

The Blumenfeld Education Letter

"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce those risks.
"Without vision, the people perish."

PURE Launches Campaign to Establish National Home Education Week

Parents for Unalienable Rights in Education (PURE) kicked off its campaign to establish a National Home Education Week at its first national conference held on March 25-26 at Christian Liberty Academy, Arlington Heights, Illinois.

Observance and celebration of National Home Education Week begins on the first Monday in May of each year and ends at midnight of the following Sunday. In 1989, National Home Education Week will be celebrated on May 1-7.

The purpose of National Home Education Week is to give home schoolers the opportunity to focus national and local attention on the great benefits of home schooling to children, families and communities. Home schooling is the fastest growing educational phenomenon in the United States, yet most Americans know very little or nothing about it. What they do know tends to be negative because of the way home schooling has been written and talked about in the media which generally reports on home-schooling court cases.

But seldom does the media report on the many home-school book fairs, seminars, conferences, workshops and conventions that are taking place all over the country.

PURE hopes that home-school organizations in all of the states will petition their governors to designate the first full week in May as Home Education Week. A model petition is being prepared by PURE for distribution to home-school organizations. A petition for the establishment of National Home Education Week will be circulated for signing and will be presented to the President of the United States and the Secretary of Education.

An American Tradition

"We want to make Americans aware that home education has a long and proud tradition in America going back to colonial times," said Sam Blumenfeld, Chairman of PURE. "The founding fathers were home educated by their parents, often with the help of tutors. And their education was generally quite

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substantial and thorough before they went on to formal education, if any. They learned to read and write not only in English but often Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, Spanish and other languages. They were well versed in the scientific knowledge of the time. Their knowledge of history was particularly deep, and it aided them greatly when they dealt with the difficult task of constructing a new form of government. Rather than ignore history, they learned everything they could from it. And the result is a form of government that has provided the greatest political freedom and unleashed the greatest surge of creativity and economic development that mankind has ever witnessed."

It should also be pointed out that education is not mentioned in the United States Constitution. That's because the founding fathers considered education to be a parental responsibility in accordance with Biblical teachings. It was left up to parents to decide how and what their children were to be taught.

God's Commandment

Since the founding fathers were Christians with a good knowledge of the Bible, they understood that God commanded parents to educate their children in a useful and godly way, and that therefore there was no need for government to involve itself in the matter. It was understood that knowledge of God was the essential guiding spirit in education, and that without it, true education was impossible.

Thus, education in America was largely a private and parental affair until the 1830's, 40's, and 50's when the idea of governmental involvement began to take hold. The movement for government owned and operated secular schools was spurred by four distinct groups: (1) the Unitarians who believed in human perfectibility and shifted the means of salvation from Christ to the

secular government school; (2) the Owenite socialists who believed that government secular schools could be used to mold children into little socialists; (3) the Hegelians who believed that the State was God and should therefore educate children for the glory of the State; and (4) the Protestants who feared massive Catholic immigration and saw the government school as a means of maintaining America's Protestant culture.

By the 1880's, government education dominated the American scene, except for the Catholic parochial school system which arose as a reaction against the Protestant influences in the public schools.

The Progressives Take Over

At the turn of the century the government school system fell under the widening influence of the Progressives, a new breed of educator, members of the Protestant academic elite, who no longer believed in the religion of their fathers and now put their faith in science, evolution and psychology.

The Progressives were also socialists because they believed that socialism would cure the evils of society. They got their vision of a socialist future from Edward Bellamy's utopian fantasy, Looking Backward, published in 1888. And so they set out on a messianic mission to change America from a capitalist, individualistic and believing nation into a socialist, collectivist, atheist or humanist nation. To achieve this they radically reformed the public school curriculum by downgrading the development of the literacy, intellectual and academic skills and emphasizing the development of social skills: values, behavior, emotions, social studies, group activities, group decision-making, etc.

Today's public school curriculum is a direct result of the reforms of the

Progressives. The new curriculum has been with us for over forty years and has caused massive functional illiteracy, the growth of an educationally impoverished underclass, the spiritual bankruptcy of our culture, and widespread moral anarchy.

Rescuing the Children

The modern home-education movement began in the 1970's as a way for parents to save their children from the negative academic and social influences of the public schools. Today there are home-school organizations in every state in the Union. In every respect this has been a grass-roots movement begun by parents who quietly removed their children from public schools and educated them at home without fuss or public attention. Today there are about a dozen home education satellite systems servicing thousands of families. Christian Liberty Academy has about 25,000 families enrolled in its program.

Naturally, the progressive education establishment has not taken too kindly to the sudden rapid growth of the home-education movement. After all, if the children are not in government schools where they can be indoctrinated in progressive humanist ideas and values, how will it be possible to bring about the socialist millennium? Their answer has come in the form of attacks on parental rights in matters of education. In some states, home schoolers have been dragged before courts, denied their constitutional rights, and in some cases had their children taken from them.

Until now the persecutions have received scant national attention because the persecutors have done their dirty work in isolated rural areas or small towns. But Parents for Unalienable Rights in Education intend to change that. PURE is creating a national communications network that will make it possible for home schoolers to

send news of persecution and harassment across the country in a short time so that protests can be organized and information relayed to the media.

The Home Schoolers' Ally

The home schoolers' greatest potential ally is the American taxpayer who is sick of paying for public schools that don't educate. That is why a National Home Education Week is needed: to provide public recognition that the home-education movement is an important part of the new high-tech, freedom-oriented American culture of the future, and to provide home schoolers with organized opportunities to educate the public about home education.

Activities for Home Education Week

What follows is a list of recommended activities for home schoolers during National Home Education Week:

1. Arrange for an exhibit of home-education books and materials at your local public library. Volunteer to man a table in the library during that week. Most libraries have meeting or conference rooms in which a seminar or slide show can be given if such programs are planned. Be sure to have an adequate supply of leaflets and free literature to distribute to the public at your exhibit table.

2. Visit your state legislators at your state capital during the week, presenting them with cherry pies so that your visit will not be forgotten. PURE has chosen the cherry pie as its symbol because it reminds us of George Washington, the father of our country, who was home educated. A home-baked cherry pie is also a wholesome reminder of traditional family values.

Introduce your children to the legislators who will remember their sweet, eager faces the next time they

must vote for or against parental rights and educational freedom in the legislature. Visiting the legislature is a good lesson in government for your children. Make it an important event, and let the media know about it well in advance so that they will be there with TV cameras to record the presentation of the cherry pies by your children to their representatives.

3. Inform the media by way of a press release or press conference about National Home Education Week, its meaning and purpose, and the activities that you and your group have planned. Put together a good-looking press kit, with photos and contact numbers. Get to know the editor of your local paper, its education editor, the hosts of your local radio talk shows (Christian and secular), and your television station's news department. Most people in the media are sympathetic to the home-education movement, so treat them as friends. To those who react negatively, cheerfully explain your position on parental rights, academic excellence, and healthful family socialization.

Whenever you meet people who oppose home education, use such occasions to sharpen your own debating skills and to construct good arguments in defense of home schooling. After a while you will find that most objections to home schooling are based on ignorance about it. Those who oppose home schooling on political grounds represent the statist and incipient totalitarians in our society. It should not surprise you to find that there are fellow Americans who do not believe in our Judeo-Christian concepts of parental rights or educational freedom. Our job is to reach those who believe in what we believe but have not heard much about us.

4. Invite local dignitaries, ministers, school-board members, and public school teachers to a home education "open house" either in a home or a community meeting place. Have home-school parents explain the benefits of home education and have the children

recite poetry or give readings. Have an exhibit table with books and materials, and serve refreshments made by the children. The purpose of the open house is to win friends and influence people. Make your presentations as professional as possible.

5. Organize a home-school crafts fair at your church or community center. You might combine it with a garage sale to attract the public. Have free literature to distribute whenever you bring in the public. Your goal must always be to educate the public about the benefits of home schooling.

6. Organize a home-school food festival with home-made pies, cakes, muffins, candies, and foods of all kinds. Have the children provide entertainment with poetry reading, songs, etc.

7. Visits to the elderly. Arrange to have home-school children visit senior citizens and present them with small gifts or cookies. You might arrange for your youngsters to volunteer helping the elderly once a week or once a month as a community service.

8. Contests. Your group might arrange home-school contests for first, second and third prizes in such fields as: poetry writing, photography, drawing, video making, music, model building, cooking, sewing, pet caring, etc. Awards should be given out with much fanfare at a buffet dinner. Such contests will encourage much creative activity.

These suggestions hardly exhaust all that can be done during Home Education Week to educate the public. You might organize one or two activities for Home Education Week and save the others for the rest of the year. It is recommended that you make a photo album or video recording of your activities to be kept as a permanent record for the future. When the children are grown up they will want to remember the wonderful times they had with the parents who home-schooled them.

The Benefits of Home Schooling

Home-schooling parents often find it difficult to explain to their friends, neighbors and relatives why they are home schooling. We have outlined the thirteen major benefits of home schooling to make the job of explaining much easier. Here they are:

1. The first benefit is that home-schooling sets you right with God; it brings you into obedience with His Word. What blessings flow from this initial obedience to the Word of God. We are told in Proverbs: "Train up a child in the way he should go and, when he is old, he will not depart from it."

What a tremendous role model for children are parents who conduct their family's life in accordance with God's law, in obedience to His Commandments.

We read in Ephesians, 6:4: "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

About a year ago on the TV show 20/20 they had a segment on children and heavy metal music -- music full of satanism, devil worship, violence, and sex. A music journalist was asked if there was anything dangerous about that music. On the contrary, he replied, there wasn't anything wrong with heavy metal music. In fact, it was good because it gave the kids something to believe in!

Yes, children need something to believe in, but if parents send their children to schools where God is considered impotent and irrelevant, and the parents don't care, the children will seek something to believe in that is relevant and very potent -- the music of the devil.

Parents who obey God rather than men will serve as lifelong role

models for children in a world of seduction, corruption and deceit.

2. Home-schooling creates a generation bridge rather than a generation gap. The true purpose of education is to pass on to the future generation the knowledge, wisdom and values of the past generation -- to create a bridge of generations, so that the children of tomorrow can build on the foundation of the past. But the public schools create alienation between parents and children. Through values clarification they encourage children to develop values in conflict with those of their parents. They create child rebellion, which is considered normal in our society. Home-schooling creates friendship and harmony between generations through the living gift of teaching. Child rebellion is perverse, but our schools have made it normal in America.

3. Home-schooling creates mutual respect -- mutual love. "Honor thy father and mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12) Children love parents who not only teach them what is important to learn, but who correct them when necessary. In Proverbs 29:17 we read: "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul." Children want to know what is the right thing to do. The schools are giving condoms to children so that they can play Russian roulette with a deadly disease. Loving parents teach their children the meaning of the word no. They also teach children the rules of sexual behavior as given in the Bible. The child doesn't need a condom to be used only once in an act of sin. He needs the words of the Bible which, if heeded, provide a lifetime of protection. Children respect parents who have something important to teach them, and what is more important than the Word of God?

Also, parents respect the intelligence of their children. They've watched them grow and learn. They know their capabilities. This is not the case in public schools where normal, healthy children enter the first grade with a tremendous capacity to learn and in a year's time become "learning disabled." Why? Because of the teaching methods used in the schools, methods developed by behavioral psychologists who consider the children to be little animals, the products of evolution, who must be manipulated and conditioned to respond to the given stimuli. In the world of behavioral psychology children have no souls and no intellect.

John B. Watson, the father of behaviorism, wrote that the behavioral psychologist "must describe the behavior of man in no other terms than those you would use in describing the behavior of the ox you slaughter."

As far as the mind is concerned, Watson wrote: "Behaviorism claims that consciousness is neither a definite nor a usable concept. The behaviorist . . . holds further, that belief in the existence of consciousness goes back to the ancient days of superstition and magic."

No wonder children emerge from public schools so spiritually and emotionally crippled. They've been robbed of their souls and their intellects.

But the ultimate goal of the behaviorists is not to educate human beings, but control them. Watson writes: "The interest of the behaviorist in man's doings is more than the interest of the spectator -- he wants to control man's reactions as physical scientists want to control and manipulate other natural phenomena. It is the business of behavioristic psychology to be able to predict and to control human activity."

4. Home-schooled children learn well. Why? Because they are more self-motivated. Having taught themselves to

speaking their own language, they know how to learn. Virtually every child learns to speak his own language all by himself. The home school relies a great deal on this enormous self-learning, self-teaching energy that every child has. And therefore it encourages the development of independent learning and study habits. Once the child learns to read, which generally occurs without great fuss or difficulty through intensive, systematic phonics, the child can learn as much as he wants as often as he wants. Home schooling is a continuous process that does not stop at the ringing of a bell. It becomes a way of life, a constant source of discussion, challenge and inquiry.

How well do home schoolers learn? According to Patricia Lines: "States such as Alaska and Arizona, which test home-schooled children, report that these children perform above average, as measured by nationally standardized tests. One study of children in a home tutorial network in Los Angeles showed that children in the network scored higher in standardized national tests than the children in Los Angeles public schools."

5. The parents learn more than the children! In home schooling two are educated for the price of one. Professional educators complain that parents have not had the proper teacher training. What they ignore is the fact that parents can learn and do learn. When parents decide to home school, they realize that they themselves must learn a great deal about the subjects they are teaching. And it ought to surprise no one how much the parents learn in the process. Because of this experience, parents become better parents, better citizens, and richer individuals. Their own horizons expand, their own interests grow. They become interesting people whom their children enjoy socializing with because they know something and are always learning more.

6. Parents become more politically aware, and as a result become better Americans. Because home schoolers must

face the hostility of the education establishment and harassment from the state, they soon learn about their constitutional rights, their form of government, and to what extent Christian and parental freedom have been eroded. This is an awakening process that home schoolers go through, a process that makes them appreciate the meaning of freedom and what must be done to preserve it.

Today's home schoolers are on the frontline of the war between individual freedom and government tyranny. The heightened awareness of home schoolers to the fragility of our rights and freedoms is acting as an alarm to awaken a public unaware to what extent its freedoms have been lost. The home-schooling family becomes over time a patriotic family striving to defend the principles of American freedom as laid down by our founding fathers.

Home schoolers are interested in American history because they know that their continued freedom depends on how well they understand that history and so the home-schooling family becomes a repository of Americanism, embodying its greatest and finest virtues.

7. For the child, the home-schooling family is a safe haven in a culture awash with drugs, promiscuous and premarital sex, perversion, pornography, blasphemy, foul language, venereal disease, satanism, devil worship, paganism, rock music, violence. Children need all the safety they can get in a culture that seduces children to their own destruction. Perhaps the public school is the most dangerous place of all, for that is where millions of children encounter drugs, promiscuity, moral relativism, paganism, violence, and even the bizarre and satanic lure of death. Between 5,000 and 6,000 children kill themselves every year. Why? Because the schools are teaching a lethal combination of subjects: values clarification, which creates hatred of life, and death education which creates love of death.

In values clarification children play the lifeboat survival game in which they must decide on the basis of social usefulness who must live and who must die. This sort of exercise may indeed depress a child who himself doesn't feel very socially useful. If this is what life is all about, how can we blame him for growing to hate it?

In death education he is taught how friendly and nice death is. He writes suicide notes, his own obituary, visits a funeral home, tries out a coffin, draws a picture of death, learns a death vocabulary, fantasizes about dying, plans his own funeral, answers long questionnaires about death and dying. Death education depresses some children, fascinates others, seduces some. I believe it has led to this epidemic of teenage suicide, untold tragedy for thousands of American families.

The home school is indeed a safe haven.

8. Home schooling encourages the freedom to try new technology -- computers, videos, cassettes, typewriters, copying machines. The home is a limitless learning center -- with access to God's Word (which the public schools are forbidden from having), access to the world of knowledge. Your children can learn to make their own video documentary films, produce newspapers, magazines, newsletters, even books of their own. Hobbies such as photography, stamp and coin collecting, bird watching, and handicrafts can easily be integrated in many of the subjects and activities of the home school.

9. Home schooling saves valuable time. No long bus rides to and from school. No so-called study periods in which time is whittled away making paper airplanes. No artificial breakup of time by bells. A home schooler can spend a solid length of time absorbed in an interesting subject or book or project. He or she is not stymied by the artificial schedule of a formal school.

10. Home schoolers can get involved in all sorts of interesting enterprises as a means of learning the principles of free-enterprise. Additional income for the family can be derived from these family industries. Such activities encourage entrepreneurship, new ideas, inventiveness, and an appreciation of economic freedom. The incentive to earn money for college can be an important driving force in this sort of family activity.

11. Home schoolers have limitless access to the world's cultural resources starting with the museums, zoos, libraries, theme parks of one's own community. Field trips and outings not only enrich the children but the family as a whole. There simply is no end to the benefits of home schooling.

12. Convenience. The home-school family can plan its vacations in accordance with Dad's time off. Vacation or travel time are not limited to those months or days of the year when public schools are closed. This gives the home-school family the ability to take advantage of off-season rates and less crowdedness.

13. Healthful socialization. The most common argument used to persuade parents to put their children in public schools is that they need the socialization they get there. The assumption is that home schoolers lack opportunities to socialize. If this were true then the founding fathers should have been very unsocial people!

The fact is that the family is the child's most important source of social experience. Home schooling enhances the relationship of children to their parents and siblings. It prepares them for further social experiences at church, Sunday school, in Little League teams or Boy and Girl Scouts. Home-school parents can decide whom they want their children to socialize with, and thus reduce the risks of negative socialization. Also, home-school children generally socialize with other home-school children through

their parents' home-school associations. There is no lack of opportunity for healthy, proper socialization.

And when they go out into the greater world they will be well prepared -- morally, spiritually and academically -- to meet other people of all ages and backgrounds and relate to them with ease and confidence.

Arkansas School Reform Fails to Improve Academics

A report issued by the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation indicates that the school reform effort in Arkansas has yielded poor academic results. Data from 75 school districts show substantial increases in special-education placements and in children being held back.

Despite these disappointing results, the reform has meant improvements in staff development and training, teacher involvement in decision-making, communication with parents, and student counseling. (Educ. Wk. 3/2/88)

Vital Quotes

"We cannot begin to understand the meaning of education and the function of schools, if we fail to realize, first, that all education is religious. . . . Each faith has its own basic philosophy of education. An educational philosophy common to all faiths is an impossibility, because the ideas of ultimate concern vary from religion to religion.

"Until we recognize that schools are establishments of religion, and that all education is inescapably a religious activity, we cannot come to grips with our cultural crisis."

-- R. J. Rushdoony, The Philosophy of the Christian Curriculum