



Homeschooling is parent-directed education that meets the requirements for regular school attendance. The U.S. Department of Education in its 2007 National Household Education Survey estimated that “1.5 million students (1,508,000) were homeschooled in the United States” (see <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009030.pdf/>). In that same study, parents were asked why they homeschooled their children. “The three reasons selected by parents of more than two-thirds of students

reporters. (e.g., *Colo. Rev. Stat. § 19-3-304; Haw. Rev. Stat. § 350-1.1(a); Me. Rev. Stat. Ann. tit. 22 § 4011-A(1); Mont. Code Ann. § 41-3-201(2); Neb. Rev. Stat. § 28-711(1); Va. Code Ann. § 63.2-1509*) The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found that “professionals submitted more than one-half (56.5%) of the cases referred to and assessed or investigated by child protective services (CPS), with education personnel the most frequent source of reports (16.2%).”

children is more frequent or severe than those who attend public or private schools, it is not surprising that child welfare advocates are concerned that homeschooled children may be at risk for undetected abuse simply because these children do not have the benefit of oversight by school officials. Accordingly, some CPS officials would like enhanced authority to intervene, in particular, to be given the right to speak directly and privately to the child.

Homeschooling and Child Protection

were concern about the school environment, to provide religious or moral instruction, and dissatisfaction with the academic instruction available at other schools.”

The extent of the regulations and requirements imposed upon parents who wish to educate their children at home varies by state. The Home School Legal Defense Association provides the following graphic:

Almost all states specifically list professional school officials as mandated

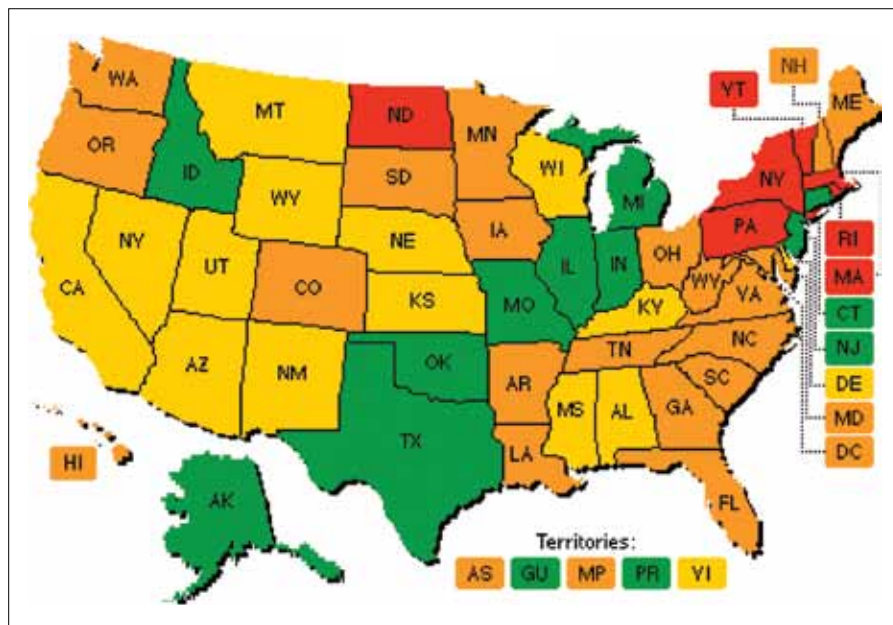
[www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/user-manuals/educator/educatorb.cfm#backntwo, Identifying reasons why educators are concerned about child abuse and neglect (2003)]. As the number of children being homeschooled increases, the number of reports of suspected child abuse and neglect by school officials regarding those children is obviously decreasing dramatically.

Whether or not there is hard evidence that abuse among homeschooled

While there is no intrinsic antagonism between home schooling and child protection, it seems that there is an increase in the number of legal actions alleging that CPS workers illegally search the residence of parents who are home schooling their children. In general, a state department of human services may not “seize” a child from the custody of its parents unless there is a court order, the parent consents, or there are some other exigent circumstances. Specifically, the Fourth Amendment protects against unreasonable searches and seizures.

To what extent have the courts established that this amendment regulates social workers’ civil investigations? What is the balance between the need for CPS workers to challenge the parent’s Fourth Amendment rights versus the importance of the government’s

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LEGEND

- ◆ **States requiring no notice:** No state requirement for parents to initiate any contact.
- ◆ **States with low regulation:** State requires parental notification only.
- ◆ **States with moderate regulation:** State requires parents to send notification, test scores, and/or professional evaluation of student progress.
- ◆ **State with high regulation:** State requires parents to send notification or achievement test scores and/or professional evaluation, plus other requirements (e.g. curriculum approval by the state, teacher qualification of parents, or home visits by state officials).

Source: <http://www.hslda.org/laws/default.asp>, Home School Legal Defense Association

The data center's mission is to support child welfare agencies in using longitudinal data and cutting-edge information technology to improve outcomes for children. To learn more about the data center and its services, visit www.chapinhall.org/partners/CSFCAD or contact Christina Crayton, NAPCWA staff liaison at christina.crayton@aphsa.org.

Fall Conference Highlights Data Integration

The Intelligence for Social Policy (ISP) Fall 2011 Conference held in Washington, DC at the end of November brought together individuals from sites with established, developing, and nascent integrated data systems. The two-day meeting focused on HIPAA and FERPA issues, research ethics, data quality and integration strategies, and integrated data applications for juvenile justice, early childhood, and housing. The sessions featured Allegheny County's (PA) Human Services and Public Schools Data Sharing Partnership; South Carolina's Integrated Data Warehouse; Washington State's TANF Integrated Client Database; and addi-

tional presentations from Milwaukee and Chapin Hall.

ISP's mission is to improve the quality of education, health and human service agencies' policies and practices through the use of integrated data systems. The summit provided an opportunity to demonstrate research and analytic capacities that integrated data systems enable, promote professional networking, and establish guidelines for practice.



National Association of State Child Care Administrators
an affiliate of the American Public Human Services Association

Nine States Win Race to the Top Awards

On December 16, Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan and HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius announced the winners of the \$500 million Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge (RTT ELC) grant program. Out of 37 applicants, nine states will receive grant funding for four years to close their school readiness gap

and improve high-quality care and education for low-income children. These states are California, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Rhode Island, and Washington.

The winning states will be charged with developing new approaches to raise the bar to improve early learning for low-income children and provide them with better access to high-quality care and education. RTT ELC grant funds will also support the work of states in creating greater investments to build statewide systems of high-quality early learning and development programs that will affect Head Start, Pre-Kindergarten, child care and other early learning programs.

The National Association of State Child Care Administrators congratulates the winning states and looks forward to seeing collaborative work and reforms that promote integrative strategies to improve child outcomes. More information can be located at www2.ed.gov/programs/racetothetop-earlylearningchallenge/awards.html/.

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interest to justify an intrusion into a person's home? These and other questions are asked following the death or injury of children who were removed from a school setting. [See e.g., Gross, J. (January 12, 2008). Lack of Supervision Noted in Deaths of Home-Schooled. New York Times, www.nytimes.com/2008/01/12/us/12bodies.html/]

Homeschool advocates note, however, that without definitive evidence that there is an increased risk of abuse, there should be no cause for undue

scrutiny and suspicion of homes in which children are homeschooled. Indeed, they ask poignantly, how safe are children in public and private schools? In both cases, we dare not underestimate the formidable task faced by CPS workers.

Daniel Pollack is a professor at Yeshiva University's School of Social Work in New York City and a frequent expert witness in child welfare cases. He can be reached at dpollack@yu.edu.