

# Preserving the Constitution in the Hearts of Our Children

By Jesse Fisher

Hi. My name is Jesse and I'm a recovering public school teacher.

I'm pretty sure that I've had more experience setting up real student governments with student-led court systems than probably anyone else in the world.

*You'd be amazed at what students can do when we trust them to govern themselves.*

Once it backfired on me, though. Around 1992, I had been elected the leader of a group of parents who were establishing a private school here in Utah County. Because the school ended up launching in American Fork and I lived in Springville, I did not enroll my children. So, none of the students at the school knew me or my role in founding their school along with their student-run judicial system.

One day, I was asked to substitute for a staff member at the school. To make this long story short, I was put on trial along with 5 young students. They all pled guilty... (cowards!). I was the first person to ever plead not-guilty. So they had to have a trial. The entire student body attended. Student witnesses were called, a student prosecutor grilled me with questions, and I pled my case to the student jury. Those little self-governing scoundrels... found me guilty! They sentenced me to mop the floors. So I did. And you know what? I relished every moment, knowing that those kids learned more about "civics" from my trial than they would ever remember from sitting in a Social Studies class in a traditional school.

Since then, I taught US Government to 8<sup>th</sup> graders in a public school for two years. My second year, I was informed by the English teacher that I was the first teacher to ever eclipse the football coach as the most respected teacher. While employed there, I created a game to teach parliamentary procedure and had the students lead a Constitutional Convention lasting for three or four weeks... fortunately for us, our Constitutional Convention at least had air conditioning. Years later, at a local private school, I taught parliamentary procedure to the students and designed and implemented their student-run judicial system. Also designed the student government at the charter school where my wife teaches.

Among adults, I have served as precinct chair and vice chair for four election cycles here in Utah County, and I served on the board of the Utah 9/12 States Rights Coalition where I helped plan and promote the Utah Freedom Conference in September 2010. I also presented there on how to use social media to engage the public in the cause of freedom.

From all of my training and experience, I've come to the conclusion that the ability to govern ourselves individually and in small groups is *the* fundamental defense against the political apathy which allows tyranny to rise to power. Freedom IS self-government. Self-Government IS Freedom. There is no freedom without self-government, and vice versa. If we give our political responsibilities up to others, we become political sheep just waiting for a wolf to show up to "lead us" to destruction.

Unfortunately, our well-meaning public and private schools are *all* organized in a way that is 180 degrees askew from what our free society is supposed to be. Think about it! For some strange reason, our society believes that if we deny our children nearly every Constitutional right, all day every day for twelve years, somehow they are supposed to magically wield those rights responsibly when they turn 18! Without any practice doing so. It is simply unfathomable.

You remember that old poem that says, "If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn" etc.?

Well, I'd like to add another line or two. Here it is:

"If a child lives 6 to 7 hours a day in a strict top-down hierarchy and is denied nearly every God-given right, he learns to be a good subject to a king, not a good citizen of a free society."

(it's a tad long, but I think it would be an improvement to the poem).

I have three grandchildren and I suspect more on the way. I want my posterity to enjoy freedom -- forever. I would love for my grandchildren to experience an environment every day where real freedom and self-government, the rule of law, and the right to a trial by a jury of their peers are all held sacred. These American values are all starkly absent from the Prussian model of education that Horace Mann foisted on the American public beginning in 1852.

So, I'm founding a private school, in my "spare time," where children live all day every day under a constitution, where the students learn Roberts Rules of Order the same way they learned to walk and speak English. I'm starting a school where the students make the laws they have to live by, where their rights to property are not violated through confiscation, where all bullies are taken to court, where their right to a trial by jury is honored. Where they can learn to be free citizens so that when they get out into the world, into the mess we've made of our free nation, they not only can recognize tyranny when they see it, but that the Spirit of Freedom will burn in their hearts, and they will have the self-confidence and the wisdom to stand up to petty dictators and say, "Not while I take breath!"

That, my friends, is how you preserve the Constitution, you sear it into the hearts of the children where it will never be lost.

But it's not just about freedom and self-government. Let's talk about "e4" – Entrepreneurship.

At about age 11, I read Napoleon Hill's "Think and Grow Rich" and decided right then that I wanted to be a business owner. So, in the 7th grade, I did market research, picked a demographic, produced marketing materials, and distributed them. I fielded calls from prospects, closed the sales, and performed the service, and collected my fees... with no adult help or supervision.

Since then, I have started, helped start, or tried to save, multiple small businesses, interrupted by my two-year stint as an 8<sup>th</sup> grade civics teacher (thought I'd try out my degree since I spent all that money to get one). Eleven years ago, I started my current business, where I help my small business clients get their websites and videos to rank well on Google and YouTube. I celebrated when I passed the 5 year mark that 80% of new businesses never reach, and again at the 10 year mark which only 4% ever reach.

I LOVE being a small business owner! I love the challenge, I love the responsibility, I love the rewards. I think being in business teaches you life lessons that can be learned in no other way. I would love for my children and grandchildren to have those same opportunities and experiences, to learn those same life lessons. But just as our political freedoms are at risk, so also are our economic freedoms. The Free Market

is also under fire. Obama's manufacturing Czar, [Ron Bloom](#), in a keynote address stated that the free market is "nonsense". I couldn't disagree more.

Unfortunately, a research study I read states that if your children or grandchildren attend a public or private school, there's a 97% chance they will NOT start their own business within 12 years of graduating. Our school system is cranking out yes-men who are conditioned all day every day to do as they are told by authority figures. The schools do a great job preparing student to become... employees. Imagine that! We sing the praises of the free market, but we don't prepare our children to engage it as full participants! What are we thinking?!

So, as I mentioned, to solve this problem I am launching a private school based on a proven model that, out of every 100 graduates, they have unintentionally produced 42 entrepreneurs and they've done it year after year for over 40 years. We expect my version of this model to increase that number to around 70 or 80%. Wouldn't you rather your kids and grandkids attend my schools?

Let's talk semantics for 25 seconds, then I'll quit. A "school" is actually where fish spend all their time following the crowd. A "hive", on the other hand, is where productive, hardworking, self-directed bees produce liquid gold. So, I'm not going to call my project a school, I'm calling it a Learning Hive. I'd call it a Freedom Hive, but unfortunately, there are a lot more people concerned about their children's economic futures, than about their political futures. But you see, we'll trick their children into learning how to be free while they become entrepreneurs.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am convinced that the best way for us to preserve the Constitution, and the free market, in the hearts of our children it to create freedom-based hives of learning, where children live daily in an environment saturated with a deep and institutional respect for their political, economic and intellectual rights, freedoms, and responsibilities.

I invite you to join me in this endeavor to preserve freedom in America by preserving the Constitution in the hearts of our children.

May God empower us to save the American Republic!