

Elizabeth Bartholet Statement on Homeschooling

Both I and the Harvard Law School Child Advocacy Program, for which I serve as Faculty Director, have received many hundreds of comments and questions related to my position on homeschooling. Because it is impossible to respond individually to every inquiry, I am setting forth my position briefly here, with links to more detailed versions.

I believe that children have rights, rights that must be balanced against parent rights. These include the right to an adequate education and the right to be protected from maltreatment. I am opposed to parent rights absolutism -- the idea, shared by many who oppose homeschooling regulation, that parents have absolute rights to control their children free from any state intervention on the child's behalf.

I also believe that many homeschooling parents are doing a fine job. Many are providing a far better education than their children could get in the public schools, and relatively few are guilty of abusing or neglecting their children.

But a significant subset of homeschooled children are at serious risk for maltreatment and inadequate education in the current, largely unregulated homeschooling regime. I am not in favor of a ban on homeschooling, but I do support regulation of homeschooling to ensure every child's right to protection and education.

My views are laid out in more detail in the following:

- The original and most detailed version of my position is in my article: [Homeschooling: Parent Rights Absolutism vs. Child Rights to Education & Protection](#), 62 Ariz. L. Rev. 1 (2020)
- An interview responding to questions about my position: "[A Warning on Homeschooling](#)" by Liz Mineo, *Harvard Gazette* (5/15/2020)
- [A brief statement of my position](#) as expressed in a June 2020 CATO event
- Additional information can be found in the [Homeschooling section of my website](#)