CANADIAN CENTRE
FOR HOME EDUCATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Advocating for your rights.
Changing the perceptions
of Canadians.

CCHE
Canadian Centre for Home Education

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page 1 Message from the Executive Director

Page 2 Home Education around the World
Global Education Fund

Page 4 Helping Homeschool Families in Need
When Disaster Strikes
Families in Need Fund (FIN)

Page 5 NLC 2017 From a Teenager's Point of View
Leadership Training Fund

Page 6 Homeschool Legal Support
Legal Policy & Intervention Fund

Page 8 Where we are Going, Influencing the Culture
Homeschooling Awareness Fund

Page 9 What is the difference between HSLDA and CCHE?

This document is provided to our dedicated Donors. Thank you for partnering with us on this journey.

Executive Director Peter Stock

FROM PETER'S PERSPECTIVE

YOUR SUPPORT IN 2017 made a tremendous difference in protecting the right to homeschool. Sadly, we must continue to defend our rights, even in provinces where homeschooling is long-established and widespread.

At the beginning of the year we witnessed a showdown in court between the NDP Government of Alberta, and the largest homeschool facilitator, Wisdom. Thankfully, this was resolved quickly in favour of Wisdom.

June finally saw the end of one long and costly legal saga in Quebec, with victory in the Quebec Court of Appeal for the Ostiguy family. The appellate court win, coupled with decisions in other homeschooling cases, prompted the Quebec Liberal Government to act. By the fall, the legislature had passed a bill that reaffirmed the right of parents to choose home education; and, stripped power from local school boards to interfere in this choice.

As you know, what happens in one province can easily have a ripple effect on other provinces. This is why it is so important for CCHE to continue to be vigilant and active right across the nation in 2018, and beyond. Your support allows us to maintain that vigilance and respond quickly.

Of course, defending our rights in court or at the legislature is not all that your support allows us to accomplish. Provincial and local leaders need to be encouraged onward, and new leaders raised up. Our National Leaders Conference (NLC), held in the fall of 2017, in Quebec City, brought together homeschool leaders from right across the nation for a time of training, networking and refreshment. Please consider joining us as we convene in Edmonton from September 13-15th for National Home Education Conference 2018 (NHEC).

Another important opportunity to affirm homeschooling and develop its growth internationally happens through our support of the Global Home Education Conference. This year's conference will be chaired by CCHE's own chairman, Gerald Huebner, in Russia, May 13-17, 2018. Your participation would also be warmly welcomed.

It was my privilege to begin serving the national homeschooling community in 2017 through my role at CCHE. I'm thankful that so many faithful families are willing to partner with us as we work to support and grow our movement. I'd be delighted to have a conversation with you about anything we do, or could be doing. Please call or email me anytime at 519-913-0318 or peter@cche.ca.

Sincerely,

Peter Stock

Home Education around the World

Global Education Fund: $23,000

BY GERALD HUEBNER

Chairman of the Board for HSLDA and CCHE

THE GLOBAL HOME EDUCATION CONFERENCE TAKES PLACE IN RUSSIA FROM MAY 15-19, 2018

WWW.GHEC2018.ORG

I HAD THE PRIVILEGE of participating in home education events in 8 different cities around the world as part of two trips. During the first trip, my wife Beverly and I spoke in Russia and United Arab Emirates (UAE). On the second trip, I was accompanied by my daughter, Diane Kroeker. We spoke about the joys of home education in Italy, Hungary, Ukraine and Belarus. These are countries where home education is either very uncommon, (Italy and Hungary) or virtually non-existent (Ukraine and Belarus). Having Bev speak as a veteran home educator and then Diane as a homeschool graduate and homeschooling mom was incredibly powerful.

It was a truly wonderful trip with results beyond our hopes and expectations. While we will always defend the rights of Canadian homeschoolers, there's much work that needs to be done to support and promote home education worldwide.

Gerald and his daughter Diane in Budapest.

Many homeschooling moms attended the GHEC in Rio, 2016.

In Russia we participated in a conference in St. Petersburg with 125 attendees. We were able to make preparations for the 3rd Global Home Education Conference this May in Russia.

I also participated in a TV interview with Mike Donnelly from HSLDA USA and Alexey Komov from Russia, with a leading Orthodox priest. Father Dimitri is a strong advocate for home education and family values.

In UAE we joined the Mendoza family from the Philippines and others in the 1st Middle East Home Education Conference in Dubai, UAE. This event was excellent with great participation and interest including a number of Muslim home educators.

In Dubai I also had a very positive meeting with the KHDA (Dubai Knowledge and Human Development Agency) responsible for Home Education in Dubai (Public schools in UAE are only for Emirati citizens). I conducted a presentation on home education around the world, what the research says and home education as a human right.

In Abu Dhabi we were able to interact with home educators and join a homeschool cooperative where we presented object lessons using science. The co-op had families from the USA, Canada, India, Brazil, Mexico, Philippines, Pakistan and more.

In Italy, Diane and I both spoke at a European Education Freedom and Homeschool Conference. Home education is legal in Italy and the requirements can be very onerous for parents. The conference was a great opportunity for them to begin discussions on the start of a national home education organization. In Hungary we participated and manned a homeschool booth at the World Congress of Families Conference. This was a huge pro-family event with over 1,000 participants. We were able to meet with those interested in home education from Hungary and many other countries.

Next we travelled to Ukraine where we helped a veteran homeschool couple deliver their first homeschool conference. We have already been asked to come back to speak in several cities across Ukraine.

Our last stop included conferences in two different cities in Belarus: Minsk and Gomel (close to Chernobyl in Ukraine). We met one family who has been home educating for several years although it is not common in Belarus. There is great interest to arrange a bigger conference for next spring in Belarus, so we will likely have this in our plans.

Many families said the information we shared was new to them and they wanted to hear more. It's been over 20 years since we've been supporting and advocating for Canadians; and, we understand the importance of developing strong support groups. Your generous donations enable us to help families in Canada, and around the world, by utilizing our expert speakers to share the homeschooling message.

Helping Homeschool Families in Need When Disaster Strikes

Families in Need Fund (FIN): $19,000

BY DINAH WHITTON

English Copy Editor and Staff Writer for HSLDA

CCHE IS PROUD TO have a benevolence fund to help families in extreme need to provide relief for homeschool related essentials. The Families in Need (FIN) program is dedicated to providing assistance to families for when the unexpected happens.

Like many homeschool families, Guy and Sheri Vincent enjoy being actively involved in the lives of their five children. They never imagined that one curious insect bite could have such a profound impact.

Three years ago Sheri suffered from an insect bite that seriously affected her mobility. After much testing and various treatments, she was diagnosed with Third Stage Neuro Lyme Disease. Homeschooling with a full house of vibrant children can keep any parent busy; but, a debilitating disease certainly added a stressful challenge, to say the least. During this time Guy was laid off from two jobs due to the economic climate in western Canada. Despite these incredible circumstances, this thriving family continued to homeschool, "The children have been amazing since we've made a lot of changes," reflected Sheri. "I used to be more 'hands-on', so we had to change the type of curriculum we use and they have all adjusted so well."

Even with their best efforts, their bills continued to mount and their homeschooling resources were at risk. "If there was only one homeschool supply we could get, it would be our HSLDA membership," said Sheri. "Being a member is so important to us!"

So when their HSLDA membership was up for renewal, Sheri asked a simple question: "is there any help for us?" To Sheri and Guy's relief, HSLDA's membership services team put them in touch with the FIN program facilitated by CCHE. The FIN program not only paid for their HSLDA membership, but also covered their homeschooling costs for the year. "My health condition has cost us our savings and retirement fund [and more]," Sheri said, "and the costs are not likely to decrease anytime soon since Health Canada does not provide treatment for Third Stage Neuro Lyme Disease."

The Vincent family remains grateful for the outpouring of support that they continue to receive, "It is a very real possibility that I will not win this fight as my condition is serious and continues to deteriorate," said Sheri, "thank you so very much for helping us with our homeschool costs. It has made a tremendous difference for us and taken a great weight off our shoulders."

Unfortunately there are still many families that have to face serious illnesses, death and abandonment that affect their ability to homeschool. Consider making a one-time donation or become a regular donor to support homeschool families during the most devastating times of their lives. Together we can make a difference!

We have all faced financial challenges along the way. Did you know that monthly giving is the most efficient way to support our Families in Need, uninterrupted. Will you partner with us with a monthly gift of $100, $50 or $15? On behalf of our families, thank you! To learn more about how you can donate visit cche.ca/donate.

NLC 2017 From a Teenager's Point of View

Riveting speakers discussed timely topics and offered practical advice.

Leadership Training Fund: $75,000

BY RÉBECCA BOILEAU

LAST YEAR, for the first time, I went to the National Leadership Conference (NLC) with my parents. When my mom asked me if I wanted to go, I was a little hesitant, but it was worth it.

In addition to the plenaries that the teenagers could also attend, there were workshops especially for us.

On Friday morning, we had an ice breaker session animated by André Riendeau and Stéphanie Dupont. There was a lot of fun and laughter!

In André Riendeau's workshop he talked about the process used to make decisions. We discovered that our decisions are rarely logical and, in reality, they are based on our beliefs.

In another workshop, we talked about a subject a little more taboo. Sam Black talked to us about the devastating effects of pornography; and, how it is increasingly present in the world, mostly because of Internet. He also highlighted organisations that are fighting against pornography and offer resources to those who wish to join their fight.

One of the most interesting workshops we attended was presented by Sam Oosterhoff. The message of this workshop was very encouraging: "Don't let your age stop you. No matter how young you're considered, you can do great things".

On Friday afternoon everyone went down to Old Québec and the St. Lawrence River for a cruise. We all laughed at the irony of a homeschool group traveling by school bus! Before going on the boat, we explored a small part of Old Québec. When we looked up, we could see Château Frontenac (it's really beautiful). The cruise took us on the St. Lawrence, allowing us to enjoy Québec landscapes. They couldn't have chosen a better place than Québec for the conference this year. It's truly a wonderful city that's full of history.

In addition to the workshops, the plenaries and the outing on the boat, I met other teenagers who are homeschooled outside of my province. Meeting people that are in similar circumstances at an event specially designed to encourage each other is one of the most wonderful things in the world. It was an enriching and extraordinary experience. I strongly advise you to go. You won't be bored.

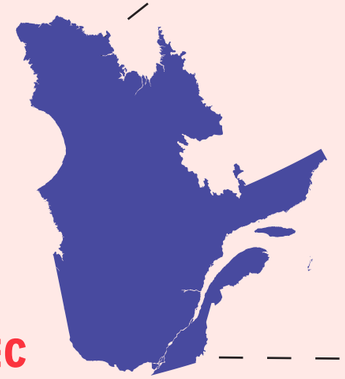
HOMESCHOOL LEGAL SUPPORT

Legal Policy & Intervention Fund: $52,000

BY MEGEN ZELINKA

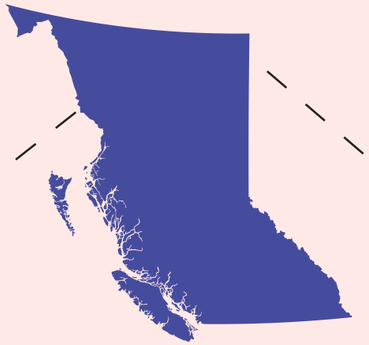
HSLDA Canada: Legal Counsel

I HAD THE PLEASURE of joining the HSLDA legal team in July of 2017, and what a busy year for the legal department! Your support has been crucial to our work in every province, especially Ontario, Alberta, Québec, and British Columbia. There's a lot more work to be done in 2018 to ensure that the homeschooling movement across Canada is protected, supported, and advanced. Thank you for your generous support!



QUEBEC

We have fought twice in court for families opposing their children's forced return to school. While we were successful in the Ostiguy case, the other court case is ongoing. In addition, the Québec legislature significantly revised the Education Act this year. HSLDA made submissions and testified in parliamentary hearings along with local organizations about the content of the new legislation. The passage of this bill is just the first step in developing a new legal framework for homeschooling. The regulations – which will have the most impact – and a "best practices" guide have yet to be drafted. HSLDA has been invited to sit on a homeschooling advisory panel to the Minister, and will have input on the regulations and guide.

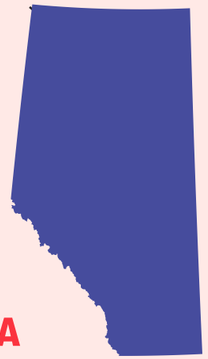


BRITISH COLUMBIA

British Columbia became an area of concern due to the introduction of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Educator Network to all schools. Given that many BC homeschoolers are in the "enrolled" homeschooling option (where the student is under a certified teacher using the provincial program), there is a very real possibility that SOGI may impact home educators. We are monitoring this issue closely this year.

ONTARIO

While Ontario's homeschooling paradigm - notification only - is one of the most relaxed in Canada, Ontario homeschoolers require significant legal support in dealing with school boards and child protection authorities (CAS). In the past year, we've assisted many member families facing CAS investigation of their homeschooling to resolve the situation, and worked with members in educating their local school boards on the limits of the board's authority.



ALBERTA

The NDP Government passed Bill 24, which compels all schools (including private and religious schools with whom many of our members register) to facilitate the creation of gay-straight alliance clubs; and, prevents schools from informing parents of their child's participation. While the law does not yet directly impact homeschooling families (whose children do not attend school facilities where GSAs are held), HSLDA is monitoring the situation and communicating with our membership about it.

Where we are Going, Influencing the Culture

Homeschool Advocacy & Awareness Fund: $43,000

BY PETER STOCK

Executive Director for CCHE

I'D LIKE TO SHARE with you a little bit about where I believe home education is headed and the role CCHE and HSLDA will play in the future.

First, consider the demographics: our birth rate in Canada, like much of the western world, is below replacement levels. Sadly, this means the total number of school age children in Canada continues to decrease annually. As a result, the public school system is in decline as the pool of possible students shrinks. In my own community I've seen a number of elementary schools, and even a high school, demolished and not replaced.

Yet, despite the drop in the general population of children, the number of home educated children is growing rapidly. The best statistics we have are a few years old now, but they demonstrate a 5% annual increase, roughly over the last decade. Some of the key reasons parents are choosing home education include: concern over declining academic standards, radical 'sex-ed' curriculum, bullying, and lack of support for special needs.

For educational bureaucracies and teachers' unions, home education is often seen as an economic threat as classroom funding is generally based on grants per student. These entrenched interests can be expected to increase their demands for greater 'regulation' of home education in an attempt to persuade children, and grant money, back into the public system.

Instead of simply responding to these demands when they arise, our vision for CCHE is to be proactive in our advocacy. We are developing a plan to directly engage with provincial lawmakers to improve the environment for homeschooling, even where there is no present challenge to our rights.

We are also developing a marketing program to proactively seek out parents, particularly parents of preschoolers, and provide them with information about the value of home education. Digital marketing will enable us to reach our intended audience with precision, and at low cost. Our goal is to grow the homeschooling population exponentially, over time.

With the hiring of a CCHE media relations specialist, we will be utilizing traditional print, radio and television media, as well as digital media, to share positive messages about home education with the general public. Our goal is to influence Canadian public opinion over time so favourably towards home education that no politician will ever try to deny our rights.

Finally, we will continue to expand our international efforts to support the founding of national homeschooling organizations throughout the world. There are two strong reasons for our international efforts. First, of course, are the benefits that home education brings to every family, no matter where they live. Second, the legal affirmation of home education in more nations buttresses our legal defence and advocacy here in Canada; and, may assist in changing attitudes and eventually the law in places like Germany and Sweden.

I hope you'll continue to partner with us as we seek to create a brighter future for home education.

What is the difference between The Home School Legal Defence Association of Canada (HSLDA Canada) and Canadian Centre for Home Education (CCHE)?

The Homeschool Legal Defence Association of Canada (HSLDA) and the Canadian Centre for Home Education (CCHE) are two organizations that work together to support home education in unique ways.

HSLDA

- Reliable membership based organization for Canadian homeschoolers
- Daily contact for everyday homeschool questions, resources, insurance and legal advice

CCHE

- A charitable organization that promotes home education in Canada and around the world through research and distinct programs
- Donations enable CCHE to support families in home education challenges including, the Families in Need program and the Legal Defence Fund (tax deductible)

For more information on HSLDA Canada or how to join visit ***www.hslda.ca***

To learn more about CCHE and how you can donate visit ***www.cche.ca/donate***

CCHE

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