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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Open Call for Homeschool Artists**

*ELMHURST, IL* — Homeschoolers of all ages from Elmhurst and the surrounding towns are invited to display their artwork at a Homeschool Art Open House at the Library on Saturday, March 24. The Open House with refreshments runs from 12-4 p.m.

Lori Hoegler, School Services Librarian in the Kids' Library, homeschooled her own children for twelve years before joining the staff at Elmhurst Public Library. Now, one of the programs she designs targets homeschool families: monthly "Homeschool Hangouts" serve as an opportunity for homeschool families to share ideas while learning about the resources available at the library.

"It's my heart's desire that [homeschoolers] feel part of the community, that what they experience here is a valuable bridge to other formal education and the wider world," says Hoegler.

Heather Overdorf, Elmhurst, has homeschooled her two daughters, ages 8 and 11, for nearly three years. To her, the library serves as an occasional classroom as well as a place to flesh out curriculum.

"It's allowed me to supplement and enhance and keep our curriculum cohesive," says Overdorf. She adds that using eLearning tools like Transparent Language helps with language instruction, and ArtistWorks (self-paced music, voice, and art instruction) helps supplement the violin and ukulele lessons her daughters take.

Besides networking with other homeschool families and exchanging ideas at the monthly Homeschool Hangouts, Overdorf appreciates the programming that Hoegler provides. “She picks our brains, and asks us what we need the most. Lori helped me when she brought in a technology instructor to teach about Chromebooks,” she says.

When working on big projects, Overdorf brings her daughters to the Makery, where there is room to spread out at the big tables. Being down in the makerspace, which opened in the basement of the library last summer, helps inspire bigger and better ideas. “We might be using the laminator, but then the kids will see that they can use the 3D printer, too. It helps being down there and seeing it.”

Hoegler’s own passion for homeschooling translates to her commitment to making the Library an essential resource for homeschool families. “Homeschooling takes a lot of time and energy, and you have to be 100% focused on helping your kids be the best global citizens they can be,” says Hoegler. The library can help by making it easier to connect to resources that would normally take too much time to invest in. You only have so many hours in a day, and you have to make the best of those hours.”

**Coming up:**

- Homeschool Hangout: Thursdays, March 15, April 19, May 17 • 1-3 p.m.
  - Homeschool Art Open House: Saturday, March 24 • 12-4 p.m.
- (Artists may drop off their artwork at the Kids’ Help Desk until March 22.)

For more information: (630) 279-8696 or [www.elmhurstpubliclibrary.org](http://www.elmhurstpubliclibrary.org)

[PHOTO CAPTION]: Homeschooler Heather Overdorf says her daughters, age 8 and 11, often use Elmhurst Public Library as an extension to their own home as a classroom. “The benefits are innumerable,” she says. “It’s a change of scenery and we meet other homeschoolers.”