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Children At Risk ---- 15 Ways Public Schools Can Harm Your Children

By Joel Turtel

Unfortunately, public schools, even in the "best" neighborhoods, can harm our kids in many ways.

Here's a list of 15 ways public schools can hurt children (and parents):

1. Public schools cripple millions of children's ability to read by using the "whole-language" instruction method (now called "balanced reading instruction" by many public schools).
2. Many public schools spend almost 50 percent of the school day on non-academic subjects that waste children's precious time. The rest of their time is spent on classes such as sex-education, personal safety, consumer affairs, AIDS education, save-the-environment, family life, study halls, multiculturalism, homeroom, electives, counseling, or sports activities.
3. Public schools teach "new" or "fuzzy" math (sometimes called by different names). These instruction methods can cripple children's ability to learn basic arithmetic. Students who fear math are less likely to pursue good careers like computer science and engineering that depend on a love of and competence with math.
4. These schools force children to read dumbed-down textbooks in English, History, and many other subjects. The textbooks are often geared to the slowest learners in the class and water-down the subject matter. Dumbed-down classes based on dumbed-down public-school textbooks therefore waste children's precious time. This is especially true for children who are quick learners, who must endure 12 years of excruciating boredom in public school classes.
5. Public schools force children to study subjects they might hate, can't learn, will never use in their lives, or which bore them. For example, many public schools force students to study a foreign language. Children learn better when they study subjects that interest them.
6. Author John Gatto, in his book "Dumbing Us Down" said that a child eager to learn can learn to read, write, and do basic arithmetic in about 100 hours. Yet our public schools keep children locked up for 12 years, yet can barely teach millions of kids to read.

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7. Public schools force parents to pay heavy school taxes for an inferior, often mind-numbing education for their children.

8. Public schools are a government-controlled near-monopoly. Bad schools don't close down because compulsory taxes prop them up. Incompetent or mediocre teachers aren't fired because tenure laws protect them. That's why public schools will never improve and will always waste children's precious time.

9. Many public schools subject children to drugs, bullies, violence, and values many parents disapprove of.

10. Public schools pressure many parents who have bright, normal children to give their kids potentially dangerous mind-altering drugs to make the bored kids "behave" in class. Over four million allegedly "unruly" kids line up for Ritalin every day in public schools across America. Methylphenidate (sold as

Ritalin) and cocaine are both listed in "Schedule II" of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency's Controlled Substances Act (CSA).

11. Public schools are compulsory. They therefore violate parents' natural and constitutional right to control the education of their children. Public school authorities, whose salaries we pay with our taxes, force parents to hand over their children to government employees called teachers and to schools that give an inferior education.

12. Public schools can destroy children's love of learning and self-confidence as learners. This can cripple children's ambitions and desire to go to college. This in turn, can force these children to end up with low-paying jobs for the rest of their lives if and when they graduate high school.

13. Public schools force millions of Christian parents to hand over their children to public schools which are decidedly anti-Christian. For example, many social studies textbooks used in public schools have censored out references to such words as 'family,' 'marriage,' 'religion,' 'fidelity,' etc. Many textbooks today refer to a family simply as people choosing to live together.

14. Public schools force children to witness sometimes shocking or obnoxious sexual material in sex-education classes, without parents' knowledge or consent.

15. The public-school near monopoly and compulsory-attendance laws cripple parents right and ability to choose a quality, low-cost school in an education free-market that has been squashed by the public-school monopoly.

Parents should consider taking their kids out of public school permanently. Parents can take advantage of quality, low-cost education alternatives available to them right now, such as the new Internet private schools that have low tuition costs.

Joel Turtel is an education policy analyst, and author of "Public Schools, Public Menace: How Public Schools Lie To Parents and Betray Our Children."

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Public-school Teachers Know Best ---- They Send Their Kids To Private Schools

By Joel Turtel

A study done by the Thomas B. Fordham Institute found that nationwide, public-school teachers are almost twice as likely as other parents to send their children to a private school. The study also found that more than one in five public-school teachers send their kids to private schools.

In the biggest cities across America, the statistics get even more startling. In Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and 16 other big cities, more than 1 out of 4 public-school teacher's kids attend private schools. In some cities, almost half the public-school teachers do this. For example, in Philadelphia, 44 percent, and in Cincinnati, 41 percent of public-school teachers sent their kids to private schools.

Yet, across America, only about 12.2 percent of all parents who are not teachers send their children to private schools.

Now, why is this? Public school authorities keep telling us that they give our kids a good education. Yet they send their kids to private schools?

Well, teachers know best in this case. They actually work in the public schools every day. They see the kind of 3rd-rate, often mind-numbing education children get in these schools. Public-school teachers love their children like all other parents do. They want the best for their kids. So, is it any wonder that so many teachers send their children to private schools?

These statistics should be a warning signal for parents, a red flag waving briskly in the wind. If your children's teachers are sending their children to private schools, should you be keeping your kids in public school? If the soldier-teachers in the public-school trenches tell you that there is something very wrong with these schools, you should, for once, be listening to them.

Actions speak louder than words. The fact that so many public-school teachers send their kids to

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private schools should be all the proof you need that it might be wise for you to look for education alternatives for your kids elsewhere.

If you think you can't afford an expensive private school, you're happily mistaken. Joel Turtel's book, "Public School's, Public Menace" tells parents all about quality, low-cost Internet private schools. These private schools are a great new resource for giving your children an excellent education at an affordable price.

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Joel Turtel is the author of "Public Schools, Public Menace: How Public Schools Lie To Parents and Betray Our Children." Website:

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