



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Sept. 17 - Annual Constitution Day in America's Schools

The United States Constitution, provides the framework for our implied rights and also outlines specific rights, such as Religious Freedom, within the Bill of Rights. Each year we commemorate the signing of the US Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787. Every school receiving federal funding is required to teach about the Constitution on Sept. 17. Many schools dedicate a week to this vital founding document.

After the revolution's victory there was no certainty that an independent United States would survive, let alone thrive. The financial situation was precarious and the former colonists were accustomed to living by their own laws and uneasy about this untried Constitution and the government for which it stood.

Earliest founders and statesmen insisted that our citizens' knowledge and appreciation of the Constitution would be its protection and lifeblood. One example of that determination was the 1828 publishing of the *Elementary Catechism on the United States of America* by Arthur J. Stansbury. The textbook used a question and answer format to teach young American students the principles and structure of our Constitutional Republic.

In conclusion, the author, Stansbury, urged students to remember "...this precious Constitution is your birth-right. It has been earned for you by your fathers who shed their dearest blood to win it for their children. To them it was the fruit of toil and danger. To you it is a gift. Prize it as you ought. To undervalue it is one of the surest ways to lose it." (*Elementary Catechism*, p. 78)

Learn the Constitution - <https://online.hillsdale.edu/courses/promo/constitution-101>

Read with your 7-9 year old - *Shh! We're Writing the Constitution* by Jean Fritz

"Hold onto the Constitution and the Republic for which it stands. If the American Constitution should fail, there will be anarchy throughout the world."

- Daniel Webster