**Moms for Liberty:**

**Who are they & what is their goal?**

**Romeo Rosales, Jr.**

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Individuals or groups challenging books in public libraries, school libraries, or bookstores is not a new phenomenon. It’s a tale as old as time. Annually, the American Library Association (ALA) releases its “Top 10 Most Challenged Books List.” This list not only provides the name of the book being challenged and its author, but it also provides the reasons why a particular book was challenged. For example, the number one most challenged book of 2021 was *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. This memoir is a useful and touching guide on gender identity—what it means and how to think about it—for advocates, friends, and humans everywhere. But the book was challenged on the grounds that it promoted “LGBTQIA+ content, and because it was considered to have sexually explicit images.”[[1]](#footnote-1) And while this book may have been challenged by individual mothers, fathers or guardians, there are several powerful organizations that have placed relentless pressure on libraries, librarians, bookstores and schools to have books banned for a multitude of reasons. One of those groups, as you may have heard, is Moms for Liberty.

But what is Moms for Liberty, who are they, what is their goal and what have they accomplished thus far? According to the “About Us” section on the Moms for Liberty website, they are “moms, dads, grands, aunts, uncles and friends. Moms for Liberty welcomes all that have a desire to stand up for parental rights at all levels of government. Our founders are Tiffany and Tina, moms on a mission to stoke the fires of liberty.  As former school board members, they witnessed how short-sighted and destructive policies directly hurt children and families. Now they are using their first-hand knowledge and experience to unite parents who are ready to fight those that stand in the way of liberty.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Although the name of the group implies it is exclusively for moms, there are individuals from all walks of life that are part of the organization. And according to their mission and vision statements, they are “dedicated to fighting for the survival of America by unifying, educating and empowering parents to defend their parental rights at all levels of government. Americans empowered and thriving in a culture of Liberty.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

And they have accomplished quite a bit as a group thus far. Their website boasts a Press section that is littered with dozens of articles from a multitude of news sites that talk about Moms for Liberty and the work they have done. In a Fox News article titled “Parents revolt against critical race theory. Here’s how they won,” Moms for Liberty is given credit for starting up as an organization in order to give parents a voice in curriculum debates. Tiffany Justice, the co-founder, is quoted in the article as saying, “We were promised a colorblind vision but now we are told colorblindness is a trait of white supremacy. Moms are mad and we can see through this nonsense. CRT proponents thought they could radically change school curricula and no one would notice. Moms and dads did notice, however, and that is why the great parent revolt has started. As parents stand up, the education establishment will have no choice but to recede from encroaching on parental rights."[[4]](#footnote-4) In another 2022 *Newsweek* article titled “Moms for Liberty Banned Books List – The Novels They Want Taken out of Schools,” Moms for Liberty is mentioned for how they were able to win seats in Florida Governor Ron Desantis’ school council that creates restrictions for public school libraries. But that council has not come without controversy. “Some of those appointed to the group are conservative parents with a history of pushing for book bans. Candidates with years of teaching and experience were passed over for self-nominated candidates like Michelle Beavers. She has no teaching experience but leads the Brevard County chapter of Moms for Liberty, a conservative group that says it challenges ‘short-sighted and destructive’ policies in public schools.”[[5]](#footnote-5) The full list of challenged books can be found [here](https://go.boarddocs.com/fl/ircs/Board.nsf/files/CBYND65F46F6/%24file/Challenged%20Book%20List%20Recommendations.pdf).

And just when you thought Moms for Liberty might stop at targeting school libraries, public libraries and bookstores, they decide to make a strong push into politics. In another article from CNN titled “Republicans elevate ‘parental rights’ as top issue while looking to outflank each other heading into 2024,” Moms for Liberty is once again mentioned. The organization’s influence has won over many Republican presidential hopefuls. “Republican presidential hopefuls have begun casting themselves as impassioned defenders of ‘parental rights,’ turning schoolbooks and curricula, doctors’ offices, and sports leagues into a new political battleground as they work to distinguish themselves ahead of the 2024 GOP primary. In leading these cultural clashes, DeSantis has become a superstar among highly engaged conservatives. He and his wife, Casey, were treated like rock stars at last year’s Tampa summit of Moms for Liberty, a group that mobilizes conservative matriarchs across the country, where he was heralded onstage as an ‘American hero’ and a ‘shining light’ for parents across the country who wish that ‘Ron would be their governor.’”[[6]](#footnote-6)

It appears that Moms for Liberty is an organization that will be around for quite some time. They have grown tremendously as an organization over the past two years and have chapters in almost all fifty states. And as they state on their website, they will consistently stand up for parental rights at all levels of government. And their fight has just begun.

1. “Top 10 Most Challenged Book Lists.” ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom, <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10> Accessed February 9, 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. “Who We Are.” Moms for Liberty, <https://www.momsforliberty.org/about/> Accessed February 9, 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Izumi, Lance. “Parents revolt against critical race theory. Here’s how they won.” January 18, 2023. <https://www.foxnews.com/opinion/parents-revolted-against-critical-race-theory-how-they-won> Accessed February 13, 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Rahman, Khaleda. “Moms for Liberty Banned Books List – The Novels They Want Taken out of Schools.” November 3, 2022. <https://www.newsweek.com/moms-liberty-banned-book-list-schools-1756574> Accessed February 13, 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Orr, Gabby. “Republicans elevate ‘parental rights’ as top issue while looking to outflank each other heading into 2024.” February 4, 2023. <https://www.cnn.com/2023/02/04/politics/republicans-2024-parental-rights-trump-desantis/index.html> Accessed February 13, 2023. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)