

I was raised in a tiny town in Pennsylvania, and was homeschooled from ages 4-15. My parents subscribed to fundamental Christianity and followed the teachings of the IBLP (Institute in Basic Life Principles). In their interpretation, this meant that they not only needed to hide their children from outside influences, but also that girls should not receive an education beyond what was necessary to run a household.

My parents feared the government and used religion as the reason to keep us from going to school. As a girl, my parents did not believe in my education. They told me explicitly that the Bible said my job was to have children and care for a home. This meant that they refused to give me instruction in any subjects beyond 2nd grade. They would give me a “curriculum” to do at my desk, but would not give me any help, in effect suggesting that I give up on education entirely to prepare to be a wife and mother.

I was also subjected to other forms of abuse throughout my childhood: I was kept out of sight in a closet until I was 4, so that my mother wouldn’t have to care for me. She claimed she was too busy trying to homeschool my five older siblings, despite the fact that education was not occurring.

The reason for all of this was my parents’ religious beliefs. Because of these beliefs and lax oversight of homeschooling, my parents were able to abuse and neglect us without any oversight whatsoever.

Signed,
ET