

Parent Jailed for Denying Kids 'Sex Ed' Classes

What would you do if your parents were arrested for keeping your little sister out of sex ed classes? That's just what happened to Heinrich and Irene Wiens.

The Wiens didn't want their four kids to attend a mandatory play and four school days of sex ed because the teaching offered what they considered an extremely permissive view of sexuality. So they kept the kids home.

The result: the Wiens were sentenced to more than six weeks in prison for refusing to pay a German court-imposed fine. As ridiculous as it sounds, the story isn't all that unusual. Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) has four similar cases going. In fact, Iren is the 10th Christian parent imprisoned. Heinrich already served his time.

ADF attorneys are working to get the Iren out of jail. ADF attorneys filed an emergency order on Thursday with the European Court of Human Rights, calling for the mother's immediate prison release.

"Parents, not the government, are the ones ultimately responsible for making educational choices for their children, and jailing them for standing on this universal right is simply unconscionable," says ADF Legal Counsel Roger Kiska. "Irene Wiens was well within her rights under the European Convention of Human Rights to opt to teach her children a view of sexuality that is in accord with her own religious beliefs, instead of sending them to four days of classes and an interactive play that she found to be objectionable. These types of cases are crucial battles in the effort to keep bad decisions concerning parental rights overseas from being adopted by American courts."

During the period in June 2006 when the Wiens kept their kids home from school, the parents taught them Christian values on sexuality. But that wasn't good enough for school officials. In June 2008, the parents were fined about \$3,250, which they subsequently refused to pay.

School officials allege that the purpose of the compulsory play "Mein Körper Gehört Mir" (My Body Is Mine) was to introduce preventative measures for sexual abuse. Yet ADF attorneys argue that the play and sexual education lessons also promoted a very permissive view of sex and sexuality that strongly contradicts the Wiens' Christian beliefs. The Wiens' argue that no scientific proof exists that the programs deter sexual abuse, but that they rather teach children to become sexually active by instructing them to observe their inner feelings of sexuality, ultimately teaching that if something feels good sexually, then it is an acceptable practice.

ADF attorneys argue in their application of appeal filed with the European Court of Human Rights in *Wiens v. Germany* that the state violated the Wiens' parental rights under Protocol 1, Article 2 of the European Convention of Human Rights, Articles 4 and 6 of the Grundgesetz, German basic law, and other binding international treaties.