



Home Rules

August 2009

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Inside this issue:

Festival of Authors	3
Kindergarten Reconsidered	4
Secure Children—Secure Parents	5
Unschooling Conference	9
Getting Together	10
Kids Rule!	11
High School & Beyond	12

Above Centre:

Kristopher Boaro, a homeschooler from Powassan, Ontario, takes to the stage as Cory Palmer Jr., in the summer musical theatre production of "Back to the Eighties" as part of his homeschooling regime.

Send Home Rules your photos and stories of a school-at-home project, expedition or an unexpected something that comes from everyday opportunities.

Editors Note:

By KIM BOARO

A report released in June 2009 by former deputy minister of education Dr. Charles Pascal recommends creating full day early learning programs for four and five year

The proposal includes joining two programs day care and kindergarten so children gain from not moving around between buildings. Parents benefit by not having to piece together services for their young children. This would give parents the option of leaving kids between the ages of four and 12 in one location between 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. for a fee.

According to the report, if the recommendations are

Many hands make light work...

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implemented, the program would be in place in about one-third of Ontario schools by September 2010, with the remainder of schools following suit within three years.

How does this have an effect on those who choose to school in their home? At this time, there is no legislation to force parents to officially begin to school at such a young age.

Carlo Ricci, author of Kindergarten Reconsidered on page 4, challenges us to think about this issue.

To learn more about Dr. Charles Pascal's proposal to combine day care and kindergarten into a full-day program in all Ontario schools go to:

http://www.ontario.ca/en/initiatives/early_learning/STEL01_139326

Home Rules is published bi-monthly by the Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents (OFTP).

OFTP is a non-profit, volunteer-managed group committed to providing information about and support for home-based education to our members and the public at large. OFTP supports parental choice in education as stated in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights (26.3). We act as a link between home educators and institutions such as the provincial government and local school boards. OFTP believes that parents have the right to determine the satisfactory nature of instruction for their children.

The views expressed in articles in this newsletter are those of the writers and are not necessarily the views of OFTP. OFTP believes that parents need to find the method that works for their particular family. OFTP does not espouse any one method of home education over another.

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Many hands make light work...
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Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO)

Want to learn and/or share innovative usage of technology in the classroom? The Educational Computing Organization of Ontario (ECOO) will be holding its 30th annual conference November 11-13, 2009, at the Sheraton Parkway North, in Richmond Hill, Ontario. Conference registration begins in September and Early Bird pricing is in effect until October."

For more information, please see <http://www.ecoo.org>, and click on 'Conference'."

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OFTP E-MAIL LISTS

For Members Only

To find OFTP's specialized lists, please visit
<http://ontariohomeschool.org/oftpgroups.html>

OFTP General List

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/oftp>

The purpose of this list is to discuss and share ideas and information about homeschooling. Discussions may include daily homeschooling issues, passing along articles or conference information, product reviews and questions about legalities.

OFTP Exec. List

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/OFTPEXEC>

This list is open to all members and its purpose is to discuss OFTP operations and initiatives.

OFTP Chat List

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/oftpchat>

The purpose of this list is to provide a forum for members to share thoughts, feelings, questions and information on "off topic" (non homeschool) issues, and OFTP's specialized lists, please visit <http://ontariohomeschool.org/oftpgroups.html>

International Festival of Authors (IFOA) IFOA XXX: October 21–31, 2009

TORONTO, June 22, 2009 ----- Authors at Harbourfront Centre is delighted to announce the preliminary line-up for the **30th annual International Festival of Authors (IFOA)**. For the last 11 days in October, the most exciting authors writing today come from Canada and around the world to take part in readings, panel discussions, onstage interviews, book signings and a host of other events. In 2009, IFOA celebrates its 30th edition with the moniker **IFOA XXX**, and affords audiences more opportunities than ever to meet their favourite authors and encounter new voices. IFOA takes place at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre, October 21–31, 2009.

On IFOA opening night, PEN Canada presents *"TOO MUCH HAPPINESS! Diana Athill in conversation with Alice Munro. Hosted by Bill Richardson."* At this unique event, Alice Munro, the globally celebrated winner of the prestigious Man Booker International Prize, appears in conversation with Diana Athill, UK publishing legend and author of *Stet* and *Somewhere Towards the End*. Munro is launching her new collection, *Too Much Happiness*, and this will be her only onstage interview this fall. Athill, making her first Canadian appearance, will be launching *Life Class*, a collection of four of her memoirs. CBC personality Bill Richardson leads the discussion, which is followed by a book signing. Proceeds go to PEN Canada to support their ongoing and vital work for freedom of expression (www.pencanada.ca). Tickets are on sale now at www.readings.org.

IFOA presents authors writing in categories from literary fiction to picture books, narrative non-fiction to graphic novels, poetry to thrillers. Fifty-one authors are confirmed thus

far. Biographical information is available at readings.org.

As part of its 30th anniversary celebration, **IFOA XXX** provides the public with more opportunities than ever to join the party and interact with their favourite authors. New programming initiatives include late-night weekend events (beginning at 10pm) combining traditional readings with a party atmosphere. Specific details to be announced.



Now in its 6th year, Young IFOA (October 27, 29, 30) returns with three "book days," each tailored to a specific age group from grades K to 8. Schools can build their trip to Young IFOA with a combination of author events and book-making workshops. For Better or for Worse® cartoonist Lynn Johnston is already confirmed for Primary Day (K-2).

In addition to the opening night PEN Canada gala, special events include readings by the authors nominated for Canada's three leading literary fiction awards: the Governor General's Literary Award (Oct. 26), the Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize (Oct. 28), and, on IFOA closing night, the Scotiabank Giller Prize (Oct. 31), along with the awarding of the \$10,000 Harbourfront Festival Prize.

With **IFOA XXX** the Festival continues its expansion into Ontario with events in Barrie, Midland, Uxbridge and Orillia added to the exist-

ing IFOA Burlington, Hamilton and Parry Sound. These satellite events take IFOA authors on the road to connect with audiences beyond downtown Toronto. IFOA Ontario takes place throughout the Festival; specific dates to be announced.

For more information about IFOA and for programming updates throughout the summer, the public may visit www.readings.org or call the Harbourfront Centre **Box Office at 416-973-4000. Tickets go on sale in September** and are priced at \$15/\$12 for members/Free for students (subject to availability). Some exceptions apply. Please refer to individual event listings.

Tickets to four IFOA special events are now on sale:

Oct. 21 – PEN Benefit with Alice Munro and Diana Athill: \$100 Ticket includes admission to a cocktail and hors d'oeuvres reception before the onstage event.

Oct. 26 – Governor General's Literary Award shortlist readings: \$25 or \$20 members

Oct. 28 – Rogers Writers' Trust Fiction Prize shortlist readings: \$15 or \$12 members

Oct. 31 – Scotiabank Giller Prize shortlist readings/Harbourfront Festival Prize presentation: \$25 or \$20 members

Since its inception in 1974, Authors at Harbourfront Centre has hosted over 5,000 authors from more than 100 countries, including 16 Nobel Laureates. Its season runs from September to June and includes the annual International Festival of Authors (IFOA) (October 21–31, 2009), including Young IFOA (October 27, 29 & 30, 2009); the annual ALOUD: a Celebration for Young Readers (May 2010); and Forest of Reading® Festival of Trees™ (May 2010).

Full day kindergarten reconsidered

By CARLO RICCI

There is another side to full day kindergarten I wish to share. In the short term, full day kindergarten may be good for the economy, for teachers and for parents; but is it best for children? Is it best for children to be locked up in a place many dread going into and now, potentially, from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The official rationale for why we need full day kindergarten is financial and achievement/learning. Financially, some argue every dollar we spend before the age of six on children saves us \$17.00 in social services costs. The advocates and promoters say, in terms of achievement, the argument is by the ages of three and four years many young children are already behind. I ask, behind in what? We can try and force children to learn earlier and earlier, but there are other options; for example, we can allow children to be children and then we can relax arbitrary obstacles later on. There is no critical period for learning and children can learn at any time. Moreover, what people need to learn is not a compulsory standardized one size fits all curriculum that forces people to learn and do what they do not want to do. What we need is a system that respects and helps people unfold in any way they choose. This is not only possible, but it is already happening among those who advocate for natural learning, unschooling and free learner-centered democratic schooling.

A large part of what the promoters of full day kindergarten refer to as the learning gap is as a result of out of school factors and these will not change by having children attend school earlier and for longer periods. In other words, yes, children will be in school, but their lives and circumstances that are out of the schools' control will not change and the resulting impact on achievement cannot be overestimated.

This leads us to challenge another assumption: Should achievement be our ultimate goal? Studies show students who spend time in schools at an earlier age may be better off in terms of achievement, but there is a cost to their social and emotional well being. Do we

value counting to 10 and knowing the ABCs more than children's social and emotional well being?

We cannot forget those who are promoting full day kindergarten most vocally are those who have the most to gain financially and optically: teachers unions, educators, businesses, politicians and parents. For example, David Clegg, head of the Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario says, "I'm concerned this would reopen collective agreements.". What do children think and want and what would truly be best for them is not a question that gets taken seriously.



The question I ask you to think about now is, "What else can we do with one billion dollars that would help young people and their families more directly?"



Carlo Ricci currently teaches in the faculty of education's graduate program at Nippissing University and he founded and edits the online Journal of Unschooling and Alternative Learning (JUAL).

He tries to incorporate the spirit of unschooling, democratic and learner centered principles in all of his classes. He has two daughters ages 3 and 5 that he hopes will decide to unschool.

CURRICULUM REVIEW

One Year Adventure Novel

By DANIEL SCHWABAUER

<http://www.oneyearnovel.com>

Complete Package - \$199 includes 78 Video Lessons on 7 DVDs, Textbook, Workbook, Teacher's Guide, Prisoner of Zenda novel, Resource Disk

Imagine being given the opportunity to write a heroic quest—your very own adventure novel. Daniel Schwabauer, an award winning novelist and playwright, has created a year long course for high school students on writing fiction and the finished product is an adventure novel.

Schwabauer has produced a practical well organized guide that covers all the basics and provides strong parameters for novel writing, as well as, how to build suspense.

The One Year Adventure Novel kit comes complete with a textbook, a workbook, teacher's guide, a set of seven DVD's, Prisoner of Zenda novel and a resource disk.

I think my son enjoyed the entire kit. The books are well laid out. His ultimate favorite were the DVD's . Complete with action clips from old adventure movies and wonderful background music Schwabauer provides a great backdrop for serious learning.

A typical day with this curriculum begins with a brief 10 to 15 minutes captivating video format lesson that can be played on a computer or television. After viewing the video lesson, the student reads through the textbook—"The Compass"- which reinforces the video lesson or on occasion asks for reading from within an adventure novel, along with, some questions to be answered. Once the textbook assignment is complete, the student moves onto the workbook—"The Map". "The Map" provides questions to help create a framework for the book and eventually to write a rough draft for the novel.

Schwabauer equips a determined student with everything to complete a novel with confidence. He also provides weekly quizzes administered via computer which are immediately graded.

Additional students living in the same household may order extra workbooks for \$25.

Secure Children – Secure Parents

The Role of Family in the 21st century

By JONAS HIMMELSTRAND

This presentation was given by Jonas Himmelstrand, author of “Following Your Heart – in the social utopia of Sweden” (written in Swedish only), at a seminar in the Swedish Parliament on December 10, 2008. The talk was based on conclusions from his book. The translation to English was completed by the author.

Special note to English speaking readers: This presentation was given in Swedish to a Swedish speaking audience. In order to fully understand it the following two background facts may be necessary:

1) Sweden’s family policy exclusively supports the dual earner household with children in day care. Today 85% of all 1–5 year olds in Sweden are in day care. The policy is possible through tax laws making it hard to support a family on one salary, and by high subsidies to day care with no national support to home parents after parental leave. The official reasoning is that adults are happiest at work and children happiest in day care, to put it bluntly. Few of the seven Swedish political parties in parliament oppose this view, with the exception of the Christian Democrats.

2) The admired Swedish parental leave policy is very generous up until 16 months. But after that, caring for your child is more difficult in Sweden than in most other countries in the western world. The long Swedish parental leave is a necessity in high-tax Sweden. Without it, few Swedes could afford to take full care of their babies.

Swedish family policies during the last 30 years have resulted in insecure children and youth, stressed adults and lower quality parenthood. As security in children is a strong social legacy, it is a negative spiral.

Our children need more time with their parents – most parents also need more time with their children. This calls for a new view on family in Sweden. This calls for political action.

What I am about to say comes from the knowledge and experience of consulting Swedish businesses, public offices, schools and pre-schools during 25 years in the areas of management, education and psycho-social environment. It also comes from my family – my wife Tamara and our three children.

I am not politically or religiously engaged. The closest I have come to partisan politics was in my youth when I was engaged in the left-wing of SSU – The Swedish Socialdemocratic Youth Organization.

I will use the word family, by which I mean all kinds of families: mother-father-child-families, single parent families and rainbow families. My reasoning is the same for them all.

My first awakening to this issue was about eight years ago when I taught coaching to teachers and school leaders at a high school in Sweden. The personnel was nearly in shock at the increasing psychological ill health among their students.

Then I heard mothers I met on business courses spontaneously express, “I felt so bad leaving my one year old (or two year old) in day care.” I asked myself how much additional stress that feeling added.

Also, I discovered how more and more young people were having difficulties managing my course in presentation skills with video feedback. They seemed to lack self-esteem.

At about the same time I heard more and more often at work places I visited:

“Eva was such a wonderful and positive person. But soon, unfortunately, she suffered from emotional exhaustion and burnout.”

These observations became the starting point of my book.

Sweden is perhaps the worlds most secure country in terms of material wealth. We have among the most equal wages, very low levels of child poverty, the lowest level of infant mortality and an admired equality between the sexes. Sweden ranks highly in these matters by international comparison. Sure, everyone does not have the problems I will describe. But given our material resources we ought be more healthy and happy than we are.

Which symptoms can we see and verify?

Symptoms—lack of close relationships

- ✓ Increased psychological ill health among youth
- ✓ Increased stress related ill health among adults
- ✓ Increased behavioural problems among youth
- ✓ Plummeting educational results in schools
- ✓ High level of divorces
- ✓ Lower quality parenthood

Increased psychological ill health among youth. Since 1989 Sweden has the worst development in this area of eleven comparable countries: Finland, Denmark, Norway, Hungary, Switzerland, Austria, Belgium, Spain, Wales and Scotland according to a Swedish Government investigation (SOU 2006:77). Mostly girls.

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Increased stress related ill health among adults. Stress and anxiety is the new Swedish national disease. The rate of sick leave in Sweden is among the highest in the world and a considerable domestic financial problem. Sick leave is especially high among Swedish women according to a study, also among highly educated women. Stress related disease is the most common form of sick leave in Sweden today.

Increased behavioral problems among youth. The Minister of Education in Sweden, Jan Björklund, asserts that "... Swedish schools have the highest level of truancy, destruction and bad language in all the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries." Björklund has been criticized for making too strong a statement. However, anyone visiting our schools and following the media can witness the situation is bad enough. We see disruptions in the classroom, conformism, gangs, bullying, violence and criminality. Mostly boys.

Plummeting educational results in schools. The educational results in our schools have plummeted in the last 20 years. Sweden has lost its previous top position and is today only average among the highly developed nations.

High level of divorces. The number of divorces have increased from 10% to close to 50% in the last 40 years. One clear cause is an inability to handle close relationships.

Lower quality parenthood. A study from last year by Britta Johansson referred to in Svenska Dagbladet (a conservative national newspaper) show that even healthy, intelligent and reasonable Swedish parents have difficulties being parents today. They lack knowledge about children's needs and cannot set limits. She writes (my translation):

The public offer of full day child care seems to make many parents loose the grip of their own responsibility. They believe/want that their children are fostered by the

pre-school/school and believe that the experts on their children are found there.

She also says that pre-school/school cannot fill the gaps caused by lack of time and trust in parenthood from the parents.

Which are the possible mechanisms behind these problems?

Lack of knowledge of the needs of small children. The lack of knowledge in Sweden on the needs of small children is monumental. Scientists today agree the groundwork for psychological health is laid in the first three years of life. The brain of the small child is physiologically formed by the psychological care of the closest carer. Lack of love and closeness during the first years in life leads to a chronically lowered anxiety threshold – as adults we become more easily stressed, afraid and anxious. Small children need love and sensitive caring from their parents or other close adults. Small children do not need education or pedagogics. Love is their entire education. It is called attachment.

The research on daycare in later years confirms the possible connection. A large exposure to care separated from parents or close relatives is associated with a small but significant increase in behavioural problems up until 12 years of age, even in those who went to the very best day care. This is not the fault of day care. The cause is more likely the separation from the child's closest attachment figures, the parents. Daycare cannot replace parents even if some children are more resilient to day care than others.

A miniature Sweden was created when Quebec in Canada introduced collective day care according to the Swedish model. The effects were researched and the three researchers wrote the following:

Finally, we uncover striking evidence that children are worse off in a variety of behavioral and health dimensions, ranging from aggression to motor-social skills to illness. Our analysis also suggests that the new childcare program led to more hostile, less consistent parenting, worse parental

health, and lower-quality parental relationships.

This is uncomfortably similar to the situation in Sweden.

Lack of time with parents also for older children 4–18 years of age. Also older children need time with their parents, an adult close to them who loves them.

When we are young we need someone to love us also when we do not seem to deserve it. Someone who stands steady in a storm. Someone who continuously gives the message: I am here for you, I love you, we can work this out together, we will manage this situation. Young people need their parents.

A day can be long in the life of a ten year old. Child care in school at 7.00 a.m. Already tired and hungry when school starts. A long day in school. Then child care in school again waiting for the tired parents to pick them up at perhaps 5.00 p.m. or 6.00 p.m. In the evening maybe another activity outside home. Where does the child find their emotional security? The parents are gone too long. One needs someone for comfort and closeness. In best case this will be an adult in school. But for most children this will be a peer or a gang offering emotional support during school hours – peer orientation. The problem with peer orientation is that peers, especially during the teens, do not have the maturity to handle more difficult feelings around differences, conflicts, failure, rejection and deceit. Therefore the peer group wins resulting in conformism, gangs, bullying and sometimes violence.

As nature wants to protect the relationship with those who the children attach to – nature had in mind that this should be the parents and other adults trusted by the parents – peer orientation leads to adults being emotionally rejected.

This results in parents feeling they have lost their teenager, and teachers who find that their pupils have less interest in learning. The teenager has attached to their peers because loving adults were not avail-

(Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 6)

able for too long periods of time. A blind is leading a blind into the world of tomorrow. It is frighteningly similar to William Golding's novel, *The Lord of the Flies*.

Both parents and teachers witness to this phenomena. The adult world has lost the emotional connection to a young generation who is not yet mature enough to take responsibility for their life. Parents, and through them teachers and other mature adults, must regain their position as the emotionally most important people in their children's lives.

In Sweden we have had the belief that the State, through day care, pre-schools, schools and after-school care, can raise our children. But in spite of the enormous resources Sweden spends on these institutions, they cannot replace the parents. Parental attachment is the basis which these institutions need to at all be able to function in constructive ways.

Good close relationships is the most important health factor. According to a meta-study by Dr. Dean Ornish, high-quality close relationships is the superior health factor. In Sweden we don't have much time for close relationships. This leads to stress related ill health.

Too little control over one's personal life situation is another risk factor to health according to research by Sir Michael Marmot. Through its family policy Sweden has given the State a place in the bedroom of every Swedish family – a clear risk factor to health.

Parents do not understand the importance of the parental role. Unfortunately the Swedish Government has been too successful in its hidden message: "The State fosters children better than parents." This is probably the most destructive political message ever given in Sweden – at least in modern times.

A positive example – the international home schooling trend.

Maybe the most fascinating example of a completely new view of family is the strong international home schooling trend. This means parents teaching their children rather than sending them to school.

Millions of children and adolescents are being taught at home in the western world today. This is the first really new pedagogical experiment done in 200 years. The research on home schooling is mind-blowing.

Untrained parents are more successful teaching their children than schools. Children seem to have better social development through home schooling than in school. Especially interesting is that parents with low education are better at educating their children than schools are. Why?

One probable reason is that adult attachment is a more important factor in learning than what educational science has realized. As children we want to fulfill the expectations of those we attach too. Parents have higher expectations than peers. Also home schooling has the advantage of being fully individualized and highly time effective.

A not particularly bold guess is that the dominance of pre-school and school will not survive knowledge society. Rather we will in the future see a considerable amount of education decentralized from the State and managed by parents in various ways.

It is an unfortunate sign of the view of families in Sweden that the Swedish Government lack understanding of homeschooling. Through prejudice and lack of knowledge pioneering Swedish homeschooling families are, in spite of home schooling being supported by law, chased with threats of the social authorities and fines in many, but not all, Swedish municipalities. Among western democracies only Germany treats their home schoolers worse than some local governments in Sweden.

Political goals – short term and long term

I have been asked to present some possible political actions. Some of these suggestions are a little more long term than most, but I feel this is necessary for a clear direction.

Parents need to be able to make their own choices about early child care 0-3 years. Every choice needs to be possible for the majority of families – home parent, with parent at work, grandparent, neighbour, day care at work place, child minder or day care centre. In countries like Sweden where day care is highly subsidised, the same financial support needs to be given to the care of the parents choice. Insecure parents must be given support in their parental role rather than routinely recommended to send their children to day care.

Quality proof attachment to every small child in child care outside the family. Sweden needs to at least follow the American recommendations of maximum six one year olds to a minimum of two trained staff, and a maximum of eight two year olds to a minimum of two trained staff. Today Sweden has neither recommendations or rules. Group size for small children can be up to 17 and child-to-adult ratios average at 5:1 for all ages. When day care is given this kind of quality, parental care will not only be best for most children but also cheapest.

Acknowledge the work done in families with children, financially, on the C.V. and in pension funds. It must once again be possible for a family to live on one wage. Also the parent being at home needs to be recognised for the highly valuable work done when entering work life again.

Make home schooling an easy option by law. A healthy engaged parent with the time, energy and a reasonable strategy will in most cases make a better educational job than the institutions of society. The Swedish home schooling law needs to be interpreted liberally as in the majority of Anglo-Saxon countries today.

(Continued on page 8)

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Encourage people to make their own decisions, based on their own convictions, about their close relationships. We need to put an end to the one-sided life style propaganda by the Swedish State. Human growth and creativity will flourish when people gain full control of one of the most important parts of their lives.

Finally: Start a national educational program on the new knowledge of children's development – and the value of families. The industrial age is over and the knowledge society is here, we all need to know the new knowledge – some of which is quite old.

Of course, each of the facts I have presented can be questioned. But when you view them all together, as I have done in my book, it is much more difficult to escape the conclusion that the Swedish view of families has gone astray. Sweden needs a completely new view of families in the 21st century. Secure children and parents in the future requires more time for the close relationships than we have in Sweden today.

Families are the only remaining institutions for close relationships in Sweden today. They need to be protected from extinction and given support and care if this nation is to survive socially and emotionally.

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Sources can be found at:

www.stratletter.com/sources_dec10speech.html

Afterword: Since this speech was given new information about homeschooling has arrived from the US Government Department of Education. The number of home schooled children has continued to increase to 1,5 million in 2007. The numbers mentioned above therefore have to be revised: In the US there are 45 000 home schooled children/9 million inhabitants according to official sources, rather than the 33 000 given above. An official spokesperson said the figures are likely to keep rising.

An appeal to Canadian homeschoolers

Dear friends,

Today the Swedish Government released its suggestion for a new Swedish school law, which has been in the works for many years.

The position on homeschooling in the suggested law is a return to darkness. It is unbelievable. Homeschooling will NOT be permitted for those referring to philosophical or religious reasons according to the European convention on Human Rights!

The reason given is:

"...that the education in school should be comprehensive and objective and thereby designed so that all pupils can participate, regardless of what religious or philosophical reasons the pupil

or his or her care-takers may have."

Thus, the suggested law argues:

"...there is no need for the law to offer the possibility of homeschooling because of religious or philosophical reasons in the family. All together this means that this suggested change cannot be said to contradict Sweden's international obligations [Human rights conventions]."

The quotes above are my translations from the suggested law on page 584. The suggested law can be downloaded in Swedish from the Swedish Government homepage: <http://www.regeringen.se/sb/d/11355/a/128290>

The law is now out for review and The Swedish Association for Home Education - http://www.rohus.nu/?English_information - will give it's suggestions to the Government. The review closes on September 25. The final law will be presented to Parliament during the spring of 2010 and will take effect in 2011.

That the Swedish Government is making homeschooling illegal is Sweden showing off its worst totalitarian socialist roots. We will need international support to show that Sweden, as a member of the international democratic community, cannot take such a position. As Sweden is often seen as the great social utopia of the world, it is important for Swedish homeschoolers to win this battle.

Sensible international suggestions about the new Swedish school law can be sent to: skollagen@education.ministry.se

You are welcome to contact me at: jonas@rohus.se or the whole Rohus board at: styrelsen@rohus.nu

Best regards

Jonas Himmelstrand
Member and pedagogical advisor of the Rohus board



The father of three children, Jonas and his wife Tamara homeschool their oldest two children of school age. Home schooling in Sweden in some municipalities necessitates a series of trials, appeals and some mild civil disobedience. Jonas and his family live in a municipality facing these challenges.

Jonas is on the board of the Swedish Association of Home Education, www.rohus.nu. Home parenting and home schooling is for Jonas a natural consequence of experiences learnt in consultancy combined with an interest of attachment psychology.

Homeschool Conferences and Curriculum Fairs in Ontario

October 2 - 4, 2009 — Caledon

Toronto Unschooling Conference

Teen Ranch

20682 Hurontario St. (Hwy 10)

Caledon, Ontario, Canada L7K 1X1

Presentations, funshops, use of the ranch facilities, and of course hanging out with other unschoolers and prospective unschoolers.

Speakers include Anne Ohman, Carlo Ricci, Francette Fey, Cindy Bablitz, Amy Carpenter Leugs. Ranch facility activities include horseback riding, kayaking and canoeing, water fun (weather permitting), games room, hiking, trampolines, and much more. "There is also an ice rink onsite and we'll be renting it during the weekend for an hour of ice skating."

**For all the details please visit the conference website: <http://livingjoyfully.ca/conference/>
And to get answers to all your questions and more, feel free to join the conference yahoo group: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TorontoUnschoolingConference>**

***If you are planning a home education conference or curriculum fair, please let us know about it by email at newsletter@ontariohomeschool.org so we can spread the word to our members and the rest of the homeschooling community.*

OFTP Policy for Co-sponsorship of Regional Conferences and Curriculum Fairs

1. OFTP will help fund regional/local conferences or curriculum fairs in our continued effort to support homeschoolers in Ontario.
2. These conferences will be organized and run by members of the support group, with support from OFTP should they request it.
3. OFTP and the group sponsoring the conference will share the profits, the amount or percentage to be determined a) according to the amount of seed money OFTP originally invested or b) according to a predetermined percentage between the OFTP executive and the local support group.
4. OFTP is willing to underwrite all or some of the potential losses depending on the financial circumstances of the support group.
5. OFTP asks that any support group submit a plan, detailing a tentative budget, a request for seed capital, a plan to share profits and loss, and a general plan for the conference or fair. The plan should be sent to OFTP as early as possible in the planning process.
6. OFTP offers support in any areas the groups may request i.e. promotion, expertise, volunteers, presenters.
7. OFTP requests that: a) the OFTP logo be used to indicate co-sponsorship; b) there be discounts for OFTP members; c) there be promotion of OFTP membership; d) there be a free display table for OFTP; and e) one OFTP member/conference committee member to liaison with the OFTP executive.

Getting together

H.O.P.E. (Homes of Priority Education)

Contact Name: Jewel Cressman

Phone Number: 519-662-3104

Email Address:

bjcressman-AT-(alumni.uwaterloo.ca)

Web Site: <http://hope.myhomebase.org/>

Other Links: YAHOO Group:

> http://ca.groups.yahoo.com/group/hope_stratford/

(must be a member to join this Yahoo group)

Area Served: Stratford, Ontario and surrounding region

Description

We are a non-denominational Christian group. Members must sign our statement of faith. The group averages around 40-45 families each year.

Activities

We hold Support Meetings on the fourth Monday of the month (September, October, November, January, February, March, and April). These meetings are open to all and have a wide range of topics. A small library with support materials (no curriculum) is available for members at these meetings. Topics for support meetings are published in advance in our newsletter, The Hope Herald. It is published monthly from August through May and is the main means of communication for our group.

We provide H.O.P.E. Days, which is a cooperative teaching opportunity. These occur on six Friday mornings, from 9:00 - 11:30, in the fall and in the spring to provide interaction, fun, and learning in a group setting. There is a nursery provided for the younger children and activity classes for the older children. There is a cost for H.O.P.E. Days above the H.O.P.E. registration fee, and parental involvement is expected. We plan many field trips and activities throughout the year. Members are encouraged to be involved and to contribute to the group by organizing, volunteering, and participating in events. Some activities include our Track and Field Day, skating and hockey on Fridays through the winter, Science, Geography and Biography fairs, Lego Contest, Talent Night, and many interesting and educational field trips.

Membership Fees/Requirements:

Annual membership fees are approximately \$45/family

The Headwaters Homeschooling Network

Contact: Amanda Philip

Email: thhn_info@yahoo.ca

Other Links: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TheHeadwatersHomeschoolingNetwork>

Area Served: Towns in the Hills of Headwaters, including Amaranth, Caledon, East Garafraxa, East Luther-Grand Valley, Erin/Hillsburgh, Melancthon, Mono, Mulmur, Orangeville and Shelburne.

Description

The Headwaters Homeschooling Network is a way to connect with homeschooling families living in the towns of the Hills of Headwaters. It's an informal way to make friends, find support, share ideas and have fun, for both kids and parents. All ages and methods of homeschooling welcome. New as of summer 2009.

Activities

Park days, field trips, get-togethers, picnics, holiday events and more. The group is new, and activities can be changed and added as members wish. Some ideas for the future might be book clubs, craft groups, support or information meetings for parents, etc, all organized by parents/members of the group. Parents may also want to arrange special ongoing activities (eg. swimming or dance lessons) or provide music or language lessons in their homes, if there is interest among the group.

Membership Fees: None

My name is Cindy Harasen and I am a homeschooling mother of three living in Blake Township outside of Thunder Bay, Ontario. Last November our family produced a radio documentary called Planet Kaleigh about life with our daughter Kaleigh who has Down syndrome. The documentary originally aired on CBC Radio's Outfront in January, 2009. Copies of Planet Kaleigh are currently being produced and distributed by our family (free of charge) to Down syndrome support groups and relevant organizations and agencies across North America and will also be available on a number of websites. If you would like more information about Planet Kaleigh or are interested in receiving a copy of this documentary for your group or organization, please contact Cindy Harasen at harasens@tbaytel.net.

My husband has spent many years creating www.toytheater.com as a free and quality educational website for PreK through Grade 5. It covers areas of math, reading, art and music. Please visit when you have a chance to see if it can help with your homeschooling experience. Feel free to add a link to www.toytheater.com if you think this site would be helpful for your children. It is completely free and will remain that way. We want children to learn!

Thanks,

Maria Hoagland



Kids Rule!

Kids Rule features great stories, pictures, and ideas by kids and for kids!
 Email or snail mail your jokes, stories, crosswords, pictures and ideas to:
 newsletter @ontariohomeschool.org
 Boaro,
 309 Chiswick Line, R.R. 1,
 Powassan, ON, P0H 1Z0

SUDOKU

(Puzzle created by the Harper Family)

During the 18th century Swiss mathematician Leonhard Euler developed the concept of "Latin Squares" where numbers in a grid appear only once, across and up and down. Later in the 1970's, Dell Magazines in the US began publishing puzzles using Euler's concept with a 9 by 9 square grid called Number Place developed by an independent puzzle maker, Howard Garnes.

In the mid-1980s, the president of the Japanese puzzle giant Nikoli, Inc., Mr. Maki Kaji, urged the company to publish a version of the puzzle that eventually became a hit in the country of Japan. Nikoli Inc., gave the game its current name of Sudoku.

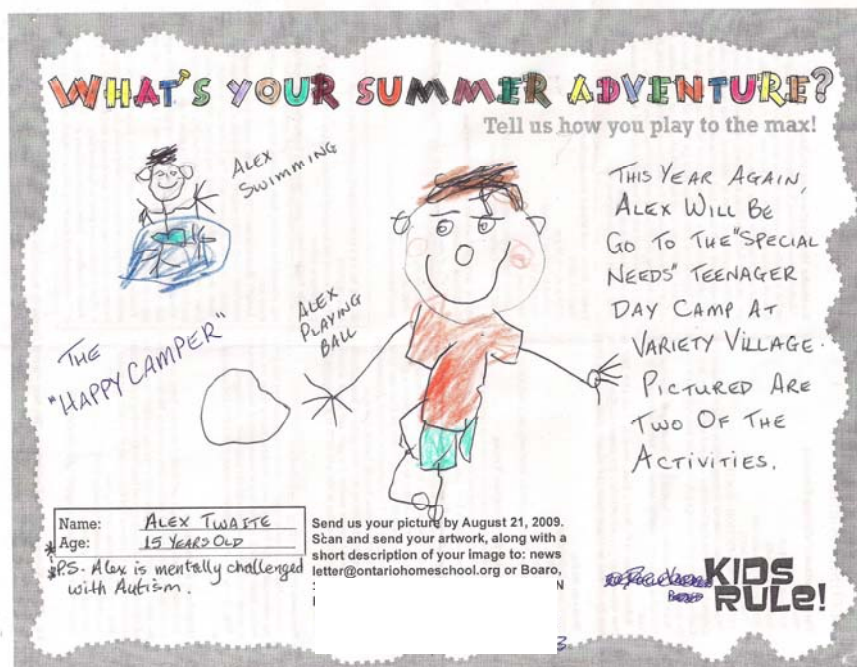
The object of Sudoku is to fill the empty cells with numbers between 1 and 9. Using the numbers 1 to 9, each number should appear only **once** in each row, column and a region—a region being a three by three highlighted block area.

			9					
			1	7	6			
		2				7	9	3
8	4				7		6	1
		3				5		
1	2		5				4	8
3	9	8				4		
			6	4	3			
				5				

Are you a photographer? Are you between the age of 6 to 14 years old? The National Geographic International Photography Contest For Kids begins August 3, 2009, and ends November 2, 2009.

For contest information, go to:

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/contests/Photos>



"What's your Summer Adventure"

This year Alex Twaite will go the "Special Needs" Teenager Day Camp at Variety Village in Toronto, Ontario. Pictured are two of the activities: swimming and playing ball.

High School and Beyond...

Concordia University College of Alberta

"Concordia University College of Alberta is an accredited degree-granting institution under the provision of the *Post-Secondary Learning Act* (Alberta), and is a member of both the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU).

We are a small, liberal arts university college offering bachelor degrees in Arts, Science, Management, Education and Environmental Health. We also offer diploma and certificate programs in Career Development and church work, as well as a Masters in Information Systems Security Management (MISSM) program and a new Masters of Arts in Biblical and Christian Studies.

Recently we've developed an admission policy for home-schooled students.

Here is a link that provides the details:

<http://www.concordia.ab.ca/programs/degree/ba.php#3.2.2>

Concordia University College of Alberta
7128 Ada Boulevard
Edmonton, AB T5B 4E4

Phone: 780-479-9220

Toll-free: 1-866-479-5200

E-mail: admits@concordia.ab.ca

Every student can learn, just not
on the same day, or the same way.
-- George Evans

Academic and Career Entrance Program (ACE)

The Academic and Career Entrance Program (ACE) is recognized as a Grade 12 equivalent by Colleges and Apprenticeship for purposes of admission to post secondary programming, as well as, by employers across the province of Ontario.

The focus of ACE is on securing access primarily for students whose goal is a post secondary college program. The course result are the minimum of what must be learned to qualify for a certificate.

Participants work on an individualized, self-paced basis. Depending upon the community courses can be offered during daytime and evening hours, on a full-time and part-time basis. Applicants must be 19 years of age or older.

All 24 colleges offer ACE not only at main campus sites, but also at satellite locations. At last count ACE programming was accessible to more than one hundred areas across the province.

For the most part, the focus of ACE is for students whose goal is entering a post secondary college program. The identified course outcomes are the minimum that must be learned to qualify for a certificate.. Generally the process has been for colleges to develop specific preparation programs as part of college offerings e.g. Pre Health and Pre Technology. The learning outcomes for these courses are different from ACE. If a university education is desired an increasing number of colleges are either collocated with universities (Canadore), have themselves been reclassified as college/universities (Durham) or have articulation agreements with a university (Nursing:Fanshawe and UWO).

As of June 2008 some ACE courses have been available as online distance courses.

For more information about the ACE programming go to:
<http://www.collegeupgradingon.ca/ace/myths.htm>
<http://www.collegeupgradingon.ca/ace/overview.htm>

Home Rules SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND DEADLINES

If you are interested in making a submission for the Home Rules newsletter, here are some guidelines to follow:

Topic Suggestions - your 'style' of homeschooling; curriculum critiques or reviews; teen stories; research studies on homeschooling; educational articles; book reviews; tell us about your support group etc.

Length Restrictions - There are currently no restrictions but attempts should be made to keep articles concise. When making a submission, please include a brief bio about yourself, approximately 2 to 3 sentences in length.

Book Reviews - Please include the author, ISBN number, publisher, copy-right date and name of reviewer. If a homeschooled child has reviewed the book please include the child's age.

Curriculum Reviews - Include curriculum name, supplier name and contact information, price, appropriate age/grade level and name of reviewer.

Format - See "Newsletter Inquiries/Submissions" to your right for contact information. The Editor can accept most file formats. Articles can be attached to a regular e-mail or included within the body of the e-mail message. Articles may also be sent through traditional mail (be sure to allow sufficient time prior to the deadline).

Issue Deadlines - Submission deadlines are the third Friday of each odd-numbered month (January, March, etc.) by 6 p.m.