

HOMEschooling in Maine

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HOMEschooling in Maine

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In This Issue



HOME: Our Story	4
HOME’s Vision for the Future	5
HOME’s Regional Representatives	6
Schedule of Events 2020-2021	7
Short Story Contest	9
5 Ways to Lose Your Homeschool Freedom	14
Good to Great: Seven Elements of a Great Day	16
Contagious Homeschooling	18
Complying With Maine’s Homeschool Statute	20
10 Steps to Start Homeschooling With Confidence	21
How About the DOE Forms? What You Need to Know	22
In a Nutshell: A Summary of Maine’s Homeschool Law	23

HOME: Our Story

HOME—Serving Maine homeschoolers since 1990

Homeschoolers of Maine (HOME) is a statewide 501(c)3 non-profit, ministry-based organization, and was founded on the belief that all families have a God-given and constitutional right and responsibility to direct the education of their children, regardless of their educational philosophy or religious affiliation.

Our Mission

HOME is Families Helping Families to Homeschool with Confidence!

Our mission is to:

- Preserve** parent-led home education
- Protect** homeschool freedoms, and
- Promote** safe and healthy learning environments.

Throughout the years, HOME has successfully worked to accomplish that mission by working with the Department of Education, legislators and by providing up-to-date information and support to homeschooling families, individuals, the media, and other state and local officials.

Our Services

Our Services Are Open to All

- Annual events provide all homeschoolers with access to information, education and resources, as well as encouragement and support.
- Field trip opportunities and special activities bring homeschoolers together throughout the year.
- HOME's website, various publications, email updates and Facebook keep communications and information flowing. (Fill out a request form to receive HOME Email Updates, which include the latest homeschool happenings in Maine and the nation.)
- HOME provides annual assessments. Our experienced evaluation team is homeschool friendly and ready to help you succeed!
- Helpful tools and resources are available in our online store.
- At the HOME Office, outreach volunteers enjoy meeting with new homeschoolers to discuss getting started, recommend curricula, or just provide support.
- Our Legislative Efforts
- We Work to Protect Homeschool Interests

Over the years, HOME has remained vigilant and protective of our homeschool freedoms. News, trends, statistics and legislation related to homeschooling are all carefully monitored throughout the year. Any possible impact or threat is researched, evaluated and discussed. Our communication team works to keep the information flowing, so that families can make decisions on issues that might impact their ability to educate their children at home.

Our Support Team

Volunteers Provide Blessing

Before founding HOME's ministry, Ed and Kathy Green had been homeschooling their four daughters, as well as providing support and guidance to other homeschoolers throughout the state for many years. With that experience in homeschool leadership, they felt the time was right for Maine to have a statewide organization with a Godly foundation and heart for service to all homeschoolers. These are the same principles that guide the numerous volunteers and leaders that are a part of HOME's ministry today. Their ongoing work is making a difference in the lives of hundreds of children and families throughout Maine.

Leaders Provide Direction

HOME's Board of Directors steers the organization and helps with some of the many tasks of running a busy non-profit, including planning for and working during various events. HOME Regional Representatives help to meet the needs of the ever growing number of new homeschoolers in our state. Other dedicated HOME leaders and teams help serve and minister to Maine homeschoolers throughout the year. Additionally, various professionals and community members form HOME's Advisory Board, and offer important insights, ideas and strategies to the organization.

Partners Give Counsel

HOME partners with others to provide more effective service to the homeschool community, too. HOME works closely with Home School Legal Defense Association when confronted with legal and legislative issues. Members of the HOME Board receive valuable leadership training and support from national leadership conventions held by HSLDA, as well. HOME also relies upon NHERI and Dr. Brian Ray for homeschooling research and statistics that are used to inform Maine homeschoolers, the media and, most importantly, the legislature during legislative concerns.

The work of HOME could never be accomplished without the help of the hardworking and dedicated families and individuals that are such an integral part of the ministry!

Our Funding

Supporters Keep HOME Going

HOME is funded by donations, supporters and various fundraising events. The generosity of individuals and homeschooling families keeps the ministry of HOME alive!

Please join us in our mission to serve others within the homeschool community. Your financial support will bring many benefits and blessings to your own family, as well as the many families that we serve!





HOME's Vision for the Future

What lies ahead for our Maine homeschool community?

Growth!

Currently, homeschooling numbers are surging as more and more parents realize the benefit of personalizing and directing their child's education. With more than 30 years of experience, HOME continues to be fully equipped to meet the challenge!

Freedom!

Parents know what's best for their children. As they have in the past, today's homeschoolers will continue to stand together with HOME to protect the right of parents to do what they know is best without government overreach.

Support!

Homeschooling families now enjoy quality and reliable help and support from HOME, as well as the wider homeschool marketplace, whenever and wherever they need it. Private homeschool enterprise is flourishing and brings choices, whereas government funding promises control and limitations.

Success!

HOME offers a plethora of tools, resources, expert guidance, and a continuous flow of trustworthy information, so that all dedicated homeschool families can thrive and prosper.

Security!

Though we will always face challenges, HOME's constant vigilance allows homeschool families to journey as safely and securely as possible.

Leadership!

HOME continues to build and train a strong, dedicated and responsive leadership team representing all areas of our state.

Hope for the Future!

All homeschoolers must do their part to bring hope to the future of homeschooling in Maine. Join us to support HOME's Vision for the Future. Help us to keep the doors of HOME open wide, and able to serve and welcome many more families into the safe refuge that homeschooling provides.

Visit our website to make a financial contribution to support the vision of HOME!

Thank you for your support!
HOME Board of Directors

HOME's Regional Representatives

HOME Regional Representatives are veteran homeschoolers who bring the ministry of HOME closer to homeschooling families in every area of the state.

Regional Reps provide a HOME presence within their region that is informative and encouraging. They are often the first friendly voice for a new homeschooling family.

Region 1: Aroostook & Penobscot Counties

Regional Reps. - Elery & Grace Grant (207) 538-6881 - Island Falls, ME
glgrant926@gmail.com

Region 2: Hancock & Washington Counties

Regional Reps. - Tim & Brandi Schunk (512) 924-7620 - Sullivan, ME
bouncybrandi@gmail.com

Region 3: Knox, Lincoln & Waldo Counties

Regional Reps. - Jacob & Trish Hutchins (207) 338-9299 - Swanville, ME
trishjhutchins@gmail.com

Region 4: Kennebec, Androscoggin & Sagadahoc Counties

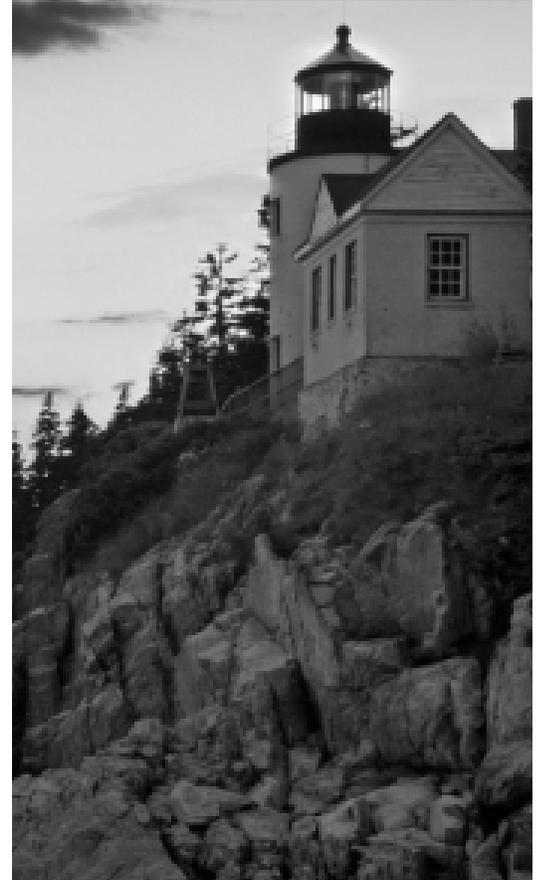
Regional Reps. - Robert & Amy Decker (207) 737-8885 - Bowdoinham, ME
stampinamy@myfairpoint.net

Region 5: Piscataquis, Somerset & Franklin Counties

Regional Reps. - Gilbert & Kimberly Miller (207) 779-0314 - Wilton, ME
kcbmiller@gmail.com

Region 6: Oxford, Cumberland & York Counties

Regional Reps. - Daryl & Michelle Collomy (207) 423-6783 - Hiram, ME
room4more29@gmail.com



Support HOME With a Portfolio Evaluation

Visit the HOME Website for More Information!

Maine law requires homeschoolers who have filed letters of intent to homeschool to submit the results of assessments, annually, to both the local superintendent's office and the Maine Department of Education in Augusta at the end of each school year, no later than September 1.

Throughout the summer months, Homeschoolers of Maine (HOME) provides a convenient method for annual assessment, which fulfills the requirements of our homeschool statute. Portfolio reviews through HOME are easy, inexpensive, and require a minimal amount of preparation for the homeschooling parent. By participating in a portfolio review through HOME, you will also be supporting your state homeschool organization!

To learn more about the portfolio review process and how to prepare a portfolio for review, visit the HOME website at <https://www.homeschoolersofmaine.org/events/home-portfolio-evaluations/>.

Homeschoolers of Maine's Schedule of Events 2020-2021

New & veteran homeschoolers alike...

Stay informed and encouraged through HOME sponsored workshops, field trips, annual events, book sales and more!

HOME's Upcoming Events:

Start Strong Maine	Ongoing Online
Start Homeschooling With Confidence Workshops	Ongoing Online
Homeschool Record Keeping	Ongoing Online
Choosing Curriculum	Ongoing Online
Homeschooling High School 101	Ongoing Online
Keep Calm & Homeschool On Conference	Online Through Dec. 2020
HOME Inventory Clearance Sale	January 15-18, 2021
Maine Home Education Week	Spring, 2021
30th Annual HOME Convention	March 18-20, 2021
HOME Graduation Ceremony	Spring, 2021
New England Heritage Days	October, 2021

Please visit the HOME website for all details and information regarding the upcoming events listed above at www.homeschoolersofmaine.org.
More events will be added throughout the year! Check our website for the latest.

Start Strong
MAINE
Homeschool University



<https://www.homeschoolersofmaine.org/you-can-homeschool/getting-started/homeschool-university/>

You're Invited to Participate in Homeschoolers of Maine's 2021

SHORT STORY CONTEST!

Our short story contest kicks off each year at the HOME Annual Convention in March. The contest is open to homeschooled students between the ages of 6 and 18.

2021 Theme: "A Light in Darkness"

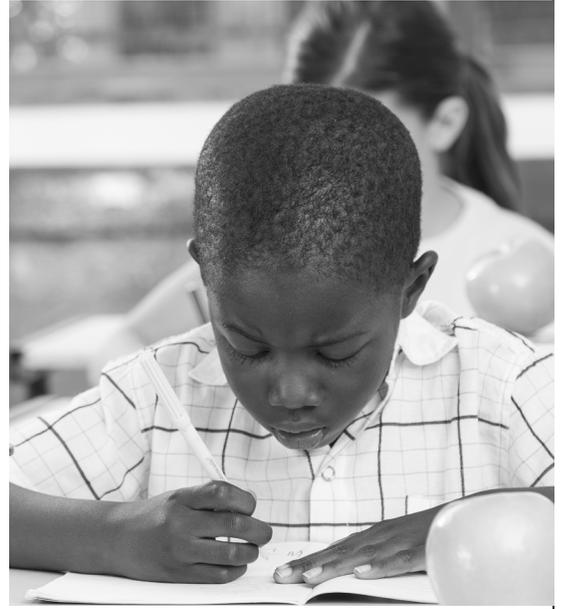
To qualify, each student's entry must be submitted in a Word document and emailed to kcbmiller@gmail.com. This email must include the student's name, age, home address, and parent's name. The email subject line should read: HOME Short Story Contest 2021. There is a 3,000 word limit.

Entries must be received on or before July 1.

\$25 Amazon Gift Cards will be awarded in each of three age categories: ages 6 to 9, ages 10 to 13, and ages 14 to 18.

Winning entries will be featured in the fall issue of the *HOMESchooling in Maine* magazine.

To find out more, visit the HOME website at:
www.homeschoolersofmaine.org



Shop our online store!

The HOME Bookshelf



<https://the-home-bookshelf-2020.weeblysite.com/>

HOME's Short Story Contest Winning Entries

In this section, you will find the winning entries in our seventh Annual Short Story Contest. We enjoyed reading each entry we received and were impressed with the talented young writers. We are pleased to share these wonderful winning entries with you. Congratulations to these young authors!

Alice in Trouble

by Alyssa Van Leeuwen, age 8

Long ago a good king ruled the land of Elentar Castle. His wife, the Queen of Elentar Castle, had one child. This child was named Alice. Alice was beautiful, for she was born that way. When she was about eight, her mother died. She was very sad, so she went to her father, who when he saw her was glad to see her.

"What brings you here?" he asked.

"I want to ask you something." She responded.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Will I have another mother?"

He shrugged. "I don't know. That takes a lot of time. But I'll go on a journey to find you a mother; a new queen."

"Thank you, father!"

The next day he went on the journey to find a mother for his daughter.

* * *

Ten years later, she got the news of her father's death. By now she had learned enough of being a Queen that she had to be crowned. When the time came, her friends and a bunch of other kingdoms came to the ceremony. At the end her friends congratulated her on her coronation. A few days later, Queen Alice looked out her window and saw a carriage. Out of it came a wonderful little girl. Then came a woman who looked like the girl's mother. When Queen Alice went down her staircase the women looked at her.

"You must be the princess." She said

"Um... no, I'm the Queen." said Alice.

"I see." said the woman, staring down the end of her nose at Alice. "But you must promise me your place as Queen."

Alice was taken aback. "But I... I don't want to; the castle is mine and I only just became the Queen!"

"What? That's ridiculous."

"I don't see why it is." Alice said irritably.

"Well you must and have my own daughter as your sister."

"Get out and that's an order!" The woman laughed maniacally. "You were never taught. Whose fault was it?"

"There is no fault. You hate those who are Queens and you want to take over."

"Ha! That is the silliest thing you've ever said, servant." She turned to the court, who had gathered where they stood. "I have an announcement: this... this 'Queen' shall be put to the test. If she wins, she will be Queen. If she loses, I

will be Queen."

The test was long and hard, and involved a great deal of question-answering. However, Alice knew she would win because the other woman answered almost all the questions wrong. After the test, the herald took out a scroll.

He cleared his throat. "I here by declare," he began, "That the lady..." he stopped and read again. "Lady... Alice will be Queen."

The other maids put into work by the chief maid said, "We would like your report!" So the chief maid gave them her report. After they read it they went to Alice.

"Come with us!" they said.

When they got to a very friendly room, (it was a place where the servants gathered) the maids said, "What is the report? We would know the report if you showed it to us." So the chief maid did. The maids led Alice to another room with men lined up. "You may choose a man for a husband." So she did: the most handsome man of them all.

The day of the wedding, the chief maid said, "Take her to the dressing room. This will be the dress." Alice took the dress and put it on.

"Come with me," the maid said, "this is the only secret room."

So when music started she was led to the room, and when the music stopped she stopped. The bishop in front of her spoke a foreign language. "Lkdfjerhfhrtierhewweh-hfruirejerfj ifrehtqt itqjp;iteriieqpr oitqjoirjgio pesl;dk-fjsgnfdvhihepigf ioe uioreuteoriv." (Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the sight of God to join this man and this woman in holy matrimony. If anyone has just cause why these two may not be united in holy matrimony, please speak now or forever hold your peace.) "m irut noi iorb-niterwop iotuwepou n it ew;p lsdj;fs?" (Do you, Lloyd, take this woman as your truthfully wedded wife, for as long as you both shall live until death you do part?" he knew the language.

"Lskdfj;a." (I do) said the man beside her.

"lskjhfwethfhwuithfdjdihjlkhutihidfgdhfj kjsdahfuweah-guigfww djsfuagtilauyrweu?" (Do you, Queen Alice, take Lloyd to be your truthfully wedded husband, for as long as you both shall live, until death do you part?)

"Lskdfj;a." (I do) She said, beaming. When it was over she and her new husband went to their room.

The End

The Freedom of Every Man

by Gavin Short, age 10

“Ouch” I cried, as the whip thrust into my back. My master often whips me multiple times a day. I wish I could just be free. I don’t even know what I did. All that I know is he must like whipping me because he does it for no reason. My name is Ben Smith. I was born into slavery. My Ma and Pa were slaves as well as their parents and their grandparents. We were captured in Africa and brought here on a ship. Not me but my ancestors. I am promising myself right now that I will escape north to freedom one day and make a living on my own and get paid for my work. I must go help my sister prepare for dinner now. We are having stew.

Dinner was good except for the fact that me and my sister are being sold day after tomorrow. I was talking to my sister privately and me and her are planning to escape north. We hear about this slave who is named Moses that is coming tomorrow to help more slaves escape north. In Virginia there has been thirty slaves missing so far this year alone because of Moses. He is willing to take anyone who is brave enough to take the journey north. Me and my sister agree that we are. By the way my sister’s name is Charlotte Smith. Tomorrow night when everyone is asleep, we are going to sneak out and find Moses. This is risky though because there are huge money rewards for Moses dead or alive. We think it will be better than being sold south and plus he hasn’t lost a slave yet, rumor has it.

I’m anxious, tonight we are escaping north. My sister and I are going to meet behind the big spruce tree so no one will see us. We would go there together but we don’t live in the same house. She married a free man, so she lives with him and his family in a different house in the slave quarters. The second reason being the less people the more likely we won’t get caught. Just five more hours of work and then I’m going to escape north.

It’s time, everyone is asleep. I was put on duty to put the saddles on the horses. I just lightly set the saddles on top of the horses and didn’t strap them on. In case we are caught the saddles will fall off the horse and they will have to stop to saddle the horses. I am behind the spruce tree now. Moses met us there with three other slaves. One boy is my age named Robert. I hope me and him are good friends. Charlotte just arrived; we are ready to go. We need to be well out of Williamsburg by dawn.

We’ve been traveling all night. Harriet (we found out the “Moses” that is “Leading the Way” to freedom is actually named Harriet and he is a she) says that we’re almost to the first stop in the underground railroad. Just five more miles. She also says that she can’t wait to see her friend. Whatever that means. The woman’s name is Mary that we are staying with tonight. Harriet says that all the children have to go to bed. Since I am older, seventeen that is, I can stay up a little bit with the adults. That makes me very happy.

I had a very good night’s sleep. We will leave in fifteen minutes, at six o’clock. We have a fifteen-mile trip ahead of us to the next stop in the underground railroad. We have faith in Harriet though. She will “Lead the Way.” We left an hour ago and about half an hour ago Harriet fell into one of

her sleeping spells. Thankfully she told us to hide in the bushes or behind a near-by tree if this happened. We dragged Harriet into some near-by bushes, and we hid in some other near-by bushes. There have been two slave catchers that have gotten close to finding us. It is very dark, and the moon isn’t bright tonight, thankfully, so they haven’t found us.

Harriet just woke up. She says that we have to make up for lost time. Unfortunately we didn’t make it to the next person’s house, so we are sleeping in the bushes tonight. We will wake-up at three p.m. and start the trek to the next Quaker’s or abolitionist’s house. We are trying to do one and a half nights journey in one night. It will be risky, but Harriet knows all the hiding places between here and Pennsylvania. She has a great memory. She does a great job at “Leading the Way” to freedom.

We just stopped at the next house, we finally made it. The word got out that we escaped though. There are bounty hunters out there with blood hounds trying to find us. We are in Delaware now. We have traveled two hundred fifty miles since we left home. Roughly one hundred fifty miles to go, Harriet says. We are leaving now. We picked up two other slaves. They were hiding in the house that we were staying at. They’re pretty nice.

We have been traveling all night but there are bounty hunters in the area. So we are going to hide until morning. One of the hunters is from the plantation Harriet used to live on. She says that she used to live on Mr. Thompson’s plantation. We lived on a plantation ten miles north-east of that. We’re almost in Pennsylvania now.

Harriet says we have to hide in bushes and wherever else we can find, instead of going to people’s houses. We will only stop at one of Harriet’s good friends house. We will stop in these bushes right along the side of the road and eat our meal before going to sleep. “Wake Up, Wake Up”! Harriet woke us up because bounty hunters were near us. She said be very still and quiet. Phew! We weren’t caught. These past five minutes have seemed like hours. I hope that doesn’t happen again. If it does, we will know what to do though. I can’t wait to be free, earn my own wages, and not always worrying about when I’m going to be sold.

One more week and then freedom. Harriet says it will be hard because they have slave catchers all throughout the border so it will be less likely for slaves to cross without being caught. We are sheltered in Thomas Garret’s home right now. He is very nice. He can’t take us across the line because people are suspicious of him helping runaway slaves.

At last we are free! It wasn’t easy crossing the line because we had two instances when we were almost caught but the important thing is that we made it to freedom. Abigail took the trip to freedom with us and I asked her to marry me. She said yes! We are going to be married this fall as soon as I finish building the house. I will get a job and make my own money.

* * *

The wedding was so good. We had a nice ceremony outside with all the friends we have made here. It was so beautiful with the leaves of all different colors. We hired a preacher and had a cake with a nice turkey dinner. I had never tasted anything like it! All I know is that it is a lot better than the food that we ate at the plantation.

It feels so good to free! I have made a hundred dollars the past two years and we are having a baby! We have two names picked out already. If it is a boy, we will name him Ben. If it is a girl, we will name her Harriet.

It was a girl! Harriet got here just in time to meet our baby named after her. We told her the news. Harriet loves the baby. Whenever we need to go somewhere, we ask Harriet to baby sit, and she is more than happy to. Harriet told us tonight that she was going back south to lead more slaves to freedom. We will miss her. She will be in our prayers. We told her to stay safe, but we know she will.

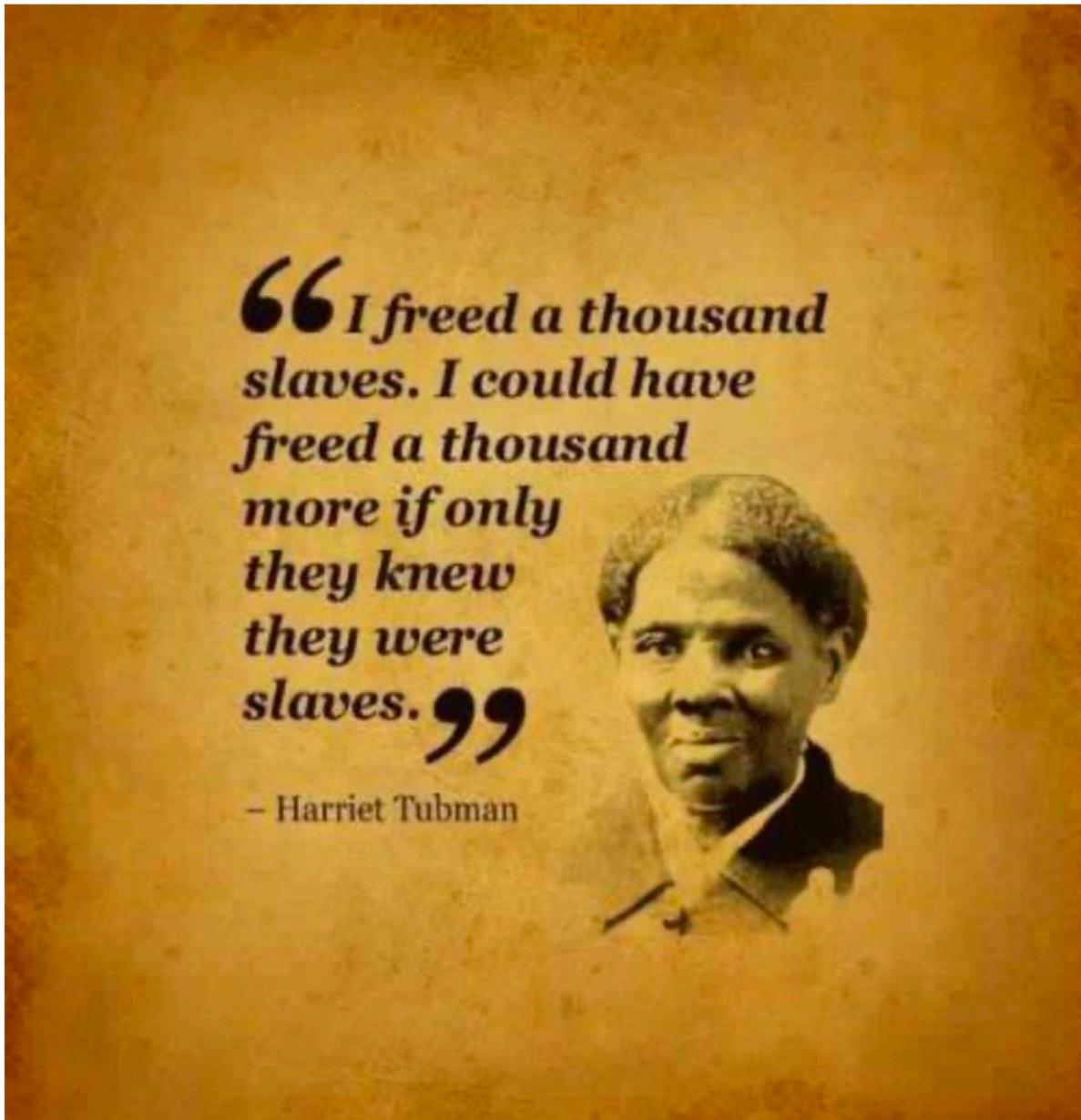
The Fugitive Slave Law was passed now so we aren't safe because our owner can come up here and capture us. Now we have to flee north to the Canadian border. The

Queen of England abandoned slavery in all British Empires so we will be free in Canada because it is a British Empire. Harriet is going to lead us to Canada. We are so glad that she got back just in time, days before the law was passed.

We made it to Canada now! We have to fear nothing. I am so glad that we are free once again. I believe in the freedom of every man. It is not right to own another man like you own your livestock or possessions. The freedom of every man should be a right in this nation. Slavery should be outlawed!

We are so thankful for Harriet Tubman. Without her we wouldn't be here today as free people. She went on to free three hundred slaves, me being one of them. In her lifetime she went south nineteen times to risk her life for other slaves. She is a very brave and courageous woman. We consider Harriet Tubman part of our family and are proud to do so!

The End



Lost in the Woods

by Anneke Van Leeuwen, age 14

Karrie hoisted her backpack higher on her shoulders as she and her friends climbed a steep hill through the forest. Sweat coated her face and soaked her hair, but she was enjoying every moment of it.

"Maybe we could look for a clearing and paint that." Suggested Jo, looking back at Karrie.

"Oh, please no!" begged Dianne. "I can't paint grass to save my life. Can we look for somewhere with water?"

Jo shrugged. "I don't really care what we paint. I'm just tired of walking!"

The girls were on an expedition for their art class. They were supposed to paint something outdoors that looked peaceful, and it couldn't be a human or animal. Their first thought was obviously a scene in the forest. Their local hiking park provided the perfect place to search.

Sometimes, Karrie would come here alone to think about God. The park seemed to be empty of people in all the right places at all the right times, and the quiet made it a good place to think. She often came here to pray about things that were bothering her, so she wouldn't get distracted by the hustle and bustle of things at her house.

The tall trees swayed in the wind, and the leaves rustled in a musical way. Birds chirped up among the branches, squirrels ran across the ground and up the trees, and water gurgled in little streams under small wooden bridges. She loved the sound of the forest, and sometimes she would see a deer. She had practiced drawing deer a lot, and her whole family said she had gotten good at it.

They reached a place where a river came right up by the path. "This is the spot!" Jo announced, taking off her backpack.

They all took out their acrylic paints and paper and began painting.

"Oh, the water is so beautiful!" Dianne sighed, layering her paper with a blue-green color. "I wonder if there are any fish in it?"

Karrie shrugged. "Who knows? Maybe you should paint some fish into it, just for fun." Then she remembered they weren't supposed to paint animals, and said, "Never mind."

In her own painting, she hoped she would succeed at making her leaves look good. She couldn't do good leaves to save her life. Jo, however, was an expert at painting leaves. She said drawing them with a pencil was a pain, but Karrie knew she could paint them beautifully. Jo had already put the trunks of the trees into her scene, and was wistfully adding lichen.

Jo had told Karrie when they first became friends that she was a Christian. Karrie knew she wouldn't've had the courage to say she was too if Jo hadn't told her first, a fact which she regretted. Jo had been the one to tell Dianne that she and Karrie were Christians, and even though Dianne wasn't one herself, she hadn't had any major opposition to the announcement.

Karrie wished Dianne was a Christian, especially since she was raised in a Christian family. However, Dianne

said she didn't like all the things she was hearing and that it was too confusing. Dianne's salvation was one of the things Karrie liked to pray for when she came here alone.

"Ugh!" Dianne cried in frustration. "At first, I thought I wanted to paint just the river, but you two are both doing the opposite shore, too. Now I can't make up my mind whether or not I want to do the same!"

Jo grinned. "You don't have to do the same thing as us if you don't want to. I think your painting looks great so far."

Dianne nodded, though she still looked a little annoyed with herself. "Thanks," she said. "Do you think I should add weeds at the bottom just to make it more interesting?"

"Dianne," Jo said, "You don't have to ask us. It's your painting! Paint anything you want to."

Dianne smiled and set to work again. Karrie could see small waves starting to form on her page, and she smiled when she saw that her friend was adding weeds, which seemed to sway under the water gracefully.

She turned back to her own painting. The trees were finally starting to look less like lines she'd just randomly stuck on her paper, though she was saving the leaves for last just so she didn't have to worry about running out of time with everything else.

The girls painted for hours, talking about various things that had happened to them recently. Time flew, and before long, the sun started to set.

"We should probably get home," Jo began packing up her paints and carefully picked up her painting. "I wish we had time to let these dry!" she grumbled, holding the painting somewhat far away from her.

Dianne, however, had finished her painting quite a while ago and it was plenty dry. "Oh, don't worry about it. In my experience, acrylic paint dries quickly." Jo nodded, though she still looked mournful as they headed home.

"So which way did we come?" Dianne asked.

"This way." Karrie pointed down one of the paths.

Dianne looked dubious. "Are you sure? It doesn't look all that familiar."

"I'm positive!" Karrie walked off down the path, feeling happy.

But after a while, she knew something wasn't right – she realized a little later that they were no longer on the path. She tried not to panic as she fumbled in her backpack for the map, though she knew that would be useless in this situation.

But Jo and Dianne realized she was worried. "Is something wrong?" Dianne asked, as she stopped near Karrie.

Karrie shook her head. Having looked at the map and found – as she expected – nothing useful, she put it away. "Nothing," she said, and walked on.

But as the light faded, she realized that they were in real trouble. She couldn't see any lights from the town, which she likely would've seen if they were anywhere near

it, and she couldn't hear any cars on the roads.

Her heart started to thump as she stopped, breathing hard. She gulped as she heard a strange noise somewhere in the forest, even though she'd heard it plenty of times at home and knew that it was nothing but a barred owl.

"Karrie, you don't know where we're going, do you?" Jo had hit the nail on the head. Karrie shook her head, wondering what she should do next.

Dianne heard what Jo said and started yelling frantically. "Oh, no... we can't possibly be lost! It's nighttime... what if we don't get home? My mom's probably freaking out right now, wondering where I am!"

"Don't worry," Karrie said, though she was worried. She was worried that she had led them so far into the woods that they couldn't find their way safely out. She was worried that some wild animal might come and attack them. She was worried that they'd be stranded here until morning.

Then she remembered that they weren't alone.

Dear God, she prayed, closing her eyes and bowing her head. Please help us to get out of the forest, or send someone to find us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

"Let's just stay here and wait for a moment." She said, turning to Dianne and Jo. They nodded, though they looked just as fearful as she felt.

Do not be afraid, she remembered. The owl hooted again, and she found herself repeating the words over and over in her head. Do not be afraid.

Then suddenly, she wasn't; God was with them. She

didn't need to worry about how they'd get home, or that something would attack them. They were perfectly safe in God's hands.

She felt peace settle over her as they stood silently in the forest, waiting for something to happen.

Her parents would likely have called the police by now, so they would hopefully be found soon. If they weren't, they would just wait here, safe in God's hands.

Suddenly, Dianne started shrieking loudly. "We're over here!" she called. "We're here; we're alright!"

Karrie looked up and noticed that there were flashlights shining through the trees somewhere near them. The girls stood up and started running toward them.

"We're here!" Dianne was still shouting as they bolted toward the lights. "We're alright! We just got a little lost!"

Karrie felt immense relief flood through her as she saw her parents hurrying toward them. Her dad scooped her up in a huge hug, and her mother wrapped her arms around both of them.

Karrie knew she might get into a little bit of trouble later, but she was glad to have been found now. She still felt sorry for having led her friends off the path by mistake, but she was glad God had led them back to safety.

Next time, she thought happily, she would leave leading the way to God immediately instead of trying to do it herself.

The End



5 Ways to Lose Your Homeschool Freedom

by Johanna Ireland



As you may know, Maine homeschoolers have enjoyed a much more comfortable homeschool environment since the passage of our homeschool statute in 2003. The law has provided clarity, security and freedom. But will we always have the same level of freedom to homeschool in our state? To paraphrase Benjamin Franklin: You have homeschool freedom, if you can keep it! Keeping or losing homeschool freedom takes intent. Here are 5 ways to lose it.

1. Ignore Elections

Maine's 152 representatives and 35 senators are up for election every two years. Every new and returning candidate has opinions about homeschooling – some based on stereotypes, some based on genuine interactions with homeschoolers. One thing they know for sure is that they want your vote! Families who homeschool are politically active,

and candidates will often look for opportunities to win your vote.

In election years, be sure to speak with candidates and ask them to share their views on homeschooling. Would they defend the level of freedom that we currently have if need be, or would they favor stronger oversight and regulation? Most candidates are eager to answer. Their opinions on these matters will clearly influence any legislation they oppose or support. One sure way to lose your homeschool freedom is to ignore the candidates' positions on homeschooling, or even ignore the election all together. Let the Maine voters who participate determine your freedom.

2. Don't Keep Your Legislators' Contact Info Handy

Once elected, legislators want to tinker. They come in to the

marble halls of the statehouse with ideas from their life experience, letters from constituents, or visits from lobbyists for “improvements” to existing laws or even suggesting new ones. Many times lawmakers have not interacted with homeschool families enough to fully understand the ramifications of their attempts to “help” homeschoolers. For example, a bill allowing tax credits to parents who choose to homeschool would end up decreasing freedom due to the accountability and record keeping required for compliance with tax code.

Homeschoolers of Maine tracks bills during each legislative session, and sends email alerts when bills threaten our homeschool freedom.¹ A good way to see your homeschool freedom diminished is to avoid contacting legislators with your concerns when threats arise. Don’t provide them with valuable opportunities to interact with homeschool families. Bills infringing on your parental freedom to home educate will then pass unchallenged.

3. Make Room in Your Budget...for State Funding

In many states, public schools are alarmed at the exodus to private homeschooling. Virtual charter school programs have the self-proclaimed agenda of bringing students back into the public school system under state oversight.² Checking in with teachers, seeking approval for purchases, submitting lesson plans or learning goals, required progress reports, and mandated testing are some of the requirements the state imposes when you use their funding. An effective way to lose your homeschool freedom is to make room in your budget for funding from virtual public schools or programs. You will integrate your students into the public school system, and place yourself under state regulations and scrutiny.

4. Rely on News Media to Tell the Story of Homeschooling

The schizophrenic telling of the story of homeschooling by the news media could give a reader whiplash. They either revere homeschooled families as an exclusive Mensa society, or cast us as villains that would happily have tea with Mommie Dearest. You will see your freedom diminish when you rely on these caricatures to tell the story. Let the story be told by teachers’ unions, chanting demonstrators, and social media rants. Encourage selfies over self-sacrifice, Instagram stories over initiative, and Facebook fame over steadfastness. Don’t mention in your circles of friends and family that homeschooled graduates are among the most well adjusted, self-motivated, gainfully employed citizens they will have the pleasure of meeting.³ Don’t write to newspaper editors or comment on news posts.

Lawmakers read the same news you read every day. They listen to the same voices you hear. You will allow them to base their decisions forming Maine law on exaggerated extremes when you rely on the news media to tell the story of homeschooling.

5. Believe the Myth that Parents Aren’t Qualified to Homeschool

Parents not only have the responsibility, they have the abil-

ity to teach their own children at home. Public education “experts” deliver dire warnings that parents are not qualified to teach. You are surrounded by people who believe that myth. They may be current and former teachers, education policy lobbyists, family members, neighbors, the cashier at Walmart, or the random dog-walking-lady-at-the-park. In some cases, they believe you are not qualified because they are misinformed. In other cases, it is because private homeschooling challenges the assumptions behind the entire education infrastructure. Others choose to belittle parents because their own bottom line suffers when kids aren’t filling seats in a classroom.

You might believe the myth, too. You might sign up for a virtual public school program for “accountability.” You might enroll your high school student in your local brick-and-mortar school so he can get a “real” diploma. You might fret that you aren’t following state curriculum requirements. Maybe you haven’t seen the compelling evidence that parents of average education can successfully educate their children.³ Maybe you still believe that the title “educator” imparts a mystical charm necessary to teach children.⁴ Maybe you don’t trust your instinct that parents have insight into their kids’ needs that professional educators can never replace. When you begin to believe the myth that parents aren’t qualified to homeschool, you erode one of the foundational pillars of homeschool freedom: the presumption that fit parents act in the best interest of their children.⁵

You have homeschool freedom. Are you going to keep it or lose it? It’s up to you!

It is the duty of the patriot to protect his country from its government. --Thomas Paine

Footnotes

1. Sign up for emails from Homeschoolers of Maine at <https://www.homeschoolersofmaine.org/>

2. Bowers, Larry C. ‘Polk County Schools review new virtual learning proposal’. Cleveland Daily Banner. Accessed July 12, 2018.

3. Ray, Dr. Brian. ‘Homeschooling Across America: Academic Achievement and Demographic Characteristics’. Website: www.nheri.org. Accessed July 12, 2018.

4. Klicka, Christopher J. ‘The Myth of Teacher Qualifications’. Website: www.hsllda.org. Accessed July 13, 2018.

5. HSLDA attorneys. ‘U.S. Supreme Court: Parents’ Rights Are Fundamental’. Website: www.hsllda.org. Accessed July 12, 2018.

Johanna Ireland and her husband Wes started homeschooling their first child in Idaho fourteen years ago, and will graduate their youngest of 9 sixteen years from now. They follow elections, know their legislators’ email addresses, and believe parents are fully qualified to teach their own children without government funding or oversight. They endeavor to keep homeschooling free by serving on the board of Homeschool Idaho.



**Good to Great:
Seven Elements of a Great Day**
By Amy Koons

How can a good day become a great one?

Some days are about coping. I get that. On these days, I am happy that we got through school, some form of dinner appeared on the table at some point, and I kept the kids alive! But then there are days where I need to challenge the mental rut I'm in, be more intentional, and stop simply going through the motions.

Marcia Ramsland's book *Simplify Your Life* has a section that challenged me to ask myself if there are any opportunities in my week to turn good days into great ones.

Here are seven elements of a Great Day to think about.

1) Preparation the Night Before

Have you ever taken a few minutes at the end of the day to plan out the next one? "To avoid last-minute stress, it is important to prepare the night before, even if it means just glancing at what is ahead and setting the alarm to get up early enough to accomplish it," says Ramsland. "It might also mean gathering items needed for the next day, confirming appointments, or doing one last 'sweep' to put things away."

I find myself wanting to relax at the end of the day and feeling like I definitely deserve it! (Let's face it: I usually do.) But building just ten minutes into my evening routine to look ahead, re-order my to-do list, and set my alarm accordingly always pays huge dividends.

2) Start of the Day

What does it mean to you, personally, to start your day well? Does it mean a hot shower, coffee and the paper, exercise, devotions and prayer time, a family breakfast, everyone making beds and starting their school work quickly? With a little bit of thought, determination, and effort, we can re-shape our mornings—or at least some of them—to get our days off to a better start.

3) Accomplishments

What gets done during a great day? "List the elements of what you specifically want to get done, including time with family and/or friends," says Ramsland. I love that this is not just about things we do but also about being intentional to accomplish relationship-building. A friend once told me she felt sad that she never took time to play board games with her kids. So she actually put this on her to-do list and made it happen a few times a week. Start with the most essential things and schedule them into your day/week/month.

4) The People

Whom do you like to spend time with during the day? Since you homeschool, hopefully your kids make the list! Ramsland encourages us to name the people we want to spend time with during the day. Name your kids and spouse, of course, but also name other people in your life who you would love to spend time with on a regular basis.

I have made a list of my "A-Team," people who really encourage me. I want to be with these people more, so when I have time, I try to invite them to do something with my family (go to the park, hike, or come for a simple dinner), or I offer to take their kids to soccer practice when I'm driving there anyway, or pick up something for them at the grocery store. These are ways to integrate people you love into your everyday life and build richer relationships and better days.

5) The Pace

What is the pace of a great day for you? I have found that I can handle a few really crazy days in my week and my extroverted self sometimes even gets a thrill from this. But I also need to retreat and have some white space. Be mindful of how much margin you personally need as you think about what makes a great day for you.

6) Spark of Life

What gets you excited during your day? Sometimes as a mom, I don't allow myself to think about what I really enjoy, because I am just so busy. But doing things I love is not selfish; it is receiving the good things God has created for me to enjoy. I want my kids to see me living purposefully and engaging in life in a joyful way, because I think that is inspiring and healthy. What sparks joy in your heart, and are there any ways you can integrate these things into your day, or at least into your week or month? Maybe it's something like creating art, shopping, stimulating conversation, a new project that you've been put in charge of, decorating, planning something new, or taking a quiet walk alone to think or listen to a podcast.

7) The End

What satisfies you most at the end of the day? Does it satisfy you that you just made it through the day?—like I mentioned above, this might be your reality right now. Maybe it's realizing you made progress to reach your goals, you spent quality time with one of your kids, you kept composure, the house is picked-up and ready for tomorrow, or maybe that you read to your children as they drifted off to sleep.

Planning a great day is like practicing the piano, according to Ramsland. You find the problem spot that keeps tripping you up and then pick it apart until you can fix it.

"If you keep looking for your stress points and make the appropriate adjustments, you will find yourself having more great days."

Amy is a second-generation homeschooler and a native Californian, transplanted to the Midwest. She loves reading good books, exploring new places, and going on adventures with her kids.

Used with permission: Originally published at <https://blog.hslda.org/2018/09/19/from-good-to-great-seven-elements-of-a-great-day/>

Contagious Homeschooling

By Karen Campbell

It all began during a conversation over dinner one night.

“And so,” concluded Clay, “That is how I started building model rockets when I was a kid.”

“What are model rockets?” both brothers asked at the same time, leaning in with great anticipation.

Clay, in his best Professor-of-Aerospace-Dynamics voice, explained the process, the science behind it, and the amazing results, finding himself promising a trip to the hobby store for supplies the next weekend.

In the weeks that followed, all three of them labored for hours assembling, gluing, painting, and balancing their miniature rockets. The first launch came and went; rocketry enthusiasts had been born.

SPREADING THE JOY OF HOMESCHOOLING

As with all children who have discovered their newest passions in life, the boys were excited to talk about it. Hurrying into Awana one Wednesday night, they described model rocketry, with much detail, to the elderly couple that led their Pioneers group. When I picked them up later that night, they declared, “Mr. and Mrs. Tuckey were so interested in our rockets that they want us to be model rocketry teachers at the special needs school!”

I was skeptical at first, but after speaking with Mrs. Tuckey and hearing about the school’s need for volunteers to teach hands-on skills, I helped the boys plan out a schedule for working on a project with her students, with the goal of Clay overseeing a launch in a few weeks.

Each Thursday we arrived at the school building, and while I attended to the baby, the boys and our daughter worked around the room with individual students, patiently answering questions and helping those who struggled with fine motor skills. Every Sunday, I heard a report from the Tuckeys. As they enthusiastically talked about our project, many of their elderly friends from the church were also intrigued. My sons soon started answering their questions, too, and one WWII veteran, who had been an airplane mechanic, said he wanted to come to the launch.

Apparently he wasn’t the only one.

On the afternoon of the launch day, as we pulled into the remote park area, perfect for sending and retrieving rockets, I was dumbfounded to see not only the school bus full of the students, parents, teachers, and the school principal, but the Tuckeys sitting in their green and white striped lawn chairs, surrounded by another fifty or so elderly people, as well as one of the pastors and his wife from the church.

We walked through the crowd, greeting all we could, as Clay prepared the launch pad, and the boys began instructing the students on the safety procedures. “Ooohs” and “aaahhhs” were offered after each liftoff, followed by applause as the students warmly received each accolade when it came their way. The school principal and the Tuckeys publicly thanked the “teachers” from Homeview Academy who volunteered their time for the students!

As I remember that sunny fall afternoon in the park, I think fondly of each of those people who contributed to our beginning years of homeschooling. Nearly all of those older church folk have gone on to be with the Lord. The principal has long since retired. Occasionally I see some of those students around town and, of course, my children have grown up and are building model rockets with their own homeschoolers. The value of what we learned in that process still inspires me:

Great passions often occur when we share them with our children. Our boys loved science because Clay did.

Sharing our interests as homeschooling families can be contagious. Others see our joy of learning and find their own passions!

Offering service to others will be multiplied and bring many further opportunities for ministry. Our willingness to embrace an unexpected invitation opened other doors to be a blessing, especially within our church family.

Stepping beyond your comfort zone, whether it is in outreach to your local school, elderly people, or those with special needs who appreciate your friendship can bring great joy and a sense of life purpose. This one experience opened our hearts and minds to new ideas and new people, which I still see in practice in the adult lives of my children.

Homeschooling families need to experience life outside the four walls of the home with a variety of ages, not just peers. Let me encourage you to look for ways to integrate academics, friendship, and service as part of your homeschooling lifestyle. What a great way to bring true meaning to “socialization!”

Used with permission. Originally published at <https://wellplannedgal.com/contagious-homeschooling/>.

Karen Campbell, who holds a BS in Human Relations and Secondary Education from Judson University, is a 28-year veteran of homeschooling, the mom of six children, grandmother of 14, and has been married to her husband, Clay, for 38 years. Karen loves baking and cooking for the whole gang when they are home and is actively involved in her local Toastmasters Club. In fact, citing Lucy Ricardo as her inspiration, she once won the District Humorous Speaking Contest for her tale of the homeschooling mom who mummified a chicken! They live on the Illinois prairie where Karen blogs and podcasts about relationship homeschooling at www.thatmom.com.



Complying With Maine's Homeschool Statute... It's Clear and Simple!

By Ed Green, President and Founder of HOME

In May 2003, Governor John Baldacci signed into law a complete overhaul of Maine's homeschool regulations. Since then, the law has provided clarity and security to homeschooling families throughout Maine.

Under the law, those wishing to begin homeschooling a child (who has reached his or her 6th birthday or who has not yet reached his or her 17th birthday) for the first time in Maine must file a written notice of intent within the period of 10 days before and 10 days after the beginning of the child's home instruction program. This applies to a child removed from school to be homeschooled at any point during the school year, or to a child who moved into Maine at any point during the school year. If the child is currently enrolled in a public or private school, it is advisable (though not required) to file the notice of intent—or at least give the school informal notice—before the child is withdrawn.

The notice of intent must be filed with the local school superintendent of your school administrative unit (you can find this address by contacting your town office). It must include: the full name, signature, and address of the parent or guardian, the full name and age of the student, the date home instruction will or did begin, a statement of assurance that instruction will be provided for at least 175 days annually and will cover the following subjects: English and language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, health education, library skills, fine arts, Maine studies (in at least one grade between grades 6 and 12); and that the student(s) will demonstrate proficiency in the use of the computer (in one grade between grades 7 and 12). a statement of assurance that the parents will submit a year-end assessment.

Each subsequent year, by September 1 the family must file a "subsequent year" letter with the commissioner and the school administrative unit. The letter must state whether the student's home

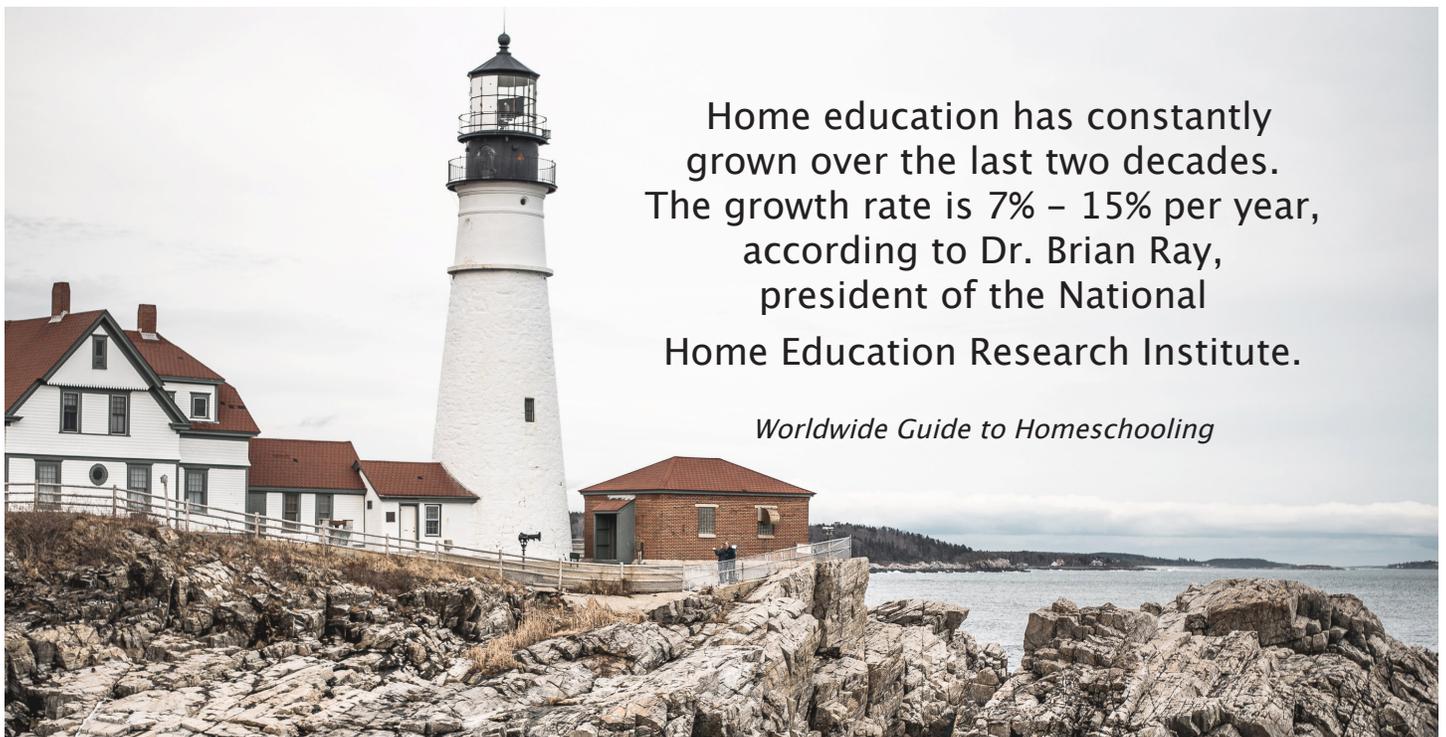
instruction program will continue. It should be signed by the parent or guardian, and include the parent or guardian's full name and address, and, of course, the child's full name. The family must enclose a copy of the previous year's annual assessment results for the child.

Both the one-time notice of intent and the letter each subsequent year should be clear and legible, or you may be inconvenienced by an official contacting you for clarification. The law requires you to keep copies of all items that must be submitted until the homeschool program concludes. (It is advisable to keep them longer). They must be made available to the commissioner upon request.

When mailing documents to the school administrative unit or commissioner, we strongly recommend using certified mail, return receipt requested, so you can prove that you sent the required documents if that ever becomes necessary. Carefully file the green postal receipts. (Please note: The State Postal Center in Augusta is the mail service center for State agencies including the Department of Education. Your DOE mail receipt will come from this address, which is 88 State House Station, and will not be signed. This is not the DOE mailing address, however. Please use the DOE mailing address when sending your documents.)

The process is as straightforward as that! Please Contact HOME if you have further questions or concerns.

Ed and Kathy Green are the parents of four grown daughters who were homeschooled through the 12th grade. After homeschooling their daughters for more than twenty years, Ed and Kathy are now helping with the homeschooling of their grandchildren! In 1990, Ed and Kathy co-founded Homeschoolers of Maine in an effort to provide information, support and encouragement to homeschoolers throughout the state. Ed currently serves as the President of Homeschoolers of Maine, and speaks throughout the state on topics and issues related to parental rights and homeschooling. Kathy manages the daily details at the HOME Office. They reside in the town of Hope.



Home education has constantly grown over the last two decades. The growth rate is 7% – 15% per year, according to Dr. Brian Ray, president of the National Home Education Research Institute.

Worldwide Guide to Homeschooling

10 Steps to Start Homeschooling with Confidence



Follow these 10 steps to start homeschooling with confidence!

1. Attend a “Start Homeschooling With Confidence” workshop. You’ll get an overview of homeschooling in Maine, and meet some veterans! Also, do some reading about homeschooling. A suggested reading list will be provided during the workshop. Making the decision to homeschool requires some discernment on your part. Research and ask questions to see if homeschooling is right for your family. You can also view our Getting Started Video Series on our website at www.homeschoolerofmaine.org.

2. Learn more about fulfilling the law. Read the summary on page 17 that briefly outlines the requirements for homeschooling in Maine. Contact the HOME Office or your Regional Representative if you need some clarification.

3. Join Home School Legal Defense Association. HSLDA provides legal information and counsel for hundreds of Maine families. They also assist with any regulatory and legislative concerns. Membership for Maine homeschooling families is highly recommended. Save on a one-year membership through HOME’s Group Discount.

4. Subscribe to HOMEschooling in Maine and HOME Email Updates. The HOMEschooling in Maine magazine keeps you informed of state and national news and annual events and field trips. Also, it provides interesting and informative articles on a variety of homeschool topics. HOME also has various special interest Facebook groups. Be sure to check those out on our Facebook page. There is one especially for beginners.

5. Choose your curriculum. There are so many choices here! It can seem overwhelming. A convention or curriculum fair is a great

way to see materials and talk with others about them. OR contact HOME to schedule a free curriculum counseling session.

6. Plan ahead for annual assessments. Maine law requires homeschoolers to submit the results of assessments annually. This can sometimes be a cause of stress for those who are just beginning. It needn’t be! Read more about the options for assessment on our website, and let us know how we can help!

7. Get organized. Decide when, where, and how you will homeschool. A routine and a little organization will help you to accomplish your goals. For example, your day might begin with chores, a quiet devotional time, and “formal” school work. After lunch might be the best time for hands-on activities, projects and classes, or activities outside your home. In the evening, you might plan to have family read-aloud time. Every family is different. During the first few weeks, you will find what works for you.

8. Remember to be flexible and adjust when needs change. Life changes, people change, situations change. Feel free to adjust and allow for the circumstances of “real life” to enhance and not hinder homeschooling.

9. When money is tight, get creative! There are many ways to homeschool without spending a lot of money. For some suggestions, please visit Homeschooling When Life Gets Hard (<https://www.homeschoolersofmaine.org/you-can-homeschool/getting-started/>).

10. When you need support (and we all do), be sure to reach out! Others have walked this road before you. Continue to read and attend workshops. Take time for yourself, with your spouse, or take time out of the regular routine to do something special with the kids.

Find this and other helpful articles on our website at www.homeschoolersofmaine.org.

How About the DOE Forms? What You Need to Know

It's Time for Unity! Say NO to State Forms.

Maine law does not require families to use any form when they submit their homeschool paperwork. And yet, the Department of Education recently created forms that call for information you are not required to give. Anyone who uses the department's forms is giving the government information to which it is not entitled. This could cause unexpected adverse consequences.

For all or most families, the best path is to continue sending in their paperwork as they always have and avoid the department's forms.

Here's another good reason to avoid the department's forms. If enough families use them, it's possible that a bill will be filed in the legislature to make the forms mandatory for everyone.

Forms that comply 100% with state law are available on the HOME website. (<https://www.homeschoolersofmaine.org/the-law/letters-of-intent/>)

Preserving homeschool freedoms requires daily vigilance. We must not fall prey to a pattern of continuous revisions beyond the law, whenever the state sees fit. After months of discussions with the Maine Department of Education, we were hoping for better results. The details and added requests on the state form may seem insignificant at first, but there is much more at stake.

Currently, Maine is a state with a moderate level of homeschool regulation. Many states are less regulated (or even not regulated). Maine could easily move into the category of high regulation (as most states in the Northeast) if we are not extremely careful.

Read Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) messages to its members below, and stand firm!

Some school districts are refusing to "accept" any other form or letter other than DOE forms. Refusal to accept a family's lawful form or letter is not legal. The family has done what is required by filing. By law, filing does not require acceptance by anyone. Please contact HOME if you have questions, concerns, or need to report a school district that is insisting on use of the DOE forms or has refused your lawful form or letter.

From HSLDA Attorney Scott Woodruff:

I urge Maine families to NOT use the state's forms either for their initial homeschool paperwork or their subsequent year letter and assessment submission. The best way to protect freedom is to use it. A freedom not used is a freedom at risk of extinction. Homeschool families who back away from exercising the freedoms that are lawfully theirs leave those freedoms vulnerable to erosion.

Here's a point-by-point explanation of where the Department's forms do not respect your freedom.

--Form or No Form?

Maine law does not require that families use any form at all. The Department strays from the law in that it insists that families use a form.

--Need to Identify "Homeschool year" or "school year"?

Maine law does not require families to stipulate either a "homeschool year" or "school year." The Department departs from the law in that it insists that families commit themselves to a school year.

--Acknowledgement won't be sent?

When a family starts to homeschool a child, they file what Maine law refers to as a "written notice of intent." The idea of a "notice" is very simple. It's unilateral. It's an announcement. It's effective even if no one responds in any way. Think about legal notices in a newspaper—they are effective even if literally no one reads them! Same for a notice of intent to homeschool. But the Department form warns: "If no email is provided, acknowledgment of submission will not be sent." Here's the problem with that: you don't need the Department to "acknowledge" your notice! Your notice is effective even if no official ever acknowledges it. The Department is threatening to withhold something no one needs. But a person unfamiliar with the law might be frightened into surrendering their email address. Bluffing and bullying is not consistent with Maine law.

--Month and date of birth?

The Department form says families must list each child's month of birth. This is not required under Maine law, however. The Department's form lists date of birth as optional, which is appropriate, but month of birth should have been listed as optional as well.

--First or subsequent year of Homeschool?

Maine law makes a very clear, simple distinction between the long notice families must file when starting to homeschool a child, and the much shorter "statement" they must file each subsequent year to confirm that the child's homeschool program is continuing. The Department's form demolishes this distinction by making families file the same long form every year.

--Is your Child "Registered"?

The Department's online process (but not the paper form) indicates that you are "registering" a child and a homeschool program. However, Maine law does not say families must "register" their child or their homeschool program. There is a difference. For example, a "registration" can be rejected. A "notice" cannot. By calling it a "registration," the Department is arrogating to itself powers it does not lawfully possess.

For many years, Maine law gave the Department power to create homeschool regulations. Those were difficult years. The Department sometimes adopted regulations despite the overwhelming opposition of the homeschool community. Thankfully, the legislature abolished the Department's power to make homeschool regulations.

The leadership and staff of the Department are not elected by the citizens. In order to maintain our freedom, we must insist that we be governed by our elected representatives—not a Department policy or regulation.

To have an orderly society, citizens must obey the law. But so must government officials. They hold us accountable to obey the law. Now we must hold them accountable to obey the law.

There is power in unity! Well-intending homeschool families who use the state forms are lending credibility to the department's out-of-line actions. That will only encourage them to keep it up. As an unintended consequence, it will put pressure on families who want to provide what they owe, but not more than they owe.

We have not had a battle for freedom in a number of years in Maine. We didn't ask for this one, but here it is. I know Maine homeschool families will stand tall!

HSLDA and Homeschoolers of Maine are united on this. Stand for homeschool freedoms along with HSLDA and HOME.

In a Nutshell: A Summary of Maine's Homeschool Law

Maine Revised Statute

Compulsory Attendance Ages: 6 years of age and under 17, or graduated, or 15 with parent and school board permission, or full-time attendance at accredited college with commissioner approval, MRSa tit. 20-A, § 5001-A sub-§§1 and 2.

Required Days of Instruction: Notice of intent must provide assurance of 175 days.

Required Subjects: English and language arts, math, science, social studies, physical education, health education, library skills, fine arts, Maine studies (in one grade between grades 6 and 12), and computer proficiency (in one grade between grades 7 and 12). Me. Rev. Stat. tit. 20-A, § 5001-A(3)(A)(4)(a)(iv).

Summary of Homeschool Statute: Maine Revised Statutes Annotated (MRSa) title (tit.) 20-A, §5001-A, sub-§3A.(4). A person is excused from attending school if instructed in a home instruction program meeting the following statutory requirements.

Within 10 days of starting home instruction for a student, file a one-time notice of intent with both your local superintendent* and commissioner of education containing:

- a. name, signature, and address of the parent or guardian,
- b. the name and age of the student,
- c. the date home instruction will or did begin,
- d. a statement of assurance that instruction will be provided for at least 175 days annually and will cover the subjects listed above, and
- e. a statement of assurance that the parents will submit a year-end assessment.

Each year thereafter by September 1, submit a subsequent letter to

both your local superintendent and state commissioner of education enclosing your year-end assessment (see "Standardized Tests" below) and stating whether you intend to continue the student's home instruction. MRSa tit. 20-A, § 5001-A, sub-§3.A.(4)(b). Parents must keep copies of items submitted under 1 and 2 above until the home school program concludes. They must be made available to the commissioner upon request. The confidentiality of all records is protected. MRSa tit. 20-A, § 5001-A, sub-§3.A.(4)(c).

Teacher Qualifications: None.

Annual Assessment: Students must annually submit the results of an assessment from among the following options:

1. Review and acceptance of progress by: (a) a Maine certified teacher; (b) a homeschool support group that includes for this purpose a Maine certified teacher or administrator who has reviewed a portfolio of the student's work; or (c) a local advisory board appointed by the superintendent composed of two homeschool teachers and one school official (must be arranged with school system before school year starts).
2. Official results of any national standardized achievement test; or
3. Results of a test developed by local school officials.

**Contact your town office to request the correct mailing address for your local superintendent. You can also find your local superintendent's name and address at this website: <http://www.msmaweb.com/unit-list.html>*

Please Note: The Summaries of Maine Homeschooling Options are reproduced by permission from Home School Legal Defense Association, Paeonian Springs, VA 22129. THE ANALYSIS OF BOTH OPTIONS DOES NOT CONSTITUTE GIVING LEGAL ADVICE.

Please contact HOME for more information, questions, and to aid in your understanding of the homeschool options in this state.



15 Reasons to Support Your State Homeschool Organization

Homeschoolers of Maine (HOME)...

- helps families get started in homeschooling year round.
- provides telephone counseling to help homeschoolers year round.
- is a non-profit, 501C-3 ministry-based organization run by a volunteer board of directors and trained leadership teams.
- is a reliable, knowledgeable and accurate source of information regarding homeschooling in Maine.
- provides up-to-the minute news and articles of interest via printed resources, mailings, email updates, website, facebook and twitter.
- stays up to date on issues affecting homeschooling in our state.
- maintains a liaison with state elected officials, and constantly works to preserve and protect home-schooling in Maine.
- maintains a network of HOME Representatives throughout the state to provide guidance and support to new and veteran homeschoolers.
- organizes many events and field trips throughout the year to encourage and equip homeschoolers.
- conducts portfolio reviews.
- holds an annual convention.
- holds an annual used curriculum sale.
- holds an annual high school graduation ceremony.
- reinvests all monies earned back into homeschooling in Maine.
- has fought the good fight for homeschooling rights for nearly 30 years.

Thank you for your support!

Join HOME Today!

HOME is Families Helping Families. Please join us to help with our mission. You will receive great benefits, too! These benefits are our way of saying “thank you” for your support.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Email _____

Membership Level: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Send to: HOME, PO Box 159, Camden, ME 04843-0159

You can become a Family Helping Families in one of five ways:

- HOME Affiliate Families—Free!
- HOME Subscriber Families - \$10 to \$24/year donation
- HOME Friends of Families – \$25 to \$49/year
- HOME Defender of Families – \$50 to \$99/year
- HOME Founding Families - \$100 to \$499/year
- HOME VIP Families - \$500 to \$999/year
- HOME Lifetime Families - \$1000

Find out more on our website at
<https://www.homeschoolersofmaine.org/join/>

Visit our website for a description of benefits at each level.