



## How Homeschoolers Can Help Promote Homeschooling

I'm sure that homeschoolers will agree that defending and expanding educational freedom is in the interest of homeschoolers. The public education establishment, which has enormous political power through the National Education Association, would love to get rid of home education, and that is why they keep trying to get state legislatures to impose all sorts of onerous regulations on homeschoolers.



Fortunately, the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) has been largely successful in keeping the wild dogs of the NEA at bay. But one can be sure that the NEA will keep trying, and there are many legislators who are beholden to that powerful organization for their support. So it behooves homeschoolers to be ever alert about what is going on in their state legislatures. It also behooves homeschoolers to rally as much support from their fellow citizens as possible, since many local school superintendents think they have a right to impose their own regulations on the homeschoolers in their communities, despite state laws to the contrary. Every community has its own would-be dictators.

There are many things that homeschoolers can do to gain the support of their neighbors. First, they should inform their fellow citizens that homeschooling costs them nothing. In fact, it saves the taxpayers the cost of educating homeschooled children in the public schools. This is no small matter considering how much money home owners pay in real estate taxes just to pay for the public schools in their communities. And, as we all know, educators are always clamoring for more money.

Here are some ideas on how to promote homeschooling. 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 day so that you can answer questions that people may ask. Most libraries have a meeting or conference room in which a talk or a power-point presentation can be given. Be sure to have an adequate supply of leaflets and free literature to distribute. A good time to have this exhibit would be a few weeks before the local or state homeschool convention takes place, so that you could encourage potential homeschoolers to attend the convention and see for themselves all of the materials available and hear some of the talks given by inspirational speakers.



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2. Just as important as reaching the public is, so is reaching your lawmakers. So visit the State legislators and present them with homemade cherry pies. The cherry pie will remind everyone of George Washington and the famous incident with the cherry tree. Home-baked cookies or sweet buns might do just as well as the pie, especially if you want to hand out as many items as possible without breaking the bank. Also give them some literature explaining the benefits of homeschooling to the children, the family, and the community. These lawmakers should be reminded that parental rights and educational freedom are important values in a free society.

Also, visiting the legislature is a good lesson in government for your children. Make it an important event and let the local media know about it well in advance so that TV cameras will be there for the six o'clock news. That's when your neighbors will be able to see how well your children behave when giving lawmakers cookies or pies.

3. Get to know people in the local media — the local newspaper, radio talk show, and TV station's news department. Most people in the media are sympathetic to homeschoolers who manage to win spelling and geography bees. So treat them as potential friends. Tell them of the homeschool convention coming up or actually give them a write-up of an event that is newsworthy.

4. Develop good debating skills. You will inevitably encounter people who oppose home education for any number of reasons, and you ought to be able to counter their negative views with positive arguments of your own. Well-meaning people who are simply ignorant of the great benefits of homeschooling may be open enough to have their views questioned and changed. But you will also find those who are part of the education establishment and are so committed to a statist philosophy of government that no amount of eloquence on your part will be able to budge them. But what you can learn from them is how better to hone your own arguments with those who will listen.

5. If the weather is nice you can invite local dignitaries, ministers, school-board members, and public school teachers to a homeschooling cookout and open house. Have homeschooling parents explain the benefits of home education and have the children recite their own poetry or give readings. The purpose of such an event is to win friends and influence people.

6. Organize a homeschool crafts fair at your church or community center. You might combine it with a yard sale to attract the public and talk with them about homeschooling their own children. You should not be afraid of proselytizing others to become homeschoolers, for you are persuading them to adopt a great new, wholesome, family lifestyle.

7. Have your homeschooled children visit the elderly, in their homes or at senior centers or in a retirement or nursing home, and present them with cookies. Senior citizens appreciate visits from the younger generation. Make sure that some of your cookies are sugar-free for those seniors who are diabetic. You might arrange for your youngsters to volunteer helping the elderly once a week or once a month. These senior citizens often have interesting life stories to tell. The best way to learn about the past is to get to know those who lived in it. War veterans have lots of stories to tell.

I'm sure you can think of other things to do to promote homeschooling and the concept of educational freedom. It is in your interest to make sure that the public has a positive view of the homeschool movement, even though they may be sending their own children to the public schools.

Build up your own library of good homeschool books, which you may want to lend out to your friends and neighbors. Our country is on the brink of changing from a constitutional republic to a socialist democracy. But socialism and homeschooling are incompatible, for under socialism the state becomes



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the educator of everyone. So, homeschoolers must also get involved in politics, for the future of their freedom depends on who the public votes for. Despotism is often elected democratically by a public unaware of the consequences of their votes. But when they eventually find out, it may be too late to avoid the disaster ahead.

But homeschoolers have the sad duty to be the canary in the coal mine, sensitive enough to threats against freedom, so that they can warn their friends and neighbors about the dangers of ever growing despotic government.



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