

State of Wisconsin



2021 Assembly Bill 963

Date of enactment:
Date of publication*:

2021 WISCONSIN ACT

AN ACT *to create* 48.9865 of the statutes; **relating to:** rights reserved to a parent or guardian of a child.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 48.9865 of the statutes is created to read:

48.9865 Rights reserved to parents. (1) This state may not infringe on the fundamental right of parents to direct the upbringing, education, health care, and mental health of their children without demonstrating that the infringement is required by a compelling governmental interest of the highest order as applied to the child, is narrowly tailored, and is not otherwise served by a less restrictive means. The rights enumerated in this section are in addition to rights granted to parents under the constitutions of this state and of the United States.

(2) All of the following rights are reserved to the parent of a child without interference from the state or other government entity:

- (a) The right to determine the religion of the child.
- (b) The right to determine the type of school or educational setting the child attends.
- (c) The right to determine medical care for the child, unless specified otherwise in law or court order.
- (d) The right to review all medical records related to the child, unless specified otherwise in law or court order.
- (e) The right to determine the names and pronouns used for the child while at school.
- (f) The right to review instructional materials and outlines used by the child's school.

(g) The right to access any education-related information regarding the child.

(h) The right to advanced notice of any polls or surveys instituted by the child's classroom.

(i) The right to request notice of when certain subjects will be taught or discussed in the child's classroom.

(j) The right to opt out of a class or instructional materials for reasons based on either religion or personal conviction.

(k) The right to visit the child at school during school hours, consistent with school policy, unless otherwise specified in law or court order.

(L) The right to engage with locally elected school board members of the school district in which the child is a student, including participating at regularly scheduled school board meetings.

(m) The right to be notified of the creation of or updates to a security or surveillance system at the child's school.

(n) The right to be informed of any disciplinary action taken against or threatened against the child.

(o) The right to be timely informed of any acts of violence or crimes occurring on grounds of the child's school.

(3) Except as limited by other law or court order, a guardian of a child has the same rights specified under subs. (1) and (2).

* Section 991.11, WISCONSIN STATUTES: Effective date of acts. "Every act and every portion of an act enacted by the legislature over the governor's partial veto which does not expressly prescribe the time when it takes effect shall take effect on the day after its date of publication."

(4) Nothing in this section authorizes a parent or guardian to abuse or neglect a child in violation of the laws of this state. This section shall not be construed to apply to a parent's or guardian's action or decision that would end life. Nothing in this section prohibits a court from issuing an order that is otherwise permitted by law.

(5) A parent or guardian may bring a suit against a governmental body or official based on any violation of the rights set forth in this section or on any other action that interferes with or usurps the fundamental right of a parent or guardian to direct the upbringing, education, health care, and mental health of a child. A parent or guardian may raise a violation of this section in court or before an administrative tribunal of appropriate jurisdic-

tion as a claim or defense. A parent or guardian who successfully asserts a claim under this subsection may recover declaratory relief, injunctive relief, reasonable attorney's fees and costs notwithstanding s. 814.04(1), and any other appropriate relief.

(6) The attorney general is authorized to enforce this section.

(7) A parent of a child in this state has inalienable rights that are more comprehensive than those listed in this section, unless such rights have been legally waived or terminated. A guardian of a child in this state may have rights that are more comprehensive than those listed in this section.
