



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on June 20, 2026

Brazilian Parents Sentenced to Jail for Homeschooling

A Brazilian couple was sentenced to 50 days behind bars for the “crime” of homeschooling their children — despite the fact that even the prosecutor in the case eventually requested their acquittal.

Audato and Ieda Denardi became “the first parents to be criminally convicted for homeschooling their children” in Brazil when a São Paulo judge sentenced them in April, according to a [press release](#) from ADF International, which is providing legal support for their appeal.



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Diversity Dearth?

The Denardis began homeschooling their daughters in 2020, when Covid-era remote learning allowed them to witness the pitfalls of the public education system firsthand. “Since they started homeschooling,” wrote ADF International, “they have seen significant improvement in their daughters’ academic performance and have also enjoyed being able to incorporate their faith and personal values into their learning.”

This, of course, is anathema to the Left, which demands total state control of education so that children can be indoctrinated in “progressive” dogma.

The judge made this quite explicit in his decision, in which he accused the Denardis of

using their daughters as pawns in an ideological struggle, subjecting them to a form of unregulated education, the effectiveness and quality of which lack adequate metrics within the Brazilian legal system, while completely excluding the State’s involvement.

Specifically, he fretted that their homeschool curriculum did not teach “gender and sex education” (i.e., LGBT propaganda) and “tolerance and diversity.”

The judge’s idea of “diversity,” however, would seem to be at odds with reality. According to ADF International:

The court also concluded that because the girls, aged 15 and 11, did not like “trap” or “sertanejo” (folk) music, their home curriculum had also failed to properly educate them in cultural diversity, despite the fact that they are both accomplished pianists and speak multiple languages.

As [The Washington Stand](#) put it, the girls “had a sort of cultural education — just not the low-brow type the judge expected.”



Jurist Imprudence

To his credit, the prosecutor, after examining witnesses and seeing the results of the Denardis' homeschooling, had the integrity to recommend acquittal on the grounds that the parents had not neglected their daughters.

Julio Pohl, ADF International legal counsel for Latin America, recalled:

The prosecutor examined the witnesses and recommended for acquittal. An independent educational psychologist found no sign of neglect. The girls themselves described rigorous daily education. The judge convicted anyway — because a fifteen-year-old said she finds some music lyrics morally questionable, and because the curriculum didn't include state-approved content on gender.

A parent has been sentenced to prison not for failing to educate her children, but for educating them according to her own values. This is a grotesque abuse of the criminal law, and we will not let it stand.

The Denardis are not the first Brazilian parents to be punished for homeschooling their children. Last year, a court fined [Regiane Cichelero](#) over \$20,000 for homeschooling her son. (ADF International is also supporting her appeal.) But the Denardis are the first to be branded criminals and sentenced to prison for daring to educate their children as they see fit.

One thing the judge in the Denardis' case got right is that homeschooling in Brazil is, in ADF International's words, "in legal limbo." While the Brazilian Supreme Court ruled in 2019 that homeschooling is constitutionally permitted, it also said there needed to be a federal law to regulate it. Thus far, lawmakers have failed to pass one, forcing homeschooling parents to rely on international law to defend themselves from the state's constant attacks. However, reported ADF International, "the Denardis' case has drawn congressional attention, with lawmakers recently holding hearings at which the parents urged Congress to act in favor of homeschooling."

State of Ignorance

Why do governments, including [those](#) in the supposed Land of the Free, work so hard to stamp out homeschooling? The Washington Stand mused:

Progressives love to claim that they are merely seeking the best interest of children and are trying to secure them against cases of parental abuse. There are cases of abuse disguised as "homeschooling," but these are both obvious and rare.

In a [2025 survey](#) of adults aged 25-39, students who were educated at home for at least eight years reported the lowest levels of depression and anxiety, were the least likely to say they "feel helpless dealing with life's problems," and "exhibited the highest levels of optimism, gratitude, and life satisfaction." Long-term homeschoolers were 50% more likely than their counterparts to be married and half as likely to be divorced, and their average number of children was one-third higher.

When government officials pompously try to stamp out homeschooling, this is the type of social success they are trying to sabotage. What game are they playing? Are they trying to



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cover up the failures of their precious public school systems? Or simply trying to drag homeschoolers into their race to the bottom — to create a society of shallow thinkers who are easily led?

The Denardis are appealing their case to the state's highest court. Their sentence has been suspended pending the appeal.

Said Ieda Denardi:

As a mother, I cannot conceive a more dictatorial state than the one that wants me in jail because I chose to exercise my right to direct the education and upbringing of my daughters. My husband and I are hopeful the court will recognize our right to choose the best education for our children and overturn this unjust conviction.



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