

EDGE Handbook

The **EDGE** stands for **Empowering Disciples through Godly Education**.

Mission Statement:

The EDGE exists to create a Christ-centered community for those who are called to disciple their children through homeschooling.

EDGE Core Values:

- To serve and obey God by answering His call to homeschool our children.
- To serve one another within the co-op by providing tutoring and enrichment courses.
- To build Christ-centered character in our children through our teachings and examples.
- To bring up the next generation of strong Christian leaders and citizens.
- To establish a relationship with our community through outreach and service.
- To provide families with opportunities for learning about homeschooling and education through seminars, lectures, and workshops.
- To stress the importance of education at home within the family unit.

Who We Are:

We are a homeschooling cooperative (co-op) comprised of Christian families united voluntarily to meet the common goal of discipling and tutoring our children through enrichment education opportunities. We believe it is our responsibility to teach our own children while finding ways to enhance the lives of others that are on the same journey. We strive to be a shining light in the community and be the visible hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

How to get involved:

There are two levels of involvement with the EDGE. You can join the Support Group only or become an EDGE Co-op Member. Families can join the Support Group at any time during the year by contacting the EDGE through our website. Co-op can only be joined during Open Registration which is generally in May, but may remain open till July if space is available.

Support Group Information

To join the support group, you must pay a \$5 registration fee and fill out a registration form. This \$5 fee will give you membership in our support group for one school year. You will have to renew annually during the registration period if you wish to continue your association. Once we receive your registration form and fee, you will be added to our Yahoo Group email. This is how you can stay “in the loop” and be connected with other members.

Activities:

- **Field Trips**

We try to schedule at least one field trip per month. We have gone to plays, local attractions and museums, caverns, hiking trips, fire station, baseball games, post office, and more. Some of our field trips are to help local ministries as well. We try to pick field trips that are free or affordable for our families. Please see the field trip dress code below.

- **Parent’s Night Out (PNO)**

These are scheduled once a month to give moms a much deserved night out! We may have dinner at a local restaurant, meet for coffee, hang out at a mom’s house, or have a craft or activity night. Mom’s who take the time to come, never regret it!

- **Family Events**

We offer events for the whole family several times a year. In the past we have had potluck dinners, picnics in the mountains, talent show, and bonfires.

- **Small Groups**

We occasionally have small group activities that come up that are for certain ages of children. Examples include high school cookout and bonfire, young girls’ tea parties, middle school boys’ basketball games, and toddler play-dates. These are planned by our parents and approved by the leadership.

- **Graduation Ceremony**

Seniors will have the opportunity to participate in an EDGE Graduation that will be organized and conducted by the EDGE. Parents are responsible for providing the student’s diploma from the school you are registered with. There is a set fee for Cap and Gown and other supplies that will be announced each fall in preparation of graduation for that coming spring.

Cooperative (Co-op) Policies, Responsibilities, and Information

General Policies and Information:

- Each family participating in the co-op classes must pay the annual family membership fee. Depending on the courses chosen, there may be book fees that are due along with the registration fees. These fees are non-refundable and are to be paid in full by the last day of July. Support group benefits are included in Co-op memberships.
- New Co-op members must pay a \$15 fee for a background check on the parent who will be attending co-op weekly. (Currently our background checks are good for 3 years, at which time adults will need to be re-checked)
- Each family is responsible to attend all Co-op days. Three absences are allowed for sickness or vacation without consequences, such as delayed registration or an incident report being filed.

- No adult or student can attend co-op when showing any contagious symptoms such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. You must be symptom free for 24 hours before attending any EDGE function.
- Students K-8th must be enrolled in all three hours of offered courses.
- High School students only desiring 1 or 2 classes, can pay a per class fee instead of the annual family fee.
- All individuals must respect the facilities, furnishings and property of the Seymour Heights Christian Church.
- In case of inclement weather, all co-op classes follow Sevier County closures and will not be made up. High School classes need to check in with their teachers through email and continue work as stated in the class syllabus.
- All members must show respect by treating others the way they would like to be treated. Physical harm or threats will not be tolerated and could result in dismissal from the group.

Parent Responsibilities:

- Parents are required to pass a criminal background check showing they have not been convicted of any sexual, neglect or violent behaviors.
- Parents are required to serve as either a teacher/tutor or as an assistant. Teachers have to serve two hours and may have one hour off. Assistants must serve all three hours.
- Parents must stay at the co-op at all times while their children are in attendance. Parents may not leave students at Co-op with anyone other an approved adult.
- Parents take full responsibility for their children's safety and education. The EDGE nor Seymour Heights Christian Church are in any way responsible for injury or harm that may occur.
- Be responsible for your children getting co-op assignments done and coming prepared for class.
- Remember the co-op is only a launching pad for the week, so the success of your children's education depends on your responsibility to educate your children at home.
- Be responsible to review, understand, and comply with all EDGE policies and dress code as a family. Failure to do so may result in an incident report being filed regarding your family.
- If a child who is not a part of the co-op visits, they must be with the supervising parent at all times.
- Children that are not in the legal custody of the member and need to be brought by the member on a regular basis may request permission to attend from the Board of Directors. These are approved on a case-by-case basis and generally require that the member be the full-time educator.
- Be responsible to arrive before the start of the Morning Assembly.
- Even though our "teachers" here at the EDGE will do all they can to tutor your children, you are solely responsible for your children's education. You are responsible for reporting your child's attendance and grades to your umbrella school that you are enrolled under.
- Please support the teacher by holding your children responsible for completing their homework on time. (see homework policy)

Student Responsibilities:

- Adhere to each teacher's policies, arrive prepared to class, and complete all coursework assigned.
- Must adhere to the policies and dress code of the EDGE. Failure to do so will result in an incident report being filed regarding your family.
- Honor teachers by being respectful in speech and action.
- Use restroom and get drinks before Morning Assembly or between classes.
- Leave skateboards, iPods, and hand-held video games at home. Cell phones should be out of sight and turned off during school hours.

- Do not be disruptive: i.e. talking out of turn, talking disrespectfully, habitually unprepared, intentionally not participating, or any other inappropriate behavior.
- Take responsibility for your course work by getting work done on time and to the best of your ability. (see Homework policy)

Teacher Responsibilities:

- Understand the teacher role is to tutor the students by preparing lessons that will enhance their understanding of the course selected.
- Understand that this is a year long commitment to the EDGE. Please plan to be at all scheduled class meeting times. For unavoidable circumstances, you are responsible to properly equip your assistant with a planned lesson and notify the Director about your absence.
- Agree with and sign the Teacher Pledge.
- Have at least one backup lesson plan available at the EDGE.
- Responsible to arrive on time to class prepared with a lesson plan.
- Complete grading in a timely manner and report them to parents.
- Make sure all coursework is included in the syllabus or given to students in writing or through email each Tuesday. Added assignments or details must be emailed out by Tuesday evening at the latest.
- Communicate with parents about their student's work. If assignments are not turned in on time please follow the Homework Policy that is included below.

Homework Policy:

Homework can be assigned in the syllabus, written on the board for students to copy, or emailed to parents. All homework must be given out no later than Tuesday evening. Communication is the key to successfully working together to make sure students are effectively educated. With class times only being an hour a week, homework is essential in credit courses and other courses as well. Students must take responsibility to complete their work in a timely manner. They must also be prepared for the consequences if the work is not completed. It is the responsibility of the teachers to keep the director informed of homework issues.

1st time the student doesn't have their homework completed the teacher will send a private email to the parent making the parent aware of the assignment and their students lack of completing it. The work must then be completed and turned in the following class. Parents please implement consequences at home as you deem necessary.

2nd time the student doesn't complete their homework the teacher will need to speak with the parent and student in person. (12:15 is a good time for this) This should be a brief time for parent and teacher to support one another and communicate to the student what their responsibility is and the importance of completing their work. Parents please implement consequences at home as you deem necessary.

3rd time, there will be an incident report filed and a meeting with the EDGE director, teacher, parent and student will be set to resolve the issue. At this time the situation will be discussed and consequences could affect the student's enrollment in the course.

Dress Code:

Here at the EDGE, we strive to honor the Lord in all that we say and do. Our appearance is no exception. The goals in establishing this dress code include providing a safe environment, representing the EDGE in the community in a Godly manner, and preparing students for the future job responsibility of complying with work uniforms or dress codes. Here at the EDGE, we realize that there are many styles and

kinds of clothing that are acceptable and honoring to the Lord, but to keep distractions to a minimum and help students learn to present themselves professionally we have established the following dress code.

Parents' full support of this dress code is required. You can do this by displaying a cooperative attitude to your students and by seeing that each student dresses in compliance before leaving the house.

Preschoolers and Toddlers:

Comfortable clothing and shoes required. Shorts are allowed when weather allows.

Students K-4th grades:

Please make sure that your young children are dressed in a manner that allows them to manage the restroom independently. If needed, elastic waistbands can be used instead of snaps and belts.

Please review the following elementary dress code carefully with your child and model for them the correct Christian response to authority.

1. Neat pants/jeans, knee length skirts with leggings or mid-calf skirts or capris are all acceptable. No rips or holes please. Please make sure that shorts or leggings are worn under skirts.
2. Shirts that are solid, stripes, or prints are acceptable. No graphics, words or screen printed pictures (unless they are EDGE t-shirts). Shirts must completely cover the abdomen, back and shoulders. No midriff should be showing during any activity. No spaghetti straps.
3. Students must wear shoes at all times. If a student is enrolled in PE they must wear shoes that securely stay on the foot and that the student is comfortable while running or kicking a ball.
4. No hats, mask, capes or any other "costumes" are allowed.

Students 5th-12th grades and Adults:

Please review the following dress code carefully with your child and model for them the correct Christian response to authority.

1. Pants must be neat and presentable. Jeans, slacks, capri/joggers, or cargo pants are acceptable if they are at least mid-calf in length and made of denim or slacks material. Therefore pants made of sweatpant material, spandex, leggings or exercise/sports style pants are not allowed. No tears, rips, or holes allowed.
2. Skirts that are at least mid-calf in length may be worn in lieu of the above stated pants. If leggings are worn with the skirt then the skirt can be knee length. The leggings can not be see through and must be mid-calf in length.
3. Shirts that are solid, stripes, polka dots or prints are acceptable along with EDGE t-shirts. No graphics (brand logos are acceptable if smaller than 2 inch square), no words nor screen printed pictures. Shirts must completely cover the abdomen, back and shoulders. No midriff or cleavage can be shown during any activity. No spaghetti straps, no rips or tears. Teachers please check yourself for exposures when bending forward to help students with work.
4. Shoes must be worn at all times. If a student is enrolled in PE they must wear shoes that securely stay on the foot and that the student is comfortable while running or kicking a ball.
5. No hats, mask, capes or any other "costumes" are allowed unless specifically permitted for a spirit day.
6. Sweatshirts, hoodies and jackets for winter may not have graphics (brand logos are acceptable if smaller than 2 inch square), words or screen printed pictures. The hoods or winter hats may not be worn while in the building.

For Field Trips (all ages):

All of the above rules apply, except knee length shorts are permitted when weather permits and the activity is appropriate for shorts.

Failure to Comply:

Individuals that are not dressed in accordance with the stated dress code will be given an EDGE provided shirt to wear or could be required to return home to change. The first offense will be a warning but the second offense against dress code will result in a incident report being filed regarding the family.

Attendance Policy:

The EDGE distributes a calendar to all co-op members well in advance, letting you know which days will be school days and which days are co-op holidays. Since we meet only once each week, any absenteeism will have a negative impact on the student's education as well as the EDGE! Please realize that when a co-op day is missed, it's not just one day missed but an entire week's worth of education. Absences due to illness are understood and expected. We also understand that we are homeschooling and need some flexibility. However, being in the co-op is a privilege and a commitment. The board asks that you plan and choose carefully any days you MUST be out. Each family is allowed 3 absences a year without consequences. It's prudent to save these days for sickness or unforeseen circumstances that may prevent you from attending. Families who miss only 3 days or less will be rewarded with the ability to register early for the following year.

Arriving on time to Co-op is also a necessity. Families who arrive after 9:10 will be counted tardy. Once a family is tardy 3 times the tardies will be counted as one absence.

As soon as a family knows they will not be able to attend Co-op the parent is responsible for notifying the Co-op Director. This needs to be done in writing through either email or text.

Any family with excessive absences will have an incident report placed in their family file.

Sexual Misconduct Policy:

Purpose: To establish proper preventative measures to protect individuals against sexual misconduct as well as to specify courses of action in the case of allegations or an actual incident regarding sexual misconduct.

Standard of Conduct: All parents of The EDGE are expected to comply with the established policy on Sexual Misconduct. Any actions contrary to the Co-op's policy will be dealt with swiftly and may include disciplinary measures up to and including membership termination, as well as legal ramifications when applicable. Child safety is our priority!

Definitions:

Child Sexual Abuse- any sexual activity with a child in any setting. The abuser may be an adult, an adolescent or another child, provided the child is four years older than the victim (National Resource Center on Child Sexual Abuse, 1992)

Sexual activity- may be violent or non-violent, touching or non-touching, and is an exploitation of a child's vulnerability and powerlessness. It involves children in sexual behaviors for which they are not personally, socially, and developmentally ready.

Sexual Misconduct- inappropriate behavior relating to or involving a sexual nature.

a) Criminal Background Check

1. All adults involved with the EDGE CoOp will sign a release for Criminal Records Check and undergo a criminal background check prior to any activity with the EDGE.
2. No adult ever convicted of a sexual or violent related crime is eligible to work with children in any capacity.

b) Policies

1. Two Adult Rule - minimum of two adults in any setting or activity regarding children.
2. All adults will wear EDGE IDs.
3. All adults are responsible to address suspicious behavior or any behavior that may be contrary to EDGE policy and to document and report such occurrences to the proper authorities.

c) Reporting Procedures

1. No accused will be addressed by anyone other than the EDGE Director until the safety of the child or victim is secured.
2. All allegation must be taken seriously.
3. All allegations should be reported to the EDGE Director as immediately as possible.
4. The EDGE Director will notify the parents or legal guardian.
5. All situations will be handled forthrightly with due respect for the people's privacy and confidentiality.
6. Full cooperation will be given to civil authorities when applicable.
7. No victim involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for reporting an allegation will be retaliated against.

d) Investigation of an Allegation

1. All allegations will be investigated expeditiously by established authorities.
2. Any accused volunteer will be relieved temporarily of his or her duties until the investigation is completed.
3. All details, interviews, and information will remain confidential to those legitimately involved in the investigation. Any individual or group responsible for a breach in this confidentiality is subject to disciplinary action up to and including membership termination.
4. No individual involved in an allegation or anyone responsible for investigating an allegation will be retaliated against.

Conflict Resolution:

Make sure that good relationships are a priority. Treat the other person with respect. Do your best to be courteous, and to discuss matters constructively.

If you have a complaint or concern:

- Express it promptly. Keeping frustrations pent up can cause ill feelings and division, which decreases our effectiveness to work cooperatively.
- Don't gossip, speak to the right person. Concerns regarding class time, speak to the teacher. Concerns regarding activities at the co-op in general, speak to the Leadership. Concerns regarding a student, speak to the parent.
- Speak in person (face to face or by phone call) to clarify the context of the problem and work toward a resolution. Board members are willing to help with mediation on unresolved issues, but it is important to go to the person you have a conflict with first.
- Express your concern clearly. Make sure the person to whom you are expressing your concern knows all the details of the situation; exactly what you are concerned about, and why. Misunderstanding could lead to further problems and needless hard feelings.
- Regarding any and all conflict we encourage following the biblical models for reconciliation and conflict resolution.
 - Matthew 18:15- 16, "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed."

- Ephesians 4:29-32, “ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”
- Philippians 2:4, “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

Accountability to policies:

The EDGE Board of Directors has the right to deny membership or revoke membership to any family who does not comply with EDGE policies. Failure, by students or adults, to follow policies could put your family membership in jeopardy. The policies of the EDGE are to be taken seriously and to be respected. When policies are blatantly disregarded verbally or physically there will be an incident report, that documents the individual's offense, placed in the family's file. After two incident reports the family's membership will be reviewed by the Board of Directors. If the Board deems it necessary to revoke the family's membership, the family must return all EDGE books or other loaned items before leaving. The EDGE is not responsible for refunding fees, loss of educational opportunity or any other hardship this dismissal may cause. If the family is allowed to stay a probationary time will be given at which point if there are additional incident reports filed the family membership will be revoked automatically. The board also retains the right to deny registration renewal in future years.