

Parents Sentenced to Jail for Homeschooling Their Kids

A judge in Brazil has sentenced a mother and father to prison for 50 days because they homeschool their children, accusing them of “intellectual neglect” and failing to teach them “tolerance and diversity.”

Audato and Ieda Denardi began homeschooling their daughters, Alice, 15, and Lorena, 11, in São Paulo, Brazil, during the pandemic in 2020 after recognizing shortcomings in their public schools’ remote-learning programs.

In doing so, they joined about 75,000 homeschooling families in Brazil. Little did the couple know their choice could cost them their freedom.

The Denardis saw homeschooling as a caring parental choice intended to give their daughters the best education possible; however, Brazilian state prosecutors viewed it as an administrative offense for failing to register the children in a formal, state-accredited school.



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The judge, despite being advised by the prosecutor in the case to acquit the family, convicted and sentenced them, making the Denardis the first to be criminally prosecuted for homeschooling children.

The judge accused them of “using their daughters as pawns in an ideological struggle ... while completely excluding the State’s involvement.”

Alliance Defending Freedom International is helping the

Denardis to appeal the ruling.

“The prosecutor examined the witnesses and recommended for acquittal. An independent educational psychologist found no sign of neglect. The girls themselves described rigorous daily education. The judge convicted anyway – because a 15-year-old said she finds some music lyrics morally questionable, and because the curriculum didn’t include state-approved content on gender,” said Julio Pohl, Legal Counsel for Latin America at ADF International.

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