

How Churches Can Help Homeschooling Families

(And Why They Should)

FPM

The Biblical mandate for parents to train up their children is clear! God has ordained for parents to be the primary care givers and teachers of their children. The church should be first in line to support parents in this God-given role.

"You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."
- Deuteronomy 6:7

Home education is flourishing as many Christian families choose to apply Biblical principles to the training and education of their children. Though private home education is certainly supported by the principles of Scripture, it is not an easy path to follow. The Biblical mandate for parents is clear. How are you going to help families as they strive to fulfill it? Families that are dedicated to private home education need support and encouragement, and the church is uniquely positioned to offer this help.

"Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
- Ephesians 6:4

The Bible describes three spheres of authority—family, church, and civil government. Children are under their parent's authority as part of the family sphere. It is not for the government (public schools are part of that sphere), or the church, to raise them. For more information on this important topic please see FPM's article on authority at fpmca.org/govtchurchfamily.

Family Government



"But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God"
(I Corinthians 11:3).

Church Government

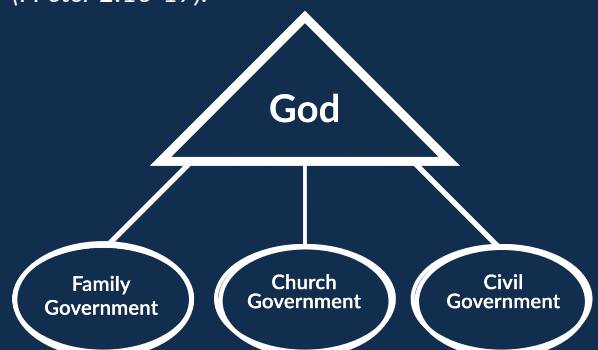


"Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood"
(Acts 20:28).

Civil Government



"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor"
(I Peter 2:13-17).



"Godless education ignores or denies that man was created responsible to God."

-Cornelius Van Til

The church must support families who are choosing to not invite the government into their homes and family life. Support those who are walking in faith—looking to the Lord and not the world for guidance in raising their children. The church is never to take the place of the parents, but must come along and offer meaningful support. Homeschooling families need to know they have the support of their pastors as they seek to follow the Lord in raising their children.

"Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching."

- Proverbs 1:8

Support home education from the pulpit (so your congregation understands the unique importance of private home education). Offer prayer and verbal encouragement to the homeschoolers in your congregation.

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

- 2 Timothy 2:15

Make sure you understand the difference between private and public education. Private home education operates under private school law in California. Private home educators receive no government funds and are not under government authority. Charter schools, even those operating exclusively in the home, are part of the public school system. They receive government funds and are under government control. Visit fpmca.org/vcd21session12/ to gain more insight on this topic.

The church needs to help

Help your congregation understand private, Christian home education is the only way parents can truly raise their children up with a Christ-centered world view in their education. Highlight the benefit of parents educating and discipling their children in the Christian faith.

Have language in your church constitution that supports private, Christian home education.

Set up a donation-funded scholarship program to assist families who need financial help with curriculum, etc.

Start a co-op at church

If your church already has a co-op or school in place, talk to their leadership about ways the church can come alongside families and the existing group.

- Consider insurance and liability.
- Consider the group philosophy.

Will your group be open to church members only? Other Christians? The community at large? For example, are you looking to host a group that will be open to the community and evangelistic, or do you desire to equip families in your church and support them as they disciple their children?

For more valuable resources and information, please visit fpmca.org/churches

Homeschool Options in California

A Single-Family Private Homeschool

ADVANTAGES

Parents are in total control of child's education.

DISADVANTAGES

Parents may feel need for some accountability.

Private School Satellite Program (PSP)

ADVANTAGES

- Parent does not have to interact with the state, therefore neither the state nor local school district has information about the child's school or location where the education is taking place.
- Many PSP's offer help for parents educating their children beyond the simple filing of the private school affidavit by keeping attendance and other records. For example, staff may offer expertise in specific areas that address education problems that arise with students.
- Diploma issued might have more credibility.
- Might be able to participate in California CIF sports competition at the high school level.

DISADVANTAGES

- Parents will generally have to pay for these services.
- Parents are under the authority of the PSP as it relates to their child's education.

PROS AND CONS OF PRIVATE HOMESCHOOL OPTIONS IN CALIFORNIA

VERY IMPORTANT

Whichever private homeschool option families choose, they should find community. Fellow supportive, like-minded friends make homeschooling fun and rewarding. Visit CHEA's directory and connect with homeschool groups and resources in your area. cheaofca.org/directory

Degrees of Flexibility in California School Options

PUBLIC
CAMPUS
SCHOOL

CAMPUS
CHARTER
SCHOOL

PRIVATE
CAMPUS
SCHOOL

SINGLE-FAMILY
PRIVATE
HOMESCHOOL

More Restrictive

More Flexible

PUBLIC SCHOOL
INDEPENDENT STUDY
PROGRAM (ISP)

AT-HOME
CHARTER
SCHOOL

PRIVATE SCHOOL
SATELLITE
PROGRAM (PSP)

Some Practical Ways to Help

Churches can readily assist in providing for some tangible needs of homeschoolers. Simply opening your facility to private home educators can provide a significant means of support. Churches can also provide financial assistance to families through funds or scholarships for curriculum expenses.

Facilities and Events

Rent to a Homeschool Co-op (weekly or monthly, for academic classes, special events or play days). Consider alleviating the financial challenge of private education by allowing homeschooling families in your congregation to meet at no cost.

Host special events such as a Sports Day, Mom's Morning Out, or a homeschool graduation ceremony.

Provide internships for homeschool teens (office work, A/V operation, website design, worship team, sunday school and Adventure Club, groundskeeping, building maintenance and repair.

Provide a lending library (classic literature, biographies, Christian homeschool curriculum, wholesome family movies and educational DVD's).

"Home-based education focused on the Gospel and built on the foundation of the truth of scripture and led by parents who are engaged in and supported by a local church, follows the blueprint of family and teaching laid out in scripture. It should come as no surprise that this format and focus provides the best foundation, education, and training for God-honoring adults." - *Nathan Pierce*

Childcare

Provide babysitting for ladies' Bibles studies and other women's events. Encourage parents to lean on their church family rather than the government by supporting moms and enabling them to attend events. Moms need the opportunity to connect with other women for encouragement and fellowship.

Volunteers

Retirees can teach or tutor in your church's co-op. Members of your congregation can give lessons:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| - Instrumental | - Archery |
| - Knitting | - Gardening |
| - Marksmanship | - Cooking |
| - Photography | - Carpentry |
| - Vocal | - Baking |
| - Crochet | - Automotive |
| - Choir | - Maintenance |
| - Quilting | - Drawing/Painting |

Seasoned homeschooling parents can serve as mentors to families just starting out. Help facilitate this by connecting new parents with veterans through panel discussions and Q&A sessions.

Additional Resources

- Christian Home Educators Associations of California (CHEA) - cheaofca.org
- Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) - hsllda.org

FAMILY PROTECTION ministries

FPM's mission is to defend the freedom of parents to train, educate, and care for their children privately, without governmental interference. We have been working to detect, analyze, monitor, and intervene in all legislation affecting the legality of private home education in California since 1986.