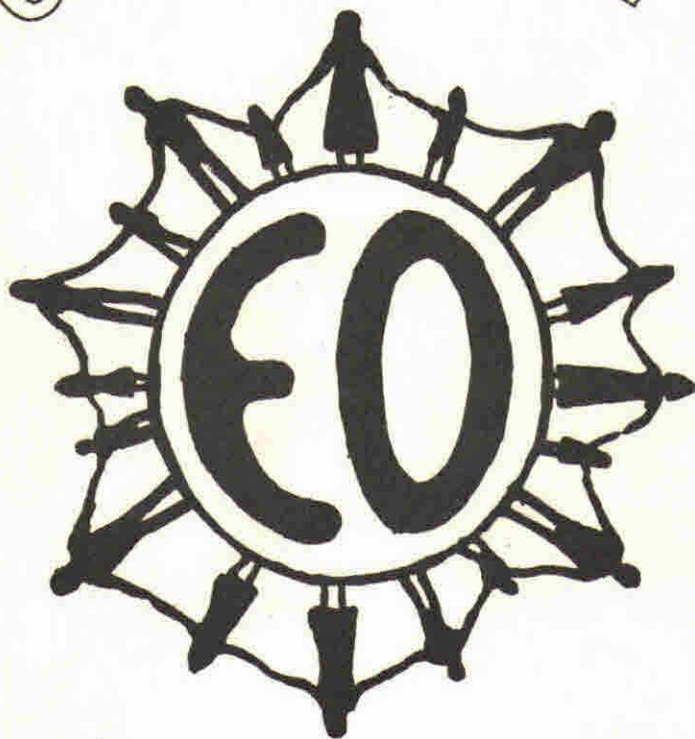


EDUCATION
OTHERWISE



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 14
JUNE 1980

EDUCATION OTHERWISE
NEWSLETTER NO. 14
JUNE 1980

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	1
EDUCATION THROUGH THE PRESS: Brian Guthrie	2
CORE GROUP: John Elenor	3
PUBLICATIONS GROUP: Bruce Cox	6
LIFE AT SCHOOL	7
EO NATIONAL MEETING *****	8
A PROFILE OF DICK KITTO: James Fearnley	10
TOWARDS SELF-REGULATION: Courtenay Young	12
CWM KESTY: Nic Milligton	16
EDUCATING ARCHIE: SEG	17
IN DEFENCE OF HOME EDUCATION: Louise Eickhoff	18
EO IN WEST LEEDS: Peter Williams	20
A CHRISTIAN APPROACH: Ian Murray-Watson	21
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHERS: Jane Davies	22
WHO SAID IT?	23
LETTERS	24
NOTICES	27

Published by:
Education Otherwise, The Manor House, Thelnetham, Diss, Norfolk

Printed by:
Oval Printshop, 52/54 Kennington Oval, London SE11.

EDITORIAL

The last Core Group meeting decided to arrange a national gathering for all EO members and friends. It will be held at Trent Park in North London (based in the buildings of the Middlesex Polytechnic) on Saturday 27th September. EO members are often rather remote from one another so we hope that this will enable us to share experiences, problems and enthusiasm. We have not completed detailed planning yet but we expect to arrange a variety of formal and informal activities and meetings. Trent Park is an ideal setting with plenty of open space as well as rooms and workshops. John Elenor will put London members willing to offer accommodation in touch with those who need to stay somewhere overnight. See page 8 for the latest details; more information will be in NL15, but make a note of the date if you hope to come.

The next Core Group meeting will be held in Leicestershire at the home of Bruce and Dianne Cox; Park Lodge, Tilton Lane, Billesdon, Leicester; on Saturday 19th July, from 2pm to 5pm (Publications Group in the morning). Any member is most welcome to come - detailed arrangements follow the Publications Group minutes.

We do not yet have a full editorial group for preparing the next Newsletter, due out in September. Anyone who wishes to play a role in this should contact Bruce and Dianne Cox at the above address, before the next Core Group meeting. Contributions should be sent to the same address.

Enclosed with this NL you will find:

- * A revised Contact List (of all members who have agreed to have their names circulated).
- * A new (though still interim) edition of "First Steps". This is to be judged in terms of its usefulness to members. We therefore really welcome all comments and criticisms. Send these to Ros & Dom Sweetman, 69 Leathwaite Road, London SW11.
- * A new questionnaire which we would like you to complete and return. One of the roles of the Core Group and co-ordinators is to facilitate mutual exchanges between members and a matching of needs and resources. We can only do this if we have full information about our members. So please return it even if the task is mildly irksome. It is for all members, not just for those with children out of school.

Education THRU' the Press

Caretakers confirmed their uncanny power over education by closing 90% of London schools for a day over a dispute about working conditions (GUARDIAN, 1st April).

A Durham mother refuses to send her 11-year-old son to the comprehensive ("I know I'm breaking the law" she says [wrongly]). His smartness and studiousness have earned him the nickname Professor Posh. He was beaten up and spat on (DAILY MAIL, 19th February).

Infant school children should be educated about alcohol says the Director of the Leeds Council on Alcoholism - though he says drinking itself isn't a threat until adolescence (GUARDIAN, 19th February).

Education cuts are meaning fewer text books - 19 science books for 200 pupils in a Northampton school - says the Educational Publishers' Council (DAILY MAIL, 12th February).

An East Ham 18-month old girl has learned her alphabet, rhymes and songs, wants to go to school and calls everyone "teacher" (DAILY MIRROR).

Labour MPs accused Tory-controlled Kent County Council of exploiting child labour by paying schoolchildren up to 96p an hour to clean classrooms (EASTERN DAILY PRESS, 10th March). Some pupils laughed off suggestions that they were being exploited. Headmaster James Freelove (sic) claims the school would be difficult to keep clean otherwise (DAILY MAIL, 11th March).

Calling a schoolboy "sambo", "nignog" and "honkey" is not discrimination, according to a Birmingham judge. The teacher who used the words was, according to the judge, a disciplinarian (GUARDIAN, 12th March).

The EDUCATION GUARDIAN chides the National Centre for Alternative Technology for bias in favour of vegetarianism in one of its schools packs (18th March).

A study of the hidden cost to parents of free education throws up figures of between £200 and £400 per child - including a farmworker and his wife whose four children's schooling costs them over £500 a year in books, meals, equipment and extras (GUARDIAN).

A survey by the Assistant Masters and Mistresses Association claims that some mothers stunt their children's speech development by not talking to them enough (DAILY MAIL, 2nd February).

A Pakistani teacher was sacked because of his accent, despite claims by the National Union of Teachers that his accent was no worse than that of Irish, Welsh or Scottish teachers (GUARDIAN, 6th February).

A 14-year old Yorkshire schoolboy was struck by his housemaster, pulled by his hair and threatened with a beating, using a leather belt. The boy stabbed the teacher through the heart and killed him. He is now the subject of a care order (GUARDIAN, 5th February).

The parents of a 15-year old have been awarded £250 compensation by Harrow High School following claims that he was brutally caned (DAILY TELEGRAPH, 28th February).

Lessons on classroom disruption were cancelled after fighting broke out in another meeting (DAILY TELEGRAPH, 10th March).

The head of a comprehensive is to resign because he says he spends too much time as a welfare worker. He is to train as an accountant (DAILY TELEGRAPH, 18th February).

Children caught playing truant are being paid £7.50 a week to stay away from school and work in the community of Glasgow (DAILY TELEGRAPH, 29th February).

Guest Editor: Brian Guthrie.

* * * * *

CORE GROUP

Minutes (three hours actually) of Core Group meeting held at 69 Leathwaite Road, London SW11 by kind invitation of the Sweetman family on Saturday 26th April 1980, taken by John Elenor.

Present (in clockwise order): James Fearnley, Halina McHale, Dianne and Bruce Cox, Helen Holland, Stephanie Leland, Dick Kitto, John Elenor, Dom and Ros Sweetman, Sheila Stocking.

Apologies received from: Joan Hoare, Helen Fletcher, Jane Davies, Sarah Guthrie, Courtenay Young, Alan and Robina Pye.

1. Since the minutes of the previous meeting were so uninspiring, we whipped through them in record time, pausing only to observe that it had been agreed, but not recorded, that Dick would pass enquiries on to Sarah, Diane and Bruce - hereinafter known as the Enquiries Secretaries.
2. The first of the Matters to Arise was the Resource List. Sheila made our hair stand on end with her description of the mountains of information she is wading through (can you wade through a mountain?), but cheered our hearts by announcing that she had finished extracting material from the questionnaires and had got as far as the letter C in the card-index of members - she is also cross-indexing these with subject cards listing resources according to the members offering them. Digests of these lists will be published, as and when ready, in the Newsletter.

The idea of having a box number as our permanent address was abandoned as fruitless.

Brian Guthrie had sent us a note in which he agreed to act as Public Relations Officer for EO, for a trial period of six months; stipulating, however, that this was to deal only with Press, TV and Radio, and not to answer membership enquiries. We felt that the best way to handle this was not to advertise his phone number or address but for Dick as before to accept any requests that came our way for interviews and pass them direct to Brian.

Bruce has started to compile the dossier of information on inefficiency etc in state schools and LEAs, but he needs many more contributions from members all over the country - the more specific the better (but verified newspaper reports only).

3. The Publications Group (whose membership overlaps considerably with the Core Group) had met in the morning, and gave us a brief report of their decisions (proper minutes appear elsewhere). The one thing they hadn't been able to decide was the allocation of duties for Newsletter 15; after many apologetic glances and embarrassed silences it was agreed that Bruce and Sheila would be responsible for finding volunteers to do the various necessary jobs (none of them onerous) and that all contributions should be sent to the Coxes, since the major work on NL15 would be done at their house at our next meeting.
4. Dom and Ros, who recently undertook jointly the duty of Membership Secretary, have become slightly alarmed at the number of applications which seem to require a personal response in addition to the usual paperwork. In view of their forthcoming family expansion they don't feel able to deal with this additional burden; we agreed that such applications should be passed on to the Enquiries Sec. They were also worried at the possibility of having to reprint publications when stocks ran out; we agreed that they should not be expected to do this, merely to report the situation at the next Core Group meeting.
5. 'The Future of EO' was the ominous title of the next item. Making the optimistic assumption that EO had a future, the first thing we did was to plan a Grand National Event (without the horse-racing) for Saturday 27th September, to be held in the leafy surroundings of Middlesex Polytechnic, Trent Park site, at Cockfosters in North London, as a sequel to the very successful London meeting held there last summer. Since I am a music lecturer at Trent Park I agreed to organise the event, to include music (and possibly Art/Craft); Stephanie offered to do a resources display, and Sheila thought she might get hold of a clown. If London members are prepared to offer overnight accomodation, I am prepared to coordinate it; mass transportation (charabancs, excursion trains, charter-flights from Aberdeen, etc) we felt could be left to the local co-ordinators. For full details see page 8.

Another social event was suggested by the Coxes; since they are already providing hospitality for the next Core and Publications Group meetings, they offered to hold open house for the weekend to any members bold enough to beard the faceless bureaucrats who run the organisation with such ruthless efficiency (you won't find any!). The date for this is fixed for 19/20th July; more details in the Notices section.

The Enquiries Secs. suggested that if EO continues to expand, more Eng. Secs. would be needed; someone also suggested the helpfulness of an index to items in past Newsletters - is any one out there prepared to help?

Finally we came to the crisis point of the meeting - our attempt to agree on a philosophical basis for EO. (We failed) The dispute might be oversimplified by posing the question: Do we as an organization want to press for greater autonomy and better facilities in state education? Or is it enough for us to leave this to other groups already dedicated to that purpose, and concentrate on supporting those members who have decided - for whatever reason - that they can offer their children a better deal than they would get in the local schools? We are uncomfortably aware that our own concerns, which are basically similar despite different emphases as to the extent of autonomy desirable and the ways to achieve it and reinforce it, do not adequately reflect the wide variety of views of the membership at large; and we are worried that any hasty formulation of policy could alienate a significant number of members. Maybe this could be the beginnings of a Great Debate in the correspondence page of the Newsletter? Not that we imagine that we shall ever come up with the Right Answer, but the fact of asking the Right Questions (Any Questions!) is a big step to understanding what we are doing.

As a help to members in knowing what is behind the views of Core Group members we agreed to publish (slowly) thumbnail sketches of the individuals involved - suitably censored!

6. The final business of the meeting (apart from tea and buns) was to find someone to compile a letter to be sent to Local Coordinators - first to give them a list of members for their county, and advice of a confidential nature on tactics to be used in dealing with LEAs - and second to ask them for information from members as to what they want from EO, and what communications they have had with their LEA. The Publications Group agreed to compile this letter.
7. Next meeting at the Coxes house in Billesdon, Sat 19th July at 2pm; items for the agenda to reach Bruce no later than 30th June. Full address etc at end of Publications Group minutes.

PUBLICATIONS GROUP

Minutes of the Publications Group meeting held on 26th April 1980 at 69 Leathwaite Road, London SW11; taken by Bruce Cox.

Present: Sheila Stocking (chairer), Dianne Cox, James Fearnley, Stephanie Leland, Dick Kitto, Halina MacHale, Dominic and Ros Sweetman, Bruce Cox.

Apologies: Jane Davies, Helen Fletcher, Sarah Guthrie, Joan Hoare, Courtenay Young.

1. Newsletter

- i) Report on the production of Newsletter 13: It was agreed that the collective production of the Newsletter had continued to go well. A contribution from the Effective Education Association was to be passed on to Sunday's editorial group meeting for consideration.
 - ii) Newsletter 14: A few items had been received and others were expected. Ros and Dom pointed out that they would not be able to play a central role in the production of NL15. It was not thought possible to consider the production of that NL without knowing the venue for the next Core and Publications Group meetings; this item was therefore deferred to the afternoon meeting of the Core Group.
 - iii) Enclosures for NL14: The new questionnaire, and contact list, and the new interim edition of First Steps will all be enclosed with this Newsletter.
 - iv) Newsletter future production: Ros and Dom reported that arrangements for printing the NL could continue even if they were less involved in its editing. The main problem was likely to be finding more members prepared to take some part in the task of editing.
2. 1979 Newsletter Digest: There is a need for a Digest of 1979 Newsletters as editions 11 and 12 are out of stock. Halina MacHale offered to prepare this.
 3. First Steps: It was reported that the new interim edition would be ready to go out with the next Newsletter.

Discussion of the long-term version expanded into another discussion of the best method of producing policy documents. Dick described his experience of involvement in production of the legal document as a good model. This involved the continuing circulation of amended drafts to a small group of interested people; this was a slow process but could be effective. It was decided to continue discussion at the next meeting when a procedure for producing the long-term edition of FS could be agreed upon.

1. Early Years revision: Members of the group had received a part of the latest draft from Sarah and were invited to send comments on these on to her.

5. Introductory Letter: This had been finally produced by Dick rather than the group mentioned in the last minutes. Most seemed pleased with the new version which Dick had put together after a fair amount of correspondence between the group mentioned plus Stephanie and Sarah.
6. County list of members: Ros and Dom are keeping this up-to-date and it will be sent to co-ordinators. The question arose of whether enquiries secretaries should get the full county list. It was decided that it would be too much work to give them regular updates of the list. Any enquiries about this will be answered by Ros and Dom.
7. Booklist: Members of the Resources Group had received some contributions from Jane Davies who was still working on this. Dianne would write to her to suggest the inclusion of books mentioned in NL lists.
8. Duplicating: Stephanie has done the Introductory Letter and the Legal Document and is now working on the Digest of NLS 1-4. Thanks are recorded to the Islington Bus Company and Inter Action, for use of their facilities.
9. Stationery: Stephanie reported that this had now been printed. It was suggested that some A5 letterheading would be useful, as compliments slips were not always large enough for writing notes.
10. The Curriculum: this was still being worked on by Jane Davies.

Next meeting is to be on Saturday 19th July 1980 at 11 am, at Park Lodge, Billesdon Coplow, Tilton Lane, Billesdon, Leicestershire; with NL15 production commencing in the evening and on Sunday. It is hoped that this weekend will be something of a social one too - see "Notices" section for details.

* * * * *

LIFE AT SCHOOL

The following letter was written in response to a debate about the children's television serial GRANGE HILL: (EVENING NEWS March 20th 1980)

"I would like to put it on record that this programme is very true to life at a comprehensive school. I am 14 and, until going to a comprehensive, enjoyed a happy school life. But after being at this school for three weeks, I lost my voice for four and a half months. I was transferred to another school which was no better.

I saw several doctors, including a speech therapist, to teach me to get my voice back. I now have home tutors as I have school phobia. This has been brought on by the huge classrooms, the violence and total chaos at the two comprehensives which I have experienced."
(Name and address supplied).

ARE YOU COMING?????

???
???
TO
??
??
ON
??
AT
??
WHERE?????

EO NATIONAL MEETING

Saturday 27th September

Corkfosters, North London.

In the Trent Park site of Middlesex Polytechnic.
(see map for directions).

YOU CAN

- * explore the park in the morning
- * picnic in the college grounds (canteen if wet)
- * enjoy music-making and art-work in the afternoon
- * visit the display of resources
- * meet fellow-members and discuss problems
(helpers available to look after children)

TIMETABLE:

- 12.30-ish assemble in or near Music Block and move off for group picnic by the lake
- 2.00 music-making in the Music Block - with student help; art activities in the Art Block - with student help (this could carry on until 4.30)
- 3.00 parents meet in another room in Music Block to discuss:
What should EO do next?
Is it being run right?
Et cetera
and to inspect the resources display
- 4.30 tea and snacks available.

ACCOMODATION OVERNIGHT

////////////////////
////////////////////

Do you live in the London area?		Do you want accomodation?	
Can you offer accomodation?		Do you want accomodation?	
YES	NO	YES	NO
	V		V
	Fair enough		Fair enough
V		V	
Give details to:		Please contact:	
John Elenor, 18 Eynham Rd, W12.		01-749 2199	

A PROFILE OF DICK KITTO: James Fearnley

I was working at a friend's house in London one morning, when a large rather shaggy black and white cat jumped up onto the table. "Get down Kitto" my friend said. "Unusual name for a cat" I said. Yes, she said, I named it after a man I met during a fortnight's stay at a place called Lower Shaw Farm.

There then followed that familiar conversation: "Small world isn't it" - "Fancy you knowing Dick" "I met him at an EO weekend" "Oh, I met him at a Community Health fortnight!" "Oh, I didn't know he was something to do with that" etc etc.

Certainly it would be unkind to pursue the similarities between Dick and that large shaggy cat; however one could perhaps be forgiven, I think, for conjuring up images of Dr Who as you spy Dick approaching in long heavy tweed coat and very long multi-coloured scarf, hair everywhere, to be embraced in a way that assures you than NO ONE is remembering anything but good from that last heated discussion/argument/row you had last time you met about something that really mattered.

That scarf, incidentally, was knitted bit by bit by some of Dick's many friends ranging from 6 years to over 70 including myself. The scarf and its making illustrate some of the character and talents of Dick, able to inspire genuine feelings of affection and, one way or another (although he knew nothing of the scarf's production), get a totally disparate group of people working together towards the same end. The job that Dick has done since he virtually founded EO has been very much trying to find a solution to the incredibly diverse nature of the people practising it.

Dick's concern for the issues and problems that surround EO is profound and deeply humanitarian. His aim, it strikes me, is always to provide help for real people in actual difficulties NOW rather than later as well as organising the many routine functions of what is now a national organisation.

Whilst many readers of this newsletter know of Dick only in his EO role, his other and perhaps most enduring passion is his garden.

Dick has been active for a large part of his life in founding or running and encouraging various organisations to do with organic husbandry, gardening and farming; organisations like WWOOF (Working Weekends on Organic Farms) and COMET as well as groups committed to making it possible for more people to live and work in the country, like the Rural Resettlement Group.

In EO like many similar groups Dick has faced the continual problem posed by the fact that people 'doing it' have so little time to run organisations even with the best will in the world.

Having someone like Dick, sensitive to this problem has I think been invaluable in the early years of EO. Despite doing the lion's share of the work he has never tried to push EO into any rigid position preferring this or that brand of EO.



Recently Dick has put forward the concept of the GIFT COMMUNITY, nothing specifically to do with EO but illustrative of a basic thread that runs through all he does; that only by being prepared to give and share whatever talents and resources we have can something better - whether it be education for our children or more wholesome food can we move towards a better society as a whole.

TOWARDS SELF-REGULATION WITH CHILDREN: by Courtenay Young

An individual's personal struggle to give his children a chance to become self-regulated.

However desirable the goal of self-regulation may be, I often find it elusive. In theory it is so simple - a child, like any living thing, will function harmoniously. There are naturally built-in checks, balances, and means of maintaining and restoring stability. There is a natural healthy flow of energy, sufficient to live, move and grow. A child will naturally eat and breath and make contact with people and the world around it - these are it's sources of energy - and will discharge that energy in play, work, sexual contact and in other aspects of its relationships. (I am grateful to Peter Jones for the framework of this definition in 'An Introduction to Self-regulation for Babies and young children', from the Orgone Research Group, Pathways, London Road, Stroud, Glos.). We know what disturbs this balance - tension. The body will get rid of tension, if it is given the chance. If it doesn't, then the tension builds up and gets locked in. If it is chronically locked we call this a neurosis. Our society is neurotic because people are not provided with the correct environment for the natural release of tension.

To provide the right conditions for our children, we will have to create an environment which is not normally found in our society and may even directly contradict it; without doubt this means we have to work on our own neuroses. To achieve this is not easy. As an adult I have over controlled my children's lives. Now I am trying to allow my children to take responsibility for themselves. If I permit it they will find and create their own security centred on themselves. I must dissolve my control gently, as it feels right. If I am not with them, they will oppose me or withdraw from me.

It is difficult for me. I have to trust. I have to trust that what I am doing is right; in the face of others and with little supportive evidence except a theory - and the beginning of a gut feeling that I am right. This is my security, if I can get in touch with it. This is my path; I must trust the child. How difficult that is, to trust a young baby, a toddler - to know what it wants and doesn't want and when it wants it. I must trust that they will learn from their mistakes - better than if I tell them. I must trust that any stormy adjustment period will pass. I must also trust that other people will sometimes support me, so I am not alone, so that I do not have to take from the child what I need.

I believe the primary pre-requisite for me is to feel my own personal 'space' (the way in which I see myself reacting to and influencing the world around me), and become aware of each child's personal 'space'. As an adult and a parent I dominate the children sometimes just by being there. Not only do I feel bigger and louder than they do (to them) but I also impose myself and dictate the way they are. How often as a child did I long to get away from my parents, resenting their influence and interferences? I have had to gradually move away a little and give my children room and time,

so they can in part shake off my influence, expand their own boundaries a bit and feel a little more independent. This occurs until a point is reached where any further contraction on my part becomes unbearable. Then I must give just a little more - and bear it. It's not that bad really! This little bit more is the real work, the real gift; it's where the real growth is.

My children's expansion is also limited. When they reach a point where further expansion causes them to be a little unsure of themselves; that is the limit of the familiar. The children must then learn to trust themselves. So I reassure them and they expand just a little bit further. This interplay of insecurities and tolerances is very rich, almost heady. I find it almost addictive. It is the emotional mixing-pot where the anger of my children (sometimes the rage) meets my rationality - and their anger must be accepted by me. To accept feels like surrender and annihilation. To find that the surrender does not annihilate me but actually enriches, is to experience the incredible joy of my personal growth. Everything that took the place of love is exposed by a real act of love - giving something of myself.

Emotions have to be accepted - properly. Once all this has happened and the children feel more emotionally independent from me, they begin to be able to resist my encroachments in a healthy way. Self-regulation has started - not before, I'm sure of that. The capacity for self-regulation, of course, has always been there. I contributed to disturbing it; and to the extent that I discover how I do that, and perhaps why, and so stop the interruption, my children will again be able to reestablish self-regulation. My intellectual arguments have no place in my children's world - the only use can be in understanding what has gone wrong. Nor does this awareness play any practical part in correcting the situation. It can motivate my actions - but actions are what count and which will recreate or maintain a situation where my children exist with their own self-regulation. (This concept of a personal space, and a boundary, and the interpersonal reactions on that boundary, was very difficult for me, first to be aware of and then to work within and I have only just begun.)

I think I had a bad start in life as we weren't an emotional family. Learning to recognise all that I have described so far and an increasing awareness of body language and the beginning of trust in my own intuitions (as against reason), have led me to at least be able to talk of self-regulation. Whether or not my kids experience it they must judge eventually - but I have a feeling, once in a while, that they do; it's enough to compensate slightly for what I have gone through and what I have done to them.

As a parent, I started off with some set ideas, some conditioned reactions, and a will - a strong one, that had to go (although it is still there). The set ideas evaporated; to be replaced by others; which are in turn being replaced by experiences; the conditioned reactions - mainly anger and disgust (as at shit and piss), caution at anything that might hurt (matches, heights, knives, hard surfaces... the list is endless), and selfishness, have all been worked on. The anger has usually covered my own

pain. The disgust has moderated through familiarity. I have learnt to trust the children and let them learn from their own explorations. The selfishness - often encouraged in the male - has been the hardest. I suppose I am learning to get gratification in ways other than on demand, which leaves them free to develop and give me things of themselves - rather than the pre-determined things I wanted.

I have to treat them in a way that I was never treated, and in a way that few other people treat their children. How difficult all this is! I have had to suppress a lot that I felt to be integral to myself, I cultivated an attitude of nonchalance or healthy neglect (but not indifference) and this grew into an independence for myself. I wasn't working things out through the children any longer. It took the pressure off them. They could be more themselves. This has been my way of giving the children their space, their freedom. It has involved a lot of soul searching, biodynamic therapy, and someone else who can be truly honest. It meant getting more in touch with my body - in the way a child is, and finding the child in myself - again and again. It was easy playing lions round the sofa with the first one; but with three - there's more work, less space, less energy, more needs. It is more than two people can easily cope with.

I don't think the nuclear family is the right environment for kids. I don't, in fact, think it is possible to have a state of self-regulation in the enclosed demanding set-up most of us live in. I think a child needs a safe space to wander; people of all ages, with varying relationships and degrees of intimacy; a peer group as well as siblings that s/he has constant access to and a clear relationship with parents, who are themselves not oppressed. Few of these conditions are met in the urban, nuclear situations most of us live in. A close knit, village - almost primitive - community, seems more ideal (eg see "The Continuum Concept", by Jean Leidloff: Futura Publications 1976). Modern society doesn't make it easy. It does need some better sort of an environment that allows children to find themselves and grow at their own rate, for self-regulation to be maintained. What, as parents, we have been able to do in the nuclear set-up is to modify some of the repressive caution in favour of the child's exploration.

With our children (aged 3, 5 and 7) we tell them a particular knife is sharp, and nothing more. They know the meaning of the word, having cut themselves once or twice slightly, and treat it with respect. The same applies to scissors, axes, and other pointed things. There have always been open fires in our house - often without a guard (though the big, square ones are great for drying nappies on overnight). The only serious accident was when my cotton dressing-gown caught fire one winter morning when I was warming my bottom, and flames licked up my back. The children were more frightened than I was. They have never been burned, but have had an occasional blister. It's been enough. They play with matches only in the hearth or garden sand-pit and seem to have learnt the rules from experience.

Cars are more tricky. I moralise and instruct too much. But a shriek of horror whenever they step off the pavement carelessly shows them we're afraid of something and therefore they should be. We remind them when they go out by themselves - it's necessary - but this makes an event of it.

Our electric plugs are screened. They don't want to eat the yew tree berries - they don't taste nice, and now they know they are poisonous. We don't use medicines much and they are usually kept separate. During one intense game which involved them playing with sleeping tablets, we had to trust them, though I counted the tablets afterwards. The children have a better head for heights than I do. I think that covers it, except to say that we have noticed that the more a fuss is made about not doing something, the more likely a child is to do it, to discover what the fuss is all about. A fairly casual attitude, supportive of their right to explore the world, with an occasional display of our anxiety seems to work. Often they actually reassure us, and tell us we don't need to worry. Mothers are naturally more protective. The children are closer to them. In that way it's easier being a father. However I'm a lot more repressive in a general way, so less loving. The differences can be good, as the child can begin to assess the true danger. A uniform approach is a bit like being faced with a brick wall. Our kids seem to enjoy people having different opinions and taking a side for themselves, or playing one off against the other. It allows them scope to have their own opinions.

I think of self-regulation as a process of which the child is unaware, the child just is. When a child says no and means it, then that must be right - for the child, and if the child sticks to it, then that is the way it must be. Only when my children can exercise their own decisions, can there be an openness to rational argument. I so often decide that I know what is best for my children. However, I really resent people telling me what I must do. I like to be able to decide for myself, or at least be consulted and my opinion listened to. A child learns what it lives.

I started off, eight years ago, with a lot of ideas. They didn't help much. It was only when I began to get in touch with my gut feelings about who I was (in the last two years) that I began to feel what self-regulation was about. Putting it into words doesn't really help either. It is how I actually respond in any one situation to the life of the child - either for life or against it - that counts. I am learning to judge by the child's eyes.

This article is also appearing in the Journal of Biodynamic Psychology 1, 1980, by whom the copyright is held. It is by their kind permission that it appears here.

CWM KESTY CHILDREN'S PROJECT: Nic Milligton

The project began with the purchase of Cwm Kesty in May '78 by the four original members. The group has now grown to six and a seventh is expected to join soon. The property consisted of a very derelict farmhouse, a large barn, some outbuildings and about seven acres of land, including a small field of just under an acre and five acres of dingle; a steep wooded valley with a stream running through it. The criterion for choosing the site was that it should allow us to establish a holiday centre for city children alongside a small independent community living and working on the premises. We felt that these two aspects could be mutually beneficial; the permanent community giving stability and continuity to the children's centre which in turn would provide some employment and provide strong links with cities. The access to common land, the dingle, and the remote location of Cwm Kesty all seemed well-suited to children, while its outbuildings offered scope for workshops and stabling, and there was plenty of room for a large vegetable garden.

Cwm Kesty is situated in Powys, Mid-Wales. The nearest towns are Llandrindod Wells, Bailth Wells, Kington and Hay-on-Wye, all at a distance of about ten miles. The age group to be catered for is between six and sixteen in groups of up to twenty children (normally with a leader or leaders). Facilities include: basic campsite facilities including water, latrines, gas cooker, boiler site lights, and kitchen equipment; tents to sleep up to twenty; spare blankets; wet-weather accomodation. The project has a large 'tipi' - a circular, red-indian type tent. It can be used for activities and group meetings. An adventure playground is sited in the dingle. We have some sports and craft equipment, and materials for session-work. Arrangements can be made for the use of local pony-trekking and canoeing facilities.

The project will supply one full-time worker to give general assistance to visiting groups. The worker will also be available to run daily sessions of approximately two hours. These sessions will be aimed at encouraging the children to explore, observe and respect the countryside. Some of the activity will be continuous throughout the holiday and would aim at a final production; for instance, the assembling and collating of a holiday 'diary' using maps, paintings, stories and exhibits to describe the stay. Other sessions will be self-contained, and might include making and flying kites, a visit to a neighbouring farm, or a games session. It is envisaged that each group will draw up a programme jointly with the project worker and we would be very willing to discuss and work out groups' own particular projects.

The charge will be £1 per person per night. For further details of this year's programme and a copy of our report on last year's activities, please contact: Cwm Kesty Children's Project, Newchurch, Kington, via Hereford, Powys; tel Gladestry 620.

EDUCATING ARCHIE

BY SEG



IN DEFENCE OF HOME EDUCATION : Louise Eickhoff

Three main objections to home education have been made to me during 25 years of advising this course, and I see that they still trouble parents and Authorities, to wit: 1) "I could not teach my child"; 2) The child will miss out in the social side; 3) The child will not get a job when he comes to leaving age.

Parents automatically compare themselves with the specialists who can see pupils past examination hurdles, and naturally, unless they themselves are trained teachers, they are overwhelmed with a sense of inferiority. They have been looking at the possible ultimate instead of the immediate needs of a child setting out in life; and like many educators, have forgotten a prime point, that for the first twelve years of a child's life it needs no teaching! Given opportunity and example in an atmosphere of security and encouragement the young will pick up what is necessary to achieve new goals, further development and gain independence in all spheres, intellectual, physical and personal. This is an innate urge in all healthy, normal children. They have but to be shown, given opportunity for practice, and instant and repeated praise or correction by someone intimately connected and revered, and they master the business and use each freshly gained step to help them to the next rung of their ladder. An eight year old put it well: "We learn how to sing, how to dance, how to sew, how to draw, how to do sums, how to read, and how to do our writing" (her emphasis). All parents of average intelligence can show how. Practice times may have to be carved into periods for a time-table to satisfy the inquiring LEA, but demonstration and example can go on at any hour.

There are more ways than one of acquiring knowledge and acumen. There is the scholastic way through reading, the main way for schools, which means that the slow reader is disadvantaged and soon on the downward path to an inferiority complex which will handicap for life. There is the way of watching the expert, without words at all, and copying and working it out, also without words. This is the way of all children under eight, for thinking then is pictorial. It is also the way of potential craftsmen, artists, musicians, artisans, workers with people and animals, and girls who are to grow into the best kind of woman. Unfortunately the only "school" for this type of learning today is out of School, at home, in the locality, in intimacy with the experienced adult.

Now for something to make Educators eyes pop - it is the children attending today's schools who are missing out socially! They are practising being part of the mechanism whilst in the particular machine, at the expense of continual experience in intimate personal relationships, recognition of each one's place in the World, and the establishment of roots in other lives, the intertwining with which gives lasting strength to the individual for life. Few school children in years to come will, like folk of my generation, be still linked with friends who, like brothers and sisters, have been with them, through thick and thin, from their earliest days: for today's children move into different classes, different schools and different groups according to number, date of birth, and individual selection. Many can say like a 14-year old

boy: "I've been in that school three years and THEY still ask me my name. THEY only want to make up their registers. THEY don't know who's friends and who isn't."

But the child educated at home has opportunities through family connections, Sunday School, Scouts, Guides, and other Institutions or Societies for growing together with those of like interest, standards and life styles, who will, therefore, continue in friendship in what we now see as an old-fashioned way, even past the barrier of different kinds of work at school-leaving age. And he will not have been battered by the kaleidoscope of hundreds of fleeting persons, but have had the opportunity all children, especially the sensitive and gifted, need to be solitary and catch up with feelings.

And so to find himself, a far more important thing than finding a job. Funnily enough (from the Educator's point of view) home educated children can ultimately be better at landing a satisfying job than the school educated, perhaps because they are more sure of themselves, having had the essential full grounding in home and relationships, and time for practising the living of Life. They are, without doubt better quality people than the usual product of today's schools. I could quote many encouraging examples but here give the three whose mothers sent up-to-date news recently. K----, now 23, worked at a well-known bookshop until, responding to his urge to do something creative (he had always made lovely models) he left to go to a college of further education where in one year he passed (from scratch) four O levels including Technical Drawing and Art. Last Christmas (1978) he was engaged temporarily in a London store's Display Department; now he is on the permanent staff. Most of his education had been "otherwise". His younger brother, after some home teaching finished his education in a special class, now at 21 is doing a degree course in computer science. Both belong to a local Operatic Society and have had walk-on parts with the Royal and London Festival Ballets, the younger being especially keen and a gifted tap dancer. The third boy elected to go to school to study art (arranged by a sympathetic Director of Education) after nine years of education at home. Since leaving he has been able to travel by plane, on behalf of his firm, to Glasgow and Stornaway, has completed a submarine course as a sea scout, and is now about to join the police force.

So otherwise-inclined parents need have no fears or doubts about their children's future. Even an appearance in Court can only strengthen their children's personal foundations by adding to their sense of security in parents who will defend them against the Big Machine, before which other children's parents give way.

[Louise Eickhoff M.D., M.R.C.Psych, D.P.M. is a member of EO and a retired consultant child psychiatrist]

EO IN WEST LEEDS: Peter Williams

Although Ben is just nine months old, we have already thought about the education he will receive after the age of five. It is necessary now to prepare for the time when Ben's education will grow from the home into interests and choices available outside.

A network of people willing to exchange teaching skills is being set up. Contacts are being made with parents dissatisfied with schooling: alternative ways of education within the community are suggested. We hope that by the time Ben reaches school age, a lively, innovative method of education will be established in our area.

In our efforts so far, we have found other forms of education are needed, particularly in inner city districts where there is deprivation abetted by schooling. It is evident here that schooling can do little but confirm what, for the majority, has inexorably been decided upon by pressures of home and surroundings. However, even in inner cities, a chain of people who would willingly exchange their teaching skills for teaching skills in another area of life could replace, or at least weaken, the dependence on schools. Skills and trades could be exchanged among parents and their children.

The work we take upon ourselves as co-ordinators is to assist this exchange and create links with specialists skilled, but not necessarily conventionally qualified, to teach different subjects. Knowledge of the educational establishments in the area has been found to be useful. Community workers are ready to help if the right kind of approach is made. Many retired people delight in teaching children the skills they have acquired through the years.

For parents unhappy about their child at school, private tuition, alongside attendance at school, can be a move in the right direction. In the homes of the people I teach there is a great interest in these moves to build and integrate learning into the community. For academic subjects we have found that home-based learning is much more effective and economical in time taken to learn than learning at school. Disruptive administration procedures, problems of discipline, and disorganised teachers make learning a long, baffling, and frustrating process for many children. If it is agreed that certain subjects need to be learnt, it seems sensible to teach them in the most expedient way.

The frequent criticism that Ben would be restricted in contact with other children we have countered by the formation of a gymnastics club using school premises, but not school methods. We welcome all children, and this particularly has been successful; it is also a good vehicle for the promotion of our methods.

A CHRISTIAN APPROACH - FELLOW TRAVELLERS: Ian Murray-Watson

For some years I have been concerned with the failings of the State education system, and principally that all schools within the system are based upon, and teach, the doctrines of humanism. There are, of course, denominational schools, but because they accept the structures and syllabi of the State system as norms, they are effectively the same as any other. The addition of RE and assemblies to a secular structure does not make education Christian, and may even seriously compromise the Christian message by placing it within a contradictory framework.

I hope those EO members who are not Christian will not by now have stopped reading. We all have fundamental presuppositions which shape the way we see the world. The tendency in a pluralistic society is to present opposing world-views with as much 'objectivity' as possible, and allow the child a 'free' choice between them. But this 'objectivity' is itself the product of a rational humanist attitude, and cannot be justified by any prior argument. It is in fact a choice.

As long as we are honest about our choices - our presuppositions - then we have real ground for discussion - or teaching. It is not indeed until we admit that each one of us cannot exist without a fundamental commitment to some principle - which cannot be justified by rational methods alone - that we can even begin to have true communication.

When we search out our basic beliefs, and make sure that our children are aware of them, then we give them a proper choice - they may either accept or reject what we teach. My quarrel with the State system is that it is not this honest. The highly vocal humanist lobby even attacks denominational schooling as sectarian, without apparently realising that its own approach is just as limited (even supposing limitation to be a proper term to use in this context).

A Christian approach to education therefore demands a complete reassessment of what is meant by learning and teaching, its goals and its structures. There is throughout the country a growing movement among Christian (and non-Christian) parents to find alternative ways of educating their children, and we find, not surprisingly, that we have much in common with one another. Our common humanity is enough to move us towards similar conclusions.

My wife and I have developed a model of education based on a community - in this case a Christian community - which we hope to put into practice in the near future as we move to Hereford (name of infamy to EO members!), where I am to take up a new post. I have not the space here to set it out in detail, but its main thrust is to set up structures which allow room for a fully human development of children and adults. We believe that without a correct structure, flexible, human and geared to family life, no amount of Christian content will be properly effective. It should be emphasised that what we intend to do is to create a good school, rather than a 'Christian' school. We believe that Christ died not

just to make us Christian, which is only a label, but to make us fully human.

We are hoping to hold a weekend conference in October for all those interested specifically in this approach - the main aim being to meet each other and discover what we are all doing. Anyone interested is invited to get in touch with me at 7A Inglis Road, London W5 (until the end of July). I also have available, for 40p, a longer article, entitled 'Towards a Better Education', which develops the ideas mentioned above. Alternatively, a more recent version of this article was published in "Third Way", March issue (vol.4, no.3), available from 19 Draycott Place, London SW3; cost 50p plus postage.

* * * * *

EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHERS: Jane Davies

This is not a comprehensive list, but a selection of publishers who should have material of value for parents, sufficient to make it worth sending for their free catalogues.

London parents can visit showrooms, others should visit the library of the nearest educational college or university and ask the librarian if it is possible to browse through catalogues, books and reading schemes, all of which will be in the library. If you are lucky the librarian may let you borrow books, particularly if you know a student at the college.

Apart from buying the material publishers offer you can use catalogues for ideas for do-it-yourself books and posters and other resources. Keep an eye out for advertisements offering free material, in the Times Educational Supplement particularly. "Where" also has useful sections on resources.

When you read a book you like, why not send for that publisher's catalogue and see if there are other books of interest to you. If you've got friends interested in the same kind of thing ask the publisher for more than one copy of the catalogue, saying why, and you'll probably get them. Saves your postage and effort.

Publishers

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS - Education Department, Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP.

Showroom at 116 High Street, Oxford; also book selection at the library of Ely House, 37 Dover St, London W1; and Zwemmer/OUP bookshop, 72 Charing Cross Road, London WC2. Tel: Oxford 56767.

F.WARNE (PUBLISHERS) LTD. - 40 Bedford Square, London WC1. Also showrooms. Tel: 01-580 9622.

METHUEN'S CHILDREN'S BOOKS - 11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4. Tel: 01-583 9855.

THE NATIONAL BOOK LEAGUE REFERENCE LIBRARY OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS -
7 Albemarle St., London W1; for a complete range of children's
books published in the last twelve months.
The National Book League publish bibliographies for each
subject at a reasonable price. Members can buy NBL
publications at a cheap rate, but anyone can buy them even if
they don't want to join.

MACDONALD EDUCATIONAL LTD - Holywell House, Worship St, London EC2;
Tel: 01-247 5499. Schools information service tel 01-247 0121.

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICES, BRITISH MUSEUM (NATURAL HISTORY)
Cromwell Road, London N7.

EVANS BROTHERS LTD - Montague House, Russell Square, London WC1.

FEDERATION OF WORKER WRITERS AND COMMUNITY PUBLISHERS -
c/o Centerprise, 136 Kingsland High St, London E8.
Tel: 01-254 9632. (Centerprise is important, it is a voice
for the majority and publishes work that ordinary publishers
would not touch).

* * * * *

WHO SAID IT?

The whole system of public education was reduced to the providing of a religion of blind obedience leading to official position as the natural reward. The naturally expansive feelings of youth were roughly driven inwards and were replaced by ambition and by jealous spiteful rivalry. Those who did not perish emerged sick in mind and soul. Rampant vanity was combined with a sort of hopelessness, a consciousness of impotence, a weary disinclination for work. Young people became hypochondriacally suspicious, worn-out before they had reached the age of twenty. No happiness could exist for them. On the slightest pretext they reacted inhumanly and dealt brutally with their neighbour. They seek enjoyment and then, as they lift the cup to their lips, an evil spirit jogs their hand, the wine is spilt to the ground and the cup, impetuously flung away, rolls in the mud.

[Answer in Newsletter 15]

LETTERS

Dear Editorial Group,

We have three children aged nearly seven, four and four months. The eldest is a boy. We withdrew him from the school system when we moved up to South Creake [Norfolk] in September. It had always been talked about as a very strong possibility from when we had been living in London two years previously. Unlike many people our action was not brought about by direct conflict with either school he has attended, rather our decision arose from a genuine belief that we could offer him much more in terms of investigating his world at his own pace than any teachers faced with the rigours of coping with up to thirty children in an atmosphere governed by rules and regulations beyond his/her control could possibly hope to achieve.

I think in this we appear to be right. The child seems to be extremely happy and is slowly developing ideas and skills in those things which at present interest him. The next child is a girl and of a very different temperament to her brother. While the teaching side with her would not be difficult, fired as she often is by what her brother is doing, we both feel it would be wrong to deny her a chance to go to school. She is very gregarious and loves being with other children. This brings me to the nub of the problem. We are living in a remote rural area with virtually no outside school activities, also we are new to the area. When our middle child starts school in September I feel her elder brother might become very lonely. We do go to Norwich about once a week and see friends with children there but I feel it is somehow not the same as having friends that live nearby as his sister has through her village playgroup contacts. He says he would like a Pen-Friend in London with interests similar to his own (maths, reading, nature, and tape recording). Perhaps contact could be done through tapes as writing can be laborious. We could swap amenities. We live 4/5 miles from the coast near the big bird sanctuary at Blakeney and have a large garden. If you are interested I would be grateful if you could get in touch.

Cherity Laniado, Hubbard's Barn, South Creake, nr Fakenham, Norfolk.

* * * * *

In reply to Dianne Cox's appeal in the last NL for accounts of dealings with LEAs, Halina MacHale wrote:

A few words about the LEA visit for your booklet: our main apprehensions were over the LEA's attitude (a) to EO in general, and (b) specifically towards us as unqualified teachers. Just about everyone we knew or heard of doing EO seemed to have at least one teacher in the family and it is easy to think "Oh well, of course the LEA can't object to them but what about us?" Anyway, in the event they neither asked us for qualifications or reasons (which we were relieved about). They did ask the usual questions:

what are you doing about reading, maths. And they tested Emma at both. "They" were two men - the Area Inspector of Schools and the Area Education Officer. We were hoping for a sweet old lady and got jittery when we read their letter (three days' notice).

I had the impression they were as apprehensive as we were and didn't want trouble. The first few minutes were quite funny in retrospect, with everyone cagey and hedging. What else did they ask? - obvious things like socialisation, painting facilities, and (rather oddly I thought) a room of her own to work in. They were quite pleasant in the end and said they were well satisfied etc, but also that they have serious doubts about EO for older children - I felt they were trying to warn us off. And they were asking us if we were anti-examinations etc. ... and what we'd do when E was older but we veered off that, saying it's far away. Incidentally, E had a medical the other day and the doctor virtually cross-examined her about who were her friends and how old they were, etc., as though she obviously hadn't believed me! Though in fact, of late, E has been playing much less with other children - I have mixed feelings both wanting her to play with other children and actively disliking the influence of most of them.

* * * * *

Dear Editor,

After reading the account of the Harrisons' court case in Newsletter No.13, it occurs to me that perhaps where Education Otherwise is not providing the best support for its members is in the matter of presentation of a programme of education to the LEA, or in this case to the court.

Apart from the fact that Wanda had difficulty reading aloud which would be bound to go heavily against the Harrisons, Roland Meighan "in a few cool concise sentences" reduced the official experts' expertise to "a groping, fumbling, thumbs-and-finger exercise." "No ostentation"? What else is it? Worse still, it allowed of no face-saving. In effect he had 'out-experted' the experts.

Did Iris (p.6) really give prosecuting counsel "a sweet smile of such compassionate understanding" etc?

It hardly seems the way to obtain a favourable judgement, to lower the self-esteem of those who will pronounce it, because there is no doubt that the majority of ordinary and reasonable people, including the magistrates, will have been brought up on the transmissive system, and will regard this as the normal system (which it is) against which to judge a proposed alternative.*

Likewise a "passionate belief" may be essential in order to carry through an alternative education, but that very quality may weigh against a favourable decision from those of a different persuasion, and might be better muted, or risk raising the hackles unnecessarily.

One might ask which is the more important, to establish a principle by adversary tactics; heedless of the individual suffering involved; or to admit a modicum of compromise, particularly in the presentation, and thereby gain the acceptance, even perhaps the support, of authority; and in this way establish a principle without martyrs.

A.St.G. Cartwright, 13 Broad Street, Hay-on-Wye, Powys.

* * * [Dick Kitto, who wrote the account of the Harrison case in NL13, replied:]

Dear Mr Cartwright,

I agree with a lot of what you write and I think the first thing to be said is that the Harrison case was conducted not according to our advice but to that of her legal adviser. We were certainly involved but only to comment on points of law. If you'll read the second article about the case where I commented on the legal aspects, you'll see that I too voiced some reservations about the defence on other grounds. But however a case is conducted it is very easy for outsiders to say after the event that it would have been better to do something different when there is in fact no way of actually telling whether it would have been.

One of our problems is that because of the vulnerability of individuals confronting all the power of centralised authority, very few families have been willing to risk martyrdom by standing up to the authority. If a modus vivendi cannot be reached, they tend to give in, so there is very little experience on call to guide one about the best way to conduct a defence.

However, you'll see from our literature that we always do advise people very strongly to reach a good relationship with their LEA if they possibly can. But if the situation has reached the stage where the parents are taken to court, it must be assumed that the relationship has broken down and that it is probably too late to reach a modus vivendi. This was, I think, without doubt the situation with the Harrison family.

Dick Kitto, The Manor House, Thelnetham, Diss, Norfolk.

NOTICES

1. Cheap holiday in Cumbria available - two bedrooms in my modern house to sleep four for up to three weeks from 6th to end of July - children welcome - £35 per week inclusive - I will be there intermittently working most days and nights and need help with the rent - I thought this would be a good opportunity to meet some EO families and for them to try a new place - lots of places for the kids to use up spare energy and lots of places to visit. It really would be nice to meet some of you and you'd definitely be saving money - most summer lets up here are £100 a week or more for self-catering. Write to: Jane Davies, 48 Fisherbeck Park, Ambleside, Cumbria or phone Ambleside 2720 on Wednesday or Saturday nights at 10pm or as near as you can make it (it's a work number and I'll have time to talk then).
2. Elizabeth and Trevor Sturges of 80 Fairview Road, Stevenage, Herts (telephone Stevenage 52645) are having a gathering on Saturday 21st June to which EO families and anyone else interested will be welcome. Come any time for an easy-going lunch, which we'll provide. We hope to have some EO "experts" here, and we can have a meeting in the afternoon if it seems like a good idea. Please let us know if you are coming for lunch.
3. Alternative Education Conference: 29/31st August in Leeds. Organised by Friends' World College (European Centre), Studio 441, O & N Warehouse, Metropolitan Wharf, Wapping Wall, London E1; telephone 01-488 3879.
4. About Alternatives in Education is a newsheet published in New Zealand, but containing information about America, Canada and, in the issue sent to us, EO in the UK as well. For anyone wishing to keep in touch with what is happening outside this country this seems a valuable publication. The subscription is \$1.50 (NZ dollars) but this would only be likely to cover postage by surface mail. About Alternatives in Education, Rosedale School Inc, Rosedale Road, Albany, New Zealand.
5. First Steps: I'd like to record thanks to James Fearnley, Robina Pye, Sarah Guthrie, Mike Hebden, Jane Davies and Helen Fletcher, who spent a considerable amount of time making contributions to my efforts at First Steps. The second draft was forwarded to the Publications Group meeting called in London on 23rd March for consideration alongside a draft produced by Ros and Sheila, and further suggestions by Dick. The meeting was attended by Dick, Sheila, Ros and Dom who finally produced the booklet, the latter three taking responsibility for the tasks of printing, collating and issuing. I look forward with you to seeing what the group finally produced. - Dianne Cox.

6. Meeting: Weekend 18-20th July As the next Core and Publications Group meetings are to be held at our house (19/20th July) we thought it would be nice to offer this weekend as a social event for any families anywhere who would like to come, since a similar meeting last year appeared to prove an enjoyable day for those who came. For anyone who'd like to stay overnight either Friday or Saturday, we can accommodate about 4 large tents (we can supply one), if need be I can ask our neighbours for field space, and if the weather's cruel there's floor space! So if you'd like to come please telephone - Billesdon (053755) 684 - and we'll give you directions: we're just off the East-West A47, and the North-South M1 passes through Leicester. We're not offering any organised activities - just a chance to meet other EOers in attractive east-Leicestershire countryside! You can find out who's who, and join in the meetings if you wish - either as an observer, or participator. If you feel you might be able to take on some small task. We'll provide some survival grub, but your own might be useful too! - Bruce & Di Cox, Park Lodge, Billesdon Coplow, Tilton Lane, Billesdon, Leicestershire.
7. WEGHEG: A notice culled from the "Glasgow Alternatives in Education" newsletter published by Roger and Lesley Downie. Wegheg (= West End of Glasgow Home-based Education Group) is the rather ponderous title for the alternative to school now running in th Downies' basement (We visualize a Wegheg as a friendly hedgehog-like creature). We've been going for two terms now; the kids meet three mornings each week and most weeks there is also an outing - to a Museum, park, the country, ballet, a concert, to make a TV film of themselves to name a few. We emphasise that Wegheg is not a school. The coming-together activities are often more to do with socialising than with normal school activities. Education occurs all the time, and much of it for the kids happens in their own homes. The parents have had their differences, but are still on speaking terms. We are keen to continue the venture. One problem is expansion. The Education Act is ambiguous on whether we can continue to be a loose-kn_t home-based group with more than 5 children (registering as an official independent school would be expensive and involve us in too many regulations). We have written for a ruling from the Scottish Education Department. They don't seem ever to have been asked the question before and are taking a very long time to reply.



PRICE 40p.