



Focus on Religious Freedom

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Christmas is Not Shut Out of Our Children's Public Schools

Christian parents and grandparents should expect to hear about Christmas activities at their children's public schools and to welcome invitations to the school's Christmas plays, concerts and art exhibits.

The two clauses of the First Amendment which deal directly with freedom of religion are the Establishment Clause (which directs that the government shall not impose a particular religious sect or belief) and the Free Exercise Clause (which directs the government not to interfere with citizens' free exercise of their chosen faith.)

Repeated efforts to keep Christmas music, manger scenes, and all things to do with Christmas out of our public schools have actually resulted in many Supreme Court decisions which uphold the First Amendment rights of students to experience and learn the history and significance of Christmas, Hannukah, Kwanza and other December holidays.

From the First Liberty Institute's *Religious Liberty Protection Kit for Students and Teachers* – Pages 12, 13,14: For example, “a federal court held that a public school is allowed to celebrate Christmas (and other holidays with both religious and secular aspects) because doing so serves the educational goal of advancing students' knowledge and appreciation of the role that America's religious heritage has played in the social, cultural and historical development of civilization.”

Also students may study and perform religious music, art and drama “so long as it is presented in an objective manner as a traditional part of the culture and religious heritage of Christmas. In fact a federal court has held that to allow students only to study and not to participate in religious art, literature and music when such works have developed an independent secular and artistic significance, would give students a truncated view of our culture.”

Read more here: <https://tinyurl.com/4xrh52d9> <https://tinyurl.com/yc8kwazw>