

“All That Glitters is Not Gold”
By Christy Myers

Communicating and interacting with other home-schooling parents is something I really enjoy. I have improved in the schooling of my own children with these encounters. When my family moved to Iowa in the spring of 2005, I searched out home-schoolers. In my search I discovered the Home School Assistance Program (HSAP). Many people in our small town were a part of it. The more I learned about this program the more my husband and I were determined to not participate in it.

Many of my strong beliefs come from being home-schooled in Arizona. At the age of five I developed severe asthma which resulted in my missing days and weeks at a time from public school. My mom had to teach me so I could keep up with the other students. When I was in third grade my mom was advised by the public school administrators that she was doing a great job schooling me at home and should consider doing it all the time. They also conveyed to my mom that the school's home teaching program was inadequate since it only provided three hours of help per week. They even provided a couple of home-schooling curriculum companies to contact. During those days there were no home-school support groups. In fact, home-schooling was not well received by most people. My parents had to keep me inside during public school hours. During my 7th grade year my parents received a letter from the Arizona Attorney General's office stating that my parents had a certain amount of days to enroll me in an accredited school or face prosecution. Quickly they enrolled me in a Christian school, but after proving my enrollment to the Attorney General's office my parents just as quickly withdrew me. After that incident we were more careful to not be seen during school hours and watched what we said to people. During these years many home-school parents were being put into jail across the nation. My parents, along with many others, knew that it was their duty as Godly parents to train their children in God's ways not man's ways. They were pioneers that fought for our home-school freedoms that we have today. The HSAP is designed to slowly take away that freedom. The more families that join, the more influential it becomes.

I know you may be asking how joining a group that is so friendly and encouraging to home-school families can take away freedom. Well, my grandma's favorite saying was, “All that glitters is not gold.” Let me give you some real cases that reinforce my grandma's wisdom. In Alaska the nation's best home-schooling law was passed in 1997. That summer the Galana School District began a statewide correspondence study program abbreviated IDEA. The school officials wanted “to provide educational, emotional, intellectual, and financial support to those who would like to work in partnership with a public school district.” Many jumped on board. At the beginning participants were allowed to purchase curriculum from Christian publishers if they choose, but that was quickly prohibited. In fact, some parents became deceptive in getting their Christian curriculum. You see, once 75% of homeschoolers in Alaska became dependent on government funds, the rules were changed.¹ Another case was in California. A mom who had independently home schooled for 3 years had been disabled in a car accident and decided to join a charter school. This school did a co-op on Mondays and the parents schooled the rest of the week. Things were great the first month, because she only had to turn in her children's work once a month. The next month the teacher required the mom to do more things which she reluctantly agreed to. The next time the mom went in to turn in her children's work she did not take her children for convenience reasons. It was made very clear to her that her children had to come because the teacher not only had to review their papers, but the physical appearance of

¹ Klicka, Christopher J. “Charter Schools: The price is too high.” [The Home School Court Report](#) 18 (2002)

them as well. The mother withdrew her children from the school's program and was bombarded several times by the child welfare services demanding that she place her children in public school.² The last example is one that is closer to my home. A family that was enrolled in the HSAP in Des Moines, Iowa had two of their children selected as leads in a play. The play was originated by the HSAP and directed by the public school employees. After reviewing the script, the parents of these two children discovered its humor was a series of suggestive innuendos. The family offered several small script changes that were declined. In fact, instead of going to the parents the HSAP play directors went to the students in the play and persuaded most of them to say no to any changes. As a result the family withdrew from the HSAP. These parents later discovered that similar HSAP programs in other states had attractive programs, but gradually had usurped parental authority.³ It is very unfortunate that most parents in these programs end up compromising their convictions instead of leaving. Most public schools think the only way to be productive is to be THE authoritative figure in all the children's lives. The only way they can obtain this is to take the authority from the parents. Many parents are too willing to give this responsibility to the state. However, the Bible clearly states that it is the parent's responsibility (Proverbs 22:6, Deuteronomy 6:5-7)!

In Iowa the school district gets 60% of the full-time funds for each HSAP participating child. It is no wonder they are so friendly? According to legislation 281-31.4 "the district may IMPOSE additional requirements upon children enrolled in its home-school assistance program." I do not want to be put into a position where they can impose more upon me than what is required by law. Even though there are plenty of great Christian teachers in the public school system, they are still under the rule of a secular system. The same restraints that were forced upon the home-schooling pioneers, like my parents, are soon to become this generation's affliction also. If we do not open our eyes to the truth and continue to support HSAP type programs, we WILL find ourselves once again heading down the road of state and federal control. Having once depended upon the state's educational and financial support, it becomes more difficult to be on your own. Nevertheless, it can be done and it is well worth the cost! God is the Provider and He is fully capable of helping with every need. Are we going to compromise our children's education to man's ways or are we going to take a stand and follow God's ways? Which will you choose? My husband and I choose God's way (Joshua 24:15).

² Ibid

³ "Innuendos in Script of Drama Play Prompt Soul Searching." Hslda.org/hs/state/ia/200310280.asp