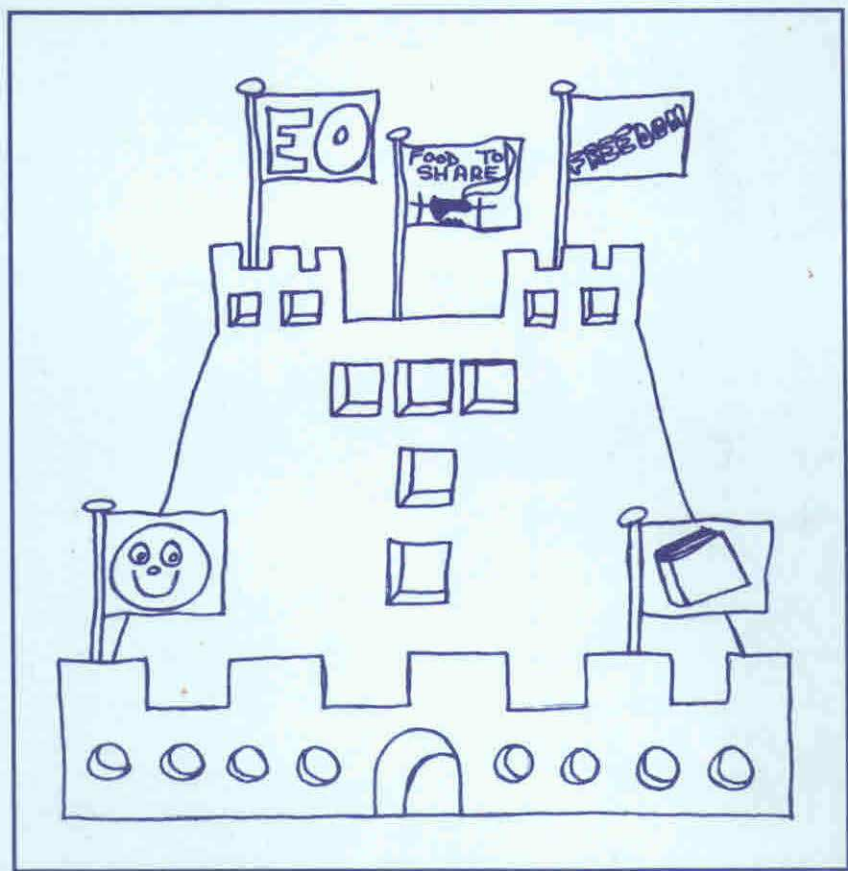


EDUCATION OTHERWISE



AUGUST '96

NO 111

The Next Issue

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The Deadline for Contributions is:

1st September 1996

Please include your name, address and telephone number and mark material '*For Publication*'. Contributions are more likely to be included if they are concise and it would be helpful if they were typed. Some Editors may be able to accept material on disc.

There will be Special Sections on the following subjects

Computers

October '96 Issue. Deadline Aug 10th '96

After EO - What are home educated young people doing now ?

December '96 Issue. Deadline October '96

Special Needs

February '97 Issue. Deadline December '96

Please share your experiences and expertise with other members. Send your contributions on any of the above topics, as soon as possible, but no later than the deadline to:

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Disclaimer

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All contributions (including advertisements) have been accepted in good faith and have not been in any way endorsed by Education Otherwise which cannot be held responsible for the consequences of responding to any of them.

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Editing the Newsletter

The Newsletter is edited by volunteers. If you would like to know more, please contact the Newsletter Coordinator. We currently need Editors from the **December '96** issue onwards.

If your newsletter does not arrive,

check with Mark Cottee, who maintains the database, that your name is still on the mailing list.

Editorial.

Before we begin, we would like to thank all those contributors who have sent in their comments regarding the continuing discussion concerning social isolation. This is a topic that concerns us all, whether we feel we have too much socialisation, or not enough. Also, thanks to everyone who wrote in, or phoned, and to those who provided articles. Please do not be afraid to write in with any thoughts you may have on home-education, or to pass on any help and advice to others.

We, Michael and Jill Allen, have been educating our daughter at home for almost six years. Jennifer is now eleven and plans to eventually follow a career in languages, hopefully working for the European Parliament. This means that we have to gear her education towards GCSEs, A'levels, and a University Degree. As this looks like quite a daunting task we would appreciate any help and advice that other EOers, who have been in a similar situation, can give us. So for our benefit, as well as everyone else's, we would urge all members who have older children, or children that have now finished their education, to reply to Yvonne Muckle's questionnaire. It would be particularly interesting to find out whether those that had been taught at home would do the same with their own children.

Hopefully readers will find the article on teaching history at home useful. Perhaps in future newsletters other members would offer alternative teaching methods, whether they have an expertise in a particular subject or just a good idea.

As it is the first time that we have edited the newsletter we would like to say a special 'thank you' to whoever invented the word processor, without which this edition would not have appeared. We would also like to wish all groups who are contemplating outside activities this summer, the best of luck and an improvement in the weather!

Michael, Jill & Jennifer Allen. 71, Belgrave Road, Loughor, Swansea, W.Glam.

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Thank you for all contributions to this SPECIAL NEEDS section - so many replies! The rest will create another Special Needs section in the February 1997 Newsletter.

The following letter from Tanya Wood acknowledges the encouragement her family have received from EO and particularly the Special Needs advisor at the time, Sylvia Jeffs, "who went to great lengths" to help - I am sure this sentiment is shared by many members of EO, and for our current Special Needs team as well. Tanya also says "a BIG thank you to all involved in EO for the hard work that is obviously put into the Newsletter and other aspects of home education on behalf of all of us out here!" - thank you Tanya, I am sure everyone in EO loves your encouragement and appreciation - it makes all the hard work worthwhile!!

I can see the look of shock on her face now as she turned to me with amazement in her voice. "But Tanya" she said, "how on earth are you going to educate your daughter YOURSELF at home? Your daughter is deaf Mrs. Wood. She is han-di-capped!" I looked at this 'teacher of the deaf' who had called to 'advise' me on the best school to send my daughter to, as she spat out the word 'handicapped', and I was disgusted at what she was saying in front of Jenni, who was 4 1/2 at the time and was standing right next to her being totally ignored by this woman.

By this time, I had had enough so, after politely but firmly informing her that my husband Tom and I were more than capable of teaching both our children at home ourselves and meeting each of their individual needs, I asked her to leave and said I did not need any more visits! After leaving me with the sum total of her advice: "...don't know how you'll manage when she switches off her hearing aids while you are teaching her! I teach a classroom full of deaf children and every afternoon they all switch their hearing aids off...!" With the most superhuman of all efforts, I just about resisted saying: "I'm not surprised!"

It is now 4 years later and Jenni, who is severely hearing impaired/deaf, (about 75% of her hearing has gone and she wears hearing aids in both ears on full volume - which have never been switched off during learning.!) is 8 1/2 years old, Tommy her brother being almost 5 now. Jenni has been home educated for the last 4 years with Tommy joining in recently too and they are both doing marvellously!

Without hesitation the very best thing for them both, but particularly for Jenni's disability, has been home education. We only found out Jenni was deaf when she was 4 and by 4 1/2 her speech had deteriorated but within a year of starting her 'lessons' as we call them, her speech had improved dramatically as I spent most of that time in one-to-one voice concentration (mouth shapes and 'clues' to what word is being said by lip-reading as many words are 'shaped' the same - eg. cheese/cheat etc.) As anyone knows who does it, helping a child learn at home with any form of disability has problems to cope with in one form or another, but her being at home with her brother has AIDED the overcoming of those difficulties, not hindered them.

There are also areas that need to be concentrated on - spelling is a main one which requires lip reading, visual concentration and a deaf child gets tired mentally quite quickly owing to the depth of concentration needed; the attention span is also shorter. You also have to BE that child with the disability ... by trying to FEEL how that child feels. (I stuff my ears with cotton wool and silently mouth to myself in the mirror to get a small idea of things from Jenni's point of view.) Ever tried to listen to a conversation with just lip reading to go by? Or understand someone's lips who has a full beard hiding them ... or someone who mumbles?

Jenni didn't know her feet made a sound when she ran or that the birds sang until she got her hearing aids. Even now, a bird has to be very close to her for her to hear it.

Because of a nice, relaxed atmosphere at home with lots of days out to do lessons and learn together, tons of visual/fun/games, that Tommy can learn from too, together with weekly swimming at the baths, gym club, getting together with a local home-educating family with four children of similar ages, craft days, making days, play days with lots of association with this family and friends who come after school ... (yes, I AM exhausted!!) ... the enjoyment and progress of Jenni and Tommy has been lovely to see.

I have found it greatly beneficial too to NEVER pass over a word in reading or spelling. No matter how long a word or how difficult, we have stopped and mastered it before carrying on and Jenni reads and writes constantly on her own and I often hear her taking pains slowly going over a long word before carrying on, with the result that she has become a very competent reader who ENJOYS it.

Of great benefit is the freedom of learning at home and you will always be able to spot me from the top deck of a bus ... I am the one who is looking under a 10' wall with a magnifying glass while my children are on their hands and knees either side of me with their magnifying glasses, clipboards, pens, pencils, butties and drinks! Needless to say, this 42 year old's legs drop off at the end of each week, but to see both my children's happy and flushed faces after their lessons is worth all the aching bones. Jenni often says when we are walking past a school and the children are in their classrooms how glad she is to be free outside in the sun! They have the freedom to learn what they want to learn and in the way that they learn. I firmly believe each child's way of learning is individual - as individual as their fingerprints.

Jenni is also coping with hearing aids in real situations - not a classroom. Hearing aids mish-mash all sounds into one big echo and a child has to filter out the sound she needs to hear, which is very difficult, but learning how to do this at an early age and socially coping with group conversation/manners with ALL ages is of great benefit to her.

When Jenni was about 5 1/2 we received our first visit from the LEA and thanks to EO who sent me lots of legal information, I was confident and ready for the visit but the Inspector who called was so impressed with Jenni and with EO that when he wrote his report on the visit he sent me a copy and he had written about Jenni's education. "... the level of teaching provided by Mrs Wood for Jennifer is what you would expect from a trained teacher ..." I was choked when I read that because Tom and I have done what we have done for the love of our children, as others have, but that report gave me a terrific boost! Especially nice was that he asked for the EO address to inform families of bullied children at school of the alternative to school.

Over the last 4 years I have learnt to not get 'up-tight' if things don't go as planned but to just 'go with the flow'. Trust your children. Jenni had not shown any interest in maths, project work for any given subject or formal writing but allowed to follow her own way, is constantly writing, done a project all by herself and is ASKING to do maths! I believe in being balanced though, and in areas I feel she needs to learn a particular thing for her own benefit, then I will introduce it - in her way of learning.

I have also become very cheeky over the last few years. All the Superstores storerooms hold great boxes with handles which I use for subject files, crayon containers, paint containers etc. Confidently marching into offices, shipping offices, photographers, old files, blank old letterheads (you get given packs of these), old maps, disposable exposed A3 size negatives from photographers (tons thrown out) - makes a good planetarium on the bedroom ceiling or

wall - works wonders! Phone Museums beforehand explaining you are home-educating for private visit to the back storerooms for first-hand hands-on experience of Victorian clothing, things put away during 'school visits' so they don't get vandalised ... phone safari parks/zoos for private visit to help keepers wash and feed elephants! Phone hospitals, colleges, schools for old blackboards, maps, text books, boxes of half-broken chalks, old technology microscopes, etc. Try tracing paper with skeleton drawn on of child, after drawing outline and internal organs on full-length piece of wallpaper, tape tracing paper over the top and child can see 'inside' his or herself! Visits to Fire Stations - write first requesting any information for home education - I went and was given a pile of information of fire-fighting down the ages - 1666 to 1995! BE CHEEKY - it works wonders!

Before I go, can I just say to anyone who has a child with a disability who plans to home-educate but feels a bit unsure of themselves come on in, the water's lovely! Enjoy learning together with your child or children, relax, enjoy it. Go with the flow, it doesn't matter if things don't go to plan it will work.

Make memories for your children and with them. All the best

Tanya, Tom, Jenni and Tommy Wood, 27 Barnfield Close, Liverpool, Merseyside L30 3UA.

* * *

My daughter has Downs Syndrome and is now nearly 14. She has been home-educated all of that time with the exception of about six months in school.

We made the decision to home-educate as we felt it was a natural extension to the "Portage" years, where we had been working on every aspect of her development with Portage and the specialist health visitor. The Lincs LEA have been (apart from some initial reservations) largely supportive and we have been lucky with our Inspectors. She has not been "statemented" and this was probably our biggest difficulty and took us a four hour intense discussion with the Educational Psychologist about the ethics of statementing in general. (I was formerly a speech therapist and as I had been literally on the other end of these procedures, I felt it helped our position). Our point was the "statement" was only of use to teachers who needed a quick assessment of her. We, who had been working consistently with her, did not feel we needed this information and also that it was almost an infringement of her rights. We do not know our other daughters' IQs or analyse every category of development. They are allowed to develop their own strengths without constantly having to work on their weaknesses.

She follows the same regime as her sisters - formal-type education in the mornings and more or less total freedom in the afternoons. There is also a lot more emphasis on speech and language activities, fine motor skills. If we are honest, she certainly does require more direct intervention that we practise with the others or she tends to go into her own little world of talking to herself and cutting herself off from surrounding activities which would be of benefit to her. Literally sometimes we feel we have to "break in" to bring her back to us.

We think we can honestly say that deciding to home-educate removed one of the biggest problems of having a child with learning difficulties. The worries of where your child will be placed in school is a terrific pressure on top of the natural worries of how/whether he or she will develop. I would be pleased to communicate with anyone to share experiences, give further information or just to chat ...

Gill Warren, White Cottage, East Barkwith, Lincoln, LN3 5RX, 01673 858703.

When I wrote in Newsletter 100, our son John, who has Down's Syndrome, was 4 1/2 and one year into treatment for Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (ALL). He is now 6 and is two months into treatment for relapsed ALL ! His sisters Elizabeth (4) and Lucy (14 weeks) complete the family. When I wrote then, I was still convincing myself that EO was the way to go with all my children. Now, 18 months later, I wonder why I had any doubts!! Our lives are greatly enhanced by being able to actively see learning happening and watching their progress without wondering if they are doing the same as all the other children of their age or development. (I personally think Elizabeth is more advanced than her peers - but then I'm prejudiced!) And now I have had a taste of the system, I am even more convinced.

After taking the advice of John's Educational Psychologist - (a lady I have respect for, not least after she told me that if she had the courage she would take her children out of school too) I wrote a (very polite) letter to the LEA in February 1995 informing the then Director of Education that as the 1993 Education Act requires the LEA to identify children with SEN, we wanted them to know that we would not be requesting a Statement for him as we were retaining the responsibility for his education ourselves.

And Oh! what a can of worms was opened then!!!!

A reply was received almost by return saying they would be investigating the points we raised. A meeting was then held between us and the local LEA gopher (sorry, Liaison Officer), during which it was mooted that if we were to agree to have John Statemented for home education, the LEA would feel it had done its duty by the 1993 Ed Act and would leave us alone. The Statement, we were assured, would be the most basic of documents and contain the barest of information mostly from the Ed Psych, who we knew to be on our side anyway.

Well we, being trusting bunnies, agreed - albeit with reservations with regard to having John assessed by all and sundry and particularly medically, as the poor little boy has had more than his fair share of Doctors! So we stressed we did not want any assessments by anyone who didn't know John already. It then went quiet for a month until we received a letter from the Special Needs Officer at the LEA saying that they were about to carry out a full assessment of John so they could decide whether they would need to make any provision to meet his special educational needs, (sound of two parents hitting their heads against brick walls!) and copying no less than 9 professionals, including the Director of Social Services, the Director of Nursing Services, the Community Consultant Paediatrician (which they spelt paediatrician!) amongst others. The gopher told us it was a standard letter that they sent out whenever they received an assessment referral, I told him we weren't a standard referral!!!

We wrote back with 4 sides of A4 of our views regarding his needs and our opinion that these were more than adequately met through home-based education and that we didn't want any more assistance from the LEA (implying go away and leave us alone), but the system once started has to follow its usual route and there is no flexibility. So there we were being told to bring John for assessment by 1. the Under 5's Support Service Teacher, 2. the Educational Psychologist (who was most embarrassed), 3. the Communication Therapist, and 4. (and most annoyingly of all) the Community Consultant Paediatrician. This last was extremely irritating because she would not read John's copious notes from both his own Paediatrician or the Oncology Consultant, but insisted on us bringing him to see her where she spent nearly two hours writing down what we told her of his medical history and the conditions specific to Down's Syndrome, so that she could inform us in his Statement of his medical history and the conditions specific to Down's Syndrome!!! (our heads and these brick walls were becoming very well acquainted

On 2.4.96 the great day dawned and John's draft Statement dropped through the letter box, (poetic licence - actually it was sent recorded delivery - d'ya think they don't trust us?) and Colin and I spent the next 10 minutes collapsed in hysterical laughter. A more unbelievable work of fiction I have yet to read. It is the most incredible (in the real sense of the word) document, and if it weren't so sad it would be laughable.

Apart from being out of date, his SEN were assessed and included the following statements:
"John needs a wide-ranging educational programme which will help him develop physical awareness" (er ... does playing on the swings count?);
"He will need to develop his problem-solving skills" (doesn't learning to change the CD and using the paintbrush programme on the computer count then);
"He will need help to develop social skills" (the paragraph before notes how particularly sociable he is with both adults and children);
"He needs an early literacy programme which is taught in finely graded steps to ensure retention" (Aaaaagh, please pass me my John Holt!! I want to hit someone with it!).

The provision they considered appropriate for John was a school (I trust that was just a slip of the word processor) which could provide no less than 10 specific elements amongst which were:

- an individual programme to develop basic literacy skills
- an individual programme to develop fine and gross motor skills
- a teaching programme designed to improve independence skills
- strategies (don't you just love it?) to extend concentration and attention to task ...
- I ask you - don't they think just living in the real world covers all this and more?

They also exempted him from the National Curriculum (oh, big deal, I don't think they know that EO kids are automatically exempt) subject to us providing them with an agreed proposed curriculum, which we were to draw up within two months and which would be reviewed in a multi-agency setting.

I told the gopher we were not now happy bunnies and felt betrayed and lied to. He - retreating down his burrow - told me to write to the LEA and tell them. So I did, on 16 April, informing them that due to John's relapse of ALL, the application of the provision to meet his needs was entirely dependant on his state of health and treatment protocol at any given time, and that we were not prepared to draw up a proposed curriculum which we were unsure we could apply anyway during his treatment (I decided against arguing on principles regarding 'adult-led agendas' here - I thought it would be too much for the poor souls to understand.) And I said if they agreed to these amendments and clearly showed Home Education in the placement section we would accept the Statement, otherwise we were happy to have 'note in lieu of Statement' and forget about the statementing until treatment finishes in 1998. The last I heard was a message on the answerphone from the gopher, saying that was fine and they would leave it to us to get back in touch. We have had nothing in writing yet so we still don't know which option they are taking - but if they go for a note in lieu, what a huge waste of time, money and goodwill the whole fiasco will have been. I think they have at last discovered that they do not have the capacity or vocabulary to statement a child who is EO - and anyway why should they have to try?

Be warned, you other parents of children with disabilities, stick to your guns and refuse a statement if you can, the system just can't cope.

Alison Peries and Colin Blain,

69 Lundwood Grove, Owlthorpe, Sheffield, S19 6SR, 0114 2478901.

Our son Ben (10) has Asperger's Syndrome, which is a mild form of autism. It is a 'hidden handicap' in the sense that Ben appears perfectly normal so that when he is rude or disruptive people assume it is deliberate and 'naughty'. It is also 'hidden' because it is a modern diagnosis which is not well known or understood even by many professionals such as educational psychologists. Another way in which it is 'hidden' is that diagnosis often comes late if at all. I know a man in his thirties who has been recently diagnosed after a series of failed relationships, and Ben was only diagnosed at 8. Until then he was constantly criticised for bad behaviour and we were seen as failing parents. I dislike unnecessary labels and initially found the diagnosis hard to accept, but in fact it has been a lifeline enabling everyone to see Ben differently and him to acquire a more positive self-image.

Ben attended school (undiagnosed) for nearly four years. He was always unhappy there and became increasingly uncooperative and disruptive. The situation was complicated by the fact that he is highly gifted in some areas, especially reading and Maths, which meant that a lot of school work seemed 'boring' and he developed a habit of daydreaming which he still has. For a long time I assumed this was his only problem - and it is hard enough to deal with anyway. I only withdrew him from school (which meant sacrificing my own part-time job) when life became unbearable and I was frightened that Ben or another child would be seriously hurt. I dithered for several months (especially as I also had a baby and another child at the same school), but was encouraged to take the final plunge first by discovering a friend's brother was home-educating and secondly by my initial contact with Education Otherwise which made it seem feasible and practical.

Our concern about Ben's behaviour had already led me to the GP and the waiting list at the local psychiatric unit. Withdrawing him from school meant he was suddenly at the top of the waiting list! He had a three month full time placement where the Asperger's Syndrome was diagnosed. By this time I was taking on the challenge of Home Education so was secretly relieved when they concluded that the combination of his high ability and social immaturity meant that there was no suitable LEA provision! They still insisted that he ought to be in full time school in order to develop his social skills, but this would have meant trying to force him into another unsuitable mould and more inevitable failure. So I felt justified in refusing (there is always the worry that over-protective parents will keep a child at home against that child's best interests. I am sure that sometimes happens, and I did not wish to be doing so myself). So for the past 18 months I have been teaching him at home.

It has been a struggle. I did not choose home education (although I am happy with it in the short term) and Ben had a lot of negative attitudes and experience to overcome. His attitude has gradually improved but we still have plenty of difficult times. My daughter Ruth is still at the school and I had been a helper there so knew the staff etc. Such contacts became awkward and it was difficult to 'chat at the gate' with friends so I felt very isolated especially as I also had a baby but was no longer able to attend toddler groups. I missed the contact with other adults apart from a few friends who probably kept me sane. Also there were some local Education Otherwise meetings which were a great help especially as Ben befriended another boy. Unfortunately there has been nothing locally for the past year and also Ben's friend is starting at a (private) secondary school in September.

It has also been hard to get used to stares and whispers when we go out and about. Ben has some strange mannerisms and is no longer small enough to seem sweet - he can even appear intimidating. It is much easier if someone asks 'No school today?' giving me an opportunity to explain about home education. Also the combination with a baby (restricting some physical activities and requiring a different routine etc) has meant that too often we have just stayed in the house. It is getting easier as Anna gets older (nearly 3 now) and Ben more amenable. However I couldn't help noticing that many of the 'positive' letters in the June issue about social isolation were from people with pre-school children when there is plenty of social

contact on offer and you are not marked down as 'different' (or even illegal) the minute you leave your house.

You are also more likely to feel isolated if your child is socially disruptive. We have tried a number of after school groups (Cubs, Gymnastics, Drama, NAGC, etc) but the only one to have coped (just!) is Woodcraft Folk, and that will end this term as he is not ready for the social demands of the older group. I did find that some of the other EO parents I met were over-protective of their children and reacted particularly negatively to Ben. This made the meetings we went to stressful although there were some lovely and understanding people there also. Ben's progress means that were there to be another meeting now (a year on) he would cope better (I hope!).

Unusually for a child with Asperger's Ben does have a few friends - as long as they don't meet up too often. He has one friend whom he sees most weeks which makes a huge difference. He is finally learning to play in the street (sometimes) without immediately precipitating a conflict. Also there are more children in the street than there used to be which helps. He is also learning socially from playing with Anna who is the one person he will sometimes put before himself.

I agree completely that school provides an artificial and sometimes antisocial environment. However, most children do cope adequately with the difficulties and they can gain a lot from the positive 'community' atmosphere which a good school can engender. Also there are children, like Ben, who do not 'pick up' social skills from normal experience and need to be positively and actively taught in a structured group setting. For two years I have been saying that this is the one area where I want professional help. I have recently been able (through a friend) to make informal contact with a local Special School which I hope will prove fruitful.

We have been trying to arrange part-time schooling as I feel this would be best for Ben, and we also feel it is essential to provide special arrangements (eg a refuge from the classroom). This means he probably needs a Statement, but the LEA refuse even to consider assessing him unless he is at school. We have appealed to a tribunal which took 6 months to arrange and will take another 6 weeks to give us their judgement. They agreed at the recent hearing that the LEA were acting illegally so perhaps something will come of it eventually.

Ben's academic ability is such that we would like him to have contact with some good secondary teachers who can inspire him and provide a good example. I remember some of my own teachers with affection and gratitude and do not believe a parent is a substitute for such role models. Perhaps I was lucky in my school - all the more reason to be careful what kind of school to choose. My experience with Ben makes me more ambivalent about primary schools, especially in the early years (Ben was barely 4 when he started) but Ruth (now 8) has been mostly happy and when offered the choice prefers to stay at school - partly because she needs time away from Ben who constantly teases her.

It is very demanding trying to teach a child like Ben without any support or help. His autism means that he needs a predictable routine which, after two years, I am still failing to provide. He also rushes at things without reading instructions carefully and is very easily discouraged. In addition he refuses to do anything open-ended (he needs clearly defined tasks) or personal (eg 'My day at the beach') because everything to do with himself he sees as secret information not to be divulged. I paid a tutor for 1-2 hours a week last year (then she got a job!) and he loved his time with her and would work hard. It is not so easy for me as I lack the teaching skills and Ben lacks patience and interest except in his few obsessions (another feature of autism). I also have trouble keeping up with his intellectual demands and craving for novelty - he is often ahead of me and is easily bored by essential routine tasks (eg writing things down). On the other hand, my relationship with him has improved greatly now that I am not forcing him to school, and am giving him lots of time and attention. One drawback, though, is that he is now very dependent on me and tends to 'shadow' me whenever we go anywhere - if

anything his social confidence has worsened. However, he has learnt a lot from interacting with Anna who is very socially mature for her age. Yet his excessive demands also mean that Anna has suffered from a lack of my time and attention.

I have appreciated the existence of EO, although I found the 'infighting' that was prevalent when I joined both confusing and off-putting. I am delighted that that is now past and have been encouraged by the information and supportive tone of recent newsletters. As I mentioned before, my local group is not active at present, so I would greatly appreciate contact with other EOers, especially if they share experience of Asperger's or giftedness or even both. I have joined the Autistic Society, but it has not been easy gaining contact with other local families with experience of Asperger's Syndrome. I am hoping to set up a local support group when I have time and energy which may help. I have been reluctantly forced to see giftedness as another problem too. It makes it harder for Ben to fit in to 'normal' society as he rarely finds another child who can keep up with his conversation - one reason he is in the habit of boring monologue (he fazes adults too sometimes and of course it is a brilliant way to antagonise a teacher!). I also fail dismally in the challenge to provide appropriate material for his voracious reading - it is easy to let him stagnate especially as I suffer from some of the same disorganised and impulsive tendencies as he does. His combination of social immaturity and intellectual ability also make it hard to find a school which can satisfy both - most schools seem to be either organised and academic but intolerant of 'difference', or accepting of his emotional needs but unable to provide the stable and ordered yet stimulating environment he needs (the former type is like his previous school and also others we've contacted while the latter is both like other schools we've visited and also his home life at present). I look forward to hearing from anyone else 'out there' who identifies with this or would like to join in mutual advice and support. Please get in touch.

Janet Appleby, 73, Shaftesbury Grove, Newcastle on Tyne, NE6 5JA.

DYSLEXIA - A "SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTY"!

There was always a puzzling discrepancy between our son Dominic's oral ability and his ability to deal with the written word. He could, from a very early age, wrap his brain around the most complex logic problems, make and explain wonderful models, come up with great ideas - all the indications were that he was a bright little boy, yet, at school, he made virtually NO progress in reading or writing. The school were not concerned. We were! When he was 6 we withdrew both our sons, for a cocktail of reasons.

Perhaps because I am a school teacher myself, I soon realised, once I had him one-to-one, that his problem was most likely dyslexia. Completely unaware of the unorthodox teaching methods that specialist teachers use, I continued battling away in the time-honoured fashion, giving myself a pat on the back that I could give much more help than he would ever receive in a busy classroom!

As he grew older, however, the discrepancy between his obvious intelligence and his written ability was so great that I felt I needed some guidance. Our first step was to have him "assessed" by an Educational Psychologist. This involved a four hour round trip from home, a three hour session and parting with over £130!! The report was full of "jargon" but the nitty gritty at the end told me that he had a reading age of 9 (his chronological age - a near miracle for a dyslexic - oh, the power of one-to-one!!), a spelling age of 7 (ay, there's the rub) and an I.Q. of 124 (above that of most university students!). The report also

directed us to the need for specialist teaching on a "multi-sensory" level. This puzzled me so I began to research into specialised methods and I hope that the following will be of help to anyone else embarking on the same journey. It is worth getting to grips with these wrinkles, they DO work:

Initially, the dyslexic has difficulty decoding the written word - just imagine yourself trying to make sense of Greek or Russian writing and you're part way to understanding the problem! When a non-dyslexic sees a collection of shapes he recognises it as a meaningful word because he draws on the store of knowledge that passed from his "short-term memory", when he was learning to read, into his "long-term memory". Dyslexics have a problem in their "short-term memories" which is what causes that puzzling phenomenon that they can be told a word at the beginning of a page and can have forgotten it again two lines later! (and again and again and again...).

The task then, on its basic level, is to move information into their LONG term memory, which functions normally. This involves a process called "over-learning" - repeatedly going over old ground until the fact imbeds itself in the memory. Your job is to ease that passage of information. The problem here is two fold. Firstly, most dyslexics are of average or above average intelligence and begin to get insulted at the repetition of work which they see as infantile. Secondly, it is not sufficient merely to repeat old work, you have to be very resourceful, putting over the same message in different ways. All sorts of tricks have to be employed to get the message through the barrier.

For example, there are a number of spelling rules which, not being dyslexic, you may never have needed. Did you know that if a syllable ends with a vowel that vowel is generally long? - i.e. it says its name. Consider "be", "me" etc. (this is called an OPEN syllable). Whereas, if the syllable ends in a consonant the vowel is short "bet", "men" (this is called a CLOSED syllable). "Magic E" serves to open a syllable up - "pet" (closed), "Pete" (open). This works for longer words - try "coincide" - 'CO' (open syllable, vowel says its name), 'IN' (closed syllable, vowel is short), 'CIDE' (magic E syllable, vowel says its name). Yes, I know there are lots of exceptions but the rule generally holds!!

This rule is one of many and they are all useful to dyslexics.

Rules and chants and patterns that to a non-dyslexic are meaningless and unnecessary are vital aids to a dyslexic - Fed up with "becos"? - try Big Elephants Can Always Upset Small Elephants! If he can't remember how a word looks then he needs a rule to help build it. Likewise, the sound picture cards that come with the Beat Dyslexia books (highly recommended) seem worthless and confusing to a non-dyslexic but I have come to realise that when my son visualises the sound pictures KW- i- K for "quick" it actually STOPS him from spelling it that way (as it sounds) and draws the correct letter combinations from him - honestly, it works!

Another piece of wonderful jargon is "multisensory" learning. This just means that it helps a dyslexic to retain the information if he has seen it, heard it and even felt it (looking in the mirror at his mouth as he speaks a sound, tracing a letter shape in sand whilst blindfold etc). Wooden alphabet shapes are good to have.

There are so many tricks and rules. The 'Alpha to Omega' series of teacher book and photocopiable worksheets are a useful investment, as is a book called 'Dyslexia A Teaching Handbook' by Thomson and Watkins (expensive at about £20 for a paperback and fairly high-brow but full of good ideas). The library may have it.

We have invested in a desk top computer called a FRANKLIN SPELLMASTER which corrects phonetic misspellings - it's not perfect (it didn't recognise my son's "yous" for "use") but DID give us "bright" for "bryt". It also explains "confusables" such as "guys" and "guise" - clever little machine costing about £39 from Argos!

Get in touch with the Dyslexia Institute (133, Gresham Road, Staines, TW18 2AJ.) they have a wealth of pamphlets and books for sale and the Dyslexia Association has a help line on 01734 668271.

The bottom line is that your child will already be feeling pretty frustrated by his own lack of progress and will need to feel successful. Give small chunks of work, don't overload, and make it varied and interesting. Just a little every day. Don't correct every single mistake but point out misspelled words IF you have already covered them. Spend time on his strengths (the non-written word!!), don't become obsessed with language work.

Enjoy your dyslexic child - he has very special abilities of his own.

Food for thought:

- four out of every five dyslexics are boys.
- there is a firm in America that advertises specifically for DYSLEXIC architects - their flair, logic and originality more than make up for their need for good secretarial back up!!

Laura Flawn, Skylarks, 43 Summerfield Road, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent, CT9 3JJ

Educating a gifted child at home -

On Tuesday I took my daughter to the Colour Museum in Bradford and bought a book 'Colour Perception' by Tim Armstrong. Over the next month Colour will be our starting place and recurrent theme. At first my daughter follows the book, but the study of colours, reflection and absorption, primaries, secondaries and complementaries sideslips into basic concepts in set theory, algebraic manipulation, permutations and other combinatorial maths.

On another day the topic leads to camouflage colours, which of course takes in some physiology, anatomy, chemistry and evolution; yet another day she asks a question about why and how the coloured filters which came with the book work and we are talking about basic molecular spectroscopy and photochemistry, then leaping sideways into temperature dependence of emission spectra and talking about stellar physics, tracking around the Hertzsprung-Russell Diagram (the colour/magnitude chart for stars) and staying up late to do some astronomy, with special reference to star colour, through light pollution and the ethics of city living to return to colour as we look at the high and low pressure sodium light colours! (The low and high pressure sodium lights are different colours, but to explain it we need to consult a textbook, I couldn't remember the mechanism in enough detail.)

We finally get to bedtime and I promise to talk about electricity and how it passes through the gases and makes colours. Bedtime story is me talking about the emission colours of the Group 8 gases on the Periodic Table of the Elements on the wall at the head of her bed.

She will eventually fall to sleep listening to a tape of Winnie the Pooh or Ivor the Engine
after all, she is only seven!

Gifted children learn more quickly than others, have very retentive memory, and long attention span. Gifted children have an unusual imagination and an odd sense of humour, and soak up information like sponges. As with all children, they enjoy problem solving, but often progress in unexpected or original ways, making intuitive leaps which beggar the normal imagination. They are often socially or ethically precocious, with mature outlooks on behaviour and morals.

In general, they will not follow the more usual pathways of learning. They will see, and feel an imperative to follow, link into many other areas. Given the freedom and support to follow their imaginations, there will be many parallel activities, linked or in isolation. Progress rates in any field may vary a great deal.

It is unreasonable to expect a teacher who is simultaneously in charge of 30+ other children to provide adequate support for this pattern of ability but if the need for higher level intellectual input is not met, problems develop. Deprived of the opportunity to meet their need, the gifted child's environment becomes one of isolation and deprivation.

While some children are able to adapt and disappear into the class, tailoring their results and behaviour to the expected norms, others become physically ill due to the stress, and escape boredom with a sick note. The lucky ones who can cope spend most of the time daydreaming or in various meditation states. Some are a problem because of misbehaviour.

A school might be able to meet their needs by allowing open library access and individually structured independent topic based research, with occasional tutorial support on a one to one basis, but I think this format can be followed more easily as a home-based system.

As for me and my daughter, at home we work without a set timetable, and with easy access to adequate and reliable information sources at adult libraries. The frustration of the set length lesson and standard school information sources is avoided. In the absence of pressure to complete within a fixed time complexity is not a problem, nor is research time. A project can even be shelved for as long as necessary.

Museum and art gallery visits can be at her own pace, when a Henry Moore sculpture needs 15-20 minutes to understand, it happens that way.

There is no age constraint upon our use of educational TV. My daughter enjoys and learns from many Open University programmes and also gets a lot of pleasure from Sesame Street. And of course, like other home-educated children, she wears normal clothes, eats and drinks while working, uses toilets without having to ask and takes a rest or run outside when she needs to.

As you might expect, for the home-educating parent the mercurial talents of gifted children yields non-trivial problems.

Exhaustion and lack of free time are there as with all children, but there is also the need to respond to abrupt changes and varied interests by rapid research, in depth, using available information sources. When you then try to provide learning support, you find yourself learning as you go, glad if you keep a bare half-step ahead of the child but not worrying if you are a half-step behind. Speed of response organising access to backup materials, visits and thinking up activities using related techniques is important. You have to learn to unearth information fast when you assist in the learning of a gifted child, but you soon learn that you can actually do it, that it is fun, and you need to admit that they can be brighter than you.

So what about the practical side of things!

We have access to excellent libraries and museums, educational TV, more time than school bound children and the world at large is our classroom, but for all home educators there is a time when access to equipment is a problem. A computer, or a pocket spectrometer is expensive, and so are good musical instruments, and Science and Technology are particularly difficult to teach without equipment. Even the materials for creative arts are fairly expensive, and some things, such as dangerous chemicals and radioactive sources are impossible.

If I was working to a predictable timetable, the cheaper items might be budgeted for, but when you are following an apparently unrelated line of investigation and suddenly there is new idea which can be simply demonstrated if only you had a cathode ray oscilloscope and you have to describe it demonstrate it some other way.

It would be nice to meet these needs by sharing costs in a scheme such as an equipment library owned as a co-operative of home-educators. Although the cost of consumables would be unavoidable, the chance to use more expensive items would be there.

Nothing exists along these lines as far as I am aware, but if there is anyone interested can they please contact me.

Experience in group working is not a big problem, it can be obtained, for example, at local youth groups, band practice or at the NAGC (National Association for Gifted Children) Explorers Clubs. By careful booking for Explorers Clubs we can get some of the best lecturers in interesting subjects.

The important thing for the parent is to be aware that you can provide the support for a gifted child to learn.

Barry Wrightson, 15 Kensington Close, Batley, W.Yorks, WF17 7RL, 01924 445608.

School was always difficult but with good management and a careful choice of teacher things could be all right. And then in his last year of primary school they decided to give him a statement of special needs. The first stop was the psychotherapist. The initial appointment was with me and William's father. We were told that William must be a disappointment. When it was William's turn, he had a bad cold and could not hear. After twenty minutes, the psychotherapist called me back in and said in front of him "He is not responding. He needs to go in a special group at school with 2 or 3 children". He had been in a normal sized class for the last five years. The report that came said his hearing was normal despite the fact that I had told her about the cold and that his middle ear on one side had been removed surgically.

The next stop was the paediatrician. "They want a way out of this, perhaps we might get him a preparatory school. Let's give him the label, Asperger's". I said I had my doubts "It will solve this problem, we can always change it in a year or two".

I did the rounds of school fairs and phoned up anything relevant I could find in the Yellow Pages. I soon learned that Asperger's was the best way of closing the doors to the private preparatory schools. I tried the label "dyspraxic" instead. I got one or two interviews with headmasters. "We might have tried a year or two ago, but the boys are doing Common Entrance at this age and are under a lot of pressure".

Even worse, the Comprehensive where he had a place didn't want him either. "Group work is so important, the other children wouldn't want him, he might get bullied and although our staff would do everything for him themselves, I can't be responsible for the pupils".

The Special Schools involved a lot of travelling, had over heavy support and limited syllabuses. William has a verbal IQ in the gifted range and is really good at maths. By the end of the primary school, there was only one possibility, a wonderfully caring but very difficult comprehensive in the toughest area the other side of the town. He was going to have to spend break time in the physically handicapped unit to be protected from the other children. Although very willing, their experience of children with his kind of IQ was zero.

I was worried about being trapped by the heavy statement they were proposing for the last comprehensive, without a chance to try it out first and William himself was quite firm about not wanting to go there. We were both very shattered and anxious after what had seemed like a kind of fruitless witch hunt. The first most striking thing about home education was how William's confidence returned and how he began to talk to people. I tried to crawl out of all the labelling and to think what William's problems really were. I was helped by the fact that I was giving private tuition to a 19 year old boy with very similar dyslexic and high IQ scores who had been unable to take his A'levels because he had a bad nervous breakdown.

I felt that William needed a gentle environment and no pressure but at the same time intellectual stimulation. It seems impossible in the current state system to get the latter without a lot of pressure, presumably to get clever children to pull up school's exam scores. The LEA visitor said many clever children in the local

comprehensives wanted time off, not being made to do more exams. William studies maths at a level about two years ahead of school and also Latin which he absolutely loves, I think partly because the Cambridge Clarendon course we use is so good. The next problem is that he will be ready to take GCSE early in these subjects - and I don't push him. I wonder why they waste so much time at school.

He likes structure so I give him five pieces of work to do every day on a set sheet I prepare the night before on my computer. This is a mixture of written and oral work, sometimes slightly to my convenience if I have a deadline. I need to earn a living which I do through coding market research, mostly in the evenings and weekends. It is a hard life and I would appreciate financial help from the LEA. I feel I am educating William at home because they were unable and reluctant to meet his needs. The least they could do is to give some finance because it would give us more facilities - I would be very interested to hear whether other special needs Eoers have ever got financial aid and i so, how. William has dyslexic like organisational problems so the structure is perhaps a special needs feature. We watch a lot of schools television which I think is excellent, live rather than recorded because it keeps us to some kind of time discipline.

William also needs social and communication work. Our syllabus is usually pretty conventional but I find literature gives us a chance to talk about people and their views and we also study People, material which I prepare myself. I find the TES useful for its reviews of educational materials of all varieties and I may try a special video of body language designed for children with communication problems.

Because his confidence has improved William is keen to get on with people and make friends and this is what is difficult. It is also an area of LEA concern and sometimes I feel this is unfair because he was really frightened of other children when he was at school and we were told he might be badly bullied at secondary school. It seems wrong to measure him against children who do not have 'social cognition deficit'. However he plays football at the sports centre, rings up and visits an old school friend and goes to Sunday school and socials, many more things than he would do while he was at school. However I would really like a drop in centre where he or I could go in the afternoons, group social skills training and perhaps a chance to attend some after school clubs at a local school because it is more difficult for him to pick up friends from our more limited range of social options.

All in all, I feel William's intellectual needs are being met well and his better esteem makes for a social improvement. However, we would be helped by more financial assistance and more opportunities for social contact but not in classes of 30 children. I really can't see why these should not be available and why the LEA cannot do more to help.

Barbara Edwards, 12 Oxford Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3RP, 01483 832250

What's next mum?

Most of us have assumed that when junior is about three, and toilet trained, he or she will toddle off to the local pre-school for preliminary education in reading, writing and raising hell. An increasing number of parents, however, are looking for something different, where they can have control of their own child's education.

We are all aware of the intimidating fact that our children will learn more in the first five years of life than during the rest of their life. (Five years ago the experts assured us it was in the child's first seven years. Living in the nineties must have sped things up.)

It was because of this revolution that I wanted to be in control of what my son was learning and who was teaching him. My first consideration was that as he would learn so much at such a tender age, I didn't want to risk having him learn things which would perhaps be to his detriment in later years. I wanted to be sure the environment in which he learned was safe and non-threatening.

I explored all options: pre-school, nursery, full-time playgroup, even a small, fee paying, junior school. Still I came back to the idea of educating Duncan at home. I was then confronted with other people's fears that I wasn't "qualified" to teach my own child. Who could be more qualified to understand her own son's needs than his mother? I looked at all the things he had learned in the first three years of life without any "qualified" people to help, and knew this was the right step to take.

I know I can do the best by him by providing personalised, one-to-one education, tailored to his own specific needs and interests. With time, and a passionate interest in his development and learning, I have been able to find people and places to assist me.

Apart from the obvious learning environments such as the park and playground, indoor adventure centres, swimming pools and the local library, we make use of the Playgroup and Kindy Gym each week. These are valuable sources for social interaction.

For Duncan's pre-school education, he spends most of his time exploring his world through play.

The world of science and nature has really opened up since we acquired an allotment and experimented with various gardening techniques, such as organic versus chemical.

Although he isn't yet reading, he has a well loved collection of books bought with pocket money at car boot sales, and of course a visit to the library is a weekly event. We also spend our long walks in making up stories and observing the wildlife in the local nature reserve.

Cooking and preparing meals has given him an understanding of measurements, leading to maths and fractions: 1/2 cup, 1/4 cup and liquid measures. The science of

heat and cold, and the laws of gravity on the raw egg were fun experiments, although a little messy.

Quality control is always in place, and corrections of errors is immediate, not left to a vague report card at the end of term.

The more we do together, the more I realise just how important I am to my son. It is my responsibility as a parent to see that he has the very best I can manage. Home schooling, for us, is the only choice.

**Robyn Everist
21, High Town Road,
Maidenhead,
SL6 1PA**

Opinions Please.

I am interested in members views on how we should handle dissemination of information. Many members of EO feel that we should not be too free with help and information to those who are not members of EO (they may even be members of other home-educating organisations).

Quite understandably local co-ordinators and others who volunteer to be at the end of a telephone begrudge giving time, help and information to those who never join EO. To some extent this problem is being addressed by the production of some information sheets that non-EO members can buy to gain information for much less than the cost of membership, but at some profit for EO.

My feeling is that we should always be willing to give time and help to anyone who asks. At the same time we should make it clear that we are EO members and encourage them to join, buy some information sheets or make a donation. I have visited and helped many a family over the years who never became members. As soon as we become less than generous in our attitude we will only encourage others to be small minded - or am I being naive?

Write to me or better still write to the Newsletter.

**Priscilla Park Weir,
212, Gordon Avenue,
Camberley,
Surrey.
GU15 2NT.**

Social Isolation.

Flexi-schooling.

Dear E.O,

Thank you to Emma and Jane of Brambles Co-op, Sheffield, for mentioning flexi-time schooling in their contribution to the last newsletter on social isolation.

Felix, Beatrix, Tom and I have managed to arrange flexi-time schooling, with two different schools now, and it has worked very well for us. I have sent out information to nearly one hundred people who have contacted us about this option.

Flexi-time schooling is part-time schooling. Flexi-schooling is broader and deeper and is a form of truly democratic education where the young person can participate in decisions on the curriculum, how and when it is undertaken. Part-time schooling may be part of a young person's personal learning plan in the context of flexi-schooling. So far, the flexi-time element of flexi-schooling is being implemented by a few young people. School Councils are a beginning to the democratisation of schools, and young people's involvement in their own assessment is another move in the same direction. Returning to Emma and Jane's comments on flexi-time schooling, as with many of these choices the outcome depends a lot on the individual. So, for example, one of my children is 'socially isolated' to some extent at school, largely because of personality. The other child is not isolated at all. Flexi-time schooling in itself will not be the determining factor in whether or not a young person is socially isolated, I believe.

I am interested to learn that traveller children "already have the right to attend school half-time". It is legal for any young person to attend school part-time, but it is not a right. It is possible only if the head teacher and governors agree to authorising absence on a regular basis. There is no financial reason why they should not agree, as the young person still attracts full-time funding and the school remains responsible for the achievement of the National Curriculum.

I recommend this option to anyone who does not want either home education or school teaching full-time for what ever reasons.

This week I have forwarded information on flexi-time schooling to the Children's Rights Office in London, and to the Principal of NCH Action for Children.

If anyone who has already contacted me, and received information, could get back to me and let me know whether they have succeeded in arranging flexi-time schooling or, if not, what hurdles they have encountered, it would be welcome reciprocity.

Thank you,

**Kate Oliver,
21, St. Mary's Crescent,
Leamington Spa,
CV31 1JL.**

Dear E.O.,

I enjoyed reading the correspondence on isolation and socialisation as it's always good to be reminded of alternative interpretations of such issues, as well as providing further positive affirmation on the decision to live outside of the school system.

In the year or so I've been receiving the EO Newsletter, I have found it helpful and interesting. What I miss is a bit more bearing of our souls, sharing negative feelings, times of low confidence and self esteem etc. I, for one, need a forum in which to share my low moments, as well as to find out that others have rough times and haven't got it all sorted, and I'm the only one floundering! Where else can we do this?

I'm sure we could all share a lot of useful ideas between us in order to help each other, and ourselves, through these difficult times.

Ironically I feel that in the educational scheme of things, we are going through our honeymoon period, as our children are five-and-a-half and two, and expectations from the outside world are still relatively low. I do see families with older children, however, being presented with more challenges and decisions to make and conversing about these through the newsletter would, I'm sure, be very helpful.

I remember speaking to someone who had been educated out of school, who shared with me her occasional feelings of loneliness and "need for more than home" whilst also realising that school wasn't the answer. This didn't turn me away from the idea of home education, but rather made me realise that there would be times when we would need to be more creative and of course, need an extra boost of support.

I hope this sparks off some thoughts in either parents or children, and gives some confidence in those who feel unsure about sharing negative feelings about home education. EO should be a safe place to open up!

yours faithfully,

**Anita Spillane,
5, Garden Cottages,
Syon Park,
Brentford,
Middx. TW8 8JF.**

Dear EO,

We have been members since our son waved good-bye to a top Grammar School in June 1995. I always read the magazine from cover to cover as soon as it arrives, and here's my contribution to help others as they have helped me.

1) The Children's Pages are fine, but please don't cut out the adult stuff. We Mums and Dads can be just as isolated, and also want to share with one another - for everyone's good!

2) Thanks to those who wrote about 'socialising' I think it's tough when parents are asked "What about the social side?". After hearing it many times I finally retorted, "Do you mean another kick on the shins, or another bang of his head on the wall?". Our boy still has one good friend from school whom he meets in the holidays. He keeps in touch with his own age group through a Church youth group and village cricket team, plays cricket for an adult team, kicks a ball around with younger children in the neighbourhood, and plays golf with retired business men and headmasters! He meets others at a Jazz Orchestra, but does not socialise with them outside that context.

3) Our son abandoned school because of being DIFFERENT. Being intelligent does not mean you will be an achiever, a 'straight 1A' candidate who brings smiles to the faces of the teachers and puts the school up in the League Table. During our first year of Home Ed it would have been pleasant to take full advantage of the freedoms, but we felt he ought to do GCSE's. He did! He sat four in June, and the results are due on August 22nd, his fifteenth birthday. Now we are digging deeper and casting wider to get together a programme for next year. We cannot reproduce here all that we have found out about tuition, exam centres, Boards and syllabuses - some of which has already been mentioned by Sam Pay and others - but I have spoken to Val Gommon (who is especially interested in the FE College scene) and agreed to give our address. Here it is:

**Mrs Margaret Stevens,
High Beech,
Lower Road,
Loosley Road,
Princes Risborough,
Bucks. HP27 0NU.
Tel: (01844) 343928**

(Please send a SAE if possible - thanks).

My cat
by
HOLLY
KIRBY



Dear Friends,

After five years of unhappy 'secondary' schooling myself I vowed I would never make any child of mine go to school, if they felt in any way similar. So when my two youngest (5 & 8 years) moaned about school I removed them. After informing the school and the LEA of my intentions I looked forward to, what turned out to be, many years of pleasure of teaching my own children and developing a close relationship with them, which I feel school's often destroy.

Although disappointed I did not stand in Michael's way when aged fourteen he expressed a desire to go back to school. I did enquire about college but they said he could not be funded until aged sixteen. After a few minor hiccups Michael settled in school and is doing well.

After one term the youngest, Steven, felt lonely without Michael so he too tried school, but without success. So once again I have been only too happy to take back on again the role of teacher to my twelve year old. I am expecting opposition from the LEA but, the happiness of my children comes first and I shall make that very clear. As long as either one of my sons wants me as a teacher I will make myself available to them. I have gained so much from my years as a home educator and I know I can provide a better education for them in a stress free, caring environment.

Steven no longer feels lonely. He recognises that school can be very lonely too, with none of the advantages of home.

With no homework he is free to play with the friends he chooses when they return from school, and is glad to be back home again for lessons.

If anyone wants to write to me, I shall be pleased to reply.

Best wishes,

Linda Darby,
10, Lime Close,
Leigh,
Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffs. ST10 4PP.

AGFL
Roanna
Freeman
PEMBROKESHIRE



The Advantages and the disadvantages of being educated at home.

You have had the parent's view of educating at home, but you haven't had the real view. You haven't read the child's view, so I thought I would enlighten you. I left school at the age of six due to poor teaching and bullying by other children. I'm eleven now and happy, but that doesn't mean that there are no disadvantages.

The Disadvantages.

No.1. Teasing.

When I was at Brownies, kids teased me because I wasn't at school, even my so called best friend did. I left Brownies and joined Guides, there I was still teased (but not so much). In the end, after a year, I had an argument with the Guide leader. Three weeks later I quit. At the moment I'm not doing anything. BUT, I'm not in social isolation, I still go round to friends houses and I'm looking for a new club to join.

No. 2. Two against One.

This is a small disadvantage: it's two against one. Both of my parents teach me and you can't hide behind somebody else.

The Advantages.

No.1. Teaching.

My parents have a relatively open mind and they encourage me to be independent and to speak up for myself. I help to sort out my work for the week. Schools don't let you speak up for yourself, they teach you to follow orders. I do what my parents say, but I give my own opinions on politics and things.

No.2. Other things.

You can just get a drink or go to the toilet without waiting five minutes to ask. Also in school you probably wouldn't translate a German comic book. Well I am translating a giant comic book called 'Lustiges Taschenbuch: Donleon der Schreckliche', which means 'Funny Pocket Book: Donald the Terrible'.

Well at the age of eleven, I'm still taught at home and for four years I've been learning English and German from a University Tutor. I hope to become bilingual. I'm still teased sometimes, but now it's usually because they want to know if I'm going to Comprehensive School, which I'm definitely not!

**Jennifer Allen (age 11).
71, Belgrave Road,
Loughor,
Swansea,
W. Glamorgan.**

NATIONAL GATHERING / MEETING

FRIDAY 6TH - SUNDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 1996.

CALDECOTTE CENTRE, MILTON KEYNES.

The next National Gathering/ Meeting of **Education Otherwise** will be held at the Caldecotte Centre, Milton Keynes.

The Centre is situated in a semi-rural area with plenty of open space. The building is a modern, purpose built outdoor pursuits centre with good amenities, however, the sleeping facilities are very limited **SO BOOK EARLY**. The good news is that the site has a large beautiful camp-site with toilets, showers and hot water sinks (There may also be the possibility of hiring camping equipment, including tents).

The site has water sport facilities for sailing, wind surfing and canoeing and also a land based adventure/problem solving activity, which I am hoping will be available to us.

For more information and a booking form send a sae to:-

Valerie Gommon, 19, New Road, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes, MK19 7EH.

NOTICES

Editors are urgently needed for the Newsletter. There is no Editor for the December edition. Please contact Sue Hutchin, Newsletter Co-ordinator to find out what is involved.

**Education Otherwise has finally been granted Charitable Status;
Registered Charity No. 1055120**

December Special Section; Where are they now?

Is home education the best preparation for life we can offer our children? We all believe (or hope) that it is, but little is written in the newsletter about the thousands of young people who have been educated otherwise and are now independent. Do they feel, with hindsight, that their education was appropriate for them and would they home educate their own children?

If you or your children were home educated, (or you are in contact with an ex-EO family) we would all like to hear from you. If you are too busy to write, a note of what you are doing would be very welcome. Contact Anne Mills (see front cover)

Later Years.

It would be helpful if as many EOers with the relevant experience could answer the following questionnaires for me.

Education Otherwise Questionnaire No.1.

This is intended for parents of children who were home-educated between the ages of 11-16. The aim is to get information which I can use in the updating of the booklet 'The Later Years'. You may prefer to disregard these questions and write something of your own. I have put down some of the most common questions asked by people thinking about home educating their child. It may help to remember how you felt when you were considering whether to keep your child out of school at this age.

Please give as much feedback as you feel able, you can write anonymously if you wish.

You may also include any other info., such as stories or quotes from famous people who have been home-educated, that would be encouraging to others.

1. (Optional) Names, Addresses and phone nos. of parents.
2. Names of children, DOB, and details of when they were in and out of school.
3. How did you approach education? e.g. Did you plan your days, did you tackle 'subjects' etc...
4. Was any part of it a 'time-table' or routine?
5. What do you think was 'covered' from an educational point of view?
6. Did you feel anything was left out? And was this important?
7. If you had to do it again, what would you do differently?
8. Did the children follow different interests from each other?
9. How much did different members of the family work together?
10. One of the frequently asked questions from new members is "How did you tackle science, especially Chemistry, teaching?" what was your experience and how would you advise them?
11. Another favourite: "Will they lose their friends if I take them out of school?" Can you comment?
12. Also "How do EO children make friends?" ... more comments welcome...
13. Another "What about exams?". What was your experience?
14. How old are your children and what are they doing now?
15. Is that OK?
16. How did being an EO parent affect your life?

Please send information to me as soon as possible. Many thanks,
Yvonne Muckle, 10, Warner Road, Hornsey, London, N8 7HD.

Education Otherwise Questionnaire No.2.

This is intended for those educated outside of the school system who are now aged 18+ and also for comments from those below 18.

I have made a list of the sort of questions that are asked by people about home education. If you only want to answer one or two that is fine. PLEASE send me something back as it will be helpful to others who perhaps don't know any home-educated people. It is also helpful to me to have real experiences to put in the booklet.

Questions.

1. Please write your name, address and phone number (this is optional-you can be anonymous if you wish).
 2. What is your age now?
 3. What ages were you in or out of school?
 4. What do you think the reasons were why you were home educated?
 5. Looking back now, do you think these were good reasons?
 6. Did home education work for you?
 7. Write in as much detail as possible how you went about education e.g. Did you have regular activities, classes, a home tutor, correspondence courses or were you left to mostly follow your own path?
 8. Who helped you?
 9. Did anyone make it more difficult?
 10. What were the advantages of being educated outside of school?
 11. What were the disadvantages?
 12. What are you most grateful for?
 13. Any regrets?
 14. What do you remember as the best thing, or things, that happened in your life?
 15. Worst thing?
 16. If you went to school at some point, did you feel 'different' to the others in any way and how did you cope with this?
 17. Do you feel 'different' from people the same age as you now because of your education? (If yes, please say in what way).
 18. Is that an advantage or disadvantage?
 19. Did you take exams? If so, please give details of which ones, the age you took them, the results and whether you studied for them at home, school, college or elsewhere.
 20. If you didn't take exams, is that OK?
 21. Did you make friends easily when you were home-educated?
 22. Who were your friends? e.g. family, other EOers, local school children, others.
 23. Did you have enough friends?
 24. Do you think your relationship to your family is different to those who went to school all the time? If so, in what way?
 25. What are you doing with your life now?
 26. How do you see your future?
 27. How do you see the past?
 28. Is there anything you wish had been different?
 29. How would you choose to educate your own children?
- Please send information to me as soon as possible. Many thanks, **Yvonne Muckle,**
10, Warner Road, Hornsey, London. N8 7HD.

"Not History Again Dad!"

As a historian who earns a precarious living teaching part-time at a University, and to adults and A-level students, I have an obvious interest in how history is taught in home-education. The first question is whether students need to be taught history at all. The simple answer is no. Many people have reached high office in commercial and political life, with the scantiest knowledge of the subject. In my opinion this has much to do with the state of the nation today. The benefit of studying history, however, is that it does teach and improve analytical skills, and engenders an understanding of why we are as we are today.

Yes, history lessons can be boring, as everyone who went to school can testify. This need not be the case, as we home-educators have the opportunity to make history relevant and interesting. As history is a subject, unlike maths or science, that can be learnt entirely from books, as long, of course, as they are the right books.

There is a problem with younger children, however, as they have a limited perception of time, in historical terms. A time line is a useful device here, if you deal with events that the child can relate to .e.g. parents and grand-parents births. Then extend the line to take in historical periods the child shows some interest in. Do not despair if this play fails miserably, you must remember that to a young child everything that happened before they were born did not exist, while parents and adults they know have always been there, so be patient.

Treat learning as a game when ever you can, this is particularly possible when learning the dates of events. Obtain small pieces of card and put the event on one side and the date on the other. Then work in competition with the child to see who gets most right. A similar game of memory can be played, again using card, with just a date or an event written on one side. Lay them face down on a table, choose two cards, then turn them over to see who can match the most pairs of correct dates and events. This type of learning aid is also useful when teaching other subjects, and should instil boring dates into the student's mind by using play.

Perhaps the best method, for younger children, is to adapt teaching history to their interests. For example, if they show an interest in the Romans, perhaps from an Asterix cartoon, use that interest to lay the ground work to expand on that subject. Similarly with older children, use a trip to a castle or stately home to do a project on the subject. Use local libraries to do this, Usborne Books do a very good range, which will help to reduce costs. Do the project before the visit, so that both teacher and pupil can identify the areas studied on the visit.

Don't be afraid of using any device to encourage an interest. Children between the ages of seven and eleven are particularly interested in the world around them, and have the ability to understand it. Videos and films on television are also useful, as they can portray historical events in an interesting way. The film 'Oliver', or the darker 'Oliver Twist', is a good example; use the film to pose questions, such as 'what was a

workhouse?', 'why were they there?'; these lead back to the Poor Law Amendment Act 1834. 'Why don't we have work houses now?'; here an explanation of the Welfare State could be used. 'Why was there such a difference between the rich and the poor?'; this leads to an explanation of the effects of the Industrial Revolution. These sort of questions would hopefully lead to informative visits to the library for more information.

A useful series of books for eight to eleven year olds are the Schools History Project (SHP) which are ideal for this age group and have the added advantage of following the National Curriculum. Don't worry that you might not know a great deal about history, when teaching this age group use the available books and learn together.

Children over eleven years of age pose different problems than younger children regarding the study of history. There is a need to look at areas in history in more detail, in preparation for GCSEs and later A'levels. To make learning more fun try the Horrible Histories Series published by Hippo, these are very funny and very informative. Horrible Histories can also be used for younger children but, be warned, some of the descriptions can be explicit.

Home-educators do have advantages over schools in this age group, however, in that they can introduce more analytical methods of learning. History, as a discipline, does not only concern events or personalities, its value lies in the student gaining the ability to analyse the information laid out before them. Children use these analytical skills every day, whether they are buying sweets, deciding on what to play, or what programme to watch on TV. All need a weighing up of factors and their likely outcomes. The objective, therefore, is to encourage the student to apply these skills to the study of history. Why did something happen, what was the motive and what were the outcomes of the event or decision? Using this method of looking at issues will not only prepare the student for later examinations but, it will also create a mature way of looking at events in their own lives.

The problems of taking GCSE examinations, now that they consist of mostly course work, hopefully will be dealt with in a later issue of this magazine. But you can prepare the child with the help of books (many available from W.H.Smith) that lay out the requirements of both areas of study and how to answer questions in an understandable way. The Macmillan Series of Mastering History are also very useful, as they give the interpretations of events in a simple and clear way.

It is important to remember that history basically concerns people reacting to events, as we do, the only difference is they were in a different time. The secret is to enjoy learning together and make projects fun.

**Michael Allen,
71, Belgrave Road,
Loughor,
Swansea.**

Our EO Day.

Having seen my 15 yr old off to school (his own choice at 14, after being home-educated himself) I cajole my 12 yr old into getting dressed and having his breakfast whilst I tidy 'round, and after a quick glance at our flexible and ever changing timetable of lessons, I get out the necessary books and pens in preparation for the morning's activity.

At 8.45 the post brings the latest EO Magazine, and whilst I read the adult pages, Steven looks at the Children's Pages and decides whom he would like as a pen-pal.

At approximately 9.20 we begin Maths that lasts for 25 minutes: some revision, square and cubed numbers, factors of larger numbers and positive and negative sums. We follow this by carrying on with our history work book on the Roman invasion of Britain (which only takes 20 minutes). English is next and we read a passage from Letts 'Foundation English' about old-fashioned children's games of hop-scotch and marbles. Steven then tackles one of the exercises, explaining a modern game called 'gogo's'. By this time it's time for a break and we have a lovely cup of tea (This is missed by school children). Steven then plays on his computer and after half-an-hour he is at the good bit in a game, so I let him carry on for a further half-an-hour.

Finally we get down to a bit of French, followed by an interesting biology lesson: on reproduction. We're almost finished when we receive unexpected visitors, so I leave Steven to tidy away the school things, whilst I make another cup of tea. After the visitors have left we walk down to my Mum's for dinner, a weekly treat, followed by an hour gardening there. By the time we get home it's nearly 4 o'clock and Steven goes off to play with his friends who have returned from school.

With only a brief interlude to have his tea, he stays out until 8 o'clock when it is in for a period of relaxing in front of the TV until bedtime. While he is out playing I catch up with housework and ironing.

Today has been a good day, and whilst the lessons have been short, we have covered a lot of work. Steven has been stress free, had loads of fresh air and free time. A good advert for a home schooler.

**Linda Darby,
10, Lime Close,
Leigh,
Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffs.
ST10 4PP.**

(If you have an EO day to contribute, send it to: Paula Turner, 79, Kingshurst Way, Kingshurst, Birmingham. B37 6EB).

NATIONWIDE HOME EDUCATORS RESOURCE SERVICE

The idea of resource centres for Home Educators is finally appearing in a number of areas of the UK. These resource centres could take on various forms and a few possibilities are outlined below. However, unless there are enough people in enough areas, (or dividing the resources into enough categories), to share the potentially heavy load of such a project, it will not work.

Possible forms of the Resource Service are as follows:

- Nationwide network of databases listing resources wanted or available.
- Premises in the form of 'Resource Libraries' from which loans can be made.
- A combination of both the above

Possible educational resources are as follows:

- Books, information sheets, reference material, reports, etc.
- Tapes, videos, CDS, software etc or Games and equipment
- Expertise, skills, knowledge, trade or professional experience

Possible conditions attached to the loan (Decided upon by the lender):

- None, the resource is donated to The HE Resource Service
- A deposit to the value of the resource loaned
- Cost of postage to and from borrower & time limit of the loan
- Replacement of consumables or repair of damage
- Resource only be used or accessed at owner's address



We would need database holders distributed throughout the British Isles or enough to cover a range of categories. The map outline is only a suggestion for potential holding centres. Offers of help are essential from anyone who is prepared to devote short periods to the service. This will ensure that no one person is inundated with tiresome and time-consuming work. Guidelines for a simple database structure and suggested fields, (or a simple book-based system), could be made available if necessary. Old database programmes and computers, clean and safe storage areas, funds etc. will all be welcome. There may even be grants for such a national venture, and organisations which will provide free computers to form a national network. Find them for us.

If we work to basic principles of common sense and decency, this service will become an integral part of home education throughout the U.K.. It will be down to each individual lending a resource to ensure that they protect themselves from abuse. It will also be down to each individual borrowing that resource to be honest and caring with the generosity of another. Too many people are afraid to lend their possessions because they are either, not returned or, are damaged through neglect.

I will gladly take on the initial collection of information until there are enough volunteers to man different databases. Volunteers could increase or reduce their availability according to their own circumstances even, (provided that they give time for a replacement and proper handing over of their database), stop altogether. It is therefore essential that there are enough volunteers available to step in where necessary, otherwise the service eventually grinds to a stop. Don't let that happen.

These are only guidelines and a definite form will emerge as the Home Educators Resource Service grows. I feel however, that there must be a definite condition brought into the Service from the start - The Service must never sell or rent resources. Anyone trying to gain financially from it would be automatically excluded and where possible, action taken against them.

Only send in details of resources, and the conditions attached to them - not the resources themselves. Try not to overburden the resource service with wasteful enquiries or correspondence. SAEs must be enclosed if it becomes absolutely necessary to enter into correspondence but phoning within the set periods is better.

This project has until the closing date of the next newsletter to get off the ground. If it does not receive the support that it deserves from everyone, then it will flop. It is in your hands, in particular the hands of those who do not usually get involved in projects and schemes, to make it work. Contact John Paddon on 01204 410723 with details between 7:30 and 8:00 pm most evenings.

You are part of a very special body of people who show that you care. Do your best for the sake of everybody's children and join in. A fully supported resource centre would add another valuable dimension to their development.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL EDUCATION OTHERWISE ENTERPRISE

Just a little story...!

There is part of the world somewhere, some time, maybe a long time ago, maybe even now and maybe some time in the future as well, where crowds of people would gather on a green and sunny hillside in the country, far from the smoky dirty streets of the city, and they would dance and sing and picnic in the hills together. At first there was only a handful of people. They had brought nothing from the city, except perhaps a bit of a husky cough from the smoky air, and tired eyes and hearts from the unnatural lifestyle of the city, so they would walk around the forests and orchards and vineyards collecting wonderful things to eat; apples, pears, blackberries, strawberries, nuts, herbs, all sorts, and making the most delicious fruit salads of so many varieties and combinations, and they would also collect vine stems, twigs, leaves and whatever else, and using the ancient, natural woodcraft skills they would create bowls, spoons, cups, baskets for carrying the food, handmade rugs to sit on, hampers to hold everything they had collected and put together. All this activity gave them such feelings of joy and peace and togetherness, as if they had found the answer to life itself. And eventually they had so much food in their baskets, had made all the materials they could need for their comfort, and had cleared such a beautiful spot to rest and play in, they were able to just sit back and enjoy the fruit of their labours, and they sang and danced and ate and drank. And whenever the food supplies grew low, they would all stroll back out happily to the forests and orchards to gather more.

There was an area of the woodland, on the way from the city up to the hillside, which was difficult to cross, because of a fast, rushing rocky stream which intercepted the path and demanded very careful balance and attention to cross safely. So they all worked together to build a small bridge over the river, supported with a few strong poles from the woodland. And in this same area there was a tall straight tree which overlooked the city itself, so they climbed up and built a tiny tree house, so they could watch occasionally what was happening in the city. They would sometimes see people reaching the outskirts of the city and looking around as if wondering where to go, so they would wave and call to them, and the people would follow the sounds of their voices, cross the little bridge and join them on the hillside.

Over time more and more people heard of this wonderful place and the fantastic things that went on there and they too would leave the grimy, desperate cities and join the others in the wonderful country banquet. They would be greeted, welcomed and would sit in relief and joy, and would learn how to make the handmade rugs and the baskets and bowls and everything, and the more people came to the hillside the more varied and fascinating the designs on the rugs, the combinations of fruit and nuts, the styles of the baskets would become. Some of the people would join the small group who continued to go out to the orchards and vineyards and forests to gather more food, and up and down the paths greeting newcomers. And the party grew and grew, more and more people every day seeking a sanctuary far from the terrible city. The gatherers of food and supplies would be busier and busier trying to keep the baskets full enough so that everyone on the rugs would be catered for while they were busy weaving and stitching and sewing their rugs, making their baskets and hampers, as well as greeting the people as they arrived on the hillside. And all the time the people on the rugs would keep busy tending to their own particular needs; there would always be questions to answer, songs to sing, wounds to be bandaged and healed, stories to be read, cuddles and kisses to be given to the little ones.

But those on the rugs would eventually finish creating their little picnic spot and could just lie back and relax and enjoy and eat and drink and dance and sing. Every now and then they would need to mend a

hole in their rug, make another spoon or bowl, perhaps just fix the lid on their hamper, and they kept themselves busy and happy just joining in all the wonderful activities that would go on around them, dancing, singing, storytelling, bandaging wounds, answering questions. And all the while the baskets would keep coming, full of fruit and nuts and leaves and twigs and vines. Baskets overflowing, always when they were needed and always in plentiful supply. And the people were so happy and engrossed in their wonderful new lifestyle they would hardly notice the people who were gathering to fill these baskets and greeting newcomers on the hillside, and by now they were even painting signposts to put up all over the paths leading up from the city to the hillside.

But you know, if they had stopped to look, they might have noticed on the gatherers' and greeters' and signpost painters' faces their tired and weary looks, they might have sensed the feeling of heaviness in the gatherers' limbs and the hunger in their stomachs, their ever-increasing need to just sit and rest for a while, to re-gather their own strength, to mend the holes in their own rugs and tend to their own baskets and hampers. And back on the gatherers' and greeters' and signpost painters' own rugs, their people sat looking a little lost, a little lonely, unanswered questions, unbandaged wounds, no stories being told and hugs and cuddles just grabbed in a quick moment before dashing off to gather more nuts and fruit before the supply ran out, to greet the newcomers and guide them to the signposts before they got lost in the forests, as more and more people joined the party on the hillside.

And the gathering and the greeting was becoming more difficult, the gatherers themselves would often be cut and scratched in their haste, would twist their ankles and trip and fall, and the sun would beat down on their heads, they would begin to feel hot and dizzy and develop sunstroke. And as fast as they put up the signposts the weeds and brambles would flourish around them and would need to be hacked back and kept under control. The little bridge over the stream, which had been fine for the small numbers at first, now creaked and groaned under the weight of so many travellers, and sometimes boards would snap or break loose and so the gatherers and greeters and signpost painters would have to become bridge menders as well. One gatherer was so tired, he slipped on a bank and fell halfway down, into a small gully, and he clung to the edge trying not to slip further, he cried for help, over and over, but nobody heard him, they were too busy to attend to the sounds around them.

At times some of them just felt like stopping and giving up but they felt so strongly about preserving the comfort and safety of the wonderful sanctuary that the hillside had become, they never even stopped for a minute. So they would all just pick themselves up and carry on, ignoring their own pain and discomfort, and they would try not to remember how wonderful gathering had been at first, when there had been just a few of them and everyone had joined in together and then rested and danced and sung together, and they never even stopped to think how much easier it could be if they just rested for a while and asked for help, for someone else to gather a basketful while they caught their breath. So they kept going, because there were so many people to feed and supply and greet and guide.

By now there were so many people the gatherers couldn't keep up with the demand. The baskets would sometimes sit empty before they were filled and the people on the rugs would sometimes notice this and feel angry or frustrated. Why isn't this basket filled? When are they going to fill it? Who's going to take care of this? And they would continue with their own mending and bandaging and answering questions, and not notice the gatherers climbing back up the hillside, so tired now that the baskets felt heavier than ever, their arms could hardly carry them, their legs could hardly carry them, walking so slowly and wearily now they sometimes wondered if they could ever reach the top again. The weeds and

brambles around the many signposts were growing thick and fast and beginning to take a hold. Newcomers were arriving on the hillside, having got lost along the way, tired and angry, and with nobody available to meet them. The bridge had almost collapsed. Down in the gully, one of the other gatherers had eventually passed that way, heard the fallen gatherer's weak cries and grabbed his hand, but he was too tired to pull him back up and really couldn't quite hold the heaviness and strain alone. They both cried out together, and some other gatherers heard them - but they didn't have time to stop to help. There was always so much more that had to be done ...

* * *

Until one day, one of the gatherers decided that it was time to ask for some help. Returning to the rugs with a full and heavy basket, she sat down and started to tell a story. And the story is a little like this story now. And as she finishes telling this story then a wonderful thing begins to happen. All the people on the rugs are rising to their feet, collecting their friends and families together, picking up their baskets and into the forests and the vineyards and the orchards they go, all of them, joining the gatherers in picking and collecting the apples, pears, blackberries and nuts, the vines and the leaves and twigs, and bandaging and healing the cuts and bruises on the gatherers' knees and hands, and carrying the most exhausted of the gatherers back to rest a while on the rugs, helping them to mend their own baskets, encouraging them to take time to tell stories to their own people and answer the questions and catch up on all the cuddles and kisses there hadn't been time to enjoy before now. All the people, painting new signposts, clearing and weeding those that had been overgrown, greeting the flood of newcomers lost and confused on the hillside, all together so much is being achieved. All the people, finding the little bridge collapsed, mending and re-building, and even building new supports to take the weight of the huge number of people now crossing the river. Noticing also now that two of the gatherers are missing, all the people ask that a search party seeks them out in the forests, which finds them slipping down into the little gully, nearly at the end of their strength, and with all those extra hands they are pulling and pulling, shouting encouragement to each other - all pull together, all pull together and we can do it - and at last the fallen gatherers, rescued, are back onto firm land again.

And soon the baskets were overflowing again and all the people could return to the rugs and sing and dance and tell stories and answer questions together, all together now, and whenever someone would notice a basket getting empty or a hole developing in a rug or hamper, that person would mend their own rugs and their friend's rug too, and would go out into the forests and orchards and vineyards and collect whatever was needed. And though the gatherers and the greeters and the signpost painters continued to go out often to do those tasks they enjoyed and found fulfilling and rewarding, they learned to always rest, to ask for help when they needed, and they trusted that all the people were noticing and doing whatever also needed to be done. And so the baskets were always overflowing and everyone found their way safely and happily up to the hillside, and singing and dancing could be seen all over the hillside.

And often people would go down back to the cities for a short time, just to spread the word about what a wonderful place there is up on the hillside. And do you know, as time passed, those that climbed up to the tree house overlooking the city noticed that trees began to grow above the buildings of the city, and gradually the grey and dirty streets were filled with green and living plants, vines and trees, fruit and leaves all around, and the smoke and smog began to clear. And many years passed the city became a wonderful place too, to visit occasionally whenever it was useful, and the city people were able to visit the hillside whenever they needed. And singing and dancing could be seen everywhere.

EDUCATING ARCHIE BY SPY096



READER! THIS IS BASED ON A TRUE-LIFE INCIDENT IN THE...



Letters.

Dear EO,

Re: Newsletter 110.

I was reading Sue North's letter about "Have Faith in Psychologists?", and wondered whether bullying is increasing in schools because of adult attitudes? If the psychologist Mrs North consulted is typical (and I see no reason to doubt it) the advice he gave literally amounted to telling her to bully and abuse her children, both physically and emotionally. This is disgraceful behaviour on the part of a 'professional' and, I would consider, unethical. Even though (I assume) the children were 8+, has he never read the provisions of the Children's Act? He even suggested a paid official (The *Welfare* Officer) also 'abuse' the children.

If she was not dumb from shock (as any caring parent might be), I hope she told him EXACTLY what she thought of him.

p.s. I have sent a copy of Sue's letter - with her permission - and this letter to my M.P. (an ex-teacher).

yours truly

**Margaret Parsons
242, Spring Road,
Ipswich,
IP4 5NN**

Dear Education Otherwise,

We joined EO earlier this year after deciding to home educate our daughters (aged 4 and 1). We know

we are doing the right thing and feel tremendously positive about our children's future (we have both taught in mainstream schools). Reading the EO newsletter has enlightened us to the fact that we are far from being alone in our determination to offer our children the opportunity to grow and learn as individuals in an environment which allows them to be spontaneous, creative, self motivated, happy and safe. We would very much like to meet and get to know other families with young children who feel like we do and are especially keen to have contact with EO families who are within reasonable travelling distance (i.e. 20 to 30 mile radius of Darlington).

Please get in touch with us on (01325) 301847. We look forward to hearing from you.

Kathryn, Patrick, Sian and Anna Robson.

**Heighington,
Nr. Darlington,
Co. Durham.**

Dear EO,

Are there any other Lesbian's out there who are home educating their children or interested in doing so? We would like to hear from you. Thanks.

**Lee Simpson,
3, Jack Bridge Cottages,
Colden, Hebden Bridge,
W. Yorks. HX7 7HS.**

Dear EO,

Most, if not all, schools in this area now have a Pupil Pass Scheme in operation.

This consists of a card, bearing the name of the pupil and of the school, and signed by a teacher, granting permission to be out of the premises during school hours.

My eldest son has, on several occasions, been given suspicious looks and frowns by those in authority (e.g. store security guards) on his way to and from places connected with his assignments for that day. He says he wouldn't know quite what to say if he was to be stopped and questioned.

Is there something we could do, as a group, along these lines and what do other EO folk think of the idea?
Regards,

**Lucy Trecallion,
Sannia,
73, Abelia,
Amington,
Tamworth,
Staffs. B77 4EZ.**

.....

Dear Education Otherwise,

Has anyone any experience of bullying within Education Otherwise, for example, at gatherings of EO member children, etc.? This is not to suggest that it does go on. How would it be dealt with if it did? There is perhaps an assumption that bullying is not possible in an organisation that helps those who wish to educate at

home, because of it happening in schools. Can I please have your views, either through this medium or personally, by post.

yours truly,

**Michael Robson,
77a, Newbegin,
Hornsea,
HU18 1PA.
Tel: (01964) 536267**

Flapjacks.

Ingredients: 6oz Butter
1oz Golden Syrup
4oz Brown Sugar
8oz Oats
2oz Dessicated
Coconut.

Method:

Melt the butter and syrup in a pan. Remove from heat and stir in the remaining ingredients. Put mixture into a greased long tin. Bake on the middle shelf of a preheated oven, 180C, (350F), Gas Mark 4, for 15 minutes. When cool, cut into fingers and remove from the tin.

From: **Penny North** (age 13),
Dorset.

HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP

Help Lines.

As we have received several letters asking for help we thought it would be a good idea to have a page called 'Help Lines'. How about making this a regular feature? Ed.

*** URGENT * URGENT * URGENT * URGENT * URGENT * URGENT ***

We are urgently looking for an electronics enthusiast and a computing or information technology enthusiast to tutor our home-educated teenager who wishes to study these subjects at college in September as GCSE's. We cannot offer payment but could help another child with French or Guitar tuition to help with four-track recording and basic music technology.

Hoping to find a mutually beneficial arrangement soon. Many Thanks.

**Veronique Walsh,
2E, Pembridge Crescent,
London, W11 3DT.
Tel: (0171) 243 - 0291.**

HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP

Hi!

Existing group of E.O. families seeks more 'like-hearted' people for rural/semi-rural spiritual E.O. community venture. Housing co-op structure in place with intention of getting group mortgage. An holistic education project of the Living Green Trust. Please write with details of yourself to:

**Julia Brightbart,
177, Highgate,
Heaton,
Bradford. BD9 5PU.**

I am trying to put together a resources guide to books, teaching materials, computer software, CD-ROMs, games and anything else that people have found useful and would love to hear from both parents and children.

Contact:

**Barbara Edwards,
12, Oxford Road,
Guildford,
Surrey. GU1 3RP.
Tel: (01483) 832250**

HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP

HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP

Dear EO,

We are an E.O. family moving to Luxembourg in September for about five years. Robert and Edward are six and three respectively; they are both bright and active self-educating children who will miss their friends at Sunday School and in the street very much. Mark is a school teacher and I am the family and household manager.

As yet we don't know anyone in Luxembourg. We would like to hear from other E.O.ers, if there are any, in the area or near by. We would also appreciate any useful advice or information. We don't have our new address yet, but the Post Office will be re-directing our mail, so please write to us at:

**Mark & Karen Crussell,
10, Lockwood Drive,
Heath Farm,
Shrewsbury,
SY1 3SG.**

HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP

Dear Education Otherwise,

We live in Earls Court, and are interested in setting up a weekly one hour 'workshop' for children, focusing on a little combined yoga and T'ai-chi (for as long as their interest holds - and keeping it light), then using the rest of the time as a drama workshop.

I have two children of five and a half and almost three, my son, Jesse left school after a term, but I think he misses some of the group activities - especially dancing and exercising, and I think this would fill the gap. I have a friend who is a good and experienced actress, lots of fun, who is just finishing her T'ia-chi teachers course, and is highly recommended by her own teacher.

The plan would be that we meet here (I live in a youth club, we can rent a room for a small fee) and split Debbie's hourly fee. We can take around eight children for the size of the room. Jesse is also interested in French, so if anyone is interested in a French group let me know, as I don't feel I'd be much of a French teacher myself!

Finally, if there are any families near by with children of similar ages, I'd love to meet up! Jesse's two closest friends have just left the country, bound for Spain and America ... and at present I can't come to the local meetings as I work that day. So if you're interested, we really look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes

**Soirai Nicholson,
17, Bramham Gardens,
London.
SW5 0JJ.
Tel: (0171) 3739726**

HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP !!! HELP

SOME NEWS FROM THE WORLD OF COMPUTERS & COMMUNICATIONS

HOME EDUCATORS NETWORK

Just a short note to let you all know that the Network is thriving since the original notice went into Education Otherwise's newsletter some months ago. The Network is open to all Home Educators and strives to be an area where we can keep in immediate contact with each other, cheaply and effectively. Notices are being given to all known Home Educators organisations to give everyone a chance to join.



This Network is not an official network of Education Otherwise or any other organisation involved with educating otherwise. If you have a PC and are not sure if you can connect up to emailing facilities, then contact your local co-ordinator who will put you in touch with Network members. It may still be possible to cheaply and effectively connect up to a Home Educator's Network with a basic machine. There is no fee but only people who wish to actively participate should link up.

HOME EDUCATORS PAGES ON THE NET

Some members of the Home Educator's Network are in the process of developing pages on the Internet for home education. There are already a number of U.K. organisations with pages on the Internet. The intention with these pages is to give all existing and potential Home Educators somewhere to visit and glean some information on home education, it's legalities and possibilities.

A big pat on the back to them for making the effort.

ORGANISATIONS TRASHING OR GIVING AWAY OLD COMPUTERS?

Enough has been heard about companies simply throwing away old computers or organisations offering to give old computers away to good causes. Someone must have information on these possibilities for under-resourced Home Educators.

Even computers with minimum configurations and slow modems will allow Home Educators to access information and other Home Educators quickly and cheaply.

Someone shed some light on these potential resources for Home Educators.

LINGUAMATCH PRICING WARNING

An update on the LinguaMatch programme which was offered to Home Educators at a discount. It has been appearing as shareware at a registration cost of around £5.00. It has never been shareware and the matter is being taken up with the individuals concerned.

The five language, speaking phrase book is still offered to Home Educators at a discounted price, further discounted if it is ordered centrally and in quantity.


(Contact Lexicon on 0181 299 0067 asking for the Home Educators discount)



Children's Corner.

As there were so many contributions from children this month, far more than the children's pages had room for, we've printed some of them here...Ed.


The sun  is a star 

Sun on the Moon


That shines very bright 


Although you cannot see  it at night 

But, you can see  the sun's light 

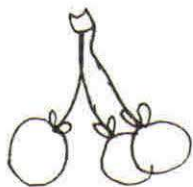
Shine on the moon 

by Sam Rees

And tonight you will see  it,

Very soon 

(7)



Haiku.

Quiet, secretive,
Foraging for ripe berries,
Inquisitive mouse.

Jason Bishop. (aged 11)

Night Watcher.

Why do I get the feeling I'm being watched?
Especially at night,
When I'm walking down the road,
Nobody in sight.
On this cold night,
A car horn beeps,
And through a window,
A light seeps
The rustle of leaves,
A miaowing cat,
A tree like a skeleton.
A man with a hat
Is this man following me?
This peculiar man,
I hurried up,
I ran.

Jeanette Blakey. (aged 12)
84, Hodder Ave,
Fleetwood,
Lancs.

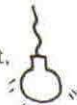
Summer



I really like the summer very much,
You can feel it's dearly warm touch.



I like it even more when you can go out at night,
because outside it is still very light.



I like it how it brighten's up the house,
and you don't have to hideaway like a mouse.



I like it when we can go outside in the paddling pool
and being on holiday NOT!!! being at SCHOOL!!!



I like going shopping to buy ice lollies,
whilst everyone else is pushing trolleys.



We can go to the park and play a nice game,
and there won't even be a sight of rain.



Meet lot's of people do lot's of thing's,
watch all the bird's whilst they fly with there wings.



I really do like the summer very much,
because you can feel it's dearly warm touch.



“By Rachel Brown, age 12. London.”



My Pony.

My little Polly is ever so jolly,
She likes to gallop and play.
She rolls in the dust, when she's been brushed.
And eats all the bales of hay.



Martyn-David (age 6)

Report of the Open Council Meeting on 18th May 1996

E.O Chair's Report

The E.O gathering was in a big field behind Gloversbridge Farm. A large circle of various shapes and sizes of tents, vans, caravans, even a real Tee pee, the Magic Lotus Cafe and an activity marquee welcomed me. The day was cold and wet. Some of the young people were poking in the central fire, others were practising walking the low tightrope, or juggling and playing ball. The adults were just getting up.

With kind permission we could use the Magic Lotus Cafe for our formal E.O meeting in the morning. Given the general surroundings it seemed almost surreal that we agreed that E.O will be going on the Internet.

Beverly Young has had a baby girl. Congratulations!

Isabel Bogucki informed us about 5 new coordinators and 3 acting coordinators. Frankie Inglis in Essex and Anita Jamal in York are dealing with publicity at the moment. A G.C.S.E network is being set up amongst members.

Valerie Gommon spoke strongly on the subject of college admission charges. A working party on this subject was formed. Please contact her with all your comments and experiences.

Valerie Gommon our general secretary will be advertising the job of membership secretary and general secretary. It will be a great help in future if anyone doing a job in E.O could please write to Valerie with their job description.

A policy decision was made that inquiry secretaries should not routinely give out coordinators phone numbers to non members

A variety of leaflets on specific themes are being prepared to introduce new members to E.O. The information leaflets are being worked on to be ready for September. There will be, for example, a leaflet on special needs and one on examinations to mention two.

Rob Wade reported on his work on SINC (School Is Not Compulsory) and by the time you read this it should have gone to the printers.

Yvonne Muckle is working on "Later Years" as the existing one is rather out of date. To help her with this very demanding task please get in touch with her to share your experiences and give support.

As always it was very impressive to meet such a variety of different hard working members in E.O. It's a delight and honour to chair such a varied bunch of voluntary people that represent our organisation.

The meeting closed as the drumming session started, to be followed by the final party of the gathering.

Pien Maltz-Klaar

An Extraordinary General Meeting
of
Education Otherwise Association Ltd
will be held at
Caldecotte Centre, Milton Keynes, Bucks
on
Saturday 7 September 1996, at 2.30 p.m.

to consider special resolutions amending the memorandum and articles of the association.

The following changes are proposed:

1. An extra clause in the articles stipulating that

- EO's bank accounts must be operated by members of the Council.
- They must show the name of the Association.
- Cheques must be signed by at least two Council members.

This clause, which simply obliges us to do what we do already, is required by the Charity Commission if EO Association is to become a registered charity.

2. The removal from our memorandum of association of the second of EO's two object clauses.

This clause enables us to provide recreational facilities. The Charity Commission has queried it on the ground that it is at variance with the object of the existing charitable trust. One of the reasons for turning EO Association Ltd into a charity is to enable the Trust and the Association to be brought together. Recreational provision has never been a significant part of EO's activities. There is a general feeling that this clause serves no useful purpose and could be dispensed with without affecting our activities in any way.

3. The removal from our articles of all references to proxy voting.

The Council feel that proxy voting is not really appropriate in an association like ours. In theory it allows more signed up members to have a voice, but in practice it makes things more bureaucratic and is open to abuse. There were no applications for proxy votes in connection with the last AGM, but proxy voting has led to arguments and confusion in the past. This change is not required by the Charity Commission, but they have indicated that they do not object to it.

4. Any further minor changes of terminology and expression that may be appropriate, provided such changes do not in any way affect the meaning of the memorandum and articles.

If you would like to discuss our application for charitable status, please contact Priscilla Park-Weir, treasurer.

If you would like to discuss other aspects of these proposals, please contact Rob Wade, meetings secretary.

There will be an open Council meeting starting at 10.00 a.m. (and adjourned until after the EGM if necessary). All EO members are welcome to attend both meetings. In the unlikely event of a vote at the EGM, signed up members (guarantors) of EO are each entitled to one provided they have paid their subscription. Under our existing articles, they may either vote in person or appoint another member as a proxy to vote on their behalf. Proxy votes are valid only if a formal poll has first been requested.

The form for appointing a proxy is prescribed by our articles. Completed forms must reach the general secretary at least 48 hours before the meeting, i.e. by 2.30 p.m. on Thursday September 5.

If you wish to become a signed up member and/or to appoint a proxy, please write as soon as possible to Valerie Common, acting general secretary (19 New Road, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes, MK19 7EH), enclosing an SAE or return address label with stamp.

Rob Wade, Meetings secretary

19 Perkin Close, Wembley, Middx, HA0 2LY; 0181-904 7155

Regional Diary.

Berkshire.

LEGOLAND: Group visit on Friday 13th September. Children £6, adults £11.50 (normal prices £12 and £15). Choice of structured workshops available. Booking essential. SAE for details to: *Pat Connor, 2, Whitegates Lane, Reading. RG6 1ED.*

ICE SKATING: each Wednesday 1-4 pm at John Nike Rink, Bracknell. Easy access M4 junction 10, and A329M. For £1.50 we get a free 30 mins. lesson (excellent teacher), skate hire plus, 3 hours skating. Large group of children, 5-13 years. Most of us now hold proficiency certificates but, don't be put off if you haven't skated before, you'll get lots of help.

SOCIAL EVENING: for parents on Saturday 21st September, at Pat Connor's home, 8-10pm. Easy access from M4 and A329M.

We also organise other events: recently we made elderflower sparkler followed two weeks later by an elderflower sparkler picnic with home made cakes and games. Also, one afternoon we arranged a half-price strawberry pick.

Details from: *Pat Connor,*
Tel No: (01734) 662123.

Clwyd, W.Cheshire, N.Powys, & N.Shropshire.

Group meets at least weekly for socialising, outings, and activities. For current listing send sae (or £3 for full year) to *Genny Bove, Rock Cottage, 49, Westminster road, Moss Valley, Wrexham, Clwyd. LL11 6DH.*

Exeter.

We're a small, friendly group of parents and children in Exeter, who meet regularly for social contact, outings and activities. We're looking for others to join us. Ultimately, we intend to form a Home Education Resource Centre and would welcome any advice or relevant experiences.

Lynda and Paul Hitchman, Tel No: (01392) 498679.

Norfolk.

NEON, the Norfolk Education Otherwise Newsletter, can be obtained by sending £1.00 and six stamped, self addressed envelopes to: *Ali Willer, 28, Cozens-Hardy Road, Sprowston, Norwich. NR7 8QF.*

It contains listings and contacts for forthcoming social events and educational visits.

N. Yorkshire.

Social events have been planned up to Mid-September. e.g. Brimham Rocks, Dalby Forest, Lotherton Hall, and much more! For details phone: *Anne Mills (01904) 488088.*

Oxford.

We have regular fortnightly meetings, some of which include workshops. We also have many organised educational activities and visits going on all of the time. For more details phone: *(01865) 514973* or write to: *15, Webbs Close, Lower Wolvercote, Oxford, OX2 8PU.* (with a stamped SAE for a complete list).

The need for a local contact list has become apparent and I am trying to compile one to distribute to local E.O. families who wish to make contact with others. Friendship and support at a local level can enrich the quality of our home-educating experiences and the lives of us and our children so, if any E.O. families living in or around Oxford would like to receive a local contact list or, more importantly, to be included on it. Write to me at the above address NOW or phone on the above number.

Wendy Pleded (acting local co-ordinator).

Surrey.

Monday September 9th (for six weeks as a trial basis) weekly meetings in Guildford Library from 4-5 pm for help with books and

resources and answers to project questions. For more details phone: *Barbara on (01483) 832250.*

S.W. Wales.

Fortnightly meetings in Llanelli area at members houses - details *Sue Hagerty (01269) 861902.*

Tues. 20th August: Beach and campfire at St. Ishmaels, Kidwelly, (weather permitting). Details: *Heather Harris (01269) 861424.*

Mon. 23rd September: Get together with Shropshire and Clwyd groups at the Centre for Alternative Technology, Machynlleth, Powys.

Some people will be camping over the weekend as well. Details: *Sue Hagerty (01269) 861902.*

Warwickshire.

August: Saturday 10th at 11 a.m. Picnic at Burton Dassett Country Park. Good for kite flying. Meet at the car park nearest to the beacon. Contact: *Alison Cox (01926) 613619.*

September: Thursday 19th 11 a.m. Sribston Discovery Park (hands-on science), Coalville. Contact: *Trish Archer (01203) 422575.*

October: Friday 18th at 10.30 a.m. Planning meeting. Please bring plenty of ideas for meetings in 1997. Contact: *Alison Cox (01926) 613619.*

W. Midlands.

Meetings have commenced at St. Paul's venture, in Birmingham on the last Monday of every month. These replace the Birmingham Library meetings. The new premises are available for the whole day, so we meet from 10am 'til 4pm. We are hoping to divide the day into two sessions, and make it easier for people to just 'drop-in' when they have a spare hour!

Session 1 - 10.30 ish - 12.00, craft activity.

Lunch (bring your own) 12 - 1.30. Drinks of tea, coffee, and squash are available at the centre.

Session 2 - 1.30 - 3.00, 'talk'.

The continuity of these meetings will depend upon your support, please let us know what you have enjoyed, what you want organised. All home-educators are welcome at the meetings. There is currently no charge to attend, but of course we have running costs so ask for donations of what ever you can afford towards resources. After the summer period we will be assessing the viability of the group. In September we are hoping to have a planning meeting to develop a home-educators' resource centre. (Ring for details from Paula nearer the date or read HELM*)

Walsall meetings continue on the second Thursday of each month in the central library 1.30 - 3.00 pm. Drinks provided by the library staff if you arrive early!

The West Midlands now has a great eight page monthly newsletter available for £1.20-3 months. £2.40-6 months. £4.80-12 months. Trips and events continually being

organised outside the deadline dates for this national newsletter. To be up to date and informed of local happenings, or if you want to subscribe to Home Educators Local Magazine* (HELM) Ring Paula (0121) 6038673 or Julie (01922) 409342.

W. Yorkshire.

Monthly parent and child meetings on the last Thursday of every month. 11am until 1.30pm at the Child Guidance Centre, Civic Centre, Huddersfield. This is where we organise trips and activities, chat, swap ideas and make friends.

Please ring Diane (01484) 846946 or Clare (01132) 690061.

In addition some members in the Bradford area go swimming in Shipley every Tuesday morning. Please ring Julie (01274) 488657.

stop press stop press stop press stop press

New Co-ordinator needed.

for **Humberside/East Yorks** area.

Contact: *Isobel Bogucki*

Tel: (01403) 261178

stop press stop press stop press stop press

"THE INTERNATIONAL HOME EDUCATOR".

Some time ago there was an advertisement in the EO newsletter inviting us to subscribe to this magazine from New Zealand. I subscribed for a year and was sent only one copy. Although I wrote twice to ask why, there was no answer. Recently I asked a NZ penfriend if she could find out what had happened. This is her reply:

"..... To cut a long story short - the magazine no longer exists. Apparently someone within the organisation stole the money and the matter is still in the hands of the police. They're hoping to get it off the ground again one day"

I thought I would share this news with you as I know there were other EOers who sent money and got nothing.

**Yvonne Muckle,
10, Warner Road,
Hornsey,
London,
N8 7HD.**

DON'T FORGET!

The newsletter needs your support - if you don't send in articles there will be nothing to print - and nothing for you to read! So keep sending in anything that could be useful - no matter how silly - or how large or small - someone out there will want to read it!

Penpals.

Hello out there, My name is Heather I am 10 years old. I love dogs, ballet, beading, art and writing. Please write to **Heather**, 163, Two Mile Hill Road, Kingswood, Bristol. BS13 1BS.

Hi! My name is James Wood, age 8. I would like a boy or girl pen pal. I like animals, watching the Simpsons on TV, playing, and I like Heavy Metal music and Rock, U.F.O., Meat Loaf, Bon Jovi, Soul Asylum, Aerosmith, Gun's 'n' Rose's and Def Leppard and I like Mariah Carey. I like collecting Superboy comic's. Please write to me at: **James Wood**, 10, Bilberry Close, Narborough Road South, Leicester. LE3 2JA

Hello! My name is Toni, I am a girl, nearly twelve. My hobbies are Roller blading and listening to music. I also like going clothes shopping but it is rare because I don't have much money. My favourite bands are: Ocean Colour Scene, The Prodigy, and Presidents of the USA. My favourite TV programmes are: The X Files and The Ren and Stimpy Show. I also love America although I have never been there. If you would like to be my penpal, write to: **Toni Deary**, 12, Haden Hill, Chapel Ash, Wolverhampton, W.Midlands. WV3 9PT.

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#####

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01227 830630 Or 01727 848836



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NEW THIS MONTH!

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ALL ORDERS SENT BY 1ST CLASS POST



Advertising in the Newsletter is free, but if you are running a business or hoping to profit from your advert, please send an appropriate donation (Cheques should be made payable to 'Education Otherwise'). Remember that EO is run entirely by volunteers and has no income except members subscriptions.

Adverts should be limited to fifty words, and sent (with any donation) to the editor of the next issue. First time advertisers who wish to send art work should contact the newsletter co-ordinator.

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01503 272087

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Common, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 8DX
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School Phobia ,Young People's Support:

Angela White

Tel: 01203 312461

Adult Support:

Catherine McKillop: Scotland

Tel: 01631 565551

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Tel: 01643 707535

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Polperro, Looe, Cornwall, PL13 2JP

Tel: 01503 272087

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Priscilla Park-Wier (Surrey)

Eleanor Stapleton (London-North)

Anne Wade (London Middx)

Bruce Wallace (Highlands)

Beverley Young (Lancs)

Stationery

EO stationery, leaflets, posters, membership forms,
car stickers and re-use labels (£2.50 per 100) are
available from Lucy Charlton (see above).

Publications

The following books can be obtained from Chris

Harper, Badgers Holt, Birchwood, Storrige,
Malvern, Worcs. WR13 5HA (01886 884740):

The Abuse of Care and Custody Orders

Pat Knox £3

Troubled Children Pat Knox £3

Learning from Home-Based Education

Roland Meighan £3

Early Years £2.50

Newsletter Digest ('82 - '86) £1.50

EO Newsletters (4 back issues) £1.20

UK postage and packing £1

education otherwise

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation which provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

Our principal aims are to:

- encourage learning outside the school system;
- reaffirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school;
- establish the primary right of children to have full consideration given to their wishes and feelings about their education.

For further information send an A5 s.a.e. to:

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