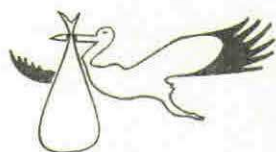
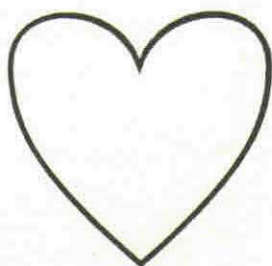


EDUCATION OTHERWISE



February '97

No 114

The Next Issue

The Editor of the Next Issue is:

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YO3 32X Tel 01904 765385

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The Deadline for Contributions is:

1st March 1997

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;

Reading & Writing

April '97 issue. Deadline February '97

A Typical EO Family

June '97 issue. Deadline April '97

Science at Home

August '97 issue. Deadline June '97

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:

Michael Allen, 71 Belgrave Rd,
Loughor, Swansea, West Glamorgan
SA4 6RF
Tel 01792 898191

Disclaimer

The opinions in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editor, nor of Education Otherwise as a whole. This newsletter is edited by a volunteer and its primary purpose is to provide support and communication between members.

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 **October 97** issue onwards.

If your newsletter does not arrive, check with Barbara Edwards, who maintains the database.

EDITORIAL

HELLO AND WELCOME

to the February 1997 edition of the
E.O. Newsletter.

My name's Rod Drury and my three
children are Hollie, Kyle and Luke.

My children have never been to
school (poor things) and I have been
educating them at home for eleven
years, six and-a-half of school age. But
they don't start as we all know at five
or finish at sixteen or eighteen, I'm
sure I'll still be guiding them in
twenty years plus.

Hollie is eleven (26/12/86), Kyle is
nine (15/3/87) and Luke is eight
(12/11/88). Fortunately we live in an
area with plenty of Home Educators
and lots of things going on. This is
thanks initially to our local E.O.

Co-ordinator, Paula Turner and then
the group of Home Educators who've
evolved over the last two years.

Now at our main local meeting
(Birmingham-St.Paul's) we have on
average twenty adults and forty
children attending and this is from a
regular group of thirty adults/sixty
children rotating between months.

If your in the West Midlands or
nearby, we'd love you to pop along,
and because it's a large (very friendly)
group, there is sure to be someone of
a similar mind to you. If you'd like to

pop along to one of the meetings for
the first time give Paula Turner a call
and she'll be there to greet you on
your arrival. If your local and you
would like a complimentary copy of
our local newsletter send me an A5
s.a.e., if your a bit further away and
would like to know what goes on in
the West Midlands just include a 2nd
class stamp aswell.

Hope this newsletter isn't to hard on
the eye and if your on the way
through the West Midlands in the
near future, try and pop along to one
of the meeting dates and you'll be
given a warm welcome and a
cup-of tea, or coffee, or squash.

Best Wishes,
Rod, Hollie, Kyle & Luke.

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SPECIAL NEEDS

Compiled by Michael Allen

*Lesley Belgium
52, Camberley Road,
Bristol.
BS4 1LZ.*

My nine-year-old daughter, Rebecca, has dyslexia.

I realised when she was only five that she was having problems. But it wasn't until she was being bullied at Junior school, two-and-a-half years later, that it began to surface. The school saw a child of average ability, who didn't pay attention in class and didn't try very hard. I saw a very unhappy little girl, who just couldn't cope with her work but who was nevertheless, a bright child. But Rebecca's father has dyslexia, so we had an assessment done. Yes, we were told, she has a specific learning ability.

We took her out of school. She did well, her confidence improved, too. Then the LEA did an assessment for us. The results tallied, she was indeed dyslexic. They suggested we put her back in, so she could be statemented. We agreed. She didn't get a statement and she ended up doing extra work in her lunch-hour. I was disgusted when I found out. We decided to take her out again. This time her younger sister came too.

That was a year ago.

Rebecca and Jessica are happy to be home-schooling. They both read well, Rebecca now uses a cursive handwriting and her spelling is improving every week. She reads anything and everything. We haven't used special reading schemes, but we did try a multi-sensory approach at first. We've used phonics too. Most importantly, I have given her my time and individual attention: which they couldn't do at school.

If you have a child with special needs; be it dyslexia, dyscalcula, dyspraxia, autism, Down's Syndrome, deafness, or whatever, and you would be prepared to be a local contact, to build up a National Network... county by county, now that Maggie Swartridge* is retiring, why not get in touch with me? Even if all you can offer is to answer a 'phone and pass on someone else's 'phone number, your help and support would be much appreciated.

Best wishes to all, Lesley Belgium.

Tel: Bristol (0117) 9530624. *(see pages 8-9)

Complaint to the Dept. of Education and Employment.

Janice Cannon sent in this copy of part of a reply she received from the DofEE. She had written to them to complain about the service she had received from her LEA, and the way her son's educational attainments had been ignored. The Cannon family had to pay for their own medical assessment when their son was statemented, and even had to fund a SATs test to prove their son's educational ability, which the LEA then ignored.

The Cannon's would welcome any comments or advice members might have on this subject. Please write to the 'Special Section' editor or to Janice Cannon directly at: 'Garden House', 4, Hodgson Street, St. Johns, Wakefield, WF1 2QZ.

Ms J Cannon
Garden House
4 Hodgson Street
St Johns
Wakefield
WF1 2QZ

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
Westminster
London SW1P 3BT
Telephone 0171 925 5000
Fax 0171 925 6000
E-Mail info@dfee.gov.uk

Direct Line 0171 925 5533
Local Fax 0171 925 6986

9 December 1996

Dear Ms Cannon

Thank you for your letter of 7 November to the Secretary of State about your son. I have been asked to reply.

I was also sorry to read that your son had been bullied in the past at school. I understand from your letter that your complaint is twofold. Firstly, that the LEA did not take notice that your son undertook a SATs test and secondly, they have been intervening at your home. I think it would be helpful if I made clear your position and that of the LEAs: under section 36 of the Education Act 1944 it states that parents have a duty to ensure that children of compulsory school age receive suitable education either by regular attendance at school or otherwise. Parents may choose to fulfil this obligation by teaching their children at home. Suitable education is defined as efficient, full-time education appropriate to the child's age, ability and aptitude or any special educational needs he may have. (You may already know that special educational needs is determined by the local education authority "statementing process" of a child.) If you are uncertain about this or if you need further information, you should liaise with your LEA if you have not already done so)

The LEA have a duty as well to ensure that you are providing a suitable education. They will need to fulfil their duty by making continual assessments of your provision by visiting you. Any parent that choose to educate their child at home are constantly monitored by the LEA.

As you may know, Education Otherwise are a voluntary organisation which plays an important role in supporting families in their dealings with LEAs. Education Otherwise's legal advisers keep detailed records of all the cases relating to home education and advise members who request information or support. Decisions relating to policy are made at local meetings and each area of the country has a local volunteer co-ordinator.

PICKING UP THE SLACK FROM POOR TEACHERS - A Book Review by Margot Dokken

Americans reserve the term 'infant' for children too young to walk. Once they become *homo erectus* they are 'toddlers'. When my son was a toddler we sometimes enjoyed listening to the television series *Sesame Street*. 'Listening' may seem an inappropriate verb for a visual medium like TV, but that's how we experienced it. I would be busy with some task, and already knew my ABCs, anyway; The Heir, absorbed with Duplos or Matchbox cars, outwardly ignored the popular children's program. Later he would surprise me with a comment about some aspect I was sure he had missed. If I delved I would discover he had, in fact, picked up and *remembered* a great deal of the morning's information. During his early years at playgroup, he 'participated' in group activities by playing quietly in a corner while the other children clustered around a story teller. He could always relate the story later.

I feared he might be a social misfit until I came across *In Their Own Way* (Tarcher/St. Martin's Press, US pub.) in which Thomas Armstrong, Ph.D, examines the different ways we learn. Armstrong was a specialist in learning disabilities when he realized in the early 1980s that the kids sent to him as 'handicapped' instead were very bright but with unique learning styles the schools didn't understand. His own discovery of the ideas of Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner, who said we all have seven kinds of intelligence, led Armstrong to adapt these intelligence styles to the process of learning, and correspondingly, teaching. He believes that we sample from several styles, favoring the couple that are most effective for us personally. More's the better if our favored styles are also favored by our teachers and the society-at-large in which we function. Armstrong's book is especially helpful in describing these intelligence styles, identifying style characteristics, and giving practical applications. The Heir's principal learning style is *kinesthetic* -- he learns through movement. He and his style-sharers are always in motion and often labeled 'hyperactive' if there aren't appropriate outlets for them. Great mimics, they need opportunities to learn by moving or acting things out. The most effective methods for teaching them use tactile experiences, manipulation, and role playing. This information was very reassuring and I read on.

Logical/mathematical people think abstractly; they compute arithmetic problems in their heads and ask questions like When did time begin? They love brain teasers, games requiring reason, and create collections of things they can classify. They learn by forming concepts and looking for abstract patterns and relationships. *Linguistic* learners read, play with words, tell stories, and respond best by verbalizing or hearing and seeing words. Teaching tools include oral or written reports, tape recordings, and creative writing. People with *spatial* intelligence think in images and pictures. They like to design things, daydream, and know where they last saw the item you can't find. They learn visually, through pictures, images and color (films, diagrams, charts), and 3-D models. The *musically* motivated are usually humming or singing to themselves. They are sensitive to nonverbal sounds others miss -- crickets chirping, distant bells ringing -- and often need music on in order to study. They respond to rhythm and melody and learn more easily if something is sung or set to a beat. *Interpersonal* learners empathize, often acting as mediators and community/playground organizers. A good way for them to learn is by teaching others! Those who incline toward *intrapersonal* are self-motivated and learn best when left to themselves. They need privacy for introspection and their semisecret projects and hobbies. Deeply confident, they march to a different drummer and can be inspired with stories about heroes who stood out from the crowd.

I recognized my son in a couple of those descriptions and began to understand why some teachers 'connected' with him, while others left him uninvolved. Effective teachers employ several techniques: when teaching is limited to one or two learning styles everyone learns a little, but only a few really 'get it'. However, armed with Armstrong's practical suggestions anyone can supplement poor teaching. Reading, multiplication, even rote memorization can be presented in a way to appeal to any particular learning strength. Presto!! 'Education' becomes FUN and everyone has a chance to shine in some area of life.

Special Needs Contacts

Every child is different, unique. As every parent is the expert on their own child, so every parent's experience and expertise is different and unique. But all the people mentioned here share the common ground of Special Needs EOing and a willingness to 'be there' for others to empower them to benefit from EOing. A wealth of 'worth-a-try's too.

Dawn Waddington, tel. 01908 678099, has volunteered to put our information on computer for us. (No more forgetting the number of the form for your entitlement to Free Milk, let alone useful books and organisations!) Please, please excuse my now lumping you into 'labels'- I'm going to use 'categories' purely for accessibility.

Autisms inc Asperger's, dyspraxia, language disorders

North	Pamela Mantri	0191 3845274	
N.West	Liz Kinnish	0151 6486984	<i>Asperger's</i>
N.West	Sue Martin	0151 5251043	<i>Dyspraxia</i>
N. East	Janet Appleby	0191 2658233	<i>Asperger's</i>
East	Jane & David Miles	01476 78118	
East	Carol Pell	01469 532308	<i>Holding therapy</i>
W.Mid	Alan & Helen Philips	01384 278789	<i>Options therapy</i>
Wales	Paul & Innys Sayers	01248 490881	<i>Options therapy</i>
London	Rita Mitro	0181 347 7130	<i>Options therapy</i>
Home	Dawn Waddington	01908 678099	<i>Asperger's</i>
South	Barbara Edwards	01483 832250	<i>Aspb. & gifted</i>
S.West	Maggie Swatridge	01503 272087	<i>Dysp & language</i>

Behaviour

N.West	Marie Collins	01772 741328
S. East	Lorraine Piercy	01424 432527

Hyperactive

N. West	Sue Martin	0151 5251043	<i>Natural therapies</i>
N.West	Marie Collins	01772 741328	
London	Jonathon Rutherford	0171 272 4756	<i>ADHD, ADD</i>
S. East	Cheryl Pledger	01702 711012	<i>ADD</i>
S. East	Sue Petzsaft	01892 667319	<i>Nut., Nat. therapy</i>
S. West	Lesley Belgium	01179 530624	<i>+ dyslexia</i>
S. west	Maggie Swatridge	01503 272087	

Dyslexia

North	Gwen Baldock	01904 421982	
W. Mid	Pauline Healy	0121 3551545	
E. Mid	Don Payne	01604 770059	
Mid	Angie Cassell	01785 712447	
London	Geraldine Adams	0171 263 4922	
S. West	Sue Godsland	01392 438844	
S. West	Lesley Belgium	01179 530624	<i>+ ADD</i>

Downs

Scot	Debra Kempt	01467 642012	+ <i>Leukeamia</i>
N. West	Alison Peries	01142 478901	
East	Gill Warren	01673 858703	
London	Margeret Gilbert	0181 947 7706	
Home	Jean Bundred	01734 794439	
S. West	Sue Downham	01258 860638	

Cerebral Palsies

Wales	Cath Salt	01978 753939	
S. East	Lorraine Piercy	01424 432527	+ <i>Behaviour</i>
London	Eleanor Stapleton	0181 8841368	

Severe Learning Difficulties

London	Eleanor Stapleton	0181 8841368
London	Shirley Bowden	0181 695 6221

Hearing Difficulties

W. Mid	Lynn Hunt	01782 522337
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Epilepsies

S. West	Maggie Swatridge	01503 272087	<i>Anyone else ?</i>
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School Phobia

Cumbria	Lee Fitton	01768 341709
Wales	Des Quarrell	01743 365913

More People Please

Other illnesses, eg renal, ME ? Scotland ? Other help - anyone able to answer Special Needs phone or letter enquiries ? Overall Co-ordinator ? I'm still aiming to retire *ASAP*, so let's get this network going !

Thanks, Maggie Swatridge

SOCIAL SKILLS

A growing number of children are being diagnosed as having social communication problems, Asperger's being a typical example. Our own LEA -Surrey - admits that it does not know how to meet these children's needs. So quite a few end up being educated at home. How do you meet their social educational needs in the home situation ? Some of them do not like other children at all. Should they be made to bother?

My son is very keen to get friends but also finds it painfully difficult. Life would obviously be much easier if he didn't. He has two or three books on making friends which he reads avidly.

Our social education is rather informal, but I thought it was better to try something rather than nothing. An immediate effect of leaving school was that he talked to people more, was much less afraid and seemed more positive. He attends a local church social club. He has started to join in group activities like the community picnic and instead of hiding away as he used to do when he was at school, looks just like the others.

I try to make him interested in people and I think this is succeeding. Literature and history give us a chance to talk about how people behave, geography allows us to look at how people cope with different sorts of weather and how their cultures differ. We looked at how different people would see our town. He has written a soap opera about some of the colourful characters in our street.

On Friday mornings, we do our 'social skills' using an Australian book recommended by the TES as meeting the demands of GCSE English oral work. We practice conversation starters and stoppers, role play indecisive customers in MacDonaldis, tramps, secretaries, historian, lawyers and over chatty women like one of our local neighbours. He is very keen on these activities and appears at 8 o'clock in the morning waving the book. But he is still quite hesitant to talk to real people.

Electronic communication has been a real blessing, he is an active member of the Open School's Teleweb and now the Y Drive on Compuserve (this one has a local point and is better for my phone bill). Soap operas are a good source of body language, but he refuses to watch them as he doesn't like anything too popular. Another problem, he likes other children but on his own terms.

I would love to know what other EOers do with similar children and whether we could perhaps put our ideas together to decide how to handle this side of our children's education.

Barbara Edwards, 12 Oxford Rd, Guildford, Surrey, GU1 3RP Tel: 01483 832250

Information about Open School's Teleweb can be obtained by sending an SAE to: The Open School Trust, Park Rd, Dartington Hall, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6EQ. Tel. 01803 8666676. Email: openschool@bbcnc.org.uk. The Teleweb enables children to communicate with others whilst learning. Topics for discussion are chosen with the guidance of the school staff. The school also provides Teletutoring at £15 an hour (fax machines can be hired at from the school at £3 per week.

Notice - Reading Section

Would the parent who wrote an article about teaching their three year old son to read using 'Peter and Jane' books, please get in touch with Mike Allen 01792 898191, as you forgot to include your name and address.

Here are a few addresses that members should find helpful:

British Talking Book Service for the Blind,
Mount Pleasant,
Alperton,
Wembley,
London,
HA0 1RR

Tel: 0181 - 903 - 6666

Books on tape can be hired, including GCSE and A'level texts. Subscription payable.

Contact a Family,
16, Strutton Ground,
London,
SW1P

Leaflets and factsheets available on many subjects. Send a SAE.

Dyslexia Advisory Centre,
6, Manorgate Road,
Kingston,
Surrey.

Dyslexia Institute,
152, Buckingham Palace Road,
London,
SW1.

Both give help and advice.

National Listening Library,
12, Lant Street,
London,
SE1 1QH.

Tel: 0171 - 407 - 9417

Tapes available to loan.

Association for All Speech Impaired Children,
347, Central Markets,
London,
EC1A.

Tel: 0171 - 236 - 6487

Help and advice given.

We have also been asked to remind parents of 'special needs' children that they are entitled to free milk tokens. For more details ask at the Post Office or Benefit Agency for leaflet WMVI *Welfare milk and vitamins: A guide for families.*

If anyone else has addresses that they can pass on to help other members please send them in and we will print them in the next 'Special Needs' supplement. Don't wait for the deadline to be announced send them now to:

Mike Allen, 71, Belgrave Road, Loughor, Swansea, W.Glamorgan. SA4 6RF.

Reading.

The 'Special Section' in the April newsletter will be about reading - send in your articles today. Whether you teach reading by a set method, or whether you let your child find their own way, your view is very important to other members. Reviews of books that have encouraged your child to read, or continue the habit, would also be very welcome, as would recommendations of reading schemes. Send contributions to:
Michael Allen, 71, Belgrave Road, Loughor, Swansea, W.Glamorgan. SA4 6RF.

A Typical EO Family.

The June 'Special Section' is about typical EO families. Who are they? Are you one? As we are all so different and organise our days in different ways every family is 'typical'. This means of course that every family reading this newsletter is qualified to write an article for the 'Special Section' ! So put pen to paper now and tell us about your family, your activities, likes and dislikes, how you came to join EO, why you educate at home and anything else you can think of! Send all articles to:
Michael Allen, 71, Belgrave Road, Loughor, Swansea, W.Glamorgan, SA4 6RF.

LETTERS

PASSING SHIPS

Dear E.O. Friend's,

we are just passing ships in the night so to speak. As my Family joined EO in November of 1996 and as our daughter is now 16 years old, she will be moving on .

I was very pleased to have joined because as soon as I received the book's etc., I felt much easier about EO from home.

Our story is quite common I would think. Sarah was being bullied verbally, the bullies were isolating her at school, making her feel lonely and unhappy. I went to the school W.F.O., who in turn went to the deputy head.

It took six months for the W.F.O. to sort it out, but of course did not stop completely. Meanwhile the W.F.O. kept saying she MUST go to school. Looking back now I wished I had Deleted her from school at that time as Sarah suffered needlessly. These same bullies (girls), saw my daughter in "Town" and attacked her physically.

I tried all I could to get her into another school, working with the W.F.O. - whom I may add gave me no help at all - who just told me to do all the running around. For instance: Go to the doctor, apply to school's, get interviews, get written replies; ONLY to find, no schools would take Sarah in at her age, to finish her education.

Then after going to two interviews at schools, plus having got two letters sent to W.F.O. from doctors supporting Sarah's ordeal; I received a phone call from the W.F.O. saying they would take us to court for not sending her to school.

So then I sent the official letter and had Sarah's name deleted from the school register. Since then we have not looked back.

Sarah has moved on, we have an English and Maths tutor coming to our house once a week on GCSE level, so she is continuing to study for her exams.

Since working from home its a lovely no stress Sarah, and she has become much more herself. Her motivation to do things has developed positively and is starting evening college in the new year, which Sarah wants to do.

We have no regrets.

I am sure in the near future EO will grow.

Fairwell and Best of Luck to you all,

Yours Faithfully,

M. Tomaszewski.

23, Linden Road, Coxford. Shirley.
Southampton. 01703-496476.

WARNING?

I deal with telephone enquiries for EO and have recently heard of an organisation in Kent who oversee Home education in the area, in place of the LEA. They are called Kent Curriculum Services Agency.

They seem to be dealing with Home Schoolers in a very high handed and negative way and I wondered if anyone else had had dealings with them, or if any similar agency existed elsewhere in the country.

If you have had dealings with these type of people I would be interested to know where you are, as it can help EO to know where to concentrate our efforts to educate the authorities and gives me an idea of potential problem areas to tell enquirers about.

Please ring or write to me if you feel you have anything of interest.

Wendy Knight, 12, Partridge Close,
Thurston. Nr Bury St. Edmunds. Suffolk.
IP31 3QL. Tel: 01359 231890.

LETTERS

NEWSLETTER EVERY MONTH

Dear E.O.,

I would like to know why the newsletter doesn't come out monthly, what are the problems involved, is it cost?

Personally I wouldn't mind paying a bit extra to have it more regular. Or is it lack of editors? As there are so many areas in the country, couldn't a rota be drawn up so each area had a turn at editing. I realise some areas are larger than others, so how about instead of individual counties - pull a few together to make the north west etc. It would be interesting to hear how other areas work, what they get up to, maybe even samples of what's included in their local newsletter, if they have one. That way every area gets a go and it doesn't come round too often and they'd know in advance and could plan what's going in their edition.

We could perhaps pick up new ideas for some regular spot. My E.O. day seems to be taking off. I quite like reading these. It's amazing how families Home Educate so differently. You can pick up some good ideas from others, I have.

I'd like to know what everyone else thinks, could it work? Course it could if we all pull together!

Julie Gibson.

67, Cope Street, Leamore. Walsall.
West Midlands. WS3 2AT.

DIVERSITY

Dear E.O.,

Suzanne Cox's letter (No113) prompted me to write. I wasn't so surprised when I first met fellow Home educators, because of a similar experience when I joined the Green Party years ago.

Then, I came to realise that, when people choose "the alternative" to the somewhat narrow and rigid portion of political behaviour that you would call "conventional politics", they are not likely to be more like each other, but LESS so.

This is because they have chosen their political behaviour not from one, equally narrow, alternative portion but from the whole of the rest of the spectrum. Now, I have found this even more true of educational behaviour - more scope for being different, I suppose!

Isn't it going to happen more and more though, as, in matters of nationality, religion, politics, social class and far more, we can no longer have the old security of saying "They're with us - because they're against them" and "They're with them - so they must be against us".

Doesn't what we have in common - we home teachers and learners I mean - point not to just to a new way of educating, but to a new way of life altogether?

Deborah Sutcliffe.

79, Newbiggin, Hornsea.
East Yorkshire. HU18 1PA.

LIBERTY , DISCIPLINE & EDUCATING OTHERWISE

The debate in the last two issues of the magazine (nos. 112 & 113) has given me much food for thought. When I read Belinda Harris-Reid's letter I had a pang of longing for Devon, where we have spent many wonderful holidays. I also felt an affinity with much of what she wrote, particularly her plug for Alice Miller and her plea to find more adults who are simply working with the idea of giving young people an equal voice within their families.

But I thought no more about it until Paula's reply landed on our mat in the December issue. Like her, I belong to the West Midlands group of home educators and find the meetings are a very good source of support and our children really look forward to just meeting up with their friends there and I'm grateful someone has taken the trouble to organise all this! Also, like Paula, I'm a Christian...being a parish priest it goes with the territory...and I have to agree that none of us brings our children up in a vacuum - I'd rather they had the values that I hold dear, whether as a Christian, a socialist, a vegetarian, an advocate of aromatherapy or an ardent fan of Alice Miller, than many of the mainstream values of society, but I hope that I also give them access to a whole range of opinions and information and that I have the grace to take my children's developing views seriously and respect their differences.

But for me the heart of the debate lies in how we see the crucial issues of "discipline" and "liberty". I agree with Paula and Sheena (also issue 113) that self discipline is vital, but I think it is better learnt through role models and experience than it is imposed by some external force. In the nine weeks after my third child was born I managed to completely write up a PhD thesis. That took real self discipline and I felt good about it, but the discipline was also linked to feelings that I was doing something worthwhile and wanted to do it for my own fulfilment, for those who had given me so much support and because the material (feminist theology) actually mattered to me. My oldest son, who is ten, is very self disciplined about practising his violin, but that's because he loves the instrument and adores his teacher, not because he is told he has to do it. I feel confident that if my children see adults working hard on things they love and which enrich their lives and also see adults working hard on things that bore them, like housework, because they care about the people they are doing it for then they will learn to do the same. Sometimes external discipline is all that exists, but it rarely endures when the source of discipline is removed. Social, caring, self disciplined human beings manage to surface from all manner of environments, but I happen to favour positive environments as the most likely breeding grounds. Hence - I don't believe in any form of physical punishment and have grave reservations about the whole notion of punishment, though sometimes I don't manage to live up to that; I don't tell my children to say please and thankyou, but trust that they will become courteous people because they experience courtesy; I don't go in for formal education, except when I'm panicking; I don't think labelling or giving lots of attention to "unacceptable" behaviour does much good, though again I'm not immune to failure(!); and I do believe that we live in a society that is

inimical to children and where their rights are trodden on, so I want my children to have some control over the environment in which they live.

I sometimes also wish I lived in a tidy, quiet house with passive, biddible children, but that's only when my own life is too pressurised - it's not what my children need and not what I want for them in the end. So much for "discipline", but what of "liberty"? For children "liberty" is a scarce commodity. Most children in our society don't have much, or even any, say in how they are educated. Children are the only group in society whom it is legal to punish physically and society is not set up to take children seriously. I don't call myself a "libertarian" because I associate that term with a political stance which involves a highly individualistic approach and I maintain a belief that as a society we could go a long way towards changing structures which effect children through political and economic policy (everything from parental leave to flexible work patterns and from human scale childcare to towns and cities designed with children as well as adults in mind, as advocated by Penelope Leach in her brilliant book, "Children First".) However in the absence of those policies I think a "liberal" style of parenting is the best I can achieve, though it isn't straightforward. On a day to day basis liberties are often in conflict. I can respect my toddler's wish not to wear a coat on a freezing cold day knowing that he knows when he's cold and will soon ask for his coat, but I can't respect his wish to stay in doors playing when the other three have to be taken to various groups to do pottery and painting. I have to admit that trying to give everyone in the house liberty and an equal voice can be a lot more tortuous and complicated than simply telling the children what to do and expecting them to obey. Sometimes the balancing act gets out of control and we resort to techniques we really don't approve of! But we always come back to that central belief that our children should be heard and that their home should be a safe place to develop their sense of liberty and self esteem while respecting the needs of others. That is part of our rationale for home educating: schools rob children of so much autonomy and give them very little room to develop their own skills and identity at their own pace in their own ways.

Like the other families we are far from perfect, but it is good to be part of an organisation that takes young people seriously enough to even ask the questions about whether and how they should be heard and which is broad enough to offer support to a range of families which are coming up with all sorts of answers. So we are going to continue to enjoy the meetings of the West Midlands group, not because all the families are just like ours, but because we have good friends there who are working on their own solutions, and we will continue to look forward to EO magazines and take heart from the letters of those who are struggling with the same issues we struggle with, confident that our children will probably be one (at least!) stage ahead of us!

Jan Fortune-Wood
St. Barnabas Vicarage, Overgreen Dr.
Kingshurst, Birmingham
B37 6EY

A TALE OF TWO TRUMPETS (or music, we did it our way)

One thing that must to some extent worry anybody that endeavours to teach their own children is - what do you do about the subjects in which you know as little as the children you are trying to teach?

One method is to do some accelerated learning yourself and try hopefully to stay one step ahead. Another method is the Helpful Friend. The Helpful Friend (theoretically) is just bursting to pass on all of his/her knowledge to your offspring. (If you ever find one, let me know...) Failing these, what can you do?

For me, the crunch came with music. Not knowing an arpeggio from my elbow, there was a definite gap we were unable to fill. With the horrendous prices being charged for private music tuition, it was beginning to be an impossible ambition. It seemed crazy that something as basic and natural as music should be restricted to those from already 'musical families, those in mainstream education or those with wealthy parents.

Then, out of the blue, we were given two trumpets. They had been the forgotten and unwanted relics of somebody else's house-moving. They had lain in an attic for years before being passed onto us, only to lay unused again in a shed.

Then we had a surprise. The father of an ex-neighbour was passing by one day and we mentioned the trumpets to him. During the conversation it was revealed that he played the tuba in our own village's brass band (I didn't even know we had one then!). He said why didn't I take my eldest boy up to the band and they would teach him to play the trumpet.

The thought of brass bands conjured up vague and shadowy images of blokes with cloth caps on, a pint in each hand, a whippet tucked under one arm and some strange brass instrumentation under the other. The reality turned out to be a friendly atmosphere where people of all ages could come and be helped to learn to play brass band instruments.

Most brass bands will have a "learner" band, or junior band. Beginners can join without even knowing how to blow a note and work their way up into the main band. The beauty of brass bands is that you play and enjoy playing as you learn, and you learn as you play. It isn't just a means to an end.

Here are two very important points for those on a low budget:

1. Brass bands will usually lend you, free of charge, a band instrument for you to learn on, take home and practise and play for as long as you're with them.
2. Membership of a brass band is ridiculously cheap, considering what you can get out of it, e.g. One band we play with charges £5/child/year and £10/adult/year. For this you get tuition, the loan of an instrument, music, uniform, etc.

When I first started taking my son (then 13), I used to sit and listen until the practice was over. After a couple of weeks I thought that I may as well learn something instead of just listening. So I took up the trumpet as well (a trumpet isn't properly a brass band instrument - they play cornets which are similar but shorter)

and lighter to hold and easier to play). After a while my son decided to go onto the tenor horn and I went onto euphonium (like a small tuba, but much nicer sounding!), and it has really taken off from there. My eldest daughter (then 10 years old) would see us going off to band practice every Monday evening and decided that she wanted to come and learn the cornet. After that, of course, her little sister (7) didn't want to be left out of it when the rest of us were off enjoying ourselves, so she came and started to learn the cornet as well! I did find, however, that we needed some extra tuition after about six months. We were keen to learn but only a certain amount can be done in two hours of band practice each week. We were unfortunate in our village band as we didn't have the normal amount of more experienced players that you would usually find in a band. Our band was just one of the many that have 'died' in the last twenty years, due to a general decline in brass banding in this period. This decline is now thankfully reversing and brass bands are on the up again! Because of this our band is mostly beginners and in order to help his old band get back on it's feet, a retired band member offered to teach us free of charge.

Lessons from other band members are definitely worth enquiring about. You will probably find one or two music teachers in there anyway, if not there are usually some that give lessons in their spare time - but there's no guarantee they're not fully booked up.

Now after two years we are playing in our local Silver Band (the same as brass - just a different finish - it lasts longer!), a nearby Town Band and the Town's junior band, we feel the need for some more in-depth tuition.

What we came up with was our local Village Colleges, via their community education (I don't know what the urban equivalent of a Village College is?). Some of them run their own Music Schools within the colleges, out of normal hours. In our area (Cambridge-shire Fens) we have to travel 15 miles to the nearest. The fees are roughly £160/adult/year, a little less for under 18's. But for those in receipt of benefit, it is free. Ask! This covers music theory, instrumental tuition, about 3 hours playing in the various concert bands, orchestras, ensembles etc. - there's even a swing band,

I have to say that being in bands in the last two years has provided me and my children with more fun than I would ever have imagined. It is a challenge that you could never actually finish, as there is not a single person in the world who could say that they knew everything there is to know about music. From the home educator's point of view, it has been extremely beneficial - as much from the social dimension as the musical. We get to go and play in all sorts of weird and wonderful places. Last year the Town Band was invited to play at the National Microlight Championships in Oxfordshire ("Those Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines" was much requested, as you can imagine!), we played at a Flower Festival, a Motor Show held at an Animal Rescue Sanctuary, various fetes, a wedding in a marquee, at the altar of a church, outside in the snow at Christmas, even at an agricultural show amongst the sheep and tractors. Wherever we ended up, a good time was had by all and I highly recommend it to all children and grown-up children alike.

Bev Conway, Cambridgeshire. 01353 741691

AN AFTERTHOUGHT: If you want to own your own instrument, brass instruments can be bought or hire-purchased from music shops. If you are after a decent one but don't have too much money to spare, (especially if, like us, there are five of you), try an instrument repairer. Ask if they have anything that is sound but tatty, before it has been worked on, i.e. before it has had its dents knocked out, valves replaced, tubing re-silvered or re-lacquered, and time spent on it. If you can find anyone near you, there is a very fair man who runs a tiny little shop in Swaffham, just over the border in Norfolk. He sells decent instruments cheaply, (a lot cheaper than most music shops). For an example, I bought a tatty looking cornet for £35 - absolutely peanuts, by the way, it is generally reckoned that is you can get a brass instrument for under £100 - and it works - you've got a bargain. The same instrument, repaired and tidied up would have been nearer £120/£150 - and still a bargain. In any other shop you would be taking several hundreds of pounds.

Don't forget that at the bottom end of the market, your instrument is unlikely to plummet in value. We swapped the original two trumpets plus another soprano cornet with no gold finish on it, for two good but ancient and tatty cornets and nice flugelhorn (yes they do have some weird names, but they are basically larger and smaller versions of the same sort of thing). Steer clear of Chinese makes. Some foreign makes are in a different pitch to British instruments (and therefore no good). Good makes are Boosey & Hawkes, Besson, Yamaha. If possible, take someone who knows with you. If you cannot find anything near you, it's a nice drive up the M11 then the A10 to Swaffham. Talk to the man on 01760 724122, see what he's got and when he's in.

I'm sorry if this article has harped on about money a lot, but it was an important barrier for me that had to be stumbled over, and I hope also it explains why brass bands are quite wallet-friendly and are making a comeback.
Have fun and keep blowing (or start!)

BEV.

GCSE CENTRES AND EXTERNAL CANDIDATES

Roger Freeborn recently wrote to Gillian Shepherd, Secretary of State for Education and Employment asking that an external candidate should have the right to use their local school to sit GCSE's along side pupils taking the same exams and that the fees be paid by the LEA. Her reply is included in full. While it does not seem to offer much chance of any improvement in the current situation (the school may allow external candidates but is not obliged to take them) it does at least include a useful list of Examination Boards.



**Department for
Education and Employment**

Sanctuary Buildings
Great Smith Street
Westminster
London SW1P 3BT

Telephone 0171 925 5000
Fax 0171 925 6000
E-Mail info@dfee.gov.uk

Mr R Freeborn
4 North Fen Road
Helpringham
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 ORR

Direct Line 0171 925 5533
Local Fax 0171 925 6986

19 November 1996

Dear Mr Freeborn

Thank you for your letter of 31 October with enclosures to the Secretary of State. You asked for information about the rights of children educated otherwise to sit exams in a centre and for funding for the payment of examination fees. I have been asked to reply.

As you know, parents are entitled to choose to educate their children at home. When parents make this choice they take on the financial responsibility for meeting all the child's educational needs, including payment of public examination entrance fees. Schools may not pay the examination entry fees for children who have been educated by their parents, since the funding they receive may only be used for the purposes of the school. Payment of examination fees for pupils not registered at a school could not be seen as consistent with that requirement. Local education authorities do, however, have discretion to make funds available to assist parents with the cost of educating their children. You may wish to contact your local education authority to see whether they would be willing to offer assistance with examination fees.

There are well-established mechanisms to enable external candidates to have access to GCSE examinations. As you have pointed out, such candidates may - with the permission of the head of the examining centre - be entered at a local school or college. However, in cases where this option is not available, arrangements can be made with the examining groups for examinations to be taken at one of their Open Centres. I enclose a list of the GCSE groups should you wish to contact them for further details.

GCSE EXAMINING GROUPS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

**EDEXCEL
FOUNDATION**

Stewart House
32 Russell Square
LONDON WC1B 5DP

Tel: 0171 393 4444
Fax: 0171 393 4445

**Northern Examinations and
Assessment Board**

Devas Street
MANCHESTER
M15 6EX

Tel: 0161 953 1180
Fax: 0161 273 7572

Southern Examining Group

Central Administration Office
Stag Hill House
GUILDFORD
Surrey GU2 5XJ

Tel: 01483 506506
Fax: 01483 300152

Midland Examining Group (HEAD OFFICE)

Mill Wharf
Mill Street
Birmingham B6 4BU
UCLES

Tel: 0121 359 2913
Fax: 0121 628 2900

Welsh Joint Education Committee

245 Western Avenue
CARDIFF CF5 2YX

Tel: 0122 226 5000
Fax: 0122 257 5894

City & Guilds of London Institute

1 Giltspur Street
LONDON EC1A 9DD
Tel: 0171 294 2468

Royal Society of Arts Examination Board

Progress House
Westwood Business Park
Westwood Way
COVENTRY CV4 8HS

Tel: 01203 470033
Fax: 01203 468080

City & Guilds and RSA
offer GCSE technology
and technology related
subjects.

GCE A LEVEL EXAMINING BOARDS

Associated Examining Board

Stag Hill House
GUILDFORD
Surrey
GU2 5XJ
Tel: 01483 506506

Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board *

(Oxford Office)
Elsfield Way
OXFORD OX2 8EP
Tel. 01865 54421
Fax. 01865 514 902

EDEXCEL FOUNDATION

Stewart House
32 Russell Square
LONDON WC1B 5DP
Tel: 0171 393 4444
Fax. 0171 393 4445

Oxford and Cambridge Schools Examination Board *

(Cambridge Office)
Purbeck House
Purbeck Road
CAMBRIDGE CB2 2BP
Tel. 01223 411211

Northern Examination & Assessment Board

Devas Street
MANCHESTER
M15 6EX

Tel: 0161 953 1180
Fax: 0161 273 7572

Oxford Delegacy of Local * Examinations

Ewert Place
Summertown
OXFORD OX2 7BZ

Tel. 01865 54291

University of Cambridge Local (Head Office) Examinations Syndicate (also offer International GCSE) *

Head Office
Syndicate Buildings
1 Hills Road
CAMBRIDGE CB1 2EU

Tel 01223 553311
Fax: 01223 460278

Scottish Examination Board

Ironmills Road
Dalkeith
Midlothian
EH22 1LE

Tel 0131 663 6601
Fax. 0131 654 2664

Welsh Joint Education Committee

245 Western Avenue
CARDIFF CF5 2YX
Tel. 01222 265 000
Fax: 01222 575 894

*these boards make up the Oxford and Cambridge Examination and Assessment Council.

SUPPORT WITHIN EDUCATION OTHERWISE

I have been a co-ordinator in Dorset for nearly eight years now, and have been contacted by many people during that time for support, usually for information, advice and reassurance. But as well as my role as a co-ordinator, we have made lots of family friends by getting out and meeting other members. (Interestingly, Naomi, Sebastian and Carl have been inclined to form their closest friendships with other EO children, and their "school" friends have largely fallen by the wayside. In fact, the same generally applies to Noel and me too.

I have become more and more conscious over time that mutual support on lots of levels is one of the greatest benefits that Education Otherwise has to offer its members. Support comes from chatting to new members at meetings, making friends, having someone else's children for an afternoon, sympathising with parents who have had a bad day or are temporarily laden with self-doubt (I'm sure we've all been there), recounting one's own experiences and offering advice and suggestions on various aspects of home education. I find the really good thing about it is support is something that everyone can offer others at some time.

I had a friend who was an active member of the supportive breastfeeding group, La Leche League. She once told me that wheels turned very slowly in La Leche League, little "got done" in an administrative or organisational sense, and this was a direct result of the members' deliberate policy to practise what the League preaches - which is basically to lead a supportive, child-centered family life. Obviously if you do this, and always take account of your children's needs and interests, the amount of time available for "adult work" is limited, and priority is given to supporting and being supported by people around you.

I have always thought this philosophy quite admirable, and I think of Education Otherwise in a similar way. I see it as a sign of strength for an organisation to have simple, achievable aims. As I said, support is something that everyone can give at some time, and when enough people feel that way, it's nice to receive support when you need it too. I think we're lucky to have a good network of families in our area now, which has grown over the years, and the long-term friendships that have developed give members in the area some sense of group identity and stability, even though people come from all walks of life.

Giving support to other families can be a bit of a balancing act, though, particularly as a co-ordinator. It's easy to shy away from people who are in trouble with the authorities, but it is also all too easy to become over-involved and take on responsibility for other people's problems. In discussions I have had with Anne Wade, she has described support as a means of empowering other people, particularly those having problems with their LEA, to take control of their situation themselves, and I agree with this. To be given the tools to take responsibility for their dealings with the LEA - offering information, advice and reassurance - is highly enabling for parents, and rewarding for both the family and those who have given support. I think a family grows in stature in the eyes of the LEA, too, if the parents are seen to have handled difficulties themselves, and it can be undermining if a co-ordinator appears to take the credit.

However, in my experience it has been necessary occasionally to "rescue" people from an urgent situation, and liaise directly with the LEA to improve communication and understanding between the parties involved. But I am mindful of the need for parents to regain and then maintain control of their predicament, and to be wholly responsible for decisions that are made. I think it is important to offer this high level of support just until families are able to continue by themselves. Then the empowering and enabling can begin.

A new member was recently heard to ask what you received for your membership fee, apparently concerned that it might not be value for money. My answer might have been- an opportunity to find and offer support at a local level, a bi-monthly newsletter, which I find is supportive in itself, and the knowledge and security that if you ever meet difficulties or need help, there is access to experience and expertise from a number of supportive members (I'm thinking in particular of those names that appear on the inside back cover of the newsletter, as well as those whose names don't appear in lights).

Mindful of the balance required in a mutually supportive organisation, I might have been tempted to add, respectfully,

"And what can you offer other members?"

Christine Adey
1 Dunbury Cottages, Milton Abbas, Dorset DT11 0DH
01258 880355

What seems like a very short time ago we were wondering whether or not to home educate our 4 year old. He is now 16 and ,no, he did not go to school nor did we teach or do any written work with him. We have lived and provided resources in areas that seemed to intrigue him. We have discussed, argued; felt sad, happy, watched T.V., read books, wasted our time, tried to fit too much in etc etc. I have sometimes worried and felt anxious (usually around the visit times of course), have had many suggestions rejected (wouldn't it be a good idea to join scouts or a youth club?) and have trusted his decisions about T.V., sleep, washing etc.

No the LEA have not been entirely happy, we have an ongoing discussion about our educational philosophy!

He has just started a one year GCSE course at a sixth form college. He has achieved very good grades and very complimentary comments about his whole approach to his work and his punctuality (I have never had to call him in the morning).

The LEA have more than once asked "How will he ever be able to work if he has not been made to get up by a certain time", "how will he be able to cope with having to do written work if you do not make him do it now", "How can we see that he is making progress if you do not have written work to show us". At the last meeting with the advisor I thought I could put their minds at rest but no, they are no longer interested in his activities because he is over 16. But the same questions are now being asked about the next child and the results with the first are said to be irrelevant.

By the way I do not personally feel that lots of GCSE passes with good grades necessarily means that a person is well educated. I know many people with no exam passes who are well educated and vice versa. But this does seem to be what the LEA's are looking for. My other children may decide not to take any exam course.

I have spent many hours thinking about what education is and examining lots of "educational materials". While you may need to be educated to carry out many of the tasks that they involve you certainly do not need to do these activities in order to become educated.

Happy E.O.ing to all of you whatever method you may be currently be following.

Isobel Bogucki - (Coordinators Secretary)

EO NEWS....

Congratulations to Gwen

Baldock who was one of the winners of the *BT Childline Services to Children Award*. Gwen was nominated for the award by an EO family that she had supported over the phone and won £3000 for the charity of her choice. She accepted the award on behalf of all volunteers who help children in what ever way and has given £2750 to EO.

Thanks to Barbara Edwards and Jill Fisher

for all their work in producing the Contact List. Please notify Barbara of any inaccuracies so that she can update the database.

Wanted, Two Families, willing to make a long term commitment to write a page for every newsletter about their ongoing home educational venture - 6 pages a year.

- One family with school age children who are just embarking on EO.
- Another family who have been home educating for at least five years and are working their way through their children.

If you fit the bill and would like to expose your triumphs and traumas to the rest of us, write and tell me.

Sue Hutchin, Newsletter Co-ordinator, Oakwood, Sparrow Hatch Lane, Bethersden, Ashford, Kent. TN26 3ED

Attention all those overworked EO volunteers...

I have a substantial list of members willing to do work on behalf of EO - it could be anything from a few phone calls to a mail out or more. Don't struggle on doing too much work - give me a call and I will try to arrange some help.

Volunteers are equally welcome.

Valerie Gommon 01908 511247

EO Club, Camden, every Monday, Wednesday, Friday 12-4, from 24th Feb, for children 8 years and upwards. Activities to include; Games Workshop (Warhammer and Talisman), arts and crafts, lots of board games, computer and Internet, toys, dressing up and your own ideas. Refreshments available. Unaccompanied children by arrangement. £3 per child (to cover expenses).

Melissa Jordan, 11a Primrose Gardens, London NW3 4UJ.
Tel. 0956 497909
Tube; Belfast Park, Northern Line

Newsletter Covers: Are there any Creative EO members who would like to design a cover for the newsletter? Not all good editors are necessarily good at artwork so it would be nice to let the artists (of any age) among us have a go. Designs must be in black, on white A4 paper, include the words *Education Otherwise*, and leave a space where date and issue number can be inserted. Send them to Sue Hutchin, Newsletter Coordinator.

education otherwise

Guestbook

Thank you for visiting E.O.'s pages. We would love it if you would Add to this guestbook we are keeping!

Hello! We are thinking of home schooling our daughter who is 4 1/2. Can't get her into our catchment area school, which is a good school, so do not want to accept second best! If there are any other home schoolers in the North London area please get in touch. We would appreciate any advice/help etc. We are concerned that Saskia will not have the company of children her own age etc only her younger brother. Also, any views on the Rudolph Stiener School in North London would be appreciated. Thanks in advance Jan & Glyn

Jan Jurczak-George <xdz79@dial.pipex.com>

London, England UK - Sunday, January 05, 1997 at 11:42:05 (GMT)

Home educating in the wilds of the North East. First visit to any site courtesy of a friend. Will be back!

JEFF WHEELWRIGHT

ACKLINGTON, NORTHUMBERLAND UK - Saturday, January 04, 1997 at 17:06:55 (GMT)

Nice Page. I am home educated myself so would be intrested to hear from people.

Michael Lightfoot <Mike@Lhome.demon.co.uk>

York, UK - Sunday, December 22, 1996 at 19:21:48 (GMT)

Great to see EO online,good luck for the future

Stephen Upchurch <Steve_Upchurch@msn.com>

Radstock, Somerset UK - Saturday, December 21, 1996 at 02:57:47 (GMT)

Thanks for the site- we are new to home educating and fairly new to England, so the resources section will be very useful. Good to see another Kiwi visiting the site.

Jenny van der Mespel <106143.477@compuserve.com>

Godalming, Surrey UK - Thursday, December 12, 1996 at 10:02:01 (GMT)

Good to see you on the web, look forward to future developments.

Janet Dalton <101744.2303@compuserve.com>

Kingsclere, Hants UK - Wednesday, December 04, 1996 at 21:03:30 (GMT)

loved finding you all, great site, my best friend is returning to uk after living in california for about 4 years, they are thinking of moving to the manchester/knitsford area, any home educators groups there? does anyone know the general statistics of home education in uk/england, here in our small county we have about 1000 children learning at home, my friend is very concerned she will be 'alone', thank you, julienne----bootman@value.net

julienne bootman <bootman@value.net>

concord, ca usa - Wednesday, December 04, 1996 at 18:27:34 (GMT)

Giddy all. Great to see your organisation online. Good site, too.

Giddy all. Great to see your organisation online. Good site, too.

David and Helen White <d.white@pobox.com>

Auckland, NZ - Friday, November 22, 1996 at 10:43:04 (GMT)

Hello folks found you at last, thought you must be somewhere on the net. We're another family hiding away in the forests of Sweden. Two kids, Kai is ten, Luka six. They speak both Swedish and English and would love to hear from any kids who would like to hear about life and home school in Sweden. We're not on the internet at home but you can write to us at Sävsjömåla,2199 Bräkne-Hoby,37010 Sweden. Hope there's someone out there. Best wishes to everyone at Education Otherwise.

Pat, Katarina, Kai and Luka Weeks-Jadinge

Sweden - Monday, November 18, 1996 at 16:16:12 (GMT)

it is a good page, very interesting and nice to see home education on the internet

James,Heather,Elizabeth E.O'ers <101447_3405@compuserve.com>

Birmingham, W.Mids UK - Thursday, November 07, 1996 at 14:26:18 (GMT)

On behalf of the swedish homeschooling association MATS (My Alternative To School) we congratulate you on this great HS site. We dream of creating something like this one day, hopefully not too far away!

Ywonne & Gunnar Jarl <yog-jarl@algonet.se>

Sparreholm, Sweden - Saturday, November 02, 1996 at 22:44:21 (GMT)

Congratuauons on this great Web page. I am homeschooling in Ireland (REpublic) do you have members there ? Or do you know of a homeschooling support group.I would like to hear from other homeschooling families

Maureen Normoyle <normoyle@iol.ie>

Co Clare, Ireland Ireland - Thursday, October 31, 1996 at 11:42:38 (GMT)

We were excited to find your site! Our family expects to be moving to the UK in January '97, in the Preston area. We hope to continue homeschooling our 7 and 4 year old girls. If there are any homeschoolers in the Preston/Blackpool area, I would be delighted to make your acquaintance. Sincerely, Averil H.

Jonathan K. Hunsberger <hunsberger_jon@msn.com>

Kent, Washington USA - Thursday, October 31, 1996 at 05:53:22 (GMT)

I'm glad to see that homeschooling is flourishing in the UK. We've been homeschooling bilingually (using Japanese and English) in the U.S. for several years. I'd like to know if there are bilingual homeschoolers in the UK, and if so, to hear about your experiences.

Dave Carlson <dcarls01@baker.edu>

Michigan USA - Saturday, October 26, 1996 at 16:21:07 (BST)

Does anyone know something similar to EO in France ? We would be glad to hear from E.O members experiences. All our best wishes for all of you.

Patrice Bouchardon <Patrice.Bouchardon@wanadoo.fr>

Fanlac, France - Tuesday, October 22, 1996 at 15:09:00 (BST)

[Responded to by EO on Wed, 23rd Oct - MM]

Great to see E.O. on the net! We hope to visit again soon.

Ann and Ruth Charles <100116.3566@compuserve.com>

Wymondham, NORFOLK UK - Saturday, October 19, 1996 at 18:42:25 (BST)

Wymondham, NORFOLK UK - Saturday, October 19, 1996 at 18:42:25 (BST)

At last! A British resource. Great to see EO on the net. We've just sent our kids to school (after approx 16 child-years of home education), but I hope these pages encourage lots more parents to "Du Different" (as they say at the UEA). A big thankyou also, to all the EOers who helped us in the (pre-web) past.

The Meek Family <andy_meek@msn.com>

Derby, Derbyshire UK - Friday, October 18, 1996 at 22:37:13 (BST)

Good to see Education Otherwise on the net at last. Good luck with the site. We will come back now and again to see how its going.

The Went Family <101646.1161@compuserve.com>

Reading, Berkshire UK - Thursday, October 17, 1996 at 10:24:35 (BST)

Wonderful to see EO on the net at last. Thankyou for maintaining the site and good luck with it. EO and UK home education will benefit from this valuable source of information.

Clare Murton <106136.3212@compuserve.com>

Leeds, W Yorks UK - Wednesday, October 16, 1996 at 21:59:20 (BST)

(EO members) Nice to see. There is also a good home education forum just started on Compuserve. We have just completed 10 years of home ed, much of the time wondering if we were doing the right thing. We were! the results, in terms of rounded education and personality, are well worth it. Have confidence, and hang on in there!

Newton family <106006.1433@Compuserve.com>

Shaftesbury, Dorset UK - Wednesday, October 09, 1996 at 20:53:53 (BST)

In a week when I read in the national (UK) press of continuing and increasing stress on teachers, schools, pupils, universities etc.(and on the resources they may have), it was nice to find a site upholding the spirit of "real" education, and of co-operation rather than competition. Thanks for the effort!

A wellwisher

London, UK - Tuesday, October 08, 1996 at 14:01:47 (BST)

Excellent presentation for home schooling parents.

Sandra Nicholls <snicholl@extro.ucc.su.oz.ua>

Sydney, NSW Australia - Monday, October 07, 1996 at 22:03:01 (BST)

Well done for the assistance . Full marks.

Peter Ackers

southport, merseyside UK - Tuesday, September 24, 1996 at 22:12:01 (BST)

A useful source of education information - even for prospective teachers like myself!

Michael Williams <michaelw@enterprise.net>

London, UK -



[Back to EO's Main Index](#)

**EO would like to say a big
THANK YOU
to Valerie Gommon
for all the hard work she has
put in as General Secretary.**

**We wish you well in your new
venture**

Maths 100 Odyssey is a maths correspondence course for 6-9 year olds which has been designed in consultation with EO families.

If any EO family would like the opportunity to try out this new maths course and review it for the newsletter, please get in touch with:

**Cheryl Maiden, Maths 100, Chiltern House,
Fawley Rd, Lower Assendon, Henley - on -
Thames, Oxon, RG9 6AN
Tel 01491 411686 Fax 01491 411709**

SPOTLIGHT ON LOCAL NEWSLETTERS WEST MIDLANDS H.E.L.M.

(Home Educators Local Magazine)

The newsletter from the West Midlands started monthly in August 96, in a basic type written form of 2-3 sheets giving the basic information of what was going on in one of E.O.'s biggest regions. Julie Gibson the W.M. membership secretary started everything off, gave birth to the newsletter if you like, just like she is going to do for the third time in April. Like a caring family she nurtured it for it's early months and then other members of the W.M.E.O. family took turns in editing it. Like families too, helping hands got tired out and it was in May of last year when I eagerly took my turn (O.K. was firmly persuaded). As I had a P.C., Printer and talent of course, the H.E.L.M. which it had become known by, (thanks to our co-ordinator i.e. the idea of being at the helm of our children's education) became 12, A5 pages, in colour and booklet form. Now being set up on the computer it could easily have regular sections, articles, co-ordinators corner, trip/event reports from the children, penfriends, birthdays, jokes and jests, rhyme and (no) reason, the wall, crosswords, wordsearches, puzzles, meeting details, trips/events, things in the pipeline, swap shop, notices, ideas, controversial cartoons about inspectors, teachers or any other people who are in the news, information of allsorts and really anything else we can develop. We now do personalised birthday cards for those who put their birthday in the H.E.L.M. and personalised bookmarks or stickers for the children who contribute. Try and start one up if you haven't yet in your local area and who knows were it may lead you.

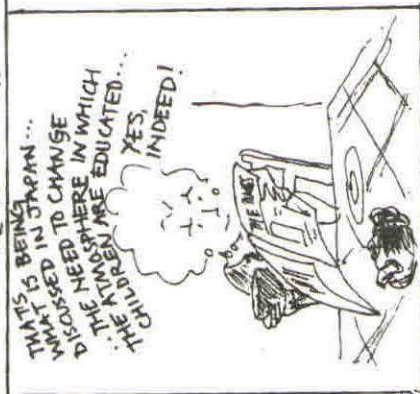
For those in the West Midlands or neighbouring counties, if you would like a free copy send a s.a.e. and we will send you a complimentary copy. Further-a-field send a s.a.e. with a 20p stamp.

Send to H.E.L.M. 5, Haig Road, Dudley. West Midlands. DY2. 7QP. - Rod Drury.

All you other Newsletters around the country. If you would send a similar article to me I will liaise with each editor so to have a regular spotlight on newsletters around the country, every issue. Go on, it would be good - Rod D.

EDUCATING ARCHIE

By Sergio



This special ARCHIE appears in the new JAPANESE translation of SCHOOL IS NOT COMPULSORY, 1997 (Tokyo)

[Greetings to Japanese Ed!]

This month being the editor, I wanted to introduce a Co-ordinators Corner. We have this page in our local magazine but where as this is more for local news, the national Co-ordinators Corner can be for letting E.O.ers know what is going on around the country.

Not only can this spread ideas around, but also can be an interesting read in seeing what different Co-ordinators are up to, what they are up against, tips and ideas they may have, plus also give them a chance to direct their views and valuable work in their own regular column.

I had already prepared my local Co-ordinator, Paula Turner to have a piece ready, but as one came in from Devon, I've used that. Paula's can go in next months to give all you hard pressed Co-ordinators a time to put your thoughts to paper.

If you'd send you're articles to me, I'll keep them in a similar style and format, and forward them on to the editor of that month. If we do it on a first come first served basis it will keep it fair. Then I'll use them in order after contacting you for any latest news you want included.

Please send them to me by the 18th of the month preceeding deadline.

All the best, Rod Drury.

5, Haig Road, Dudley, West Midlands. DY2.7QP. Tel: 01384-233497.

CO-ORDINATORS CORNER

FIONA and ROB BROOKES (MID/EAST DEVON)

I would like to introduce (better late than never) the Brookes family - new co-ordinators for Mid/East Devon since October. We are me, Fiona 39, my partner and husband Rob 43, and our children - Joe 7, Freya 5, and Lindsey 18 months. We moved to Tiverton, Devon after living several years in Southern Ireland.

I'm a part-time student and Rob is a part-time worker with people who have mental health problems (he is also an R.N.M.H. with some experience of children with special needs). Joe our eldest is interested in evolution, dinosaurs, television heroes and computers. Freya is very active and is especially interested in ponies, riding, and small or cuddly animals. She has two kittens.

Joe has never been to any playgroup or school except to have a look. Freya has been to a playgroup and a nursery class on and off, and is due to try out the Reception class at the local school next week. She may well decide to stay at home. Lindsey their little sister is into EVERYTHING!!

We home educate firstly because a long time ago we were inspired by the words of Ivan Ilyech, A.S.Neil, Alice Miller, John Holt etc.....

The initial fervour has been tempered by the practicalities and dynamics of bringing up 3 small children with little money or support and trying to remain sane. On the subject of practicalities we would like to recommend Robin Skyner and John Cleese's books - "Life and how to survive it" and "Families and how to survive them". the titles sound a bit negative but we found them interesting and enlightening.

We joined "Human Scale Education" as well as E.O. in the hope that one day the government will fund community-run learning resource centres with a sensible ratio of adults / children and no unnecessary rules. Call it a small school or whatever you like. Well, there's no harm in hoping!

Home-education is not totally problem-free for us. Happily another home schooling family with 3 children of similar ages have moved to Tiverton recently, which gave us a big morale boost as we enjoy socialising but are not good travellers - partly cash problem but mostly 2 of our children getting very car-sick. We can now think of organising weekly and monthly events. We are friends of H.E.R.E. - the Exeter group who offer support and event-organising for families who have problems with schooling or who chose to home-educate.

We don't do any formal teaching but because Joe shows "dyslexic" tendencies we do try to cover a little of the 3'R's with him regularly in a way which he chooses otherwise he seems to drift into a fantasy land all day and can become morose. He seems to appreciate a little adult organisation although we believe a conventional school environment could only do him harm. On the social side when we first moved to Devon this seemed pretty depressing.

Other children seemed pretty sewn up by school. Devon home-educators were scattered with huge variations in ages, interests and philosophies. We considered moving to a more densely populated area and visited different groups, but came to the conclusion that all areas have their drawbacks and we would just be chasing a dream.

So time moved on... now there are 2 families with young children in Tiverton and we are hoping to re-open the local branch of Woodcraft Folk. Joe and Freya go to a small Christian club one hour a week, because they enjoy it and we feel it is beneficial. We ourselves do not follow any particular spiritual path and Joe sometimes shocks the people who run the club with his evolutionary theories!

There is a beautiful North American saying "Never judge a man till you've walked a mile in his moccasins" and in the spirit of tolerance and understanding we would like to suggest a Devon E.O. get together in the Spring. So how about it S.W.E.L.L. and S.D.E.G. and H.E.R.E., H.S.E. and E.O., and all members, friends, sympathisers and interested parties too.

We thought a few days to a week camping / vanning together near the sea would be good. We all find the idea of being with a group of people of different background and ideals, who have a common interest in the future (and present) happiness of their children very exciting.

I would like it to happen more often.

If any one would like to contact us regarding this or has any ideas for get-togethers, events, etc., please contact us. We would be delighted to hear from anyone about anything and will answer all letters.

Happy New Year to you all,

Fiona Brookes.

The Annexe. Sweet Meadow, West Manley Lane, Tiverton. Devon. EX16 4NJ.

Telephone: 01884 - 252706.

CO-ORDINATORS UPDATE

DO WE NEED COORDINATORS? SHOULD I BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE AREAS THAT HAVE HAD NO COVER FOR A WHILE?

Most of us are very busy and have little time to spare, so should I be asking a family to give their precious time to new members? Maybe with the new contact list (hopefully enclosed) plus the full sized newsletter with lot's of room for families to ask for specific types of contact, the role of coordinator is not needed?

What do you think?

If you area has no coordinator at the moment do consider offering what you can. We are all volunteers and few of us are able to do as much as we would like or maybe even "ought" to do. Families and personal lives must take precedence. But on the other hand, we ALL need

support so,

I look forward to hearing from yousoon.....

Happy E.O.ing -

Isobel Bogucki.

(Coordinators Secretary)

NEW ACTING COORDINATORS

KENT - Amanda & Cameron MacKenzie - Telephone: 01634 402154.

SURREY - Sue & David Field - Telephone: 01932 863480.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY VACANCY

Membership Secretary N.E.

Dineke Dejong wishes to relinquish this work. Thanks for your two years "Dinks".

Please contact - Pam & John Bellinger. The Inn, Chapel Road, Greatworth, Banbury. Oxon. OX17 2DT. Telephone: 01295 710976.

MY E.O. DAY

Don't Forget Your E.O. Day.

There isn't a "My E.O. Day" this month. All too busy at Christmas.

Send you E.O. day in for the next issue.

Send it to - Paula Turner. 79, Kingshurst Way, Kingshurst. Birmingham. B37.6EB.

Introducing ...

Oaklands

Educational Resource Centre

Oaklands, High Street, Airmyn, Near Goole, East Yorkshire, DN14 8LF, Telephone: 01405 720894.

What is Oaklands? Oaklands is a beautiful grade-two listed building 'born' in 1834 - originally a Sunday School, courtesy of the Earl of Beverley, 'growing up' into a Village School until the 1990's. Moving into 'years of maturity, insight and wisdom', the building transformed into an alternative Small School named 'Oaklands', until lack of funding forced its closure. Now in the magical cycle of life and death, the small school's sad demise has allowed a 'rebirth' into - Oaklands - Educational Resource Centre & family home for Anne & Kathy Mills, Michael Robinson, dog & cats!

Who is involved with Oaklands? ... Anne Mills - Area Co-ordinator for Education Otherwise in North and East Yorkshire, part-time lecturer in alternative education at York University, home-educating parent of Kathy ... Kathy Mills - home-educated daughter of Anne ... Michael Robinson - happily-retired science teacher, promoter of low-impact, ecological, sustainable lifestyles, parent and a 'Parentlink' Co-ordinator ... and anyone else who would like to become involved in any way!!

Why an Educational Resource Centre? Home-educating families are taking a significant step towards creating an optimistic vision of the future of education, by enacting a highly flexible education system which is able to meet the individual needs of each unique family and child. 'Education Otherwise' forms a valuable network helping us link together to support each other - 'Education Now' and 'Educational Heretics Press' keep us freethinking and in touch with everything of significance in the alternative education world. Oaklands Educational Resource Centre can offer local home-educating families whatever else we collectively choose to create, to make home-education the very best for ourselves and our children. Oaklands will also extend its educational facilities beyond the home-education network, to provide a variety of courses and workshops for adults, plus activities for children and adults to enjoy together (primarily relating to the emotional, spiritual and physical health and development of individuals - eg. parenting and relationship skills, communication and negotiation, conflict resolution, positive thinking, learning and thinking skills, healing and therapeutic techniques, creative arts, movement and dance, relaxation, various themes with an environmental/ecological bias, etc. . .), as well as providing a venue to hire for any other workshops, meetings, conferences etc. for other people or organisations whose aims or values are aligned with our own.

What is being created at Oaklands so far? Oaklands opens its doors every Wednesday from 11am - 4pm (cost £2.00 per family) for home-educating families to meet for any social and educational purpose, for example workshops and activities (all optional) on whatever anyone offers to facilitate - eg. science and technology workshops, environmental studies, a permaculture design project, all kinds of art and crafts, dancing, drama, music and singing, co-operative games, discussions about home-education/ alternative education, etc.

The 'spirit' of Oaklands includes such guiding principles as ~ collective responsibility ~ taking the initiative ~ belonging to an educational community ~ and such mottos as ~ 'many hands make light work' ... With no 'them' to organise everything for us, **Oaklands is US** - you and me and him and her - and whatever we collectively create with all our individual skills and interests, our initiative and creativity, and as with everything, the 'whole' will be far greater than the sum of its individual parts. Activities offered will of course be whatever individuals are interested in themselves, so with many different individuals we should achieve quite a variety of different things being available, hopefully several activities going on simultaneously for a range of ages and interests. This system is ideal for home-education, which encompasses a remarkable variety of different educational approaches, viewpoints and interests, all of which will be welcomed and respected at Oaklands.

Who is funding this home-education Dream and Paradise? Oaklands has the advantage of being a family home as well, for Anne, Kathy and Michael, so the (expensive) rent is covered other than that it's up to me, you, him, her, them and everyone else to beg, borrow, lend, make, fund-raise, and donate to fill the Centre with appropriate educational resources, and to create and maintain the environment we all want. Profits from the home-education events will be used to enhance the facilities Oaklands offers (although other courses and workshops will hopefully provide a much-needed income for Anne, Kathy and Michael!). Oaklands also has the advantage of being affiliated to a new charity called the Centre for Personalised Education (Charity No. 1057442), for fund-raising, donation-begging and grant applications. So - Anne and Michael will now be persistently applying for grants and donations of 'allsorts' from anyone and everyone, anywhere and everywhere.

How can we support Oaklands? People can support Oaklands by giving donations of 'allsorts', by attending regular or occasional Wednesdays, by hiring Oaklands as a venue, by attending our workshops and courses, and/or by subscribing to the Newsletter.

What are donations of 'allsorts'? Oaklands will benefit from all kinds of donations, including money, educational materials, resources and ideas, furniture, rugs, curtains, building skills (esp. plumbing, carpentry, roofing and gardening), plants and trees, tools, paper and art materials, dressing-up clothes, candles, wood to bum and make things with, a fax and photocopier, computer, musical instruments, stereo/tv/video, cushions, books, tapes, videos, offers to run workshops or help with jobs ... the list could go on for pages! There are also two major expenses for which donations will be required, re-roofing the building and installing a damp course (for which we need a mere £10,000!).

The next Newsletter will be in January, and will summarise all that has been decided since opening in December and all that is expected to happen in January and February - **it will be sent to people who have supplied a stamped, self-addressed envelope** - it will also offer an option to subscribe to the bi-monthly Newsletter from then onwards, probably costing £15 a year **plus any donations of course** for the financially able, £10 a year for the financially average, and £5 a year for the financially deprived!! In addition to this, following the 'many hands make light work' motto, subscribers will be asked to supply 6 stamped, self-addressed envelopes for the year's issues, to make administration and Anne's life easier. These will sit in a box, be filled with a newsletter and posted every two months, and when the last envelope for a family is filled, a 'please re-subscribe' slip will be inserted too!

We would like to thank all those who have already offered donations of 'allsorts'.

* * *

Happy New Year and Love from Oaklands, Anne, Kathy and Michael.

-----cut here and return-----

I WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT OAKLANDS...

I offer a donation of **£5** **£10** **£20** **£50** **other** **and/or 'allsorts'**

I am interested in hiring Oaklands as a venue and will make contact to discuss dates, costs etc.

I would like to attend regular or occasional Wednesdays, from 11 am - 4 pm. I enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for directions to get there.

I would like to support Oaklands by subscribing to the newsletter. I enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for the January issue which will include a subscription form for future issues.

LES ENFANTS D'ABORD

As a side-effect of editing the December newsletter, I find myself the 'official' EO contact with our counterparts in France: LED'A.

Led'a has 19 area contacts around France. Large parts of the north do not have a contact, but most of the country is pretty well covered. I like the fact that the bulletin includes a map of the country showing the area with which each contact deals.

As yet, I am not entirely sure of their publication schedule, but the bulletin is quarterly. After a brief look at the Autumn 96 issue, the bulletin is similar to the EO magazine. It contains association business, information about the relevant law, reports of gatherings, interviews with young people, letters about personal experiences and small ads. The Led'a bulletin also contains recipes, jokes and other miscellaneous material. There is no separate publication for children, so their drawings and puzzles are scattered throughout the bulletin.

If you would like to place an ad, read the Led'a bulletin, or write an article for publication in the bulletin, please contact me. The article below was written by the Led'a International Relations contact.

Shena Deuchars, 206 Lavender Avenue, Mitcham, CR4 3HP Tel: 0181-395-0209 Email: deuchar@bcs.org.uk

A Good Life

I am German, but I have been living in France for nine years. I am home-schooling my son Emanuel (7).

The reason I do not send my child to school is that I do not like the school system. It is part of society; in school you learn to become a good citizen, and learn the values of society. For me, the decision not to send my child to school is part of my wish to set other values in my life than those of society.

Do I home-school my child, but continue to work in a factory, go to the cinema, buy my food in a supermarket? I have not changed much. The most important goal in society is to be rich, to consume (some get it, but for this a big part of the world's population has not enough to eat). My opinion is that it is important to rethink the values of society and create new values. Society influences my life everywhere: education, housing, nutrition, thoughts, free time, etc.

I set my own values in educating my child. I do not accept the big school machinery of the state. I teach my child at home, and I choose the material. To teach him to read, I can buy good children's books, or I can write them myself.

I also choose carefully the place where I live: in the country, in a house built of natural materials (wood or stone). I do not depend on society's

offerings for leisure time (cinema, TV, museums, football club) but I create my own: hiking, pottery, singing, dancing, etc. I choose good food for me and my child, natural without chemicals; good natural clothes; good toys. Instead of letting my child read comics, I tell him stories from my imagination.

But I need a basis for my life. In society, it is money. Here my dream becomes a utopia. I cannot imagine living without money: taxes, insurance, buying or renting a house, clothes, food, etc. I can do my best to grow my own vegetables, fruits and cereals, but I still need money.

It makes a big difference if I live alone, with my family, or in a group or community. Living together creates problems and we do not learn how to solve them in school. Living together is difficult and often provokes fear. Living in a group is very important for our children. They need to play and learn together, and to have contact with a variety of people. A group has more power than a single person.

I present here the utopia in which I would like to live. I welcome letters from people who share my dream.

Claudia Gringmann, Impasse Jean Pierre, 66130, Trevillach

CONTACTS

WARWICKSHIRE AREA (surrounding counties)

Are there any E.O. Members (either home educating or not) in the Warwickshire area or on it's border with the West Midlands, Leicestershire, or Northamptonshire?

Having moved around quite a bit and had a lot of changes in his life, first not going to school till he was 6½ and then attending a couple of different schools, we have moved to Rugby where we hope to settle.

Samuel (who was 9 last April) is now going to the local school in Rugby which we are quite happy with at present. He does find it difficult to make friends though and having no brothers or sisters/friends, or family here, it has been quite difficult for him.

I would like him to have the opportunity to possibly do E.O. or flexi-schooling at secondary level as I feel that, being such a sensitive child it could be difficult for him to "fit-in" there.

This could only be a possibility if he was able to make a few more contacts with other children of similar ages and establish friendships.

Is there anyone who can help out there? We don't have a car, but we manage to get around quite a bit.

Samuel is interested in; boats, swimming and anything to do with the sea, reading, lego, board games, the countryside and animals.

Looking forward to meeting new friends, please contact us at:

Samuel Bush. 35, New Street, Rugby.
Warwickshire. CV22 7BE.

Telephone: 01788 553647 (evenings).

STAFFORDSHIRE (Help after Fire) (7/12/96)

Dear Friends,

I am home-educating my son Steven age 12½. Seven weeks ago I took on the task of also teaching his friend Daniel age 13½, who was unhappy at school and who lives (Only) with his Ukrainian grandfather.

The first day went well until the boys failed to extinguish a home-made oil burner and whilst we were out of the house (thankfully!) it set fire to the curtain etc., etc., and neighbours seeing black smoke billowing out of the upstairs windows, phoned for the fire brigade.

As a result we have lost the whole upstairs floor of our house and whilst we were insured, the company have not only turned a drama into a crisis they have created what seems a everlasting nightmare.

So we still have no home to call our own and are temporarily (we hope) living with my mum, and have tried under trying circumstances to continue with educating Steven and Daniel at my mum's.

Possibly we may be re-installed by Christmas, but we are all feeling very stressed and if anyone would like to write to either myself, Steven or Daniel to cheer us up, please do so (Steven has lost all his pen-pal's addresses and Daniel would love a pen-pal).

Also from my contact list received today (I have lost all previous newsletters, books, pen-pal letters, addresses, etc. in the fire) it appears there are quite a few home-educating families within a 25 mile radius from us. If there is a localised group or someone who could write offering local support, I would be grateful.

CONTACTS

Thankyou for your time.
Best Regards,
(Mrs) Linda Darby.
10, Lime Close, Leigh. Stoke-On-Trent.
Staffordshire. ST10 4PP.

CLEVELAND

Dear Education Otherwise,
We are a family in Cleveland who have recently started to home-educate our 12 year old daughter, Laura, due to school anxiety problems which began when she started secondary school.

We have another daughter who is just starting infant school and is happy, but we still have a lot of contact with the school and other parents, and find the constant questioning and comments over Laura's education a little bit wearing!

We would like some moral support and possibly contact with other families in the area, preferably with children of a similar age. We have transport so can travel a reasonable distance to meet other families if necessary.

Please write or phone.

Yours Sincerely,

Frank and Pauline Butterworth.
24, Tamworth Road, Billingham. Cleveland.
TS23 2AX. Telephone: 01642 550628.

PHILOSOPHY for CHILDREN

Using techniques developed by Matthew Lipman (in America), philosophical inquiry with children helps them to develop a variety of skills and dispositions. both as individuals and group members.

For Example: communication, self-esteem and self awareness, empathy, creative and critical thinking, dealing with emotions,

appreciating others, decision making, problem solving, self criticism.

For several years now, I have been aware of what Philosophy for Children had to offer.

Taking my son out of school last term prompted me to follow up this interest, as I strongly believe in the value of Lipman's method and want my son to enjoy its benefits. Recently I went on a course tutored by a very experienced practitioner, and 'leading light' of the Philosophy for Children movement in this country. Now I have learned the principles necessary, I am keen to facilitate a Philosophy for children group in my area.

The new group will meet regularly at my home. Philosophical inquiry will be child centred, and triggered by 'Thinking Stories' (these recommended for use with children ages 8-12 years.) If you are interested, either in your child coming to the group, or in Philosophy for Children in general please phone, or write to me, Sarah Barrett, at Cottons Yard, High St, Yoxford. Suffolk. IP17 3EY. Telephone: 01728 668652.

WELLS/ GLASTONBURY/ SHEPTON MALLET/STREET/ CHEDDAR/FROME

So far we meet on Wednesdays for a day swimming and playing, informal network.
Contact Alison on 01749 - 677316.

I am also a distributor for Wells,
for D.K.Books.

Also Liberty & Elfinda from Cardiff. I have lost your address along with my address book during the summer (so this applies to anyone else who's in touch over E.O. etc.). So if you want, please renew contact.

Regional Diary

BERKSHIRE

WEDNESDAYS

Ice skating at John Nike Leisure Centre, Bracknell - 1pm - 4pm. We have a lesson with a very good teacher from 1.30pm - 2pm. Cost including skate hire and lesson, £1.50.

The rink is easily reached from the M4 and A329M.

FRIDAYS

Table tennis, badminton and other outdoor / indoor activities at Woodford Park, Woodley, Reading, from 1-4pm. We hire the tea room (clean and warm) in which you can cook lunch and do crafts. There is a playground and plenty of parkland for the children to work off their excess energy. Do join us; the cost is about £3 per family. The park is on the east side of Reading just off the A4 and near the A329M and M4.

Other events also organised, contact Pat Connor for details - 2, Whitegates Lane, Reading. RG6 1ED. Tel 01734 662123.

Isle of Wight

Education Otherwise Network

meets every 2nd Saturday of the month, mostly at Newport Youth Club.

This is a newly-formed group, sharing support, encouragement and information. Open to anyone interested in any form of education outside the state system.

Phone Alison Morley to check venue: 01983-563862 or write to her at:

Carters Stables. Upton Cross. Isle of Wight. PO33 4BP.

DORSET (Bournemouth)

Monthly meetings to make friends, play, swap ideas and resources, plan outings.

All ages welcome.

Contact: Sue North on 01202 525011.

DORSET

Education Otherwise local meetings are still taking place regularly in Dorset. Until Easter, this is likely to be two Tuesdays per month at the Village Hall, Pimperne (north of Blandford). Everyone is always welcome, and if you would like to be kept informed of details via a local newsheet, please send several SAEs to:

Sue Davis, Heathcote, Dorchester Hill, Millborne St. Andrew. Dorset.

Any suggestions for, or offers to arrange a meeting, or visit in your area, are very welcome. Contact co-ordinator's - Rosemary Newton (01747-853593) or Christine Adey (01258-880355), or Sue Davis if you have any news that you would like published.

KENT

The 1997 Kent Camp

will be from June 5th to June 9th at 'Penny's Field', Headcorn.

Suggestions, or offers of workshops welcome.

Please contact:

Amanda MacKenzie on 01634-402154 or
Liz Turner on 01304-367625.

Regional Diary

NORFOLK

NEON,

the Norfolk Education Otherwise Newsletter, can be obtained by sending £1.00 and four stamped, self-addressed envelopes to: Ali Willer, 28, Cozens-Hardy Road, Sprowston, Norwich. NR7 8QE. Please send reasonably sized envelopes.

SUFFOLK

County-wide meetings every 3 weeks from 24th January.
Phone Sarah Gutherie for details and confirmation of dates - 01379-783678.

SUSSEX / SURREY

There are lots of things happening South of London.

Skating in Guilford every Friday, a drop in club near Haywards Heath on Tuesdays, Parenting discussions, workshop days, swimming at Crawley, Hove, Littlehampton, at home days each month in Horsham and much much more!

We plan to have a maths/science workshop towards the end of February and if anyone is interested, a recorder session for beginners/improvers using some brilliant accompaniment tapes.

If you would like to add your event to our local listing ring Ian 01273-883977. the deadline is the 18th of the previous month. If you would like to subscribe send a cheque made out to E.S.E.O. for £8 for a year to: Lyndon Pugh, The Barn, Mongers Farm, Barcombe, Lewes. BN8 5BQ.

If you would like more information ring Isobel Bogucki - 01403 261178.

WARWICKSHIRE

FEBRUARY

Either a visit to Leamington's station - contact Fiona Cole on 01926-850010 or a social at the home of the Martins with the theme of history - contact 01926-339697.

MARCH

Funtasia at Banbury. This is a large soft play barn. Contact Margaret Harper on 01295-711991. Visit to Lunt Roman Fort. Contact Sue Cardus on 01203-543801.

APRIL

A visit to the Sea Life Centre in Birmingham. Contact Jocelyn Underhill on 01926-400338.

WEST MIDLANDS

Birmingham Central Library

First Wednesday of every month. The central library is situated centrally, so good for public transport and car parking. The central library is one of Europe's biggest libraries with over 9 floors of books and information. The meeting is held in the "Centre for the Child" meeting rooms. There are three multimedia computers booked for our use only and you do not have to be a Birmingham resident to join the library.

If you pop along to the meeting, there are many interesting places to visit in the city centre close by, such as the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, the International Convention Centre, Museum of Science and Industry and Gas St Basin with restored canals, all these are free of charge. Contact - Rod Drury on 01384-233497.

(West Midlands continues on next page)

Regional Diary

WEST MIDLANDS

(continued from previous page)

BIRMINGHAM ST. PAUL'S

MEETING

Usually the third Monday of every month - though for February it will be the fourth, the 24th February - between 10am and 4pm.

St Paul's Venture, Malvern Street, Clifton Road, off Moseley Road, Moseley, Birmingham (A-Z Pg 90 2B), is a few minutes outside the city centre and well served by public transport. St. Paul's is on a large self contained site with a fully serviced, heated building, with kitchen, toilets, and space for indoor activities.

There's a grassed playground, urban farm, football pitch, lots of space to play and run around, as well as other activities usually happening. All the tea/coffee and squash you can drink is included.

To cover costs it is £1 per family and then 50p per child who attends.

This is well attended with a regular attendance of 20 adults and around 40 Home Educated children. Everyone is very friendly and if you would like to pop along for the first time, give Paula Turner a call and she'll then be there to greet you on your arrival.

Call Paula Turner on 0121-603-8673.

WALSALL MEETING

Usually the second Thursday of each month between 1p.m. and 3p.m. at Walsall Library in Lichfield Street, Walsall.

It is easy to get to being in the Town Centre, just a few minutes from the bus and train station. Free tea and squash from the kind library staff, if your early enough. You do not have to live in Walsall to join the library either, and the computer is reserved for our use only.

Above the library, is Walsall's Museum and Art Gallery which is quite interesting and children friendly. It has many changing

exhibitions. Walsall Gala Baths are also just around the corner and Walsall Arboretum with it's many acres is a short walk away. If your coming along for the first time, give Penny Clarke or Julie Gibson a call and they will be there to welcome you. Call Penny on 01922-745465 or Julie on 01922-442815.

N. & E. YORKSHIRE

February

February 14th - Friday 11.30 am at Sea World in Scarborough.

Adults £4.75, Children £3.25, discount for 10 or more people.

February 28th - Friday 11.30 am at Janet Lightfoot's in York (juggling, drama, computers, animals...) Tel. 01904 631182.

March

March 14th - Friday 11.30 am at Archaeological Resource Centre in York, meet outside.

April

April 11th - Friday 11.30 am at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm, Leeds.

April 18th - Friday 11.30 am at Marit Tamli's near Harrrogate - "Pond day", more designing and building wildlife pond. If you have: "wellies", spare clothes, fishing net, white ice-cream tub, magnifying-glass, please bring them! Tel. 01765 677078.

Also Every Wednesday

11am - 4pm at Oaklands Education Resource Centre. High Street, Airmyn, Nr Goole.

East Yorkshire. DN14. 8LF

Telephone Anne Mills on 01405 720894.

**EO National Gathering
Featherstone Castle
Friday 23rd May - Friday 30th May 1997**



Featherstone Castle is set in beautiful countryside near Haltwhistle in Northumberland. There is plenty of space for a variety of activities. Accommodation is basic, mainly in dormitories. Catering is communal. For more information send s.a.e. to: Dineke de Jong, 48, Montgomery Rd, Sheffield. S7 1LQ

French Family

Florence Thiriez & daughter Melodie-Fleur (13 & keen on horses) want to contact friendly EO families prior to visiting England soon.

Tel/Fax
Paris 0033.1.42772517

East Sussex Over 14's Teenage Camps - Proposed Dates for 1997

Friday 28th February to Monday 3rd March.

Friday 2nd May to Tuesday 6th May.

Friday 4th July to Tuesday 8th July.

Friday 19th September to Monday 22nd September.

Friday 30th October to Monday 3rd November.

Camps will take place on the same format as previous ones - some work (maintenance of the camping area, clearing laurels etc.), some games, some eating and some sleeping. Anyone who comes for less than a whole weekend must come during the day and participate in the work involved rather than arriving in the evening. We will make the effort to play some new games, because when we do it is generally enjoyed, the last camp seemed to involve a lot of snooker and Monopoly.

Again we will not have an adult sleeping outside. Basic ground rules that seem to work are: we allocate rota jobs and decide who is going to cook what, and who is going to shop, and then buy it. We try and do a couple of hours work each day. By general agreement alcohol is banned; bring a tent if you don't want to sleep in the communal room, and bring a bed roll if you don't like sleeping on lumpy ground. There will be no charge for people who work hard. One communal meal a day usually costs about £2 each per weekend. I would prefer everyone to arrive between 12noon and 2p.m. on the first day of camps, and preferably stay the whole time. This makes it easier for the group to gel. We look forward to meeting new people at any of the camps.

Application Form for Camp ~~February~~ February 28th to March 3rd.
(Please Return By February 17th)

Name and Address _____

Phone Number _____

I will arrive at Crowborough / Tunbridge Wells at _____

Please return by February 17th to: Sue Petszaft, 2, Leylands Manor, Tubwell Lane, Crowborough, East Sussex. TN6 3RH. Telephone: 01892-661319.

Advertisements

The Resource Guide

The resource guide is growing! It is far from comprehensive (15 as opposed to 300 pages). Entries are answers to the question - what have you really enjoyed/found useful? For a copy please send £1.50 (stamps will do) for paper version or £1 for a Word 6 Doc file on disk. Free copy to people who contribute. Send to Barbara Edwards, 12 Oxford Road, Guilford, Surrey. Gu1 3RP

West Yorkshire

Is there anyone in the West Yorkshire area who is familiar with the present self-assessment taxation rules and could give some guidance to an E.O.er. If you could, would you kindly contact Jannice Cannon, Garden House, 4, Hodgson St, St, John's, Wakefield. WF1 2QZ.
Tel: 01924-377497.

Past GCSE and 'A' Level Exams Set and Marked

to board's marking schemes plus assessment subjects include: English, Maths and Science.

£5 per paper. Send a s.a.e. for details to Mr Roger Freeborn, 4, Northfen Road, Helpringham, Sleaford, Lincs. NG34 0RR.
Telephone - 01529-421218

"Home Schooling Neighbourhood"?

We would like to contact any families interested in working towards (or already living in) a "Home-Schooling" neighbourhood. Peter & Joe Tuffnel, 37, Ralph St; LL49 9UA.
Tel: 01766-514832 / Fax: 01766-513513.

Newsletter for Jehovah's Witnesses who Home Educate their Children

For a sample copy, please send three 20p stamps and your address to: Louise English, 41, Queens Road, Horley, Surrey. RH6 7AH.

Part-Time Tuition in Bournemouth/Poole

We are a group of parents arranging part-time tuition in Bournemouth/Poole for ages 11-16. We have teaching staff and venue. Any parents of young people wishing to join us to share costs for any lessons, please telephone: 01202-573145 / 742315 / 848757 (after 6p.m.) for details.

Chris O'Donoghue:
Honours degree in Maths,
Teaching Certificate,
Counselling Certificate,
Photography qualification(LRPS).
Tel: 01202 880651
Based in Wimborne, I am happy to tutor if I can reach you!

Advertising Conditions

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 E.O. is run entirely by volunteers and has no income except members' subscriptions.

Adverts should be limited to 50 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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Pam Bellinger: The Inn, Chapel Rd, Great Worth, Banbury, OX17 2DT Tel 01295 710976

Stationary

EO stationery, leaflets, posters, membership forms, car stickers and re-use labels (£2.50 per 100) are available from **Margaret Thompson**, 2 Charleville Rd, Hockley, Birm. B19 1DA (*Donations towards postage & printing welcomed*)

Publications: Chris Harper,

For details of EO publications, information leaflets and back issues of newsletters, send a SAE to:
Badgers Holt, Birchwood, Storrige, Malvern, Worcs. WR13 5HA (01886 884740);
If you have had your publications list for a while, ring Chris to check on the availability of the items you want before ordering.

Council Members

If you have a problem, contact your local council member;

Andy Archer (Leics)

Jude Ashley-Walker (Isle of Wight)

Gwen Baldock (Yorks -North)

Pam Bellinger (Oxon)

Isobel Bogucki (Sussex West)

Lucy Charlton (Leics)

Barbara Edwards (Surrey)

Jill Fisher (Leics)

Val Gommon (Bucks)

Maxine Griffith (Yorks-South)

Sue Hutchin (Kent)

Pien Maltz-Klaar (London-North)

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Anne Wade (London Middx)

Bruce Wallace (Highlands)

Beverley Young (Lancs)

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:

P.O. BOX 7420
LONDON N9 9SG
HELPLINE 0891 518303

(calls charged at 39p minute evenings and weekends, 49p minute all other times.
Average call length; 1- 2 minutes)

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