

# Homeschooling Parents Plead For Prayer For 'Difficulties'

**POLICE STATE, GERMANY: 3 Families Face Fines, Frozen  
Accounts**

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By Bob Unruh, © 2007 WorldNetDaily.com

Three families have released a letter pleading with Christians worldwide for prayer because of their "difficulties" - fines equal to thousands of dollars, frozen bank accounts and even the threat of the sale of the family home - because they homeschool their children.

The letter comes from Alexander and Helene Schneider, Johann and Katharina Harder and Heiko and Anna Krautter and was released through the International Human Rights Group, which already has been working on the case of German homeschooler Melissa Busekros.

Alexander and Helene Schneider  
Süßmilchstr. 3, D-01877 Bischofswerda, Germany  
Johann and Katharina Harder  
Dresdner Str. 6, D-01877 Demitz-Thumitz OT Wolkau, Germany  
Heiko and Anna Krautter  
Prischwitz 14, D-02633 Göda, Germany, Telefon & Fax 035937/88944

03/26/2007

We are turning to all believing gospel Christians and Baptists in the CIS, Europe and America.

We are three families of the church in Bischofswerda and we homeschool our children. For that reason we had to deal with numerous difficulties with the authorities. At first we were threatened with compulsory fines of over € 5,000 (Schneider family € 3,000, Harder family € 5,000, Krautter family € 5,000).

These penalties are now being enforced. Measures such as freezing our bank accounts, compulsory mortgages, insolvency of our self-employment are making our lives difficult. Even the custody of our children was to be taken from us, but GOD prevented it. Two courts decided against the loss of custody.

There already was a higher administrative court lawsuit that we lost.

On March 15, 2007 the revenue office of Bischofswerda and Bautzen, respectively, settled the compulsory fine by collecting it from our home ownership allowance. The following amounts were collected: € 1,476.10 from the Schneider family, € 5,368.00 from the Harder family and € 5,065.00 from the Krautter family.

Now the second compulsory fine in the same amount is due to be collected. Even our homes are to be sold for that. The bank account has already been frozen (Krautter family) and the marshals were already there (Schneider family).

We ask that you pray for us and that you make your voice heard before the secular powers.

**ADDRESSES**

state education office  
Sächsische Bildungsagentur  
Regionalstelle Bautzen  
Otto-Nagel-Str.1  
D-02625 Bautzen  
Germany

higher administrative court  
Oberverwaltungsgericht  
Ortenburg 9  
D-02625 Bautzen  
Germany

A letter to Christians seeking prayer for three families being fined for homeschooling their children in an atmosphere that protects them from state-required sex classes

Busekros was taken from her parents on a court order and put into a mental institution because she was being homeschooled. Authorities later moved her to a foster home, but she still is not being allowed to see her parents or return home.

As WND reported, she also released a letter through the IHRG pleading to be allowed to returned home.

IHRG President Joel Thornton told WND the situations are becoming more dire and parents more fearful about losing custody of their children because of the advancing stages of the Busekros case.

"We are turning to all believing gospel Christians and Baptists in the

CIS, Europe and America," the three sets of parents wrote. "We are three families of the church in Bischofswerda, and we homeschool our children. For that reason, we had to deal with numerous difficulties with the authorities."

The families cited fines of about \$4,000 for the Harder and Krautter families and about \$2,500 for the Schneider family – so far.

"Measures such as freezing our bank accounts, compulsory mortgages, insolvency of our self-employment are making our lives difficult," the letter said. "Even the custody of our children was to be taken from us, but GOD prevented it."

Now more fines are being imposed, and "even our homes are to be sold for that," the letter said.

"We ask that you pray for us and that you make your voice heard before the secular powers," said the letter.

Thornton said he and several others working on the government's attacks on homeschoolers traveled to Bischofswerda to meet with the families.

"The German government is taking these actions simply because these parents homeschool their children," he said. "With a very strong Christian faith and a conviction that they should be allowed to raise their children in a Christian educational environment, these families are taking a stand, particularly regarding their right to oversee the sex education of their children as well as protect them from occult influences.

He also said he was able to meet with members of the Brause family, about whom WND has reported. The German courts already have granted custody of the family's five children to social workers, although they had not yet moved them out of the family home.

"The youth welfare office has asked the parents to come in for a meeting on the week of 16 April. Often, this is how the youth welfare office begins taking charge of the children," Thornton said.

He said the organization continues to work on Melissa's case as well and met with her parents, Hubert and Gudrun Busekros, recently.

"They are encouraged by your prayers and letters of support as they continue to stand strong in spite of the fact that Melissa is still being held in state custody; this nightmare has gone on for over two months now," Thornton said.

"In fact, we are optimistic that Melissa will be returned to her family in the next few weeks – even though she was not permitted to come home and spend the Easter weekend with them," he said.

"Unfortunately, the family was not allowed to see Melissa at all this past week because her father, Hubert, was forcibly removed from the clearing house during a visit. His crime? Using his laptop computer to show Melissa a television interview that included a youth welfare worker stating that Melissa had never asked to go home," Thornton said.



Gudrun Busekros, Melissa's mother, with some of the supportive letters the family has gotten from around the world

"Melissa and her family are encouraged because they have received over 200 letters from around the world. Please continue to write and support them," Thornton said. Their home address is: Schallershoefer Strasse 72A, D-91056 Erlangen, Germany.

A separate website, FreeMelissaB.com, also has been launched by some homeschool supporters in the U.S. to provide addresses of people to contact to protest the situation in Germany.

Thornton told WND the problems for the homeschool families have developed simultaneously, but the fear of court intervention in their custody has been raised for parents suddenly because of Melissa's case.

The 15-year-old was taken by police from her parents to a psychiatric ward after a social worker and judge determined she had a "school phobia" and was being homeschooled, which is illegal in Germany.

The IHRG said it continues working on several fronts to try to help Melissa and her family, with several German lawyers evaluating their options for an appeal, all the way to the European Court of Human Rights, if needed.

Wolfgang Drautz, consul general for the Federal Republic of Germany, has commented on the issue on a blog, noting the government "has a legitimate interest in countering the rise of parallel societies that are based on religion or motivated by different world views and in integrating minorities into the population as a whole." Melissa had fallen behind in math and Latin and was being tutored at home. When school officials in Germany, where homeschooling was banned during Adolf Hitler's reign of power, found out, she was expelled. School officials then took her to court, obtaining a court order requiring she be committed to a psychiatric ward because of her "school phobia."

Drautz said homeschool students' test results may be as good as for those in school, but "school teaches not only knowledge but also social conduct, encourages dialogue among people of different beliefs and cultures, and helps students to become responsible citizens."

The German government's defense of its "social" teachings and mandatory public school attendance was clarified during an earlier dispute on which WND reported, when a German family wrote to officials objecting to police officers picking their child up at home and delivering him to a public school.

"The minister of education does not share your attitudes toward so-called homeschooling," said a government letter in response. "... You complain about the forced school escort of primary school children by the responsible local police officers. ... In order to avoid this in future, the education authority is in conversation with the affected family in order to look for possibilities to bring the religious convictions of the family into line with the unalterable school attendance requirement."

In Melissa's case, the local Youth Welfare Office arrived at the family home with about 15 uniformed police officers to take her into custody. They had in hand a court order allowing them to take her into custody, "if necessary by force."

The Home School Legal Defense Association, the largest homeschool

organization in the U.S. with more than 80,000 member families, said the case is an "outrage."