not just L.I.N.K. Thursdays students. Presentation Night is usually held on the evening of the last day of the fall L.I.N.K. Thursdays semester. The Year-End Showcase and honoring of the graduates is typically held on a Saturday afternoon in the spring.

Special Events: A special event is any gathering open to the members of L.I.N.K. that promotes the education and social development of our families. Some of our regular events include Moms Night Out, Field Day, Picnic at the Park, Teen L.I.N.K. events, and our Fall Kick-Off gathering. You are required to sign-up to coordinate or assist with one of the annual events. The first chance to sign-up for a new school year is at the Mandatory Meeting held each spring.