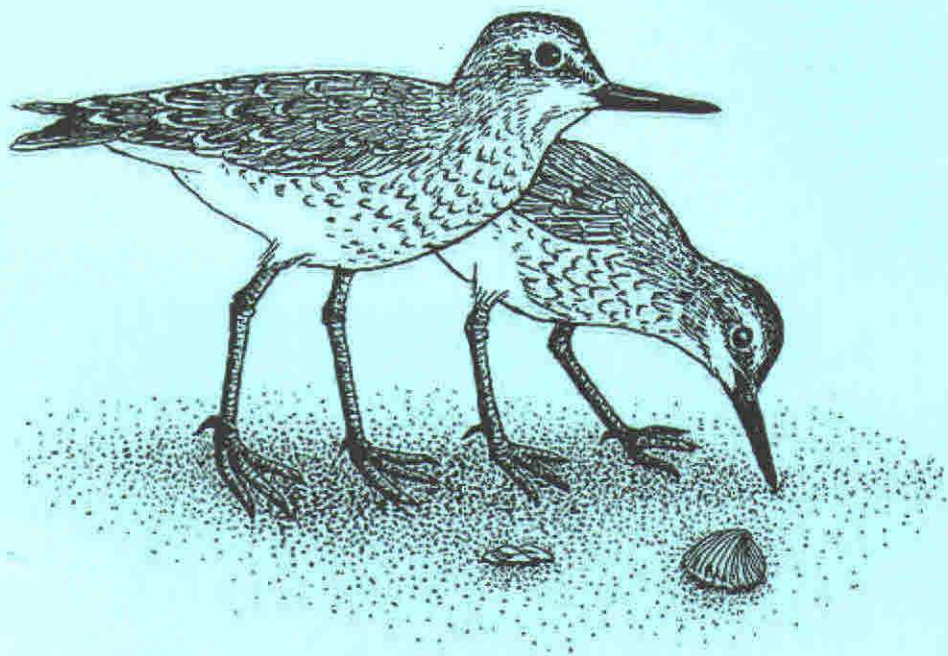


education otherwise



No. 183 – August 2008

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DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE IS: 1st September 2008

Please mark material 'for publication' and include your name, address, phone number and e-mail (if you have it) as we may need to contact you to discuss your contribution (your personal details may be withheld from the publication on request).

E-mail contributions will be acknowledged within a few days. If you require a postal acknowledgement, please include an SAE. If no acknowledgement is received, or in the case of queries, please contact the NL Co-ordinator (see inside back cover). *Please also ensure that your EO membership is up-to-date.*

Please send contributions via the most appropriate section editor listed below:

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Editor for the next Children's Pages: Jacqueline Goldston **Deadline:** 20th August 2008

Please send all material to the Children's Pages Co-ordinator who will forward it to the relevant Children's Editors. This is to ensure that if there is a problem submissions from other children will not be lost.

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N.B. *If you change your address, phone number, e-mail or other details, or if your Newsletter does not arrive, please contact the Database Administrator (see inside back cover under Membership)*

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EO MERCHANDISE

To gain the 10% discount available to members who use the online store, please enter the code: **summerhols**

If you forget to enter the discount code you cannot claim the discount back later

Welcome...

To the August edition of the Education Otherwise Newsletter.

I hope you're enjoying the warm (if rather grey) days - maybe by the time this Newsletter comes out it will have brightened up a bit!

The 'summer holidays' can be a bit strange for home-educators. I enjoy visiting places more in 'school time' when it's likely to be quieter and can find the buzz created in the holidays quite frustrating at times. Still, we have our trip to Cleethorpes planned (mandatory if you live in South Yorkshire) and also up to Bridlington (where my sister-in-law lives) for a bit of 'traditional British' seaside fare: icecream, chips, candy floss and the seaside fair, digging in the sand and not going any further than ankle deep into the sea!

It's great to be able to be out in the garden more, my children have been busy building a cross (for the repelling of vampires, this was apparently a very important job) and tunnelling out a bush where my husband has been replacing the fence (which has created the perfect cubby hole). My daughter has worked out how to 'swing herself' and my youngest son has been terrorising snails (he can't seem to walk past a snail without insisting on picking it up and putting it on his face, or generally waving it around). There are tents to be built out of sheets and general 'digging' (of the "What are you doing?" "Just digging." variety). Unsurprisingly this has resulted in a lot of looking at various bugs and insects in the garden, with the discovery that there are 'different' ladybirds and lots of painted pictures of butterflies.

I hope you are enjoying the summer and all the opportunities that it can offer.

Nikki Haxell
Newsletter Co-ordinator



Any Safeguarding Children concerns should be reported to the NSPCC.

NSPCC Helpline Telephone No.:

0800 800 5000.

If you are a child and you need someone to talk to, contact:

Childline: 0800 1111

Diary of a Home-educating Nobody

I was really moved by the story: 'The Foundation Stage' in the last newsletter. It is the kind of story I've heard many times before and it raised so many often forgotten issues relating to the education of our children.

The first issue is to do with 'what is a good school'? We perhaps all have differing personal views on this! But our different views aside, the procedures to inspect and label a school as 'good', or not, are so farcical as to be virtually invalid. As the article pointed out 'good' schools probably earn their reputation on a polished performance for a short period in time - put on for the purpose of inspection - and bear no relation to the actual reality of daily school life. This was indeed my own experience when I worked in school, and is also backed up by colleagues, still in the profession, who describe a magnificent demonstration of 'goodness' during Ofsted time, and sloppy practices for the rest of the year. I've also heard about the teachers who can give a brilliant act during their assessment yet generally deliver poor teaching for the rest of the time. (It was a secondary teacher who told me that!) Obviously there are many brilliant teachers but sadly it only takes one of the opposite to damage a child for life.

And this brings me to another important issue about children's education also raised in the story: it is the people involved that matter far more than the school or other physical resources. Something parents are not always clear about when they pick the schools with 'good' Ofsted reports, with the best equipment, the biggest science lab, the fastest technology, the shiniest decor, is the fact that none of this stuff is any good whatsoever if the people in the school do not have good relationships with one another. Both adult/child relationships, adult/adult and child/child relationships. These matter more than resources. Anyone can learn, even without fancy resources and other physical advantages, if they have encouraging and respectful relationships. Without those, you could be in a palace of learning resources and still not get anywhere.

For a third important issue raised in the story is the fact that children have to be comfortable in order to learn well and achieve their full potential. A good school provides a comfortable learning environment with good relationships. However, each child's need for 'comfortable' will be different - how can schools cater for that? Would it ever be possible therefore to have a 'good' school so do schools just cater for general? At home we can provide the exact and individual environment our child needs to be comfortable enough to learn.

Small private incidents, however insignificant they seem to us, are Big Things to children. Children have to be comfortable and confident in their setting, and with the people who have charge of them, in order to learn well. Children who feel threatened, fearful, disrespected or unhappy do not learn well. Children's education needs to be based on trustworthy and respectful relationships in order to be successful. From the story, from the way in which the parents were deceived by the school into thinking their child was happy, that could never be achieved at that school.

I've worked with young children in schools. I have seen cold hearted teachers drag crying children into classrooms. I personally experienced the fear and distress the school environment brings. The sense of overwhelm created by such a place. And I too took my crying child back off a teacher and brought her home. For in my heart I knew this could not be right; it was not right to leave a child in a distressed state, with a complete stranger, to 'settle down' as they call it.

Sometimes children are distracted or their distress is momentary. But in many cases they

do not 'settle down' they just learn instead to conceal their grief and that their feelings don't really matter in our adult world. I could never understand how people can be so un-empathetic towards children's personal preferences. Some kids like the hurly-burly of school. Others don't. But what is so destructive is that these children are made to feel that there is something wrong with them because of their personal preferences. Made to feel pathetic if they can't bear the school environment. How discriminatory is that?

When you think about it, how many adults would revel in the idea of being in the hurly burly of school, with a mass of other children, some who were very threatening, day after day, year after year? I wouldn't. I don't know anyone who would! Some adults maintain that exposure to the school environment is a good preparation for life later on in the outside world. But this is absolutely ludicrous, for life in the outside world is nothing like conditions in school where you are thrust with a load of folks all the same age as you, without any kind of choice, or the maturity and experience to deal with it. As adults in the working world we can make choices about where we work and who we work with and we have the maturity to deal with it. Children are denied that choice in school, and are even made to feel bad for expecting it. And made to feel bad for being afraid. Fear is not conducive to learning, neither is a fearful environment going to be one which fosters good behavioural skills. It is more likely to teach kids how to be aggressive, how to put others down.

Thank goodness we can give them choice with HEing, and we can also give them the skills with which to make appropriate choices; demonstrate how to care and how to interact caringly with others. For that's what HE is about, as much as it is about education; it is about care and respect. And love.

Mrs Fatima is absolutely right: the best foundation for a child's learning is a happy environment. One filled with love. Children who are loved make the foundation of a loving

society. It's a loving society we need, not an aggressive one. And I would extend her comments further to say that in fact a loving approach to children, whatever age they are and whatever learning stage they're at, can continue - and works - right through their education and their lives. A loved and supported child will be a child who learns and achieves their potential. Who feels good about themselves and can carry that goodness over into their adult life and extend it to others.

Thank you to her for sharing her story, congratulations to her for sticking with her beliefs in providing a loving foundation for her child, and to all you other HEers out there who are doing the same. Long may there be people like you who will continue to do so and show others that there really are other more loving ways to educate our children than only school ways!

Ross Mountney. ross.mountney@tiscali.co.uk

Free Gideon New Testament available for HE-ers

The Gideon Society is offering children a free Gideon edition of the New Testament.

In the case of school children the offer will be mediated via the school.

Members of Education Otherwise wishing to find out more about this offer should contact the Gideon Society directly.

Contact: Peter Grange
Email: homeschool@gideons.org.uk
Tel: 01455 554241



FREE BOOK: THE GENIE IN THE BOTTLE

EO has been approached by Rachel Parsons, the Project Manager of Project Genie about their book *The Genie in the Bottle*. This book is currently being offered free to children in school and Project Genie wanted to make sure that home educated children did not miss the chance to get a free copy.

Project Genie is the brainchild of Hugh Montgomery who delivered the Royal Institute Christmas Lectures in 2007. Hugh is a medical doctor who has paid for these books himself so that they can be free to children. *The Genie in the Bottle* tells a cautionary tale about two planets: one "dead" planet - where the inhabitants did so much damage that it became impossible to live there- and one "live" planet - Earth- where we still have a choice.

The book would usually be priced at £4.99. To get your free copy plus two posters and details about online resources on climate change.

Please email rachel@projectgenie.org.uk or telephone 077 233 199 70.

You can find out more about Project Genie at www.projectgenie.org.uk or via

http://www.btbetterworld.com/bt_education_zone/project_genie

http://www.btbetterworld.com/bt_education_zone/genie/home

News From Scotland by Fiona Chaff, EO Enquiries Secretary for Scotland

On 21st May I attended a Scottish Executive Roadshow on 'Getting it Right For Every Child' (GIRFEC).

GIRFEC has funding for 7 years and is unfocused. The government wants children to be successful learners and progress to be successful, confident young people. They want to identify concerns locally and nationally and keep tabs on children as they move from one area to another. They want to reduce monitoring and inspection. They want to change the culture, systems and practice and fundamentally shift the way they deal with children. They want to give people choices in help available and provide the right support for families.

There has been a Domestic Abuse Pathfinder taking place in the Highland area. They are learning about the advantages and disadvantages of the system before putting it into practise elsewhere. Originally, they wanted to cover all children with unmet needs, but later realised that that was naive. Originally Jill Moss was to be employed for 6 months part-time, but has been working for 3 years full-time. The system has been filtering out gradually to the whole of Scotland. 800 people are being trained in Inverness.

Previously care and welfare concerns were referred to the Children's Reporter. Teachers and health workers were told about concerns when background reports were required. The government want to reduce the number of children referred by 70%.

More information: www.forhighlandchildren.org

The only mention of home-educating children I could find on the website was in regard to health practitioners identifying children not attending to school and liaising closely with education departments.

The Domestic Abuse Pathfinder has had 4 pilot studies in Falkirk, Clydebank, Edinburgh and Dumfries and Galloway. There is single trigger for domestic abuse. Teachers are being trained in this system.

In 2005-6, 45,796 people were abused, with 87% being women. 45% of incidents involved children, with 54% aged 0-4; and 33% aged 5-11.

Previously there would be 7 letters sent for 1 incident. Now the government want to have a child concern form with the minimum amount of information. Where a domestic incident occurs, information should be shared universally via 1 named person. Risk should be categorised and then a decision made regarding what is best for the child. The informed consent model should be used.

Previously child protection cases would be referred to the reporter. Usually police would have escalating concerns and meet daily with social workers. If a child was on a supervision order already, the child reporter would be involved. Previously services were based on 1 size fits all, but now the government wants a proportionate response.

Everyone should be aware of a named person who will coordinate with health and education departments. The single trigger for domestic abuse could be to any agency, but most likely to the police.

Each individual providing services for children should recognise their role and responsibility. Families are to be seen as the biggest resource, and families should be supported to make changes. The government wants to get rid of parenting orders, and adopt a supportive approach with the focus on the child and family.

GITFEC is an aspirational programme and funding will be supplied where there is an identified need. The government wants to get rid of what doesn't work and reduce bureaucracy.

In Scotland the E-care framework is based on information with consent. It won a European Privacy Award. You cannot search for a name and you can only view through consent. This should enable practitioners to make decisions earlier. In the future, it is hoped that children will have access to their own records. The system can be used as an aid to making decisions.

It is hoped that meetings can be avoided by using handheld PDAs using secure messaging, as the government wants to get away from a meetings culture. There will be an Integrated Services Officer, who has no case load. The named person can contact this officer. Key elements of GITFEC are Equality of access to services, especially specialists; Access to mental health services; and Dispute resolution.

Principles and Values session

Professionals are expected to respond positively and creatively to diversity among children and families, and colleagues. The approach should be child-centred and holistic. Professionals should work in partnership with families and should be looking at how help can be brought to the child, rather than passing on the responsibility to someone else.

The government want to ensure that families are not subjected to stressful repetition of information, avoidable delay, or to assessments without a plan of action to help. The government want professionals to recognise that respect, patience, honesty, reliability, resilience and integrity are qualities valued by children, families and colleagues.

*Fiona Chaff, Enquiries Secretary for Scotland,
Knowes, Ollaberry, Shetland. ZE2 9RU
Tel: 01806 544233*

New Contact Details?

To ensure you don't miss any mailings from EO, can you please let the Database Administrator know if you move house or change any of your contact details (eg address, email address, phone number, numbers of children etc).

Email: database@education-otherwise.org or telephone Lynda on: 08445 867541. Can EO volunteers also let their line manager know please? Thank you.

Our Journey Towards Home Education by Natsha Gregory

From an early age it was clear that Abigail was 'different' from other children. By the age of 18 months, her 'friends' were running around in groups, screaming with laughter. Abigail was always the one who was either sitting watching, or ignoring them altogether. At pre-school, Abigail took a long time to 'settle', having to be pulled off me initially. However, once she had adjusted to the separation, she really enjoyed her time there. When I saw her friends, I was surprised to see how 'grown-up' they were in their play, playing all sorts of complicated imaginary games. I thought at the time that Abigail was just a little slower to develop socially.

Abigail looked forward to starting school. I was anxious but tried hard to hide those feelings from her as well as myself. I never liked school, but really wanted Abigail to be positive about it so I made certain that I was always very positive when discussing school. We had a terrible start to her school life. The Reception class teacher was totally unsuitable to teach little children. She was stern, strict and seldom smiled. She refused to let them go to the toilet during lesson time and showed no understanding or gentleness towards those children who found separation from their parents hard.

Abigail found it increasingly difficult to get to sleep in the evenings and was always deeply unhappy about going to school. She would walk there slowly, holding my hand all the way in silence. When we arrived, she would hover at the door, trying so hard not to cry, saying, "Just go Mummy." I had to go quickly so as not to prolong the agony. I reassured myself by thinking that it was just the separation that was difficult for her and that she would be very happy doing all sorts of lovely things during the day. Towards the end of the year, we had a parents' evening. The teacher sat there and told me with a half smile on her face that Abi spent the whole day sitting on the sofa and that if any other child approached her, she just 'glared at them'. I couldn't believe that she

hadn't told me sooner. I asked for an assessment to be done by the SENCO. After two weeks I asked if anything had been done for Abigail. I was told that because Abi was not disruptive in class and was progressing with her work, there was no need to do a formal assessment of any kind.

I wish so much that I had taken her out of that awful environment straight away, but I was still conditioned too well at that point. Year 1 was a huge relief as Abi had a wonderful teacher who did a lot for her. She seemed much happier in general, although she was still very anti-school. It was during this year that I realised that Abi had still not caught up with her friends socially. Her teacher told me that she spent most of her time alone and would not talk to any other adults in the school.

In September last year she was diagnosed as having Asperger's Syndrome. I was relieved to get this diagnosis since I thought we might get some help and because it explained so much. The SENCO was fantastic and did all that he could, but since Abi was by no means the most needy of the many kids with special needs and as resources are so limited in schools, there was very little that they could actually do.

In Year 2 Abi started to have panic attacks. They were always during the evening when she was struggling to sleep. She finds it hard to tell me about problems as they occur and tends to blurt it out some time later. Following a class vote for school council rep when no-one voted for Abi and a while school vote for best piece of work, when again no-one voted for Abi, she started to talk about wanting to be dead. I tried hard not to react to this too much but it was very hard, especially when she said she would make herself die. She was 6 years old. I realised that this could not go on. She was being damaged by a system that just did not fit her needs. I started to look into home education, although I didn't seriously think I could ever do it. I read the book 'Home Educating Our

Autistic Spectrum Children' and started to take the idea more seriously.

After spending a lot of time looking at the EO website, I rang an advisor on the helpline. They were really helpful and put me in touch with the local advisor for this area. I then made contact with a local HE group who were so welcoming and warm that I began to feel really excited. I was amazed to see how well the children interacted with adults as well as each other. They seemed so happy and confident - it was a real wake-up call. I read everything I could get my hands on (lots of useful leaflets and books on the EO site!) about HE and began to see that I would love to HE my girls even if Abi didn't have Asperger's Syndrome. I had always felt this guilty longing to have more time with them and found myself getting really low at the start of every term. I thought it was my inability to 'let go' that was the problem and that I had to deal with it. I began to realise that there were plenty of other parents who enjoyed being with their children and felt that they had not had children just to pass them on to someone else to be taught about life. There was another option that would set us free.

I still took several months to come to the decision. I was not helped by the incredibly negative comments of so many friends. The way some people reacted you would think I had suggested selling my children! I had comments like: "You need to let them go," and my favourite, "Have you thought about this?" (to which I wanted to reply, "No, I just woke up this morning and decided out of the blue!"), let alone all the usual, "But what about socialisation?"

We finally took the plunge in April this year. After I picked Abi up from her last day at school. I kept thinking, "What have I done?" My younger daughter, Lydia (aged 4) said, "You really have done the right thing Mummy." I have not once looked back.

We generally have a more structured time in the morning, during which we cover the 'foundation' subjects of English, Maths and Science. We do

some reading (me or the children, it doesn't matter as long as we are enjoying books) and times tables every day. The rest of the day is spent on different things like arts and crafts, music, French, projects or just playing together. I expect that we will become less structured over time but I feel that I need to gain confidence first!

It is wonderful to have outings to places that are heaving at the weekends. What I enjoy most is watching the children playing imaginatively together, since Abi was thought not to have enough imagination or be able to socialise well enough to do this! It seems that she was just too tired and fed up with enforced social contact.

I feel like I have had 'blinkers' on which I have just removed. I cannot believe so few people question the system that enforces such long hours to such young children (taking away so much of their natural 'playtime'); massively inhibits family time together; requires one adult to teach 30 children most of what they will need to lead successful, happy lives; focuses on academic and book based learning as opposed to the experience-based learning that children learn most from and encourages children to interact with a very limited range of people.

Abi is already so much happier. She has had much less anxiety; she has been playing wonderfully with her sister and with her friends when they come over (most of the time!); she has been initiating conversations with shop assistants (sounds small, but believe me, it's huge for her!); she has coped with joining the HE group and made friends there. Above all, the biggest change is that she has returned to her habit (long forgotten about by me) of singing to herself almost all of the time. I am so glad that she is now home-educated. She has been freed from the pressure and anxiety of school and has already shown that she is so much more able to cope with the difficulties (as well as the wonderful things) about AS. We have been given the most extraordinary, wonderful gift of time together as a family.

Adventures of a Co-opted Trustee - Jennifer Skillen

When I was approached to see if I would like to be co-opted onto the council, I made it clear that due to my son's disabilities, (autistic spectrum disorder) I wouldn't be able to do telephone conferences, or go to meetings. Then after I said that I realised that there was a meeting in Bristol which is probably the closest a meeting will ever be to me. So I started to lay a cunning plan.

A couple of months before the meeting I started casually dropping into conversations with my ex husband and son that there was a meeting in Bristol. Then talked about where it was, how long it would take to get there, what they could do at meetings, and other general things, without actually suggesting that I was hoping to go.

I had to do this because after the last day long meeting I attended for another charity both my boys said never again! The plan had been that they would drop me off and then go onto a local castle. At the morning break they appeared in the room beside me. They had got as far as the car park and hadn't even started the engine! My son just couldn't cope with the idea of being apart from me.

I knew that if they had a similar experience this time, I would never get them to cooperate with me attending meetings, so I got more information about the venue from the organiser and started to tell them about it. I then suggested that if I went, they could drop me off, and either go else where, or even stay there, but that they were in control of when we left. I figured I had a better chance of getting their agreement if they felt that as soon as they had too much they could leave. So eventually, the Bristol trustee meeting quietly slipped from being something that might happen to something that was going to happen, without my oppositional boy ever getting a chance to say no, but at the same time putting him in the driving seat.

But the difficulty wasn't over then. I had to make sure that the day went as smoothly as possible. The night before we packed up what we thought they would need for the day in a basket. A couple of new Lego kits, two Gameboys (they like to race against each other) a Bionicle book, and a Listening Book and my laptop to listen to it on, as well as to play games on.

Then in the morning while my son slept, I managed to quickly have a shower (he gets very stressed when I am in the shower, and hates the smell of soap on my body, but I didn't think the other trustees would appreciate me 'au natural' the way my son does!) before he woke up, then packed a picnic lunch of food that I knew he would eat. When my son is not with me, he won't eat, even if he is with his father.

Then I opened the curtains so that my son could wake naturally, while I took our elderly dog to the farm next door, as she can no longer stay by herself for the day. I knew that my ex and son would be welcome at the meeting, but I figured that taking a dog might be a step too far!

Then we managed to go through the waking up and getting dressed routine, without too much trouble. Phew! The last thing I needed was for him to suddenly refuse to go at the last minute after all the work was put into making the day work.

We picked up my ex and made our way into the centre of Bristol. My son being an Aspie, doesn't like to go out much, so he had never been to an inner city situation. We were able to point out things that we never see in rural Gloucestershire, like Halal butchers and high rise apartment blocks with washing hanging out on the balconies. This is a side of Britain that my son never sees, so it was important to me that we use the journey as an educational situation too. In fact on the way home my ex decided to drive the 'scenic' route to give him

more of a view of a city, but Bristol's bus lanes and one way systems defeated us!

When we got there, everyone was very welcoming, and it was great to finally get to meet some of the people that I had only ever had email contact with.

The boys were installed in their own little room with all their things, and I was able to sit down with the others without a child at my side. That can be a very strange feeling when you are used to having an Aspie that can't leave your side, but I did get used to it.

We nearly started the meeting on time! Our chair did get us going very quickly, not with the 45 minute delay that he jokingly referred to all day. We listened to several reports from various trustees, and discussed them and asked questions. There were a few proposals to vote on too.

I was glad that I didn't have to go first, because I had never presented a report at a meeting like this before, but everyone was so friendly that it didn't really matter and all my nerves quickly settled down.

During the meeting I kept wondering what socks people were wearing as I fondly remember Jacqui Houlding writing a review of a council meeting where she went through what people were wearing. But I couldn't see all the feet as they were being hidden by the tables, but I can report that it was very casual with a mixture of denim, flowers, black and white. Oh, and I had striped socks on with pictures of Snoopy on the side, and hand woven shoe laces!

We broke for lunch a mere 10 minutes later than the agenda said, which is pretty good, but we were falling behind as there were so many important things to discuss, which I am sure you will be able to read more about when the minutes are released. I went and found my boys happy in their room. They had also ventured outside into the garden and found a fountain. I managed to get my son to eat, but he was clearly

on edge. Not in a negative way, but in a sort of happy excited way. They had both made up the Lego models, played lots of Mario races on the Gameboys (which my ex lost) and generally seemed to be okay. I told them that I would tell the chair that I might have to leave early, so that they knew that if they got bored they could come and get me.

We got started again in the afternoon, and discussed more reports. We did have to postpone one item as it was getting on and we were all tired and we felt that it was important enough to warrant a fresh day for it.

Much to my amazement, the boys didn't come to get me early. They managed to stay the whole day! They were glad to leave, and when we got into the car, my son asked for a pit stop at his Dad's. It seems that he was hungry, but didn't want to eat without me there, and wanted to leave before he could find the words to say he was hungry. But we made it to the flat, and he devoured two apples while I drank a pint of water. Note to self: remember to bring two bottles of water to the next meeting, not one!

Because I can claim expenses all the way home we kept reminding each other to remember to look at the mileage on the car. Of course when we got back we totally forgot! But at least I do know that I can claim reasonable expenses.

Will there be a next face to face meeting for me? I am not sure. The day worked out so well due to careful handling, planning and the help of the trustee who organised it, that it hasn't put my boys off, but I don't want to push my luck and start planning to go to the next Open Trustee Meeting just yet.

But it has shown me that even single parents with children on the Autistic Spectrum can manage to do volunteer work with Education Otherwise, as people and organisations are sometimes more flexible than we realise. So if you have thought about volunteering for EO, but thought that maybe you couldn't either because of a disability of your own, or that of your

family's, think again. You just might be able to manage it!

Note from the Disability Group:

As a trustee and Chair of the Disability Group, I can now see that trustees do understand far more about the issues for people attending meetings, making sure that venues are arranged with "reasonable adjustments" in mind, and that members have someone they can contact for more information or to explain their needs should they wish to go to a meeting. The

Disability Group can mediate queries about access arrangements and make any necessary adjustments that are possible when people contact us in advance of a meeting they would like to attend.

Contact: disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org

We know that this can make the difference between being able to attend and not attend a meeting.

New EO Children's Forum

The new Forum where EO children can chat and make friends has now opened and is proving popular.

There is a 3 step process to join.

- 1) Your child needs to register using the form here - <http://forum.education-otherwise.org/ucp.php?mode=register>
- 2) A parent needs to register for their own login on this new board, so they have easy access and can supervise their children;
- 3) A parent needs to complete and return a permission form - this form will be sent to your child's email address automatically on registering.

Once these three things have been done, then we can activate your accounts and your child/ren can start posting.

There is also an accompanying website with information about the forum here:
<http://forum.education-otherwise.org/aboutforum.html>

There are 3 boards for children to use on the forum with suggested if very approximate ages - under 11s, over 11s and 16-18 year old.

Email childrensforum@education-otherwise.org if you have any queries or difficulty joining.

EO Forum Admin

SPECIAL NOTICE - Learnpremium website:

Learnpremium, the online educational resource, offers almost complete coverage of the core curriculum followed in schools through a huge range of lessons, interactive resources, activities, worksheets and tests delivered in one handy website.

The price EO can offer it's members has been reduced for the last 3 months of the subscription to £12, so why not try it out. You will get full access to the website for you and your family from now until 20 October 2008 when EO's renewal with Learnpremium is due. See advert on Page 28 of this newsletter for contact details and more information.

Working in Paid Employment Whilst Home-educating

With the current consultation into single parents being moved from Income Support onto Jobseekers Allowance once their youngest child reaches 12 years old (with plans to bring this age down to 7), a series of articles about HE families where the parents (or single parent) are working in paid employment or self-employment are planned.

If you've ever wondered how families manage to balance home-educating with working, here are some insights into two families (with more to follow in subsequent Newsletters).

Sarah Barnard's experience as a self-employed home-educating single parent:

Working whilst home-educating. Is it even possible? Especially when the family is a single parent? Some two parent families struggle so it's not going to be easy, but the UK is a country where self employment is not only possible but supported. It's also a country where home education is a legally valid choice. There are forums and groups all over the internet supporting and promoting both choices, which although not common are growing in popularity.

I'm a single mum to two home-educated children and run Ethics Trading as well as writing novels, the first of which was published this year - search for the name on Amazon, you'll find it.

A typical day in the Barnard household involves getting up when the two children wake up and a leisurely breakfast while the computer boots up and connects. A quick check of emails and a forum roundup as well as a website check and then work starts. For part of the day the children work alongside me. I am doing website checks and updates but the ones that don't require total concentration, or there's order packing to be done too, while the oldest, aged 8, is reading, maybe doing a bit of maths or english or a project he's working on. The younger one, 5, usually has dolls or beads out, or she likes to draw. The older one can do most of his work on his own and he does before heading out into the garden to do some weeding and playing. The younger one needs a bit more one to one time so once the older one is outside she can get that. All before lunchtime and any household errands

are run in the afternoon and that includes sending out any orders that have come in from either of Sarah's businesses. I also fit in a weekly home education group that they attend, a semi regular play meet in the local park and the kids attend Rainbows and Cubs.

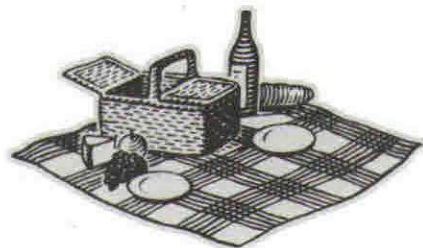
Then after the kids are in bed the serious work starts. In the evenings is when accounts get balanced, the websites get worked on and books get written.

It's all very flexible and actually works really well for us. So, yes being self employed while home educating really can work but it's not easy.

The decision to be at home has meant some serious downsizing in order to make it all fit together and the main business reflects that as a lifestyle - it's all about lowering our impact on the world around us, about respect and honesty, fair trade principles and openness. A philosophy I carry through my whole life.

Sarah Barnard, Author of The Portal Between and Proprietor of:

<http://www.ethicstrading.com>



Job Juggling and the Home Educating Family

As lifestyle challenges go, combining earning a living whilst at the same time home educating your children, has to be one of the toughest. I'm assuming, for the purposes of this article, that you're not one of the few home educating families where the parents can afford to go out to work and employ someone to supervise and home educate their children for them. For most families these days, school provides a large chunk of free child-care and this is what many parents exploit in order for them to be able to earn a living whilst raising children.

So, what do you do when you do not have access to hours of child-free work time each day? What can you do if you are a single parent and/or home educating very young or disabled children? Tough challenges indeed, but certainly not impossible judging by the number of families I've come across who are, apparently successfully and happily, doing just that.

There are many different ways in which families achieve this, although the process of changing their lifestyle has often taken place over several years. How do they manage it?

Balancing income and costs.

In absolute terms, of course, it doesn't matter how much income we have so long as it is equal to or greater than our costs. Most of us can decide, to a large extent, what our costs will be and therefore how much of an income we need, but if our income drops, then it follows that our costs must decrease too.

When I decided to take my two boys out of school in 1998, I was already running a small business from home, but it quickly became apparent that I would not be able to continue with this. My job, though home-based and part-time, took up around 30 hours per week, some of it spent away from home. I wasn't happy spending that amount of time working or being away from my children while they were young (age 8 and 6). So, I quit my job in order to home educate. My doing that left us with one income (I was married at the time and my husband was working) which was not sufficient to cover our bills as they stood. So, we decided to downshift to a part of the country where it was less expensive to live, buy a much less expensive home and lower our sights in materialistic terms.

During the months and weeks that followed, I read many books and websites on home education and, just as importantly as it turned out, I started learning about something called "Voluntary Simplicity". The tenets of Voluntary Simplicity are frugal consumption, ecological awareness and personal growth. However, this change in life path and priorities i.e. my children's education now rated above my quest for material possessions, felt like deprivation or even poverty sometimes. I realised there were seeds of resentment threatening to germinate as a result of our decision to home educate. I needed to stop feeding them. I needed a change of perspective.

It was a revelation for me to discover that taking the path of voluntary simplicity was not about poverty at all, but about unearthing a simpler, freer way of living that gave us more time together. I quickly realised that this was really an opportunity for us to lead a much richer, more meaningful life emotionally, physically and spiritually.

What are your options for cutting costs?

When we take our children out of school (or decide not to start sending them) and home educate, it can appear that we have lost the time necessary to earn a living. So one of the things we need to do is regain that time some other way. How do we do that? One option is to view our time spent with the

children as a time to practice frugality. At the same time we can be educating our children. Here are some examples of the sort of activities I mean:

1. Home education eliminates the need for the school run. This reduces the number of miles travelled and therefore the cost of transport (although some of these miles will be made up by families travelling to events and social gatherings). Perhaps you can find a way to reduce your car use further by walking, cycling or using public transport. This can be much more interesting for the children and lead to many questions and discussions about what you all observe during your journey.
2. By being at home more, all the family have the opportunity to take part in daily cost saving activities such as recycling, composting, growing and cooking their own food, maintaining the house and garden, learning how to reuse and repair items rather than just throw them away. (Thus learning about how things work and about the materials from which they are made.) You can learn how to make necessary everyday items, from sweaters, skirts and scarves to soap, plant pots, bird-tables, garden tools and even computers. There are further savings to be had by buying your food locally and through farmers' markets and by forming a food co-op with other local home educating families. All of these are much richer in interesting experiences, human interactions and problem solving opportunities than a quick trip round your local supermarket.
3. If you decide to cut your costs by minimising your expenditure on "educational materials" you can actually find yourself presenting information to your children in a way that promotes a more holistic perspective. For example, using real money instead of plastic money, real items to weigh instead of artificial weights and measures, items from your kitchen or garden for science experiments rather than science kits. Many materials used in schools are produced with the assumption that consumerism is the norm. Some are sponsored by private enterprises that have a vested interest in encouraging children to start using their products from an early age e.g. worksheets on dental hygiene produced by a leading manufacturer of toothpaste who promote the use of fluoride. At home, parents may point out all the alternatives of which they are aware. E.g. the pros and cons of using fluoride as a means of protecting teeth.

There are many other ideas on the internet if you search on "frugal living". For single parents and for those with very young or disabled children, using more than a few of the above examples is likely to present more of a challenge. In this case, it can be beneficial to get involved with other home educating families or to engage other members of the extended family for mutual support.

Many cost-saving measures are healthier for us as well as providing our children with interesting educational opportunities. Maintaining good health, after all, is also a cost saving exercise.

What are your options for generating an income?

I find it uplifting to hear of the many resourceful and imaginative ways in which home educating parents choose to earn money. During my time as a "stay at home mum" when my boys were young, I watched the freedom with which they chose what to learn and how to spend their days. I decided to emulate them and choose a vocation that my heart was in and that I absolutely enjoyed. Also, having felt the twinge of resentment at the thought of reducing our income and our buying power at the outset, I was determined not to head down that route again. Rather than take any job that would earn us a decent income, my aim was to use the situation as an opportunity to re-train in something I loved. For me that job was life coaching. Here are some examples of what others have done. These are taken from the experiences related to me by friends and acquaintances or else by parents I've coached:

- A married couple with 4 children who both teach musical instruments. When their children were too young to be left unsupervised at all, they took it in turns to teach. As they got older, they increased their teaching hours.
- A single mum who, in return for food and accommodation for her and her two children, carries out voluntary work for a charity in several different countries.
- A married couple where the mother is a journalist and technical author and the father looks after the children.
- A married couple with 3 young children where both partners are business consultants and take it in turns to work. When they occasionally have to work away from home together for a day or two, the children's grandparents provide childcare.
- A single mum who re-trained as an herbalist and sees clients at her home.
- Other jobs that I've know home-educating parents to do, either as a couple or alone, are:
- Running a franchise business selling clothes or books in people's homes or running an after school club.
- Making and selling specialist foods, home-made clothes, soap, and jewellery.
- Providing accommodation for foreign students who are in the UK on school trips.
- Childminding
- Bed and breakfast accommodation
- Travelling with the children and being employed in a variety of casual or temporary jobs.
- Writing
- Performing (e.g. music, circus skills).

The Benefit Dilemma

Something that I've had considerable trouble facing since starting home education is the idea of being dependent on someone else for my income, whether it was my ex-husband or the state. The latest efforts by the Government to get single parents "back to work" under the mistaken impression that all single parents of over 7 year olds must have nothing constructive to do with their time, has not helped to quash this social stigma.

Time again for a change in perspective, I think. By home educating each child, we are saving the state several thousand pounds per year and yet we receive nothing from the state to fund our home education. We can view social security benefits as a way in which the state (i.e. society at large) is supporting us for fulfilling this vital role. This is especially true, I believe, for those of us who home educate young or disabled children, since they require a large degree of supervision, commitment and specialised care. To expect a single, home educating parent to work at some other job too in these circumstances is beyond belief and yet this expectation is a situation we are going to have to accept and deal with until such time as the Government sees reason.

The benefit that home educated children (and therefore society as a whole as they grow up) receive from being nurtured in this way is something that the rest of society finds it hard to acknowledge and value at the moment. In the meantime, if you're in the situation where you're reliant on benefits, my suggestion from personal experience and from talking with others is to do everything you can to acknowledge to yourself the value of the "unpaid work" that you do. Also remember that as your children grow up so your life and work situation will change. Being at home with your children is a wonderful opportunity to learn new skills and broaden your horizons before returning to work or re-training if that's what you choose to do.

My experience during my 10 years of home educating is that home educators are a feisty bunch and not people to be too daunted by a challenge or two. Combining earning an income with home education requires above all an open and creative mind, capable of thinking outside the box. If parents don't have those perspectives when they first start home educating, many learn to cultivate them as a result! This puts them in the perfect frame of mind to create a means of income generation at the right time, that meets their needs and that they enjoy.

© Sally Lever 2008.

Sally Lever is a long-term and committed home educator. Since home educating, she has been both married and a single parent, a "stay-at-home mum" and part-time self-employed. Her two sons, one of whom is disabled, are now 19 and 16. Her website www.sallylever.co.uk offers many useful resources for the home educating, self-employed or working-from-home family, including free subscription to her monthly newsletter, "Fruitful".

Hope, the Travelling Doll

<http://woolcreations.com/travelingdoll>

Hope will be sent into the world on an adventurous journey. Her goal is to visit children all over the world, starting out right here in North Carolina, where she was born.

Hope will leave here with a "passport" that should get "stamped" for proof of where she travelled to, a suitcase that may be filled with small gifts for the doll given by the children Hope stayed with, and a journal that hopefully will be filled over time with encouraging words, memories and wishes.

Hope's goal is to bring some unique and happy moments into children's lives. Children who are not as fortunate or who need some special attention brought to them. I want Hope to visit Children Hospitals, Orphanages and other places devoted to the care of children. Doing this I need help!

I need volunteer families that would like to invite Hope for a visit and bring her to those children. Families that have a connection to or have been touched by those children in need. The hosting family will take pictures of Hope's adventures and be responsible to post the story of her visit on Hope's very own blog. "The Adventures of the traveling doll". Making it possible for others to read and follow Hope on her wonderful journey.

Please contact me if you are interested in hosting a visit of the travelling doll via email: adventuresofthetravelingdoll@woolcreations.com and tell me where you would like to take her to bring joy to children.

If you volunteer I need to ask of you that you are willing and able to continue sending this doll on to her next destination (which will be provided to you) or back to me. The doll has to be sent via USPO mail (or local equivalent) with delivery confirmation and insured up to \$200.00 to ensure safe delivery. The doll should not stay in one place longer than two weeks, exceptions are possible.

After one year of travelling around the world Hope, her passport, her suitcase with clothing and her journal will be raffled off as a set. 100% of the proceeds will benefit a good cause, to a Non Profit Organization that works in the spirit to help children.

EDUCATING ARCHIE

Hurrah for the hols!

readers often ask if Archie & I EVER take time off from our busy H.E. life

well of course we do. I'd like to share with you

a video clip made for FACEBOOK BY MY SON

ENJOY

Handwritten note: I've added it!

Vertical text on the right: Dedicated to Heather x

MRS G + ARCHIE ARRIVE AT

BEWARE Children

CHILDREN CROSS HERE!

to the H.E. FIELD

AND SET UP CAMP here's the Kitchen sink

that's the lot then

I'm off... back in a bit

have fun

later...

MADE A SPOON! needs sanding

mmm - nice

W. SHAND JULY 08

then-

DONE A POT ON THE WHEEL! can you not touch it, ok?

OK

GOING TO KNIT SOCKS NOW

No time!

want a drink?

and so the day passes in a haze of excited creativity. finally-

WE WON AT ROUNDERS!

W. W. U. come & have something to eat

I'M SHATTERED Archie

well don't do so much tomorrow!

① a secret destination in Norfolk (to deter the Inspector)

1st/2nd August: Lughnasad/Lammas (Pagan)
 6th August: The Transfiguration (Christian)
 9th-10th August: Tisha B' Av (Judaism)
 15th August: Assumption Day (Christian)
 24th August: Janamashtami / Krishna Jayanti
 (Birthday of Krishna) (Hindu)
 28th August: Paryushana - Parva/Samvatsari (Jain)

31st August: Start of Ramadan (Islam)
 1st September: Nanakshahi (Sikh)
 3rd September: Ganesh Chaturthi (Hindu)
 7th September: Bikarami (Sikh)
 22nd September: Autumnal Equinox/Mabon (Pagan)
 Sundown 29th Sept-1st Oct: Rosh Hashanah
 (Judaism)

The Autumn Equinox

The Earth takes approximately 365.25 days to go around the Sun, so every 4 years there is a 'leap year' to 'even out' the quarter. At the time that the Sun is crossing the celestial equator, day and night are of nearly equal length and these points are called the Equinoxes. In March the Sun is moving northwards along the ecliptic and this is known as the Vernal (Spring) Equinox and in September the sun is moving Southwards and this is known as the Autumnal Equinox.

The date of the Equinoxes changes from year to year due to the time it takes for the Earth to orbit the sun: approximately 365.25 days. Every four years there is a 'Leap Year' to allow for the quarter. Generally the equinoxes will occur about 6 hours later every year, moving backwards a day on Leap Years.

Source: <http://www.nmm.ac.uk/server/show/conWebDoc.3843>

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year. It is a time for Jews to review the mistakes they made in the past year and to resolve to make improvements in the upcoming year.

The origin of Rosh Hashanah is Biblical (Lev. 23:23-25): "a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts (of the Shofar, the ram's horn)." The Bible refers to the holiday as *Yom Teruah* (the day of the sounding of the shofar) and *Yom Zikaron Teruah* (the day of remembering the sounding of the shofar).

In Talmudic times, Rosh Hashanah became a celebration of the anniversary of the world's creation and a day of self-examination, repentance and judgment. While the day was called *Yom HaZikaron* (Day of Remembrance) and *Yom HaDin* (Judgment Day), the name Rosh Hashanah (Head of the Year) which was first used in the Mishna has become the most prevalent.

On Rosh Hashanah, Jews listen to the shofar blown during lengthy prayer services, eat holiday meals, and do no work. After repenting for bad deeds through prayers, they symbolically cast off sins through the tashlich ceremony.

Rosh Hashanah is both a solemn and happy day. It is a time for introspection, asking for forgiveness, giving forgiveness, resolving to do better, remembering God is King and Judge, and praying for a healthy and happy year to come. Those observing the Jewish New Year are solemn in their repentance, but happy in their confidence that God is merciful and good.

Source: http://judaism.about.com/od/roshhashana/a/all_roshhashana.htm

Anyone for a Youth Hostel?

My children have asked me several times if they will be going to a Youth Hostel soon. They have really enjoyed going to youth hostels in the past as part of a home educators group. I am wondering if there is anyone else out there that is missing it?

The idea I have is for a long weekend in November 2008 from Friday to Monday. I have been looking at the 'Heart of England' and 'Peak District', please see here:

<http://www.rentahostel.com/Web/Site/Maps/EnglandWalesMap.asp>

Youth hostels vary in size from 20 up to over 80 people. So please let me know if you would be interested. Also be aware that full payment would be required at least 9 weeks in advance.

Janet Simpson

Tel: 01427 617313

E-mail: janet@hubblesimpson.co.uk

Concerns

I am a bit concerned that in the June Newsletter Fiona Nicholson wrote that "At present we have the extraordinary situation where 6 members of EO are inadvertently

holding up the modernisation...". This sounds terrible. Six of all the many thousands of members are somehow blocking necessary changes to EO? Not quite, it turns out. What Fiona seems to have actually meant was that if the 'modernisers' could only have managed to get at least 6 of the 22 'traditionalists' to change their mind then EO would have modernised.

Now, like many members probably, I am bit confused by all this arguing etc and have no real idea what is the right way to go forward but there is no way that it was other than unreasonable of Fiona to describe this as "6 members". In fact it seems that she has no respect for any of the 22 people who disagree with her (and constituted a quite considerable 36% of the voters) or their opinions and this is what concerns me. I want the trustees to be sensible people who have a vision for EO but also people who respect the honest opinions of others who also have a vision for EO, even if they are different visions.

On a quite different subject I was very disappointed to see that 'Education Otherwise supports the Government's aims to eradicate child poverty'. As this child poverty argument is based upon the completely fallacious basis of relative poverty it actually has nothing to do with child poverty but rather wealth distribution (my recent pay increase has just put more children under the poverty line; do I feel bad about this? No!) and is therefore purely a political, and socialist, mission. I would hope that EO does not support the Government interfering in people's lives and making judgements upon them because of what other people believe or do. Relative poverty must be shown as the rubbish that it is and until the Government has a vision based upon absolute poverty all poverty campaigns must be treated with EXTREME caution.

When and why did EO decide to support this Government's poverty eradication campaign?

Website list

We are putting together a list of websites that may be of interest to home school families. Rather than listing them all in this newsletter as I am sure there are enough to fill a whole book in itself. We are aiming to have a space on the web pages so you can just click into them.

So please share any or all of your wonderful web pages that you use, and would recommend. I am hoping that we will be able to share our knowledge all round the country.

Please email me at karen.ptttt@hotmail.co.uk

So why should home educating parents be treated differently because of the choices they made of their own free will. The same argument could be made for Full time mums or dads or anyone else who can argue they 'make a vital contribution to society'. It is time Government got out of people's lives and let them make their own choices and take responsibility for the consequences.

Thanks,

Robert Nock Tel: 0870 3212460,

Rob@Nock.org.uk

Any other Heing childminders?

Thank you for sending me the new issue of the Education Otherwise magazine, which I found really informative. In particular I would be very interested to know about other childminders who home educate. On page 1 of the last issue Nikki Haxell wrote her welcome piece and said that there is a list of HE-friendly childminders but I am not sure where to find it.

I would be really interested to know, not only because I am a childminder combining home educating and also needs tips on how to do this the best way but also it would be great to use another He-friendly childminder for occasions where I need extra help for my son James. Yes I could probably use a regular childminder but it would probably mean lots of questions as to why he was home educated etc.

I hope you can help please.

Hilary Knight

E-mail: hilary_knight@hotmail.com

Reply to Hilary Knight re. HE-ing childminders

There are quite a few HE-ing childminders around and I've suggested some sort of online forum or group would perhaps be a good idea, although I wouldn't have time to run it myself.

Hopefully by the time the Newsletter is out, I will have got some details to you.

There is a main UK list for Registered Childminders and a number of home-educators were on there last time I was a member of it (I don't have time to keep up with the volume of e-mails on that particular list at the moment, I deal with 100s a day as it is), it's: Ukchildminders on Yahoo, so it might also be worth joining that and asking.

Nikki Haxell

Newsletter Co-ordinator (and Registered Childminder)

French Language Exchange

I'm looking for a family in Great Britain for a Language Exchange for my daughter Shady, age 10-1/2, from September 2008 to June 2009. Ideally, your family has a little girl of the same age. I suggest that they both spend two weeks in one country, and then two weeks in the other, for most of the year. After a few months when the girls are comfortable with each other, they could spend 3 weeks and eventually a month in each place.

Shady is mad about horses, so it would be wonderful to find a British family with horses or the possibility of riding. We live in France, close to Paris, in a house with a garden and lots of animals: cats, mice, rats, and a dog. I work at home as an author or books and articles about food and nutrition. I have another daughter 15 years old, who will be spending some time in France and some time overseas next year.

I speak English and I have been teaching French to foreigners for several years. I have "home-schooled" my two daughters for many years. They enjoy music and the arts. By June 2009, our two little girls could be great friends and perfectly bilingual!

Thank you for your consideration,
Bernadette mangerbio-eatingorganic@orange.fr

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase by Joan Aiken

The Wolves of Willoughby Chase is set during a fictional historical period within the 1830's. Miss Bonny and Sylvia Green are cousins from different lifestyles and with very different personalities - one wild, one quiet - who come together and go on an adventure when their house (Willoughby Chase) is taken over by the evil Miss Slighcarp. They are joined and helped along the way by their friend Simon (and lots of geese! We all gave this book 9/10 or 10/10 and thought it was realistic, 'happy and sad'. surprising, good, scary and exciting. We all think EVERYONE should read this book and are looking forward to reading more from this sequence.

Huddersfield Home Educators Book Group (ages 6-12)

Conquer Maths

This is a very good computer programme. So far I have almost finished the first section on algebra. You go into the programme online and an automated voice explains all you need to know about a particular maths topic and then you download the printed work sheets to complete offline. I found these had just enough challenge to make them interesting to do.

The programme keeps track of your progress so it is useful for a supervising adult to keep check on how you are doing and you can work through the various topics as you like. What is really good is that I never had any interest in algebra (because I didn't understand it) before I went on this programme but now I find myself doing it all the time!

Keith (15)

www.conquermaths.com or 0191 240 1990

A FREE BOOK FOR HOME EDUCATED CHILDREN IN ENGLAND

Booked Up is offering a free book to home educated children in England. Booked Up receives financial support from the Department of Children Schools and Families which operates in England, hence the offer is only available to children in England. In schools the books are judged suitable for pupils aged 11.

You can find more details here <http://www.bookedup.org.uk/Parents'-and-Carers'-space->

Or call customer services on 0845 606 4262 to register as a coordinator for the Booked Up programme and order your child's free book. You can also download a four page leaflet which gives you more information about the programme here <http://tinyurl.com/5uj2uc> including a list of all the titles with colour photos of the book jackets.

Authors include Cathy Cassidy, Sharon Creech, Siobhan Dowd, FE Higgins, Catherine Johnson, Elizabeth Laird, Derek Landy, Gaby Morgan, Tom Palmer, Malcolm Rose, Mitchell Symons, Mark Walden, Giles Andreae, Quentin Blake, Sue Nicholson and Christyan Fox and Chris Riddell. It is advisable to get in touch with Booked Up as soon as possible.

Disk Weaving

Weaving narrow cords or more accurately braiding, has been around for 1000's of years. The First Nations of North America call it finger weaving, the medieval re-enactment people use wooden disks and call it disk weaving, but the Japanese have elevated it to an art form and call it Kumihimo.

<http://tinyurl.com/6k4tdk>

A simple variation is know as Fill the Gap, and can be easily done by children.

Instructions for Fill the Gap

Make a disk out of thick cardboard, or foam (the sort of thin craft foam rather than foam rubber) about four inches in diameter, then cut 8 one cm slits into the sides, at equal distances.

Put a hole in the centre about a cm in diameter.

Measure off 7 lengths of wool, about double the length of the finished cord you need. Roll the wool into 7 small balls - or onto 7 small bobbins. Tie the ends of all 7 threads together with an overhand knot.

Drop the knot through the centre hole of the ring. Slot one thread through 7 of the slots on the ring edge. Looking from the top of the ring you should have 1 empty slot and 7 slots with threads in.

Slot 1 is the empty one. Start with the empty one furthest away from you. The slots are numbered anticlockwise, so slot two is to the left. Working anticlockwise take the third thread from the empty slot which is in slot 4 and fill the gap (slot 1). Now you see how it got its name!

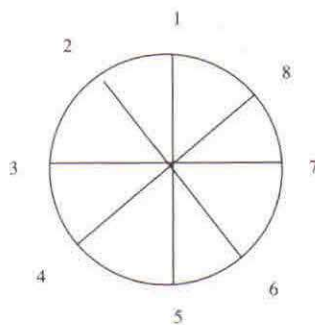
Slot 4 is not the empty one. Turn the ring anticlockwise until the empty slot is where the 1st empty slot was to begin with. Take the third thread which is in slot 7 and move it to the empty slot 4. Slot 7 is now empty. Turn the ring again anticlockwise till the empty slot is at the top and repeat until you run out of wool.

Tie the ends together and you have a cord!

The sequence is this: slot 4 to 1, 7 to 4, 2 to 7, 5 to 2, 8 to 5, 3 to 8, 6 to 3, and so on.

You might find it easier when you have a couple of inches to tie something heavy to the knot beneath the disk to keep the tension. We use some metal washers. You can also use your thumb but it might be harder for little ones to do that.

You can use this to make friendship bracelets, shoelaces, or to use as a decorative ribbon. Try using different colours, textures or type of yarn.



Food for Rosh Hashanah

Round Challah. The round shape symbolizes a perfect year to come. Sometimes raisins or honey are added to make it extra sweet.

Apples and Honey. Apples are dipped in honey to symbolize the wish for a sweet year to come.

Head of Fish or Gefilte ("filled") Fish: Fish is an ancient symbol of fertility and abundance. The head of fish symbolizes the head of the New Year. The head also symbolizes the hope that the Jewish people will lead other nations through their righteous acts.

Head of Lamb, Sweet Chicken or Meat Dish: Head of lamb symbolizes the hope that the Jewish people will lead other nations through their righteousness. The sweet entree

symbolizes our wish for a sweet year.

Tzimmes: Tzimmes is an eastern European recipe for honey baked carrots. The Yiddish word "meren" means carrots and to increase. Carrots symbolize the hope that we increase our good deeds in the coming year. Some tzimmes recipes add prunes, sweet potatoes or even meat to the sweet carrots.

Honey Cake or Teiglach (crunchy dough boiled in honey): "This day is holy to God, your God; do not mourn and do not weep...for the joy of God is your strength." (Nechemiah 8:9-10). It is said that the Prophet Nechemiah introduced to the ancient Israelites the Persian custom of eating sweet foods to celebrate the New Year.

Source: http://judaism.about.com/od/roshhashana/a/shana_food.htm

Teiglach (Honey Cake)

Ingredients

- 500 mls or 2 cups honey
- 500 grams or 2 cups sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground ginger
- 3 eggs beaten
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 250 grams or 2 cups sifted plain flour
- 1 teaspoon finely ground almonds
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (optional)

Method:

1. Combine the honey with the 500 grams or cups of sugar as well as the tablespoon of ground ginger in saucepan and set aside.
2. Place eggs, sugar and oil in a large bowl and beat well.
3. Combine the remaining ingredients and work into egg mixture to form soft dough.

4. Flour your hands, break off pieces of dough and roll into 2cm thick ropes. Cut ropes into 2cm lengths.
5. Bring honey mixture to a boil and drop in pieces of dough, a few at a time. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes.
6. Stir gently with wooden spoon to bring cookies on bottom to surface. Cook until they are lightly browned and dry and crisp inside.
7. Remove with slotted spoon and place on waxed paper, not touching, until cool.

Makes about 30.

Tzimmes

Ingredients

- 500 grams of medium sized carrots
- 2 tablespoons of margarine or butter
- 1/3 of a cup of brown sugar
- 1 1/4 cups of water
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- a little salt

Method

1. Cut the carrots into rings.
2. Lightly fry the carrots in the margarine or butter until golden brown on the outside.
3. Boil the sugar and the water for five minutes, then add the carrots and cook until tender.
4. Remove the carrots then dredge with flour.
5. Return to the saucepan, add salt and simmer for a further five minutes, stirring constantly

Carrot Kugel

Ingredients

- 4 eggs, separated
- 75 gram sugar
- 25 gram butter
- 1 small cooking apple
- grated rind of 1 orange
- 225 grams carrots
- juice of 1 orange
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 50 grams potato flour or cornflour

Method

1. Set the oven to 190 degrees Celsius 375 degrees Fahrenheit and grease a 1 litre casserole dish.
2. Place the egg yolks in a bowl and beat with the sugar until light and fluffy and pale in color.
3. Very finely grate the carrot and apple, and squeeze out all the liquid.
4. Mix the grated carrot, apple, orange rind, orange and lemon juice, and flour. Mix well with the first mixture.
5. Whisk the egg whites until they are very stiff. Fold them into the carrot mixture.
6. Spoon into the greased casserole dish.
7. Bake for 35 minutes or until golden brown.
8. Better served hot.

Serves 4.

Challah

You can add 1 cup raisins or golden raisins to the dough just before shaping and then make the loafs into round braids for Rosh Hashanah."

Ingredients

- 590 ml warm water (110 deg F/45 deg C)
- 10 g active dry yeast
- 120 ml honey
- 60 ml vegetable oil
- 3 eggs
- 20 g salt
- 1000 g unbleached all-purpose flour
- 8g poppy seeds (optional)

Method:

1. In a large bowl, sprinkle yeast over barely warm water. Beat in honey, oil, 2 eggs, and salt. Add the flour one cup at a time, beating after each addition, graduating to kneading with hands as dough thickens. Knead until smooth and elastic and no longer sticky, adding flour as needed. Cover with a damp clean cloth and let rise for 1 1/2 hours or until dough has doubled in bulk.
2. Punch down the risen dough and turn out onto floured board. Divide in half and knead each half for five minutes or so, adding flour as needed to keep from getting sticky. Divide each half into thirds and roll into long snake about 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Pinch the ends of the three snakes together firmly and braid from middle. Either leave as braid or form into a round braided loaf by bringing ends together, curving braid into a circle, pinch ends together. Grease two baking trays and place finished braid or round on each. Cover with towel and let rise about one hour.
3. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
4. Beat the remaining egg and brush a generous amount over each braid. Sprinkle with poppy seeds if desired.
5. Bake for about 40 minutes. Bread should have a nice hollow sound when thumped on the bottom. Cool on a rack for at least one hour before slicing.

Sources: <http://www.jews.net> and <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Challah-I/Detail.aspx>

We have some exciting news that may help all those with disabled children or parents with disabilities, who qualify for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or other benefits. Education Otherwise are now professional members of Benefits and Work: <http://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk/>
<http://www.benefitsandwork.co.uk>

This means that EO can now distribute the B&W guidelines for filling out DLA forms directly to our own members.

Benefits and Work, was launched in 2002 by advice worker turned barrister Holiday Whitehead and benefits writer and trainer Steve Donnison. It became a limited company in 2006. B&W is unique amongst benefits information providers in that it asks for no funding or support from the government, local authorities, grant making trusts or large companies. Every penny of Benefits and Work's revenue comes from its subscribing members.

By becoming professional members EO now has a licence to reproduce and distribute copies of B&W guides to EO members on paper, on disc or by email attachment. It also gives EO access to a number of resources for professionals including: Guidance for claiming DLA on dual diagnosis grounds; an introduction to the new Employment and Support Allowance (which replaces Incapacity Benefit) and a range of sample letters relating to DLA and incapacity reconsiderations and appeals.

Many people with disabled children qualify for Disability Living Allowance payments. The criteria is that the child take more care than a child of the same age, but it is no easy thing applying for DLA. The forms are very long, and if the wording is not just right then the claim risks being rejected.

There are also parents who home educate who are disabled and can qualify for DLA in their own right, but can also get caught up in Incapacity Benefit and the changes that are happening there. B&W also supplies information about Incapacity Benefit and the new Employment Support Allowance and Work Capacity Assessment.

Disability Living Allowance may have more impact in the future for lone parents on Income Support. The Government wants to move many claimants on to Jobseeker's Allowance but has said that receipt of Carer's Allowance will entitle the claimant to Income Support. In order to qualify for Carer's Allowance a parent has to have a child that is in receipt of DLA middle rate for care. The difference between low rate and middle rate can be down just to how the application form is filled out, therefore it may be critical in the future to make sure that parents get the appropriate DLA care component awarded.

We have a few tips already for you and will bring some more in the next issue. In the mean time, if you would like a copy of one of Benefits and Works guidelines, please email: disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org with your name, address and membership number, which guide you require, and how you would like it sent to you. On grounds of cost and convenience, we would prefer to send it by email attachment, but please get in touch with us if you have additional requirements. For example, if you do not have access to email, then write to the EO Address P.O. Box 325, Kings Lynn, PE34 3XW marked "B&W guideline request" stating your name, address and membership number, along with which guide and how you would like to receive it (paper or disk).

It is important that you include your membership number as we are only allowed to distribute copies to members of our organisation. If there are any other questions you have about DLA, or you would like to

share stories (successful or otherwise) of your experiences in applying for DLA then contact the Disability Group on disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org, or write to:

Education Otherwise Disability Group, c/o Po Box 325, Kings Lynn PE34 3XW.

Jennifer Skillen Disability Group Chair

Top Tip Number One for DLA

Don't use the worst day only.

You often hear that you should fill out the DLA form as if it was your worst day, but that is not a good idea. You have to sign the form to say that the information is correct, and by making it look like everyday is your worse day, you could be putting your claim in jeopardy. It could make it look as if you or your child's condition never varies, which may not be true.

It is better to explain how the condition affects you on an average day, and then give examples of your worst day. That way you have given an honest accurate and convincing look at the reality of daily life. You show what it is like most of the time, but also show that your condition varies by saying what the worst days are like, but you won't have undermined your claim by talking about having good days.

You are likely to get on better if you go to a tribunal too. Fewer than 50% of people get an award on the strength of their initial claim pack, and you are more likely to get on better at the hearing if what you say matches what is said in the pack. But if you only talk about the worst days in the claim pack, then you are more likely to be seen as an unreliable witness by the tribunal and awarded nothing at all.

From Benefits and Work: "By giving highly detailed, credible evidence you're much more likely to get the award you're entitled to and you'll sleep more soundly at night knowing that you got it by being scrupulously accurate."

Top Tip Number 2 for DLA

Claiming DLA to enjoy yourself?

This may sound unreal, but adults can't claim DLA for needing help with grocery shopping, but they can claim for window shopping. It relates to a case known as Mallinson. The judges in this case held that DLA was intended to allow people to live as normal a life as possible and that social and leisure activities were part of a normal life.

So if your child needs help to access social and leisure activities, you can include that in a DLA claim.

For example, your child might really want to join the local Scout group, but without a one to one carer, they wouldn't be able to go there alone. It might be help in getting there, if the child needs supervision crossing roads, when others of their age don't, or it might be that they need one to one help to make sure that they know and understand what to do.

Even if your child isn't accessing Scouts at the moment, if they want to and they would need help to do so, then you can add this to the form.

And just because they don't go to school doesn't mean that you don't have to mention it. You can say that if your child went to school, they would need one to one care, and then give examples, such as help changing into P.E. Kits, help getting from class room to class room and so on.

To get the middle rate for daytime attention needs, you have to show that you reasonably require help both 'frequently' and 'throughout the day'. Most people with children in school can show that easily, but it can take some thinking outside the box to show this for home educated children.

They may not take it into consideration, but if there are things that a child would normally do if they went to school or accessed leisure activities, that they wouldn't be able to do without help, then it is worth mentioning it.

Top Tip Number 3 for DLA

There are no magic words, but there are magic numbers!

The reality is that it is evidence and lots of it that results in successful DLA claims. Many people believe that there are magic words, which according to Benefits and Work there isn't. But there are magic numbers created by case law and their guides explain all about it.

From a recent B&W update: "For example, the law says that you get the lower rate of the care component if you would benefit from help with bodily functions like washing, dressing, eating, moving around, etc. 'for a substantial portion of the day'. Case law has decided that a substantial portion is about one hour.

"So, one magic number in a DLA claim is 60. When you fill in the pack, if you're aiming for lower rate care for attention during the day, a very worthwhile thing to do is count up the numbers in the daytime 'How long would you need help for?' boxes. If they don't add up to at least 60 minutes then you may not be eligible for the lower rate for daytime attention needs."

The number for night time care is 20 minutes. If you need 60 minutes during the day and 20 minutes during the night, you or your child may well qualify for middle rate of care.

Top Tip Number 4 for DLA

Don't let anyone write on your form.

On the form there is a page that requests a 'Statement from someone who knows you'. It doesn't have to be filled in, but it helps. So you leave it with your GP, child's former school, or other health professional to fill in.

When you get it back you can't believe what they have said! They say that your child has no difficulties and is lovely to work with. If you submit that, it will jeopardise your claim.

So what can you do to avoid this?

Never let anyone else write on the form unless you know exactly what they are going to say. Either photocopy the statement page, or print it off from the downloadable on-line form. That way you can

also ask more than one person to fill it out.

When you are happy that the evidence is correct, then you can submit it with your claim pack, but if you are not happy, then you can ask them to change it, or even not use it at all.

Alternatively, rather than using the page from the DLA form, ask people to write a letter setting out what they know about how the condition affects your child and give it to you to submit with your claim.

Home educators often find it hard to think of who to approach because it is traditionally the teachers and support workers at school who would do this, but you can get people from your local home education group, friends, neighbours, or anyone else that knows your child and their difficulties.

And remember that even if you are not going to ask your GP for evidence, the DWP probably will. GPs are not supposed to contact you before completing the 'Factual Report' that they are sent from the DWP, so it is best to get the 'Health professionals' sheet from the B&W guides filled in and sent to your GP before you send your claim in, so that your GP knows how things affect you.

Top Tip Number 5 for DLA

Make sure your house looks appropriate for the circumstances.

Sometimes the DWP will send out a doctor to do a medical. They might want to have a quick look round the house. What are they looking for?

They have to fill in a medical report which will include things like 'Describe any features of the current accommodation that cause increased problems for the customer e.g. upstairs toilet, steep steps.' Secondly, in accordance with their training, they will check to see if your child is 'genuinely living the life of a disabled person'. They will be looking for clues to things which they consider do not fit in with your claimed level of disability.

So it might be a good idea to have a look around your house from the eyes of a doctor.

If your claim says that you need a buggy for getting your child around, it might be a good idea to have it by the front door. If it is brand new and looks unused, explain that you have just bought a new one or they might think that you don't actually use it. Do you need to use visual or written schedules to help them get dressed? Make sure they are in a prominent place. If you are claiming that your child goes through more clothes because of a disability, make sure you have the washing machine on and another pile of clothes waiting on the floor to go in, rather than making the house look ultra tidy.

If the doctor does say they wish to look round your home, it's worth asking them what they are looking for and requesting that they tell you about anything they see which they consider significant. You could, of course, refuse them permission to look around your house, but could adversely affect your claim.



Update on Single Parents and Welfare Reform

The Department of Work and Pensions intended that regulations amending the Jobseeker's Act 1995 would be approved by resolution in the House of Commons and the House of Lords before the summer recess. I am very happy to report that this has NOT gone according to plan.

The welfare reforms now appear to be in disarray and we may have a window of opportunity to turn the tide with our MPs before the regulations arrive in the House of Commons. Parliament went into recess on July 22nd and re-commences sitting in October. We are aware that JobCentre staff were previously told that the commencement date was to be November 24th 2008 but this cannot possibly be the case now. The draft regulations proposed that lone parents on Income Support with a child over 12 would be moved on to Jobseeker's Allowance from February 2009, with the age threshold being lowered to 10 in October 2009 and 7 in October 2010. On JSA the claimant is required to seek work of 16 or more hours a week.

As is customary with regulations which amend primary legislation, the Social Security Advisory Committee asked for comments on the DWP proposals. Education Otherwise was one of many stakeholder organisations which gave feedback to SSAC. You can find the EO response at <http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/ssac.htm>

There have already been over 1500 Statutory Instruments published this year. In 9 out of 10 cases they are adopted without anyone noticing, because they are subject to the negative resolution procedure. However, the Statutory Instrument entitled Social Security(Lone Parents and Miscellaneous Amendments)Regulations 2008 is subject to affirmative resolution procedure which means it

has to be approved "by resolution" in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

Your MP may not previously have been aware that this Statutory Instrument was about to be laid before the House and will probably not now be aware that it has been delayed. It is vital to continue to raise awareness before parliament resumes sitting in October. You may also find your MP more active in the local constituency during August and September. If you have already been in touch with your MP, as many of us have, you can email/ telephone or write again to give an update and to keep the issue at the forefront of attention.

EO Government Policy Group is liaising with the Chair of the DWP Lone Parent Stakeholder Group and also with the Social Security Advisory Committee. At the time of writing the EO petition at:

<http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/EOloneparent> to permit home educating lone parents to remain on Income Support has 725 signatories. This petition will close on July 22nd and we will report the Prime Minister's response in the October Newsletter.

Children Missing Education

EO Government Policy Group would like to flag up an important new issue for home educators in England.

We have recently learned that the DSCF will launch a public consultation on revised statutory guidance for Children Missing Education some time in August. We expect that the consultation will run for 3 months and we anticipate being able to give an update and walkthrough in the October newsletter.

"Children Missing Education" was a cornerstone of the 2006 Education and Inspection Act and the Government already ran a full public consultation before the current statutory

guidance for England was published in February 2007.

In 2006/7 the Government could have said that any child is potentially missing a suitable education unless it can be proved that the education IS suitable. Or it could have said that in the case of the vast majority of children we know that the parents have made arrangements for the children to receive education either by sending them to state school or by making alternative arrangements. However some children have NOT had arrangements made and these children are "potentially missing education." In 2007 the Government chose the latter option but now appears to be reversing its entire policy.

The implications of the proposed new CME data definitions are that home educated children in England will be potentially missing education for the whole of the time that they are home educated.

We know from the DCSF workshop notes available on Teachernet that the Government is considering the following:

"A definition of children who are not receiving a suitable education is suggested as "A compulsory school-age child who is not on the roll of a school, not placed in alternative provision by a local authority, and who is not receiving a suitable education at home". Do you consider this definition to be sufficient? If not, what amendments would you suggest?"

The Government is not currently planning to examine if education in school is suitable for every child. We consider this to be a glaring anomaly.

Education Otherwise Government Policy Group will co-ordinate briefing material and a walkthrough at the beginning of the consultation period to enable the home education community to make a comprehensive response. We will also post regular updates on the EO Campaign Website.

References

DCSF consultation website
<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/>

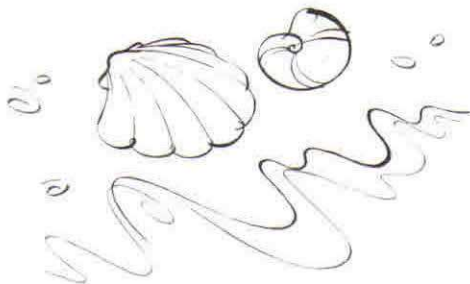
2006 Education and Inspection Act section 4
<http://tinyurl.com/58q3mz>

Statutory Guidance Children Missing Education (England) 2007
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/resources/IG00202/>

DCSF workshop notes on new data definitions found on Teachernet website
<http://tinyurl.com/5abou2>

EO Campaign Website latest news (sign up for email notification)
<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/update.php>

Fiona Nicholson
Chair Education Otherwise Government Policy Group



EO Scotland Group

Following the retirement of Ann Samuel Till, Fiona Chaff is the new ex officio link member for Scotland in Education Otherwise Government Policy Group. The other members of EO Scotland Group are Rebecca Kail, Jane Bathgate and Jan Atkinson.

Fiona Chaff says :

"The Scotland Group was originally formed to consult with the Scottish Executive about the Guidance on the reasons why parents choose to educate their children at home. As that purpose has been fulfilled, with the new guidance in force this year, we would like to hear from members as to how further develop the group. It may be that the group just needs to 'stand by' in case of further developments from the Scottish Government. We would be interested to find out from members if they have pressing issues that we could address. My email address is scotlandenquiry@education-otherwise.org and my phone number is 01806 544 233. "

The 2008 Scottish Government Guidance to Parents and Local Authorities on Home Education can be found on the EO website Scotland page:

<http://www.education-otherwise.org/Legal/ScottishHE/ndxlglbscot.htm>

Fiona Nicholson, Chair Education Otherwise Government Policy Group

Make Sure You Have a Vote at EO General Meetings

On the following page you will find a Signed Up Members Form. At present only Signed Up Members are entitled to vote at EO General Meetings. These include Annual General Meetings or AGMs where Trustees are elected and Extraordinary General Meetings or EGMs which may take place between AGMs.

Please note that you can now appoint a proxy to vote on your behalf at meetings which means you still have a vote even if you are unable to attend yourself.

By completing and returning the Signed Up Member form to Po Box 325, KINGS LYNN, PE34 3XW you are ensuring your right to cast a vote. There will shortly be an Extraordinary General Meeting to vote on the revised Articles and Memoranda of Association.

Fiona Nicholson

On behalf of the Trustees



SIGNED-UP MEMBERS FORM (EO Membership Declaration)

I (Print Name)
wish to become a Signed up Member of Education Otherwise Association Limited.

In the event of the Association being wound up I agree to contribute up to £10 in payment of any debts and liabilities it may have incurred.

Signature of Member

Date

EO Membership Number if known

Address (print in full)

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

This form may be completed by current members of Education Otherwise who have paid their annual subscription, and should be returned to:

EO Company Secretary, c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn Norfolk PE34 3XW

Please note that Education Otherwise will post any correspondence related to Signed up Members to the member's address as listed on EO's membership database and it is the member's responsibility to keep the Database Administrator informed of any change of address via the PO BOX listed above or by emailing database@education-otherwise.org

In any correspondence accompanying the SUM form please enclose SAE if you require confirmation of receipt.

New joint Local Contact for Denbighshire-Prestatyn Julie Bevis, Phone: 08445 868916, Email: denbighshire-lc1@education-otherwise.org

New LC for West Yorkshire Gillian Wright, Phone. 08445 853891, E-mail: bradfordwakefield-lc@education-otherwise.org

New for West Norfolk. Desiree Pennington, Phone 08445 853878, Email: norfolkwest-lc@education-otherwise.org

New Joint LC for Gwynedd Judy Hemmings. Phone 08445 853879, Email gwynedd-lc1@education-otherwise.org

Even if your area has a Local Contact, please consider volunteering to job share with the current post holder. The following areas are without Local Contacts or the current post holder has given notice that they wish to resign when someone has volunteered to replace them. All Local Contacts will be CRB checked.

If you would be like to consider being a Local Contact please contact Carla: 08445 868827 or lcco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org . She will be happy to explain more about the role so that you will be able to consider whether it is something you would like to do.

Vacancies:

England:

Cleveland
Essex, South East
Gloucestershire, South
Gloucestershire
Hampshire
Herefordshire
Kent, South West
Lancashire, Bolton
London, Enfield
London, West
Manchester, South
Merseyside
Norfolk, Breckland
Staffordshire, South
Surrey

West Midlands, Birmingham and Solihull
West Midlands, Dudley
Yorkshire West, Leeds
Yorkshire East, Hull

Scotland:

Perth and Kinross
Argyll and Bute
Edinburgh and Lothians
Inverclyde and the Ayrshires
Glasgow
Fife

Wales:

Ceredigion
Glamorgan

Local Contact Co-ordinator Admin Assistant

The work would be helping to update and maintain the database of LC's. Mailing to Local contacts as well as organising networking and training days over the next year. This voluntary role would suit a young person wanting to gain experience in administration and event management.

Please contact Carla Macgregor if interested.
08445 868827

Volunteer Needed to Assist EO Finance Group

Qualified accountant to liaise with EO Finance Group, offer input on bookkeeping and support the work of EO's Treasurer. If you are interested in discussing this further, please contact: Fiona Nicholson or Alexander Roarke of EO Finance Group:

fiona_j_nicholson@yahoo.co.uk or
alexander.roarke@educationotherwise.org.

EO Monthly Volunteer Update Co-ordinator

This post would suit someone who has good organisational skills and who could give up to 6 hours time per month. The job requires co-ordinating EO information needed for the bulletin, putting it together, typing it up and then sending it on to all volunteers on the mailing list.

You would need easy access to the internet in order to retrieve the information. The update is sent to volunteers in between Newsletters.

To find out more about this volunteer post

please contact Fiona Nicholson:
fnicholson@education-otherwise.org

Looking for Volunteers for the Helpline

We are looking to recruit new volunteers for the Helpline. If you have ever thought about giving a few hours of your time to help others who are thinking about home educating then please do get in touch. As the option of home education becomes more widely known, more and more parents are turning to EO for information and support. Many get information from the website; but personal support is still in great demand.

We are currently making some changes to the helpline in line with best practice. EO is now an associate member of the Telephone Helpline Association. The THA will be providing Level 1 helpline training during a day in September or October in the Midlands which will be paid for by EO.

We ask that all our volunteers take this training unless they can show that they have training in something equivalent. Every Volunteer will have supervision and support and a place to offload after challenging phone calls. This is to ensure that all volunteers receive professional support in order to carry out this role and also to look after themselves.

We are intending to be more flexible about the hours per helpline shift, so if you only have one or two half-days a week, don't let this prevent you from volunteering. If you're interested and would like to find out more or have any questions then please contact:

Jo Berry, Tel: 08445 868821,
jo.berry@educationotherwise.org
Or Pauline Butterworth, Tel: 08445 868826
p.butterworth@educationotherwise.org

Looking for Volunteers for E-mail Support

We are looking to form a team to offer information and support to the public by email and through a new public area of the EO forum. There will be support and training for this important work which can be done in your own time.

If you have any questions or are interested then please write to: eoemailhelpline@education-otherwise.org

Volunteer wanted to take on Distribution of Our Stationery

This involves organising the printing of, storage and distribution of our stationery to EO volunteers. Easy access to a post office and local printer is necessary. For further information on this role and to volunteer, please contact Gail on: stationery@education-otherwise.org, telephone: 08445 867549 or write to: Education Otherwise Association Ltd., PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, PE34 3XW

EO Trading Team

The Education Otherwise Trading team are looking for at least two volunteers.

Responsibilities would include:

1. Holding stock (levels to be agreed subject to space available at the volunteers home)
2. Receiving orders via email and despatching as soon as possible (within one week if possible)
3. Emailing Store Manager (Paul Robinson) when merchandise is shipped so that records can be updated.

People need to have access to email as Paul has set it up that as much as possible is automated to reduce the amount of work involved.

Due to the potential for lots of orders (we hope), people should have easy access to a post office. For more information, contact Jacqui Houlding on jacqui@thecrystalball.org.uk or on 01925 654856 or any other EOT volunteer.

Volunteers Needed: Team to Help Co-ordinate AGM Event, February 2009

Volunteers are needed to form a team to help organise the February 2009 Annual General Meeting in the Birmingham/West Midlands area. We want the AGM Event to be a day of interest for home educators with stalls, workshops, activities and guest speakers as well as conducting the business of EO. The AGM is where Trustees are elected and is a chance for members to meet the people who work in EO and to find out more about what the organisation is doing. There are a number of short term volunteer roles available running from August 2008 to February 2009. You can arrange to make a shorter or longer time commitment based round your family's needs.

To make the most of our AGM Event we'll need people who can cover the areas of event planning, networking, catering, administration etc. We also need people to help on the day. You might have the skills yourself or be good at finding the right person to do the job. You might not be sure precisely what you can offer, but just want to help.

Some team members will need to live locally, but there will be other ways to make a contribution if you live further afield, so if in doubt please contact the co-ordinators for a chat. This ad will also appear in the October and December editions of the Newsletter but preliminary work is already underway for the AGM Event so please get in touch sooner rather than later as the next six months will pass very quickly.

Co-ordinators Julie julie.bunker@zen.co.uk
07976 710 629 or Fiona:
fiona_j_nicholson@yahoo.co.uk

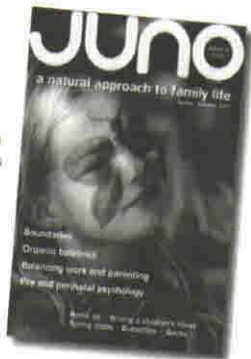
Juno

Juno is a parenting magazine with an ethos based on conscious parenting, sustainability, social justice, non-violence and a commitment to personal growth and spiritual awareness. Juno is named after and inspired by the Roman goddess of birth, fertility, marriage and female genius.

Our aims are to acknowledge the valuable role of being a parent with all of its joys and challenges and to enrich family life and relationships by encouraging reflection, self-acceptance and peaceful parenting; building a sense of community and celebrating the roles of parenting and home making.

Our broad editorial contains features, interviews, reviews, personal stories, crafts and celebrations. Contributions from our readers are central to the ethos of the magazine, and it is by sharing stories, ideas and information that we hope to empower you to be the parent you want to be.

Described by readers as different, inspiring, down to earth and intelligent. We aren't glossy and you won't find us in supermarkets or newsagents - but you can find us nationwide from branches of Borders, eco baby shops, organic and health food shops and via subscription.



You can subscribe on-line and read articles on our website

www.junomagazine.com

To subscribe by post please send a cheque for £20 (6 issues) or £35 (12 issues) to Juno Magazine, PO Box 592, East Grinstead, RH19 3AQ mentioning where you heard about us. You can also try a sample issue for £4.

'I can honestly say I think Juno is the best written parenting magazine I have read for absolutely ages!'
Susie Fairgrieve, Welxela

WANTED!!!! Have you any National Extension College / Oxford Open Learning GCSE Course folders you wish to sell???

I'm looking for all GCSE subjects the above companies offer.

Please e-mail me with details of course folders you have to sell.

John Adams Tel: 07891 607649
Email:
johnadams9992000@yahoo.com

Advertising in the Newsletter

The Education Otherwise Newsletter has an average bi-monthly distribution of 4,000.

We offer reasonable advertising rates, including reduced rates for our members and discounted block booking rates.

Contact:
Justine Kinney-Graham
Tel: 020 7328 6433
advertising@education-otherwise.org

The Green Parent

is a vibrant, colourful magazine all about family life.

Learning and alternative education · natural health · bumps and birth · breastfeeding · organic food and drink and much more.

"Brilliant - nothing else like it"

"I can't wait for the next issue"

"Only magazine I've read from cover to cover in years"

Inside every issue there is a brilliant Green Kids magazine all about the environment. An exciting colourful magazine for enquiring minds. Plenty to keep small hands occupied with recipes, crafts, games and stories.

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HOME EDUCATOR LEARNING

HOW HOME EDUCATORS CAN PROMOTE BEST PRACTICE

The National Extension College offers flexible home study courses for 20,000 people each year.

TWO FREE ONE-DAY WORKSHOPS SUPPORTED BY THE ESMÉE FAIRBAIRN TRUST IN:

Shallowford House, Stone, Staffordshire, Tuesday 23rd September 2008

Westbourne Grove Church, London, Tuesday 30th September 2008

Each event will comprise:

- An introduction from the National Extension College
- Current State of the Home Educator Legislation
- Parents' Guides to GCSEs
- The role of Parents as mentors of home-educated children working towards NEC GCSE courses
- Professional Development for the Parent Providing Advice and Guidance

LEARN



FUTURE



SKILLS

Sign up now!

To secure a place for any of these FREE events please

✉ Email: alison.cornell@nec.ac.uk

☎ Call: 01223 400358 (Monday - Thursday morning)



Cheap Broadband and Phone Calls

The Phone Co-op has introduced a tiered rate for Broadband, so at last, if you are a low user, you will pay less. EO has an affiliation scheme with the Phone Co-op, so quote our affinity number *017* when you sign up for inexpensive phone calls, dial-up, broadband, line-rental and much more. The co-operative is "owned" by the members and any profits go back to the members, not into the pockets of phone moguls!

Three ways to find out more: go straight to their web site www.thephone.coop go to the bottom of the front page of the EO website or phone 0845 458 9000. Remember to quote the affinity No 017.

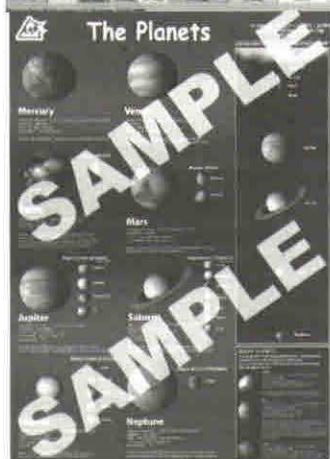
Learnpremium

This is an online educational service owned by the Guardian Newspaper. EO pays LearnPremium a lump sum and is making a small charge to each user to cover this cost. Current subscription expires 20 October 2008 and costs £12.00. You can sign up using the Renewal form on the EO website or contact Lynda.

There are around 130,000 pages of online lessons and resources on a wide range of subjects including English to Design & Technology or Physical Education. It offers interactive lessons and resources, games and activities, video lessons, Guardian lesson packs, whiteboard activities, randomly generated tests, a daily news service for 9 - 14 year olds and the facility to generate tests.

Free Trials - contact Lynda 01553 617551

learnpremium@education-otherwise.org



A3 Posters

Times Tables	£1.80
Dinosaurs	£1.80
Colours and Shapes	£1.80
Alphabet	£1.80
Space	£1.80
Special Offer: Choose any four posters	£6.30

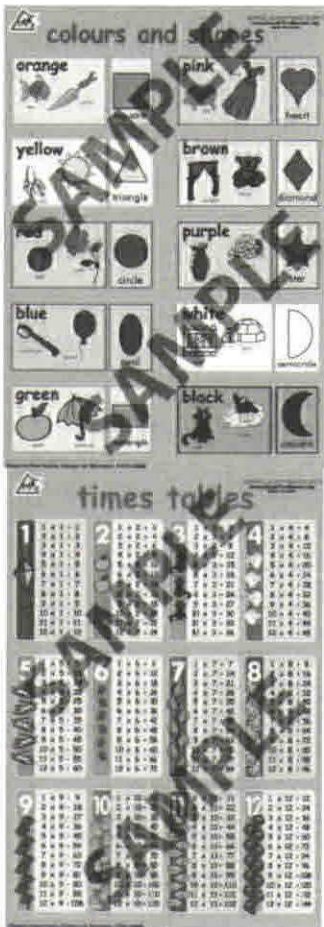
Publications

Early Years	£3.60
Teach Your Own by John Holt	£7.50
Free Range Education, Ed Terry Dowty	£9.90
Home Educating our Autistic Spectrum Children: Paths are Made by Walking, Ed Terri Dowty and Kit Cowlshaw	£13.50
Learning from Home Based Education	£4.50
School's Out, Educating Your Child At Home by Jean Bendell	£3.60
Educating Your Child at Home by Jane Lowe and Alan Thomas	£10.75
Educating Children at Home by Alan Thomas	£9.85
Evaluation and Research in Education, Special Edition Home Education. Guest Ed Paula Rothermel	£6.00
Their Own Voices	£3.15
Paula Rothermel's PhD Research (2002) Leaflet	£0.54

EO Leaflet Series

All leaflets are **45p each** and are available free to download from the EO website.

1. *Choosing your approach to home-education*
2. *Deregistration and contact with local education authorities*
3. *Legal aspects of home-education*
4. *Home-education research*
5. *Further reading*
6. *Useful organisations (part of membership pack)*
7. *Courses and qualifications*
8. *GCSEs*
9. *Educational resources*
10. *Home-education and Steiner*
11. *Flexi-schooling*
12. *School anxieties*
13. *Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Home Education*
14. *Dyslexia*



colours and shapes



times tables



Stationery

Recycled 30cm/12" Rule	£1.08
Eraser (Red or White)	£0.41
Recycled Pencil	£0.53
Recycled Pen	£0.77
Triangular Highlighter (3 colours)	£0.89
A5 Notepads	£1.00
Red Pencil Case	£1.35
Set 10 Coloured Pencils (made from sustainable materials)	£4.32

Clothing (T-shirts)

Navy: Home Education - a real option Sizes M, L or XL	£6.00
Navy: Home Education - a real option Sizes 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 or 12-13	£4.50
White: SINC Sizes M, L or XL	£6.00
White: SINC Sizes 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 or 12-13	£4.50
Oskar: The World's My Playground Sizes S, M or L; Purple, Royal Blue or Sky Blue	£5.15
Oskar: The World's My Playground Purple, Royal Blue or Sky Blue Sizes 1-2, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-13	£4.70

Clothing (Hoodies)

Hoodie: SINC with triangle logo, Black, Navy Sizes 5-6, 7-8, 9-11, 12-13	£15.00
Hoodie: SINC with triangle logo, Black, Navy Sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL	£20.00

Miscellaneous

Car Stickers	£1.17
Re-Use Labels (pack 100)	£4.00
Sun Shades Single/Pair	£4.75/£9.00
Wristbands (Red)	£1.00
Toiletry Bag	£7.19
Car Tax Disc Holder	£0.89
Frisbee (Red or White)	£1.79
Playing Cards	£2.03
Clip on Torch	£4.28
Clip on Clock	£3.59
Binoculars	£8.09





EO Merchandise Order Form

Item	Size	Colour	Quantity	Cost	Total
				Sub Total	
				P&P (UK)	
				Total (Sub Total plus Postage)	

Your Name:
 Your Address:
 Your Telephone Number: Email Address
 Cheque Number:

Please send this order form to:
 EO Trading, 38 Garwood Close, Westbrook, Warrington. WA5 8TF Email:
 merchandise@education-otherwise.org *Cheque to be made payable to:*
Education Otherwise Trading Limited

Postage and Packing

Having now had a chance to actually see how the changes in postal charges will affect EO, the pricing structure has been changed. For small items, you, the customer, are paying much less postage. For larger items, the cost of postage has increased. The following costs for postage and packing here, and via the website are now as follows:

Order Value	£0-5	£5-10	£10-20	£20-30	£30-40	£40-50+	£50+
Postage	£1.00	£1.50	£2.50	£3.50	£4.50	£5.50	£6.50

We've had some feedback from members that some groups listed in the regional diary are no longer meeting. Education Otherwise also needs to obtain permission to print contact details from the individuals listed as group contacts.

So for the August Regional Diary only, if you want to find out more about a listed group, please either call Jo 08445 853894 or email regionaldiary@education-otherwise.org and your query will be forwarded to the relevant local group contact. Please note that not all groups listed are run by EO members.

Events organisers please remember when giving details of events that the newsletter can be read by people who are not EO members.

PLEASE NOTE: If you wish your group to be listed in future newsletters, you need to fill in a form for each entry in the Regional Diary giving permission for your contact details to be included. This form is printed at the end of the Regional Diary. There will be a small prize, whilst stocks last, for people who return the Permission form by the end of August.

If we don't receive a form by then; due to print deadlines, we will unfortunately have to remove the groups details from the October issue. We are sorry for any inconvenience that this may cause.

ENGLAND

BEDFORDSHIRE

- South Bedfordshire Home Education Group, covering Houghton Regis, Dunstable & surrounding areas. We meet regularly with a variety of activities.

BERKSHIRE

- Email list for home educators in Berkshire & surrounding counties.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BerkshireHomeEducators>
- Varied activities & HE events for all ages most days, details & list of all Berkshire activities.
- Hero's Education Centre 4 days/wk, workshops, lessons, activities.
- Lambourne. Meeting weekly on Fri's on an organic farm for play, activities & support.

BRISTOL

- Thurs meeting at St Paul's Adventure Playground.
- Email list for Bristol & surrounding areas at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BristolHome>

Education, also local group website for more information about home ed in Bristol:
www.bristolhomeeducation.org.uk

- Bristol Home Education Learning Place meeting Monday + Friday pm.

BUCKS

- Newsletter for Bucks/Northants & Milton Keynes home educators network extends a warm welcome to all. Multi activities and support, also have excellent relationship with LEA/LA. www.mkhen.co.uk
- MKHE - Milton Keynes Home Educators, friendly group welcomes all, monthly newsletter + online discussion room. www.miltonkeyneshomeeducation.co.uk
- South Bucks: meetings for craft, activities, play, speakers, drama, trips etc.
- High Wycombe, Hughenden Village Hall, 1.30-4pm every Tuesday.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/highwycombehomeeducators>

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

- Cambridge: regular meetings & outings.
- Alconbury monthly activities run by Christian group. All welcome.

- Peterborough weekly meetings.
- Peterborough Muddle Puddle Group. The group is primarily for under 8s + meets 3 Friday afternoons a month. To contact the group see Yahoo list at:
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/PboroMudPud/>
- Cambridge/Norfolk border, North Cambridgeshire: Fortnightly meetings at March.

CHESHIRE

- South Cheshire and North Staffs Group, regular activities, meetings and trips for all ages. Teen activities.

CLEVELAND & DURHAM (see also DURHAM)

- email list:
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tvhe>
- Billingham meetings.

CORNWALL

- Regular events sheets available by e-mail or SAE.
- Menheniot near Liskeard, Mondays, term time only.
- Pensilva, Forest Day, 2 last Tuesdays of each month.
- Penzance PZ HOME ED Mon pm.
- Cornwall and all south west, Festivals and Photo's SW.

A contact group for home educating families who want to share their interest in festivals, events, photography. Members can arrange to get together informally.

CUMBRIA

- Cumbria Otherwise Newsletter, for full details of events throughout the county.
- Kendal 3rd Friday each month.
- Kendal alternate Mondays.
- Penrith alternate Tuesday, 1.30-3.30.
- South Lakes, Wednesday.

DERBYSHIRE

- Chesterfield Home Ed Group meet Wednesday. Outings & activities.
- Chesterfield - Art Class, age 10 & over, Thursdays, 12-2pm, term time only.

- Derby Group, 4th Thursday of month.
- Amber Valley, Alfreton area, meetings, 30 minute drive from Derby, Nottingham, Matlock & Mansfield.
- Derbyshire Family group including tai chi & French plus playtime.
- Family swimming sessions, Wednesday pm.
- Derbyshire & beyond - AHEAD. Meet weekly on Thursday for French, tai chi, special events & time for playing/chatting & Weds for swimming. Website:
<http://www.geocities.com/aheadhomeeducati> on

DEVON

- EO Devon Newsletter available.
- National Trust (Devon): a contact is available for this.
- Okehampton Monday, alternate weeks.
- Exeter Wednesday, Free Range Learning for all ages.
- Exeter Tuesday, fortnightly Pottery.
- Exeter - Green Woodworking.
- Exeter - Weekly teenage group.
- Bideford area fortnightly social meetings on Tuesday.
- North Devon Home Grown Kids, twice weekly meetings & events. Swimbridge Wed 2pm-5pm.
- Barnstaple Fri, Funderzone, term time only. www.homegrownkids.co.uk
- South Devon Home Education Group: Mons: swimming at Totnes.
- Tues: outings, museums + camping trips.
- Wed: weekly meetings in hall near Totnes.
- Thurs: workshops, see Devon Newsletter for more info.
- South Devon, Dart Valley H.E. Network regular meetings & one-off events. For more details see Devon newsletter.
- Devon East/Dorset West - Lyme Regis, Axminster, Bridport, Chard.
- South West Dorset/South East Devon/South Somerset, every Monday from 10-2.30 term time, all ages welcome.
- Devon and all south west, Festivals and Photo's SW. A contact group for home educating families who want to share their interest in festivals, events, photography.

Members can arrange to get together informally.

DORSET

- Dorset/Somerset/Devon borders. Regular meetings on Tuesday and Thursday.
- Dorset meetings.
- Bournemouth Weekly Monday Meetings.
- North Dorset, meeting in Sturminster Newton area. Regular social meetings.
- Dorset and all south west, Festivals and Photo's SW. A contact group for home educating families who want to share their interest in festivals, events, photography. Members can arrange to get together informally.

DURHAM

- Email list:
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/tvhe/> or
http://groups.yahoo.com/durhamhome_ed

ESSEX

- Chelmsford monthly meetings, third Thurs, 2-4pm.
- Colchester Bowling & Swimming monthly on last Wednesday, term time.
- Southend OTHENA - Older children/Teens News & Activities (11+).
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/OTHENA>
- Tiptree monthly meetings, last Tuesday of month 2-5pm.
- Various venues across Essex, New Teens Group, meeting monthly.
- Around Essex Educational visits twice monthly Thursday. Details of Essex groups & events in Epicycle available.
- Southend meetings.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

- North and South. A variety of meetings, workshops and outings, open to all. Website:
<http://members.lycos.co.uk/GlosHomeEducators/index.html>
- Glos email list for events and forum.
- Cheltenham meetings.
- Gloucester meetings.
- Cirencester and Cotswold meetings.
- Forest of Dean meetings.

- Gloucestershire South (which would come under a separate LA from N. Glos):
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthGlousHomeEd>
- Stroud,
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SouthGlousHomeEd>.

HAMPSHIRE

- Havant, meeting most weekdays
<http://www.activeo.org.uk>
- Fareham & Gosport, FAREGOS HE meets twice weekly for craft, swimming & other activities.
- North Hampshire, NHEO. Open to all home educators in North Hants & surrounding areas. Regular meetings in Oakley, ice skating & other activities.
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/NHEO/>
- Farnham/Aldershot area, under 10s; fortnightly.
- Romsey/New Forest area, fortnightly.
- Southampton & area, SEEDS meetings at least weekly.
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SEEDS1>
- New Forest "I'm back to running the home ed social group for the New Forest and we are moving to a new location. Join us on Fridays between 11am-1pm for crafts, tea, workshops and socialising!

HEREFORDSHIRE

- Meetings, workshops and outings and how to join the Herefordshire email list.

HERTFORDSHIRE (see also N.London)

- Hertfordshire yahoogroup available.
- Stevenage, Swimming Lessons every Thursday 10.30am, term time.

ISLE OF MAN

- Isle of Man Home Education Network. Meeting monthly.
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/hen-iom>

ISLE OF WIGHT

- I.W.E.O. Group: craft sessions, visits, swimming, theatre, picnics, barbecues,

mutual support, especially older EO kids but new members & visitors always welcomed.

- Isle of Wight Learning Zone.

KENT

- Wealden Home Ed website:
<http://www.when.omnia.co.uk>
- Ash, Sandwich, Dover, Canterbury, Ramsgate & surrounding areas.
- Isle of Thanet meetings.
- Medway towns meetings.
- Tunbridge Wells group meet every Monday from 10-4.
- SEFLAGS Edenbridge, Kent; Sussex & Surrey. Weekly sports & meetings. Website:
<http://www.flags-education.org.uk>
- Leham anyone wanting to meet in this area.
- Medway Towns, regular meetings & visits.
- Hayes, meeting alternate Fridays, 11am-2pm.

LANCASHIRE

- Old Cobblers, a comprehensive list of monthly events.
- Blackburn Ice Rink monthly.
- Botany Bay meetings.
- Preston for Badminton/Swimming.
- Lancaster, monthly meetings, Thursday 12-3pm.

LEICESTERSHIRE

- 5 regular meeting venues across Leicestershire.
- Leicester area - Syston Group for the under 8's.

LINCOLNSHIRE

- Activelincs Home Education Group.
- Boston and surrounding area. Families with teens who'd like to meet for swimming, bowling or other activities.
- Central Lincoln, Bluebells, regular meetings.
- Lincs - Variety of informal events & get togethers.
- Lincoln Cathedral Home-educators - Central Lincoln, regular meetings.
- South Lincolnshire, drama group, Tues.

LONDON

- FULHAM, and surrounding area group. Fridays from 11 am. Age 5+ (Siblings welcome of course) Tennis Lessons, Open house, play in park and some field trips.
- Ladbroke Grove/Queens Park group, Monday and Wednesday.
- South East London/Kent borders regular meetings.
- East London HE Group alternate Wednesdays in Leytonstone 1-4pm.
- East London Home Educators, Forest Gate, Fridays.
- Bromley/Croydon Chrysalis Group.
- Dulwich, Wednesday, Maths, Science, Speakers and Social for age, 8 yrs - teen.
- Dulwich, Monday Study Group, Science, English + Maths for ages 11-16.
- Lewisham Thursday 11-1 then to park afterwards.
- Sydenham meetings.
- NW London - The Otherwise Club.
- Chelsea Open House Project - SW London, Mon afternoons
- Stanmore events on Tuesday + Wednesday. Programme available.
- Hackney Group, Adventures With Education, Meets weekly in term time, Tuesdays 11-3.
- N London, Haringey Home Educators' Club, Wed pm.
- North London Barnet Group, Mon.
- West London (& Middlesex) Home Ed group Tuesday (EO West London Local Contact) to join West London Home Ed yahoo group.
- West London, Wednesday 12-2.30 pm fortnightly during term time.
- West London (Chiswick & Ealing) Tuesday. Also contact for details of yahoo group membership - discussion & information about events in the area.
- Greater London, meetings:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/MuslimSistersHomeEducationNetwork>

MANCHESTER

- Manchester meetings.
- Madcow Manchester + District, events & support email list.

MIDDLESEX

- Hayes, meetings every other Thursday from 10.30 to 1.30.
- Pinner, Meadowsweet Home School, Tuesday-Friday, qualified teachers, 10am to 3pm.

NORFOLK

- West Norfolk
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/WestNorfolkHomeEducators>
- Norfolk, Mattishall. The music club here runs fortnightly.
- Downham Market HEDD (Home Educators Downham & District)
www.freewebs.com/hedownhamdistrict
- Norwich area - Free Wheel for under 10s, activity group - Wednesday fortnightly.
- Norwich Yoga Bugs.
- Thetford, Swimming, indoor sports/play at Leisure Centre Term-time, Thurs 2.30-4.30.
- Norwich, Fri, fortnightly activities run by Christian group.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

- www.northantshe.org.uk
- Daventry, monthly meetings.
- Northamptonshire, Local home ed teens.

NORTHUMBERLAND/NORTH EAST

- <http://groups.msn.com/EducationOtherwise>

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

- Nottingham Weekly meetings, full list available.

OXFORDSHIRE

- Group meets alternate Thurs for varied timetable of activities. Children split into 3 age groups. Workshops & regular speakers.

RUTLAND

- Weekly meetings & activities.

SHROPSHIRE

- South Shropshire - regular meetings every Tuesday, outings & workshops.
- Newport Nr Telford, meetings & outings, Fri from 12.30.

- Telford, Art Club meets every Monday afternoon at Horsehay village hall.

SOMERSET

- Bath H.E.L.P. group meets regularly for outings & activities.
- Bath Meetings 3 days per week for semi-structured child-centred learning activities with parents & a teacher.
- Frome & Beyond (FAB) home educators' support group. Social gatherings, group activities, outings + newsletter.
- Wiveliscombe/Taunton area - regular get-togethers & outings.
- Wells & Glastonbury area, regular social meetings.
- Somerset North - Regular get-togethers & activities.
- Somerset North W.A.V.E.S group meeting fortnightly for crafts & activities in Weston-Super-Mare. Friendly group.
- Somerset and all south west, Festivals and Photo's SW. A contact group for home educating families who want to share their interest in festivals, events, photography. Members can arrange to get together informally.

STAFFORDSHIRE / S. CHESHIRE / N. SALOP

- Stafford HESEO, meeting 2nd + 4th Wednesday each month 11-3pm, bring lunch.
- North Staffs and South Cheshire Group, regular activities, meetings and trips for all ages. Teen activities.

SUFFOLK

- Woodbridge, Foxburrow Farm, activities organised by Suffolk Wildlife Trust.
- Wetherden meetings 3rd Fri 10.30-3pm.
- Wild Meadows, Ringsfield, regular meetings.

SURREY

- P.A.C.T. Surrey's home education group. Monthly newsletter containing information about activities, outings, events etc.
- Surrey Home Educators meet regularly at Reigate.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/surrey_home_ed/

- Surrey meetings.
- Guildford Spectrum skating, Fri. Please don't call group contact on Sundays.
- Cobham area, Learning Group for parents + children 0 - 7.
- Guildford area: Theatre bookings.
- Guildford: Under 10s group.
- Dorking/Reigate area - meetings.
- Farnham/Aldershot area, friendly group for under 10s, fortnightly meetings & occasional outings.
- North Surrey/Croydon meetings.

SUSSEX

- Wealden Home Ed website:
www.when.omnia.co.uk also email group:
wealdenhomeeducatorsnetwork@yahoo.com
- Sussex East - meetings.
- Sussex Newsletter for Home Education
Monthly newsletter gives full details of news, groups, events & activities throughout the county.
- Lewes meetings.
- Hastings HEDGE Group www.hedge-education.org.
- Brighton meetings.
- Eastbourne 'SHINIES' home ed. Group.
- Forest Row Area - meetings..

SUSSEX WEST

- Worthing/Shoreham Beach meetings.
- Worthing. EtudEO-home-ed group, various clubs and groups meeting daily in term time.
- Chichester, meeting most weekdays.
www.activeo.org.uk

TYNE & WEAR & NORTHUMBERLAND

- Regular, frequent & varied activities. Age range from 1 to 17yrs. New members welcome.
http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/home_ed_tyneandwear
- Music group.
- National Trust & English Heritage Visits + Woodland visits.

WARWICKSHIRE

- Coventry & Warwickshire Monthly meetings held at various locations, plus monthly outings. Full details of meetings & outings given in HELM (see under West Midlands).
- Bedworth, meetings 1st Tuesday 10.30-1.30pm.
- Coventry, meetings 4th Tuesday 1-4pm.
- Wolston, meetings 2nd Thursday 10.30-3pm.
- Rugby, Daventry, meeting monthly.

WEST MIDLANDS

- Meetings, trips out, activities etc are held throughout each month at a variety of locations all over the West Midlands. The newsletter HELM lists many of them. HELM is available free by email or by post for a small charge & covers HE related articles & events throughout the West Midlands & surrounding areas. Please contact Helm Editor.
- Birmingham HE Group, regular meetings.
- Coseley, West Midlands, Meeting monthly, 10am, Fri.
- Coventry and Daventry, meeting monthly.

WILTSHIRE

- Biddestone, Chippenham, Tuesdays termtime 9.30am to 3.00pm.
- Warminster meeting each Monday from 2.30.
- Salisbury New group started April - Mondays 1-3.30pm fortnightly, large hall, skate park, table tennis.

NORTH WILTSHIRE

- To link up with almost 100 HEer's in North Wilts, NWilts_HE-
subscribe@yahoo.com
- Swindon (term time) Monday, swimming at Oasis, from 1:30; 2nd & 4th; Wednesday, ice-skating at Link Centre, 1:30-3:30;
- Swindon Wednesday - FLL Robotics team. Call EO Local Contact.
- Calne book club.
- Devizes Thurs, 11.30 - 2.30.

WORCESTERSHIRE

- Meetings, events, trips out etc happening all through the month throughout the county. Contact EO Local Contact
- Worcester Home Education Group meeting Tuesday.
- North Worcs/Kidderminster meetings.

YORKSHIRE EAST

- Regular meetings & visits E Yorks.
- Bridlington for meetings.
- Between York and Pocklington, group meets Weds for various educational activities, crafts & social contact.

YORKSHIRE NORTH

- Regular meetings & outings.
- North/West Yorkshire Group, Steeton, Fortnightly meetings on Fri.
- Skipton Home Ed Group Meeting monthly on Friday.
- Near Malton, meeting weekly on Monday.
- Scarborough, weekly meetings, outings and activities, 11.30-3pm on Fridays. All welcome.
- Harrogate/Knaresborough, for details of regular meetings and outings.
- Between York and Pocklington, group meets Weds for various educational activities, crafts & social contact.

YORKSHIRE SOUTH

- Regular meetings for arts/crafts, visits, swims, hanging out & more.
- Sheffield, Highfield, Tuesday.

YORKSHIRE WEST

- Bradford Weekly meetings & activities. A monthly schedule of activities available.
- Halifax: Mon in term time.
- Huddersfield: Swimming, Wed.
- Huddersfield monthly meeting, Wednesday.
- Huddersfield, "Lunch & Chat", monthly, Thurs.
- Huddersfield Art Gallery, Art Workshop, Thursday.

SCOTLAND

ARGYLL, Home-Ed Group, regular meetings.

FIFE, Friday fortnightly meetings.

HIGHLANDS/MORAY meetings.

IRVINE meetings.

LOTHIAN, CENTRAL & S.E. SCOTLAND fortnightly, meetings + outings.

WALES

SOUTH WALES

- South Wales Home Educators Network, weekly meetings in Llantrisant & Swansea. For information & support. <http://www.swhen.netfirms.com>

MID GLAMORGAN

- Rhondda Cynon Taff, meetings on a Friday.
- Caerphilly, fortnightly meeting on Thursdays.

PEMBROKESHIRE & Cardigan area.

For local information, contact EO Local Contact.

CEREDIGION & CARMARTHENSHIRE & PEMBROKESHIRE

- Childwise Education Newsletter A local bimonthly newsletter for home educators with 'what's on' listings and contact list. Regular trips to museums, NT properties, country parks etc. Up to date local group info for Aberystwyth, Lampeter, Carmarthenshire, Rhonda, Swansea. Childwise Newsletter available.

GWYNEDD

- Bangor & area home ed network.
- Creative Learning and Support (C.L.A.S) meet every Wednesday at Tregarth 12-5pm. Free weekly newsletter of events via e-mail.

POWYS

- Local Contacts for home ed info, home ed camps, activities & outings.
- Brecknock/South Powys area occasional events.
- Newtown area: Fortnightly in Newtown.

N.E. WALES / BORDERS

- Oswestry/West Cheshire/NE Wales local newsletter of events available.
- Froncysyllte fortnightly meetings.

Permission form for inclusion in the Regional Diary

Area(s) entry is to be placed:

Name of group:

Group Details:

Contact Details to be included in Newsletter:

I/We confirm that I am/ (we are) the contact/(s) for this group and agree to my/our details being included in the EO Newsletter. I/we understand the newsletter is distributed to EO members, and is sold to, or may be seen by other third parties.

EO Enquiry Volunteers often get asked about local groups in their area by families new to home educating. My/our contact details may be given to these callers by EO volunteers. YES / NO (delete where appropriate).

Signed:

(Needs to be signed by ALL people whose contact details will be included in the entry)

Dated:

Please return completed form to: Education Otherwise Regional Diary, c/o PO Box 325, King Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3FB

New volunteers for any of the groups most welcome, with expertise or just an interest. For more information email the group, write to EO's PO Box address or contact one of the Trustees listed (in italics). If you would prefer to volunteer for infrequent or small tasks please contact database@education-otherwise.org (please put EO in subject line of e-mails)

Small Groups:

- **Finance Group**
(financegroup@education-otherwise.org):
Fiona Nicholson, Roarke Newstead, Lynda Hitchman
- **Core Govt. Policy Group**
(governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org): *Fiona Nicholson, Annette Taberner, Ann Newstead, Jo Berry, Kira Patefield-Smith, Janet Wilkinson*
- **Disability Group:**
(disabilityawareness@education-otherwise.org)
Fiona Nicholson, Jennifer Skillen, Christine Waterman, Celia McDonagh
- **Scotland Group:**
(scotlandenquiry@education-otherwise.org) *Fiona Chaff, Rebecca Kail, Jane Bathgate, Jan Atkinson*
- **Website and Publications Editorial Committee (WPEC):** (wpec@education-otherwise.org)
Fiona Nicholson, Jennifer Skillen, Joss Nowell, Lynda Hitchman

Grievances and Complaints:

eocomplaints@googlegmail.com or write to
PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

- *Jo Berry* ~ 08445 868821
- *Pauline Butterworth* ~ 08445 868826
- *Lynda Hitchman* ~ 08445 867541

EO Yahoogroups:

EO runs several email lists with Yahoogroups, including a general one and one for single parents. The Yahoo lists are open to all, members and non-members.

Go to <http://tinyurl.com/56k2w7>
to join one of the lists.

Media Contacts:

Please contact one of the following people if you would like to volunteer to be interviewed or are contacted by the media and would like help/advice/support on giving an interview:

Media Co-ordinator: Ann Newstead, 08445 868839
mediaco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

North East: Eva O'Rourke, Wilsden 01535 274520
northeast@education-otherwise.org

Wales (S): Celia McDonagh, Cardiff, 07763 729055
wales1@education-otherwise.org

Wales (N): Edwina Theunissen, Wrexham, 01978 661882
wales2@education-otherwise.org

South West (Acting): Kay & Simon Smith, 01726 842057
southwest@education-otherwise.org

South East: Ann Newstead, Kent 08445 868839
southeast@education-otherwise.org

London: Winnie Durdant-Hollamby, 01342 826087
london2@education-otherwise.org

Isle of Wight: Shara Ouston, Ryde, 01983 562313
iow@education-otherwise.org

EO E-mail Lists & Forums

There is a Members Forum on the EO website. It has discussion forums for members to chat and get information about home education etc., as well as EO business, and lots of other info (eg past NL articles, minutes of OTMs, etc). There are also separate forums for EO Volunteers and Local Contacts and a new forum where EO children can chat together.

To access the adult part of the forum, just email forums@education-otherwise.org giving your chosen User Name (4-15 characters long), full name, email and EO Membership No. or postcode. To join the children's forum, email childrensforum@education-otherwise.org for more information on how to sign up.

Who Does What in EO

Trustees -

Letters to: PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3XW

Leslie Barson (London) ~ 08445 868817

lbarson@education-otherwise.org

Jo Berry, (Cheshire) ~ 08445 868821

jberry@education-otherwise.org (Enquiries Secretary)

Gail Borrows (Bucks) ~ 08445 868824

gborrows@education-otherwise.org (Membership Secretary)

Pauline Butterworth (Cleveland) ~ 08445 868826

pbutterworth@education-otherwise.org (Treasurer)

Carla MacGregor (Bristol) ~ 08445 868827

cmacgregor@education-otherwise.org (Local Contacts Coordinator)

Celia McDonagh (Glamorganshire) ~ 029 20483498 or 07763

729055 ~ cmcdonagh@education-otherwise.org

Kelly Moorhouse (Denbighshire) ~ 01824 703690

kmoorhouse@education-otherwise.org

Roarke Newstead (Kent) ~ 08445 868813

rroarke@education-otherwise.org

Fiona Nicholson (S Yorks) ~ 08445 868831

fnicholson@education-otherwise.org

Joss Nowell (Staffordshire) ~ 01538 385057

jnowell@education-otherwise.org (Publications & DPO)

Vicki Skinner (Dorset) ~ 01202 302275

vskinner@education-otherwise.org

Jennifer Skillen (Glos) jskillen@education-otherwise.org

Janet Wilkinson (Cambridgeshire) ~ 08445 868812

jjwilkinson@education-otherwise.org (Co Sec)

Rowenna Williams (Gwynedd) ~ 01678 521348

rwilliams@education-otherwise.org

Judi Wilson (London) ~ 020 8969 7963

jjwilson@education-otherwise.org

Membership

Membership and newsletter subscription enquiries, address changes, membership cards, new member admin, other queries or missing newsletters contact: ~ Lynda Hitchman ~ Database Administrator, Education Otherwise, PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3XW ~ 08445 867541 or 01553 606501 ~ database@education-otherwise.org (Please put EO in the Subject line of emails)

Stationery

Leaflets, posters, compliment slips, membership forms, car stickers etc: free (donations toward postage welcome). 08445 867549 ~ c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW ~ stationery@education-otherwise.org

Volunteers are needed for the following posts/contacts:

EO Stalls, Single Parent Contact

Useful Contacts

If you need help in dealing with your LA/EA please ring your Local Contact or any Council Member. If you have a query not covered below please contact your nearest Council Member.

Anti Bullying Support (Acting) Jacqui Halson (Kent) ~ 01227 277869 ~ c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

Autonomous Education Support: Maya Lucas ~ 01462 630786 c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW

Campaign Team Contact: Fiona Nicholson ~ 08445 868831 c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW governmentpolicy@education-otherwise.org

College Contact: (Acting) Roger Scaife ~ 01422 884682 c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW ~ collegecontact@education-otherwise.org

Company Secretary: Janet Wilkinson (See CM List)

Coordinator for Enquiries Secretary: Iris Harrison ~ 01584 781341 ~ esco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Designated Person: Jim Clossick ~ 08445 869091 ~ For EO members to call if they have concerns about a home educated child and are unsure about phoning the NSPCC.

Enquiries Secretary: Jo Berry (See CM list) enquiries@education-otherwise.org

GCSE Contacts: Sarah Cook: ~ 01768 896019 gcsecontact@education-otherwise.org

LearnPremium & EO Members Forum Admin: Lynda Hitchman 08445 867541 learnpremium@education-otherwise.org or forums@education-otherwise.org (please put EO in subject line of e-mails)

Local Contacts Co-ordinator: Carla MacGregor (See CM list) lcco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Membership Secretary: Gail Borrows (See CM List)

Newsletter Coordinator: Nicola Haxell ~ 01302 863195 nlco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Publications Secretary: Joss Nowell (See CM List)

Research Contact: Sue White ~ 08445 868913 ~ c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE34 3XW research@education-otherwise.org

Single Parent Family Contact: Vacant

Special Needs: Christine Waterman ~ 01923 464773 c/o PO Box 325, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 3XW

Treasurer: Pauline Butterworth (See CM List)

Publications

Books, information leaflets and back issues of newsletter. For a full list send SAE to: June Rawson, 5 Warwick Road, Ettington, Warwickshire CV37 7SH publications@education-otherwise.org

education otherwise

Education Otherwise is a membership organisation that 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 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;
- promote knowledge, understanding and acceptance of education otherwise than at school in the world at large.

For further information send an A5 sae to:

PO BOX 325
KINGS LYNN PE34 3XW

Helpline 0845 478 6345

Information can also be found on the Education Otherwise website:

<http://www.education-otherwise.org>

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