

New Jersey Homeschool Leadership
Press Conference
January 12, 2004
Trenton, New Jersey

Statement by Diane Toler, Catholic Homeschoolers of New Jersey

Good morning.

My name is Diane Toler and I am here today to represent the Roman Catholic homeschoolers of New Jersey. My husband, Rick, and I have two birth children and four children adopted through DYFS. We were DYFS foster parents for many years.

We are very sorry for the alleged problems in the Jackson family and we pray for healing and justice for the children and the parents. Homeschooling, however, was not the cause of the Jackson's problems. Laws to prevent such horrible cases are already in place, but the procedures are not always followed. Last Friday, the deputy human services commissioner for children's services quit her post as just another incident in DYFS's internal management woes. The agency is in constant turmoil.

Responsibility for the Jackson situation rests squarely with the Division of Youth and Family Services and, ultimately, with legislators and the governor. Many in our state legislature, particularly Assemblywoman Loretta Weinberg, are using homeschoolers as scapegoats. Ms. Weinberg is acting in a cowardly way by wanting to gloss over DYFS's shortcomings. Instead, she is focusing attention on innocent homeschoolers.

We are here to ask Ms. Weinberg, the entire assembly, the senate and the governor to halt this unjust persecution of innocent homeschooling families. We ask them to have the courage to take care of business in their own agencies and to stop the injustice of blaming our good families for the failures of DYFS.

Adding more regulations is not the answer. Fixing problems in areas that are currently regulated is the answer.