



Another Blow to Homeschooling

The decision came about as a result of Botswana's accession to the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child. Even though the judge found that the home-schooled children were properly cared for and well-educated, the UNCRC nonetheless determined that the "best interests of the child" involve state authority in the upbringing and education of children.



In the United States, Mike Donnelly of the Home School Legal Defense Association reacted to the judge's decision: "HSLDA has warned about the danger of the UNCRC to homeschooling families. It gives almost unlimited powers to judges to decide how children should be raised. We are asking our 85,000 member families to contact the Botswana Embassy and Office of the President of Botswana to protect these families' basic rights to decide what is best for these children."

Leendert Van Oostrum, Director of The Pestalozzi Trust, a South Africa-based homeschooling legal defense organization, will be representing the families. He asserts, "We find the behavior of the Botswana police and courts outrageous and hope that more responsible leadership will be applied to remedy this situation without undue trauma to these children."

According to the Christian News Wire, the families in Botswana will continue to homeschool their children. The Modimoothata family father explained his resolve to violate the judge's decision: "I must obey God. The schools here are corrupt and teach my children things that go against our faith and our values. I cannot allow them to go to these schools."

Similar reasons are cited by American homeschooling parents when explaining their decision to homeschool. According to writer Gavin Cruise, "Thirty-one percent of homeschool parents say they're concerned about the environment at public schools. Further 16.5 percent say they have been dissatisfied with the schools' academic instruction. Twenty-eight percent said they would like to include some religious instruction — forbidden, of course, in public schools. Eight percent gave 'other' reasons."

While Botswana is 10,000 miles from the United States, American homeschooling parents have cause for concern as well. Homeschooling has come under attack in the United States in recent years. In 2008, the Concerned Women for America [noted](#) the vilifying of homeschooling parents from the courts, child welfare agencies, and legislatures, particularly in [California](#), [Nebraska](#), and [Washington, D.C.](#)

Likewise, the United States is slowly becoming more beholden to the United Nations. In 2009, President Obama revived discussions of gun control [imposed by the United Nations](#) through an international



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treaty. Recently, the United States joined the United Nations Human Rights Council, an organization that requires its members to submit a report detailing its human rights violations and the measures the government is taking to combat said violations. Membership in this council forces the United States to be judged for human rights violations by nations like China and Libya.

How beholden has the United States been to UN decisions? Let us not forget that the United States has even gone to war (e.g. Iraq) to uphold UN Security Council resolutions, and much of the world today views the UN as possessing the authority to decide such matters as Iran's nuclear program, with all countries including the United States expected to follow its dictates. If the United States continues to allow the United Nations to govern its decisions, American homeschooling parents might be the next to be forced to succumb to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Homeschooling continues to be a growing phenomenon in the United States. A 1997 study "Home Schoolers Across America" showed that homeschoolers performed higher than public school students by 30 to 40 percent on all subjects, rivaling the American public education system. Yet, with the United Nations increasingly gaining influence, the fate of homeschooling in America does not appear to be guaranteed.



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