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Russian Lawmakers Propose Punishing Parents for Failing to Cultivate 'Spiritual Values'

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Kremlin Press Service

After a recent roundtable with representatives from the Russian Orthodox Church, the State Duma's Education Committee has recommended punishing teachers and parents who fail to cultivate the proper "spiritual values" in children.

According to the news agency Moskva, Duma deputies argue that both state educational institutions and "parents and educators" should face legal responsibility for raising children with spiritual values "of a sufficient quality."

The draft document does not, however, specify what measures the government should take, when children's values are found wanting.

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Parents

The Duma committee also recommends that officials in the Education Ministry create a council on spiritual-moral education, staffed by scholars, community members, and priests, in order to vet teaching materials on spiritual-moral grounds.

If the Duma's Education Committee gets its way, the government will also introduce special privileges for textbook publishers with a proven record of "spiritual-moral work."

Additionally, the draft recommendations call for guarantees that students are provided with lessons about the basics of Russian Orthodox Christianity, and the Duma's committee also proposes cooperation between police and the Education Ministry, in order to curb the use of foul language.

Related article: Religious Groups Push for Russian Schools to Teach 'Family Values'

Last week, the State Duma overwhelmingly approved legislation to decriminalize many forms of domestic violence, including beatings within families that result in "minor harm," like "small abrasions, bruises, superficial wounds, and soft-tissue damage."

The law now needs the approval of Russia's Federation Assembly, and then it heads to President Vladimir Putin, who has already endorsed the initiative.

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