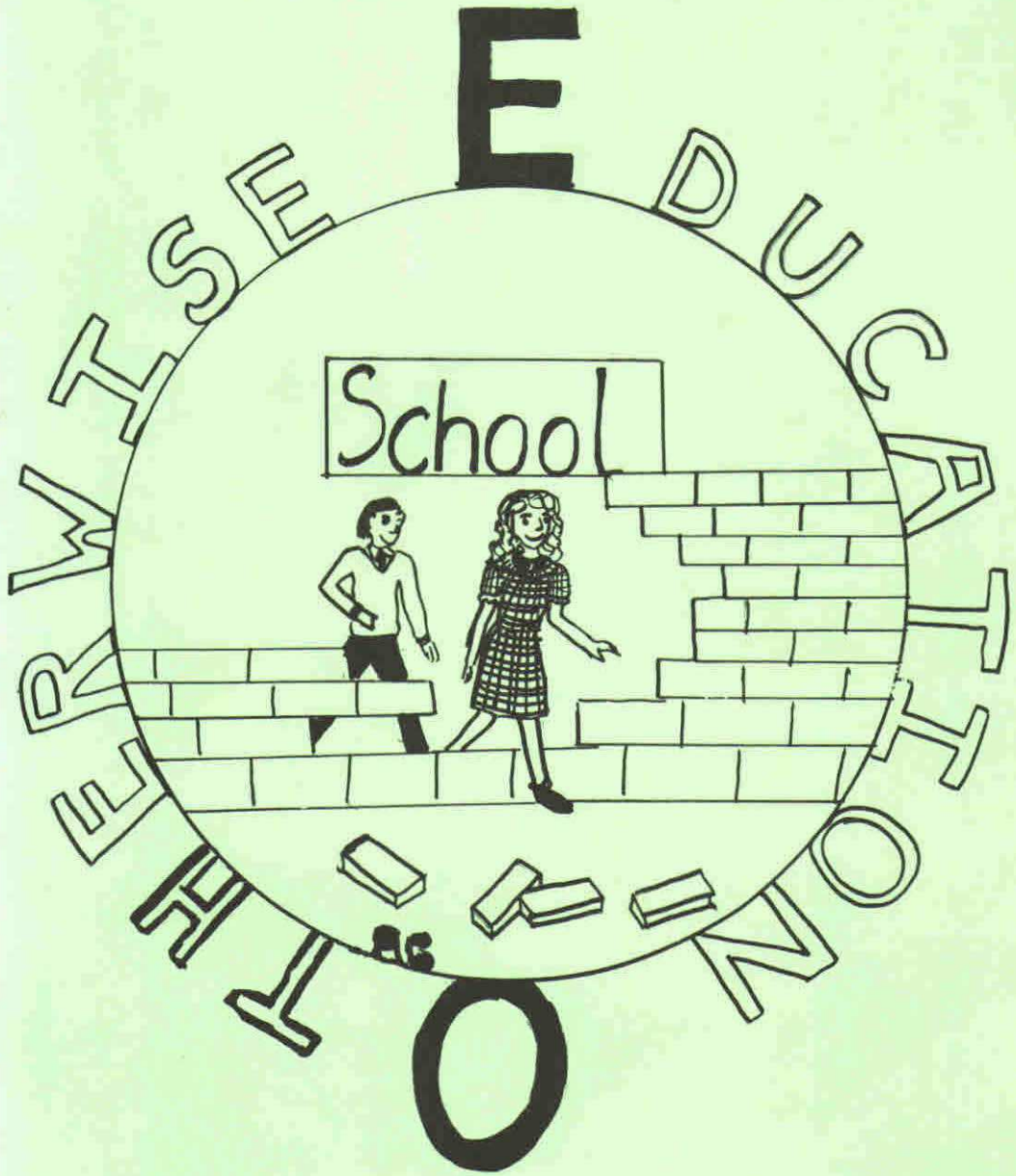


APRIL 1986



NEWSLETTER N° 46

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Contributions for the next edition must be sent to the editor by the deadline date. All material intended as such, should be clearly marked 'FOR PUBLICATION'. Contributors are asked to ensure they include their name and address.

NEXT EDITOR - JULIE WEBB

THE THATCHES, 28 CHURCHWAY, HADDENHAM, BUCKS. TEL. 0844 290773

DEADLINE DATE - MAY 1st.

The opinions in this publication are those of the contributors, not necessarily those of the editor, or of Education Otherwise as a whole.

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EDITORIAL

In 1973 we began home-educating. Our eldest, Brian, was 4, Julie 3, Amanda 2 and Valerie 1. We struggled at first, as it was felt that everything had to be formal, but this soon changed.

The surprising thing was that Julie and Amanda taught themselves to read. They loved learning. Brian did not, probably due to being left-handed. He is also colour-blind.

When Valerie joined in, the LEA began to pressurise us to send them to school. Their education was deemed adequate, but the social aspect worried the Inspector. We gave in, mainly due to my exhaustion and high blood pressure. By then James had been born.

For Brian school was a disaster; his teacher disapproved of home tuition. Julie loved it, but Amanda hated it.

As we settled in our unhappy ones, Julie became afraid of school. Then baby six arrived - Amy. Valerie and James started school, (James too is colour-blind and left-handed). He reacted badly by kicking, screaming, hiding and destroying things in the house. We decided to keep him at home for a while longer.

Soon after this Julie's school phobia erupted with a vengeance. She refused to attend school. The psychiatrist pronounced her immature and backward, which was rubbish. We were told that to make her 'normal', she would have to go to a boarding school for children with emotional problems. It turned out to be a home for the mentally subnormal. We removed her from school.

By now the other four were all happily attending three different schools.

Then everything went wrong. Amanda began sleepwalking, having nightmares and headaches daily. Valerie became aggressive, being now at the local secondary school. James had a repetition of his earlier behaviour and felt a complete failure, while Brian was thoroughly fed-up with continually disrupted lessons and wanted to be taught at home.

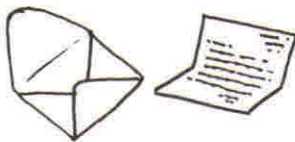
Amanda was under pressure to wear certain styles of clothing and was being victimised by pupils and teachers. Valerie just could not cope with the large number of pupils (1,000), or the size of the school. James, a slow learner, had been dumped at the back of the class, with writing and simple adding sums to do and told he would be unable to do games, art or play until he had finished. We took them ALL out of school.

During their school years we had constant sibling rivalry, arguments, rudeness to parents, destructiveness and illness. These now rarely happen.

My family did not have a 'pathological dysfunction'. Their problems were a result of experiences within the school system, the cure? removal from that system.

THANKYOU EO for the courage you gave us to try again, and the support you give to those of us who have to home-educate for the sanity of our children.

LOIS COOK 34 BEACON ROAD, HERNE BAY, KENT. CT6 6DJ



Dear Editor.....

Dear EO,

Thankyou for another excellent NL.; the system of changing editors seems to work well and produce a pleasant variety of style. Other members I know avidly read their NL's like I do.

The articles by families home educating were very welcome, as were those from home educated-children, I consider these an important part of the NL. I found the tribute to John Holt very touching; having read his books it was nice to read articles written by those who'd met him. If anyone is interested in formal qualifications for EO children: I heard on a Radio 4 programme about the GCSE and have an information sheet on it, and I've written to ask about home-educated children and am awaiting a reply.

The NL. is a lifeline, the letters help us to know a little, others who tread a similar path for whatever reason: let us help them on with confidence and not put off any newcomers with extreme political viewpoints, there is no one way to be 'Otherwise'.

CATHERINE BARRETT. 26 LIGHTHORNE ROAD, SOLIHULL, WEST MIDLANDS
B91 2BD



Dear Friends,

I have given the matter of compiling a book some further thought and although my friend, Jean Bendell of Bath, reveals that she has been commissioned to write a book on EO - her personal experience, how to go about it, the legal aspect etc. I feel that there is plenty of room for books on 'Educating Otherwise' and indeed the book I would like to make is of a fairly different nature. What I would like to do is make a collage of peoples personal experiences, drawings and photographs, quotes from parents, children and books. A ten years on album. Obviously the newsletters over the years contain much of interest and I shall be extracting from these but I would be most grateful for anything of interest, however little. From the children too - poems, drawings, a story, whatever. I want it to be a book about all of us - to show our diversity, how we are made up of all sorts of people and their children, from all walks of life. I want it to be an inspiration to those who are setting out on educating their children 'otherwise', to those who have considered the idea but who feel too alone or afraid to do it and to those who have desperately unhappy children at school and do not know what to do about it.

I look forward to hearing from you all.

Best wishes,
Meg Robertson

The Old Thatched House, Midford Lane, Limpley Stoke, Bath, Avon
BA3 6JP Tel. 022 122 3266



Dear EO,

I would like to comment on Geraldine Taylor's advice in the last NL. to someone, on how to prepare their son for secondary school. My views on this, based on my own experience of supporting my children through the school system, are very different from Geraldine Taylor's.

I would say to this parent: dreadful though the schools are, you can bring your child through with minimal damage, but only if you clearly understand one crucial thing - the school is not on your side or your child's. It is an institution, and like all institutions it cares more for its own survival than for its clients' best interests.

Because of this, if you don't firmly and obviously take sides with your son against the school, you will risk losing the relationship between you and your son, and the school is going to undo all your good work. It's not a question of what the individual teachers are like, even the head; every participant in an institution is utterly bound by its basic rules (I know, because I used to be a teacher).

You shouldn't waste time thinking that it needn't be a question of taking sides at all; of course it needn't, but as things stand that's the way it is - and are you willing to sacrifice your child to try and build a better system? I hope not.

When my children were at school I discovered that, once I had accepted this basic truth, it was actually quite simple to support them adequately. What I did was to make it quite clear to them that there was no question of school being good for them, except to the extent that (i) it provided useful credentials for later life, and (ii) all their friends were there. As against that I acknowledged that the work they were given was mostly stupid and pointless, and the teachers' behaviour was often downright irrational. Also, we would jointly do what we could to minimise this side of things.

What we could do to minimise the bad things was quite a lot. If one of them had a particularly boring or frightening day coming up that they wanted to avoid, I would give them the day off sick, and when they went back I provided a note giving some spurious but plausible reason (sore throat, dental appointment, etc.). (Don't be taken in by all that nonsense about losing essential steps in their education - my son who is no genius - lost through genuine illness a full 6 months from his final year at Junior school and still came top at the end of the year)

When they got into scrapes I would always ring up, write or visit the school, and in these encounters I always took their side unreservedly. I'm sure the teachers used to dislike me for this, and to avoid any tendency to take it out on the child when I wasn't around I used to be as diplomatic as possible, but my guiding principle was always - again - to give the child my unquestioning support. If you think back to the things that hurt you in your own childhood, it always comes down to receiving treatment that you didn't think was fair; and whether you were right or wrong, it hurt just the same didn't it?

My principal was, if I saw a way of preventing my child being hurt (or upset, bored or frightened) I would always try to take it. If there is any grace in the universe, this must be what nature intends. And also (God forbid) you or your child could be dead tomorrow, and wouldn't you want your last act to be putting your arm around them in protection?

Another thing to do is, when reports come in or they have consultation evenings, make it clear to your child that his accomplishments or the lack of them are utterly irrelevant to your love for him, and make it clear to the teachers that in your eyes he is just fine as he is. With both of mine the teachers used to always be saying, 'I feel that he/she is not trying his/her hardest, and could do much better....' And I would smile and say 'Yes, that's right, isn't he/she sensible?'

Because it is sensible. I have a good job today, which I enjoy and am grateful to have, but I'm damned if I'm going to work myself into a lather all day every day. Sometimes a task engrosses me and I

do work like a little demon, but other times I perhaps feel a bit lazy and I do just enough to get by. Well if that's all right for me, it would be the utmost hypocrisy for me to pressurise my children, wouldn't it ?

I can promise you, if you accept the basic fact that the school and the teachers are at bottom your enemies and your child's enemies, things can work out well for both of you. Working out what to do in most circumstances that arise is easy; you just work out what you feel is right according to your instincts. Then you work out how to accomplish it; what will they swallow, how can you put the case so that they will be forced to accept ? This can be a bit of trouble, but no more than teaching your son yourself, and you know you can do that.

My own parents were teachers and as a result I suffered dreadfully throughout my schooldays. In my time as a teacher I saw all this suffering again, eventually realising that it was the system that was causing it, and no individual within it could stop the carnage. So I left the 'profession' and changed the way I treated my own children in terms of their education. The results were wonderful; they did acceptably well academically (though not as well as they might theoretically have done!) but much more important their emotional development became stable.

They have now both left school and are happy young adults. They didn't commit suicide, get inferiority complexes or turn aggressive - all the appalling things that the school system does to kids has passed them by - for one vital reason; whatever happened at school, I was always on their side.

I knew (and they knew I knew) that they were only children and likely to get into situations out of their depth and need rescuing, and I always did rescue them if I could. Above all, whatever they did and whatever anyone in authority might say about them, I loved them regardless, and made sure they knew it. Please, please do the same for your son.

PIERS LANDMANN. 20 BRICKFIELD. HATFIELD. HERTS ALIO 8TN



Dear EO,

Space in the NL. often seems to be given to the legal problems in allowing children to educate themselves out of school - quite rightly. However, there must surely be many families who meet, not official but social and family opposition, which though less dramatic can be harder to resist.

Certainly our own encounter with the Education Board here has been a mere breeze, compared with the icy gales of disapproval from our families, all the harder to bear because they love the children too, and genuinely feel we are wrong.

Perhaps in large cities or remote rural areas, neighbours are less of a problem than in villages, but surely we can't be the only ones who skulk at home until after 3.30pm term time ? It's not so much that I mind explaining, it's just that we are heartily sick of having to explain !

Incidentally, we would be happy to act as a base for campers (and a refuge if the weather is disastrous) particularly if they include people aged about 5. Ours are 5, 4, and 1 and their only speciality is Having Ideas. We can offer a good view of the T.T. course.

JANE PEARN THE GARDEN HOUSE, BALLAUGH, ISLE OF MAN.

Dear EO,

My husband and I and our two children became members of Education Otherwise, almost two years ago, when we first began to consider the idea of withdrawing the children from school. It has taken until the end of 1985 for us to feel strong enough and able enough, to actually take the dramatic step of rejecting formal education. It also took what we considered, to be an unbelievably insensitive attitude on the part of the school which the children were attending.

We have two children aged 10 and 7, and ever since they started school at 4 and 5 respectively, we have seriously doubted that they were learning anything of value there. Due to personal reasons, we have moved house several times in these last six years, and so the children have attended six different schools between them. Some in Kent, some in Sussex, some state, some private. Sadly, I can only express the opinion that the general attitude of teachers towards parents, who show a serious interest in their children's education is totally hypocritical. They project very strongly the impression that they are too busy concerning themselves with children who are slow learners, who come from underprivileged families, or who have emotional problems etc., to pay anything other than cursory attention to children from average families, of at least average intelligence, who do not present them with any particular day-to-day problems in the classroom. The general attitude is to assume that children without serious problems will survive the system relatively successfully, and indeed this may turn out to be true. However, why is it reasonable to devote all the school's resources to the disruptive children, whilst those who deserve extra attention and help and consideration, just because they themselves are helpful and considerate individuals, are actually deprived of almost all real contact with the teachers?

This hypothetical observation on our part, has been borne out not only by our own personal experiences with the children, but has been supported time and time again by letters and articles we have read in various publications. What is more, we suspect that this particular failing of the educational system spreads even into the universities. My husband and I are both students at the moment, at Sussex University. It is our finding that students who do their set work on time, turn up to seminars and perform at a consistent level throughout their course, can pass through three or four years of university with barely any interaction with tutors or lecturers. They receive no encouragement in their work, no offers of loans of books or papers, no help in seeking employment or choosing post-graduate courses.

It seems to us that this attitude is leading to a tragic waste of the intellectual resources of this country. While we would never wish to see any of the various support schemes withdrawn, and in fact would advocate improving them, especially in Kent, it is not right that the more able person should have to struggle on alone. It seems highly likely that large numbers of children who would if encouraged, develop into gifted writers, scientists, artists, politicians, musicians and so on, have the spark of brilliance extinguished in them at a very early age. Only those who are fortunate enough to receive encouragement from a parent or mentor stand a chance of achieving anything like their true potential.

I do believe that everyone should have the right to choose what kind of education they receive. If they do not agree with the rigid, examination bound system currently favoured in the West, they can and should be helped to find an alternative. If they have a child who needs special help of any kind, they should receive it.

And surely this must include those of us, who, for whatever reason, seem to have produced children who demand a level of intellectual activity equivalent to the level of physical activity demanded by a hyperactive child.

It is for these reasons that we have taken our children out of school. I need not describe how much happier and fulfilled we all are now, especially the children. In the space of a few weeks my son has begun to respond in a way I always knew he was capable of, but which he has never before achieved. My daughter, instead of struggling to fit all the things she wants to do into one weekend, now spreads them throughout the week, and fits in much more. I have not yet contacted the LEA, and have not heard from the school, but I suspect I will soon, and wonder how I will deal with them. If anyone has any experience of dealing with the Kent authorities, I would appreciate their advice, as I believe they are intractable.

Thankyou for the NL., and the various publications produced by EO. I doubt whether we would ever have had the courage to face up to our views, and to take the step of de-schooling our children, if it had not been for the support found within the pages of the NL's. And to others in doubt, whatever your reasons for leaving the system, we would encourage you to do so.

DIANE & CHRIS GREENWELL. 'LYMPNE', BOROUGH GREEN ROAD. IGHTHAM. SEVENOAKS. KENT.

Editor: We've been home-educating in Kent (on and off) for 13 years and haven't found the EA so. They will do all they can to discourage you, especially re. 'social integration', but if you stand firm they shouldn't give you too much hassle. (give me a ring HERNE BAY 367059)



Dear EO,

I was very interested in the comments made in Feb.s NL. on the subject of 'end products'. My favourite 'quote' on this topic is from John Holt's, 'Instead of Education'. - "The 'outcome'. Why does there always have to be an 'outcome'? When I go to see something that interests me, I don't have to do a dance afterwards or make a six-foot papier mache map and hoist it to the ceiling. I can decide for myself what sort of outcome, if any, I want to have for my experience. More important, I can wait until the outcome reveals itself to me. This takes time, sometimes years, and it never happens if 'creative teachers' are busily pushing and prodding and motivating to make it happen".

JILL HORNSBY. 36 BURTON ROAD. ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUTH. LEICS.



Jean Bendell would like to hear from US on home-education - 'How it works for us' - 'A typical day', however short, from which she can use extracts. Also 'Famous people who learnt at home' and 'O' and 'A' levels - any practical experiences? She is writing a book on Home Schooling, to be finished this spring.

JEAN BENDELL 61 COTSWOLD ROAD. BATH. AVON. BA2 2DL. TEL.0225 313634



Much love and best wishes to Mary Carter for a speedy recovery, after her double operation on or about April 8th. Thanks to all those who contributed, what I have been unable to use has been sent to next editor. Some letters have been edited (a little) due to lack of space, I hope the contributors do not mind too much. LOIS COOK EDITOR.

THE DEWAR STORY IN LEEDS

Written by Cathie Dewar, mother of Christina, and edited by Peter Williams, West Yorkshire Co-ordinator.

To encourage children to attend school, Leeds has been experimenting with a procedure of repeated adjournments in the Juvenile Court. Each time the child appears, and it may be at intervals of a week, a fortnight, or more, depending on progress, the child's attendance is reviewed. If attendance has not improved, an interim care order is made as an 'encouragement' to attend school. If this does not work, a full care order is made. The chairman of the magistrates tells the child in no uncertain way of the consequences of poor school attendance: '.....next time bring a bag with your night things. You'll be going away for a bit.'

Christina was nine or ten years old when she first started feeling ill. It went on for months before I pinpointed it to Fridays: games day. One teacher at Middle School was a bully. After having a word with the headmaster, who said I was not the first to complain about this teacher, she stopped picking on Christina, but started being sarcastic and sneering.

After about a year of this, Christina became worse and taking her to school became a nightmare. She would feel from getting out of bed, and feel sick all the way to school. Sometimes I would take her to school asking her teacher to keep an eye on her. I was always at the doctor's surgery, and when Christina started with pains in her legs and stiffness, I really began to worry.

She was sent to hospital to see a specialist. She had blood and other tests, but thankfully they could not find anything wrong. Christina continued feeling ill: she was acquiring different ailments all the time. She would go to bed at night and shout down, 'I can't breathe!' She would be gasping for breath. I would sit on her bed and talk to her, or read a story. This would help for a while and then it got worse.

I took her to the doctor who said it was night asthma. In time I found it easier to go to bed with her. She also moved into my bedroom as by now she was very frightened. We would spend most of the night awake. Sometimes we sat in the garden at 2am to help her breathe. I could not send her to school after a night like that, but I always took her to see the doctor. He wanted to examine her for asthma so that she could be given a spray. But he could not, at the time, as she always seemed full of cold.

The Educational Welfare Officer became a regular visitor to our home, and twice made Christina get out of bed to be taken to school. Quite often she would be sent home as she would faint in class or be sick. I have had to carry her home many a time if she fainted on the way to school. No one could convince me she was not seriously ill. The EWO asked my permission to check with the doctor that we did attend the surgery, and at the time I did not realise what this meant. He left a card with the doctor to be put in Christina's medical folder to be filled in every time she attended. It was about six months before I found this out, and as a result I became on such bad terms with the doctor we were asked to leave the practice, even though he had been our doctor for over forty years.

One night Christina was so ill with asthma, we sat up all night with the washer hose fixed to a boiling kettle to try to help her breathe. She was so bad her dad stayed up with us, even though he had to be up at 4am for work. Later that morning I telephoned the doctor who sounded concerned and said she would come right away. As she came into the room, she took the EWO's card out of the medical folder and her whole attitude towards us changed. She examined Christina quickly and told us if we were worried, to get a bottle of mixture from the chemist; no prescription was given. I asked, 'Could it be night asthma?' She said she did not know anything about it and left rather abruptly.

Next day Christina was no better, so I made an appointment to see another doctor at the surgery. Before I went in to see him, I took the EWO's card out of my folder and put it in my pocket as, with it, I did not think we would get fair treatment. The doctor said she had bronchitis made worse by asthma, and could not understand why the other doctor had not noticed this. I told him he did not have the card and showed him it saying it had not to be put back in her folder. But before we left, this doctor tried to help us. He gave her an asthma spray, but said she thought she has school phobia and referred her to the Child Psychiatric Unit at St. James's University Hospital, Leeds.

We had already made our first appearance in the juvenile court, but during the six months Christina was at the unit we did not have to go to court. The time at the unit was useless as it was used only to try to induce her into thinking school was the best place to be, and that all her illnesses were in her mind.

One day, travelling to the unit by bus, a lorry ran into the bus while it stood at the traffic lights. Some of the passengers were taken to hospital by ambulance. The others were put on another bus to continue their journey. Christina was in a state of shock when she arrived at the unit, and told the sister why she was late. She received no sympathy, and was told to go into class and get on with her work.

The first I knew of was when she came home at 4pm with a stiff neck and a croaky voice. I took her to hospital. She had a back injury and whiplash. She had to wear a collar for the next few weeks.

I telephoned the sister the next day and asked her why Christina had been treated this way. She said, 'We don't take a lot of notice of these kids as they often come in late with excuses.' She telephoned the bus station to confirm my story and apologised.

After six months she was sent back to her own school, and back to court. Her attitude to school had not changed. In fact, it was made worse by being away such a long time. She did not find it easy to fit back in. She was asked by other children where she had been. Twice she was ill at school: once she was left to sit in the corridor all afternoon, the other time the head teacher brought her home.

By now my nerves were in a bad state. I dreaded getting her up on a morning to be told she felt ill. My heart used to be in my stomach as I forced her to school; and, because of this, I punished myself by not eating all day. At work I feared the telephone ringing in case it was for me to collect Christina from school. We could not go out any more in case she became ill. Life was awful.

In September 1984 Christina was to move to High School, and she had chosen an all girls school. We hoped things might change, but it was just the same, and now it was costing me £20 a week in taxi fares to get her to school. In her condition travelling by bus was difficult.

Halfway through the term, I read an article by Peter Williams in the Yorkshire Evening Post about educating your child at home. I had heard about it a couple of years before, but the EWO at the time said I had no chance. I got in touch with Peter Williams. He came to see us, but when he knew we had a court order on us he said we would not find it too easy. We joined Education Otherwise and were put in touch with other families with the same problems. We found this a great comfort, as we had felt so alone.

By now Christina had turned against me. We were going through a bad time at home. She thought I did not know what she was going through. She became bitter towards me: coming home from school glaring at me and staying in her bedroom all evening. If I spoke to her, she only snapped back at me.

Christina passed out one day in the dinner queue. I was sent for and I began to wonder how much more either of us could take. As she was so withdrawn, I was frightened for her and what she might think of doing.

The Chairman of the magistrates caused many problems. I had earlier been to see a solicitor who refused to take on our case because of this man. So we had to face him alone, and believe me, he was as bad as I had heard. It seemed he put together the Leeds system and other magistrates dare not go against him. He is reluctant to lift a court order from a child brought before him for truancy, although it was said Christina was not classed as a truant. He terrifies children into going to school with all kinds of threats. It was never a very pleasant experience going to court, but it was made worse by this man.

At the time of one appearance in court Christina was having problems with her periods, a touchy subject for a girl so young. And this was used like a weapon. He shouted some abuse at her across the courtroom embarrassing her. She had visited the doctor earlier that day. The EWO said in court that he had telephoned the doctor, but the doctor said he had not seen her. The magistrate went wild and although Christina had good school attendance, he said his usual piece, 'Next time, bring your night clothes as you will not walk out of court with your mother.' He would have had her put away for Christmas.

When I arrived home, I telephoned the doctor to find out why he had said that Christina had not been to see him. We had not told the new doctor about the court cases, so he didn't realise how serious it was and I explained what had happened. The EWO had telephoned the leading doctor of the group practice, who told him he had not seen Christina that day and could not find her medical notes. But they were still on the desk of the doctor who had seen her. This mistake could have put Christina in care. From that time forward, each time I took Christina to the doctor, I was advised to telephone the EWO as soon as I got home.

The next time we went to court, was just before Christmas. It was the time my eldest daughter, Carol, lost the child she was carrying. The night before we went to court, Christina stayed the night at Carol's house looking after her two year old son while my husband and I rushed Carol to the hospital. I did not send Christina to school that morning and as we were in court that afternoon, I hoped it would go unnoticed. They knew she had not been to school. We had not been to the doctor for a cover note.

The magistrate if she had been to the doctor and when she said no, but she had not slept that night, he said, 'Right, you're away this

time my girl and they will make sure you get sleep where you're going, as they will give you sleeping tablets.' At that I had had enough, for the first time I let him know what kind of temper I have. I screamed and shouted at him and told him why she had not been at school that morning. He was shocked for a moment, then said he was sorry for what had happened and would let Christina off this time. I suppose he thought we should have felt grateful to him, but I told him we did not need his pity.

I would listen to the other children in the waiting room saying what they thought of him and what they would like to do to him. With this hate in their souls, it made me wonder where they got rid of their aggression: maybe at the home of some poor old woman.

Through EO we appointed a solicitor who had no experience of this sort of case, but was prepared to give it a try. I suppose he saw it as a sort of challenge. It was worthwhile for us, as now we were getting some respect in court. Christina was even allowed to sit down, and this magistrate did not shout quite so much. The solicitor asked him to take the court order off Christina, but he would not.

In February 1985 we decided to take Christina out of school and gave as an explanation: she cannot be educated in two places at the same time. It was a month before we went to court again and during this time a senior EWO came to visit us. He saw Christina working and said he knew our intentions were genuine and, would say this in court.

Also Steve and Linda Cooper, now in Gloucestershire, were 'educating' the solicitor about our rights to teach Christina at home. So the next time we went to court, the solicitor was better prepared.

When the Chairman of the Magistrates learned Christina was being educated at home, he was not amused. He wanted her back at school.

At court we saw a pleasant woman magistrate. She said it was hard work teaching your own at home, but wished us luck. She could not take the court order off us, as it was the previous magistrate's case.

Another month, another court case and a different magistrate. This was a man and he wanted Christina back at school. He took some convincing of our case. We were in court a long time that day and her books were sent for to help the magistrate reach a decision. Happily our solicitor had really done his homework, the magistrate had to concede saying, how the next hearing went would depend on an assessment of her work.

We were visited by an LEA senior advisor. He seemed pleased with what she was doing. So in June 1985, there was nothing else the court could do but take the court order off Christina. At last we had won! We never did see the Chairman again and have not heard of him since.

EO CHILDREN'S CAMP AT THORNHAM FIELD CENTRE - 21st to 25th JULY.

This is a small advertisement for a big event - a national summer camp for EO children between the ages of 8 and 14.

PLACE: Thornham Field Centre, near Diss in north Suffolk. The centre is fully equipped for the study of plants and animals of the park and woodland which surrounds it. The centre is one of a group of converted buildings mostly used as craft workshops. It has been used for some time by a local EO group with the support of Andrea Hanks, the warden, who will also be involved in organising activities during the week of the camp.

TIME: 12.00 noon Monday 21st July to 4.00pm Friday 25th July.

WHO IS IT FOR ? Unaccompanied children between 8 yrs. and 14 yrs. who do not go to school.



Please send reviews of any books you have read to the Editor, or write to Helen Holland requesting a copy of any new book coming out. Helen will try to obtain a copy for you, but, PLEASE WRITE A REVIEW if you receive any such book.

READ WITH ME - AN APPRENTICESHIP APPROACH TO READING. by Liz Waterland. Published by Thimble Press at £2.35 (inc. postage)

It is about a teacher who grew into an individual approach to teaching reading, using 'real' story books. It's quick and easy to read, also very exciting and it works.

THIMBLE PRESS. 'LOCKWOOD' STATION ROAD, SOUTH WOODCHESTER, STROUD, GLOS. GL5 5EQ

THE HUNCHBACK AND THE PRINCESS. by GEORG DREISSIG. Published by FLORIS BOOKS, 21 NAPIER ST. EDINBURGH. (hard back) price £5.95

The story of a Princess who at birth was given a magic lantern which always comforted her when angry or sorrowful. She is given the advice always to seek the light and when the time comes for her to marry, the only suitor in whose eyes she sees such a light is a poor hunchback. We are told how, in spite of competition from rich Princes and Nobles he manages to fulfill the King's wise challenges and is eventually united with the Princess.

A beautifully told and illustrated book suitable for ages 5-6 plus.

HISTORY TODAY. Published by History Today Ltd. 83-84 BERWICK ST. LONDON W1V 3PJ.

An informative and interesting monthly magazine. From the March issue: THE TUDORS AND ENGLAND: ENGLAND IN EUROPE: THE NORMAN WORLD OF ART: MOTHER AND CHILD IN THE GREEK WORLD: THE INDIANISATION OF THE INDIAN ARMY. plus book reviews. Well worth £1.40 per month. obtainable from your local newsagents. (you'll have to order)

EO CHILDREN'S CAMP: continued....

COST £27 per child, including food (basic vegetarian) and hire of tent. £22 if you bring your own tent.

ACTIVITIES: We will spend the week studying the countryside, working at conservation, walking, playing and swimming. There may also be opportunities for art and drama. To some degree plans can be tailored to those who are coming.

ORGANISER : BRUCE COX
Grey Row, St Margarets, South Elham, Harleston.NORFOLK.
IP20 0PL

ENQUIRIES : Write to Bruce enclosing SAE or phone (ST CROSS 315)

BOOKING: Send deposit (non-returnable) of £5.00 for each child, or the full fee, to Bruce (address above) Cheques made payable to 'Education Otherwise' Early booking will help us to plan the week. We are hoping that at least 25 children will come. When bookings are in we should be able to make shared travel arrangements.

CHILD BENEFIT

- RULE BY CIVIL SERVANT -

Should a civil servant, without an educational inspectorate, educational advisors, standards, without any requirement upon him to state or support a case - be permitted to sign 'on behalf of the Secretary of State for Social Services' that our homes are not suitable places in which to educate our children over the age of 16 ?

The answer is clearly 'No'. Yet this is actually happening. If one appeals against a DHSS Adjudication Officer's decision not to allow Child Benefit for a child over 16, who is studying full time at home, a 'piece of paper' signed on behalf of the Secretary of State for Social Services, declaring that 'The establishment (the home) is not, and is not comparable to, a University, College or School' constitutes the entire case of the DHSS for the refusal of Child Benefit, under the Child Benefit Act 1975.

The Claimant, however, possesses another 'piece of paper'. This is signed on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education, usually by the Director of Education of the local education department. By virtue of the approval of the educational arrangements made by the parents, the home has been recognised by the Secretary of State for Education, as an educational establishment under the Education Act 1944.

QUESTION : How is it possible to enforce two contradictory Acts of Parliament ? Is it legal for civil servants to decide which if the two Acts is 'the law' and ignore the other ?

In some EO cases Child Benefit is being paid for a child over 16 educated at home. These cases have never gone to Local Tribunal: in most, MP's have taken a personal interest. In each case it appears that the DHSS have taken the view that the child concerned should be receiving Child Benefit. This seems on the surface, to be a good thing, but a discretionary decision is not legally binding on the DHSS. Within the Child Benefit Act, there is no machinery for discretionary payment.

In some cases a demand has been made for repayment. The Child Benefit Act is clear, 'If we (the DHSS), paid you and we should not have paid you, it is your fault, and you must repay the money. Even if we are entirely to blame for any misunderstanding on our part which has led to Child Benefit being paid, when (we now think) it should not have been paid, then you are at fault and you must repay the money'.

QUESTION : Should a civil servant exercise 'discretion' when to do so is not within the powers given by the law concerned ?

What dependence can be placed on a 'discretionary' decision ?

A DHSS employee recently told me: 'If a Minister or Member of Parliament makes an enquiry about a case, panic sets in at the DHSS!' If the DHSS were sure of it's ground, as it should be since it is spending a great deal of our money taking Claimants to Local Tribunals and Commissioner's Appeals, then why the panic ? If the DHSS is not sure of it's ground, why is it not sorting out the anomaly ?

QUESTION: In what circumstances will the DHSS exercise 'discretion' ?

When a Claimant complains loudly ? When an MP complains on behalf of a constituent ? When the media get wind of it ?

Nowhere in the Child Benefit Act, or any other Social Services legislation does it say that the Secretary of State for Social Services MUST rule that the home is not comparable to a school or University. If he MUST rule thus, he has no option. If he MAY rule thus, he MUST have reasons for so doing. What are they ? He MUST have reasons for rejecting the D.E.S.'s recognition of the home as an educational establishment by virtue of inspection, where it has been given. And he MUST declare those reasons. What are they ? These are questions that

you should ask your MP and the two Secretaries of State. Your local co-ordinator has the details and addresses and will give you any further information you need. The more MP's that know about this anomaly, the more likely we are to get it sorted out before your child reaches 16. Let me know how you get on.

LYNETTE CAMERON, 79 WHITEKNIGHTS ROAD, READING, BERKSHIRE.(0734-661656)

FROM THE USA

We live in a small city in the state of Kentucky. Fortunately Kentucky is one of the more liberal United States about home-schooling. We are not required to have ANY Education Official come into our home. We did have to have our home inspected by fire and health officers. Odd, Allyson could live here safely but could not attend school here, unless our home was examined. The only other requirement is to send an annual letter to the local superintendent stating that our child is attending school.

Some states are so strict on regulations that families 'Hide Out' or move to another state. Parents actually go to jail for teaching their children at home, in states where home-schooling is not legal or very difficult. The courts take children away from their parents. In most cases, the parents win their court cases.

Our reasons for teaching Allyson at home, are probably no different from most. After 4 years of public schooling we had had enough. Most of the 4 years was spent trying to find a way to get her out of school legally.

Allyson did well in school, but emotionally she failed. She started stuttering in Kindergarten, by 1st grade it was headaches, nausea and the dread of 'going to school'. First grade was a nightmare. The teacher was cruel and verbally abusive to the children. Humiliation was her middle name. She did so much harm to so many innocent 6 year olds. The next two years were somewhat better, at least the teachers were kind.

We could not tolerate the attitudes of the school system. We do not believe children should be clones. In school, they are taught to conform so totally. Every day was torture. The division of children according to their parents status is obscene, this starts in Kindergarten.

The drug problem is everywhere. When the local police have to have their 'drug busts' in our schools it is a sad situation. The boy next door is afraid to use the rest room during school hours because of, drug abuse and the selling of any type of paraphernalia. He puts his lunch money in his socks, to ensure not having it stolen from him, he's fifteen. It must be fun to go to school.

Since our daughter left school at the start of 4th grade, our lives have changed for the better. Each day is a happy day instead of a battle. No more stuttering, nausea or headaches. We have time to enjoy ourselves as a family.

There are few families in our area who are home-schoolers. Sometimes it's hard being different. Most people don't understand why one would want their children at home. We are finally overcoming our anxiety about defending our feelings. No one should have to explain or defend themselves about how they raise, and educate their children.

I don't think any of us could go back to 'public school'!
Freedom seems to have this kind of effect.

DONNA CLARK. 711 SOUTH INGRAM STREET. HENDERSON. KENTUCKY. 42420.
U.S.A.

NOTICE

Hi, My name's Hannah, and I'm looking for a pen-pal. I am 11 and like anything to do with Horses. Interested? Then please write to :-
HANNAH STARR, THE RECTORY, HIGH STREET, WILBURTON, CAMBS.

WAYLAND ASH COZENS (AGED 20 MONTHS) Would like to meet some lively but gentle local EOers who will not shoot him with guns, to play with from time to time. We are a bit short on like minded company!
WAYLAND COZENS, 'BLAENBEREM' MYNYDDCERRIG, NR. LLANELLI, DYFED, CYMRU.

I'm a 12 yr. old girl looking for a penfriend of similar age. I live on a smallholding in Wales, my hobbies are, swimming; dancing(all kinds); drama; dressmaking. I'm also an animal lover. I'll answer ALL letters.
KATE STOBBS, RHYDYFANTWN COTTAGE, MOYLGROVE, CARDIGAN, DYFED, WALES
SA43 3BL Tel: 023 986 227

I would very much like to communicate with an unattached mum, or perhaps a small group interested in simple living and school free children.
I'm male, 35, with a 9 year old daughter, and no work ties.
PAUL SCRIVEN, 18 VERNE COMMON ROAD, PORTLAND, DORSET.

I have a son, born NOV.'84, and would like to get in touch with other EO parents who, like me, feel strongly about home-educating, but find it economically difficult. Also, does anyone know about child-orientated farms-communes or similar, where it's possible to stay for a while without paying a fortune?
MARINA CLAESSENS, FLAT G, 13 CREDITON HILL, LONDON NW6.

Is there anyone in Central London, or the Greater London area, (possibly families not in the contact list?) who would like to get together with us for a daytrip to the Museum, South Bank, or whatever, or just for the children to play together occasionally? We have one child, a daughter of 5. GAIL and JOHN TEL. 01 289 3422

I am a 40 yr. old batchelor with a varied and interesting background. My current ambition is to find a woman with whom I can share my life. I hope to provide a happy and secure home for her and our children's home-education.
CORNELIUS BAKER, 12 BROAD STREET, TODMORDEN, LANCASHIRE. 0114 5JQ

FOR SALE - Wolsey Hall Preliminary Courses in English Language and German. Unused except for lesson 1 in the English. Cost £57 will accept £35 or offer.
MEG ROBERTSON, THE OLD THATCHED HOUSE, MIDFORD LANE, LIMPLEY STOKE, BATH.
AVON BA3 6JP TEL. 022 122 3266

RE-USE LABELS WITH CORRECT ADDRESS NOW AVAILABLE. £1.50 per 100
FROM - CO-ORDINATOR SECRETARY, ADDRESS ON BACK PAGE.

My apologies to Meg and to readers for the incorrect page numbering of the index in Feb's NL. And for the contact list being in wrong order.
JEAN SHEPHERD

BOARD

FURTHER BOOKS TO DO WITH MUSIC - JOSEPH O'CONNOR
'A SOPRANO ON HER HEAD' BY ELOISE RISTAD published by THE REAL PEOPLE
PRESS(1982) (UTAH USA) obtainable through AIRLIFT, 14 BALTIC STREET
LONDON EC1 Y0TB 01 251 8608

CHOOSING THE RIGHT INSTRUMENT FOR YOUR CHILD by ATORAH BEI-TOVIM
published by GOLLANZ (1984) obtainable in any bookshop or library.

WANTED - Open University Arts Foundation Course Bks. Plus, ANY Open
University Bks. D.MANSON, 48 WESTER ROW, GREENLAW, BERWICKSHIRE, TD10 6XE

SUPPLEMENT EDITORS NEEDED. Supplements are 4-8 pages long. Members find
these interesting and informative. We would like to cover these
subjects :- GEOGRAPHY; RURAL STUDIES; TV AND RADIO PROGRAMMES; SCIENCE
IN THE HOME; COMPUTERS; OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES; ORGANISATIONS OF INTEREST
TO EO MEMBERS, eg. WATCH, RSPCA, WOODCRAFT, FOLK. If you would like to
edit a supplement on one of these, or other subjects, please write to
JEAN SHEPHERD for more information.

'DISCOVERERS' Family Club in Chatham area. Varied activities and events
to suit a wide age range - a social and informal get-together.
CLUB SECRETARY. JANET STONE. TEL: MEDWAY 240893

EO INSURANCE FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS. EO has a public liability insurance
with the Prudential against injury to participants in EO meetings. If
a co-ordinator, or any other member organises a public meeting, would
they please let me know the date, time and place of the meeting, plus
the approximate number of people coming, as I need to let the Pru have
a list of our meetings at the end of the policy's insurance year.
JOAN HOARE. GEN.SEC. 25 MOOR OAKS ROAD. SHEFFIELD S101BX

CO-ORDINATORS WANTED FOR SOUTH CENTRAL MANCHESTER: COUNTY OF CORK
IRELAND: DORSET: JERSEY: GWENT.
Contact CO-ORDINATOR SECRETARY, ADDRESS ON BACK COVER.

STEERING COMMITTEE - Consists of 3 people. Currently JOAN HOARE: ALISON
MAFHAM: and JANET EVERDELL. Who have the authority to make decisions
between Core Group meetings. Please contact any of the above (address
on back cover) if you want any queries on EO policy discussed.

Several people have expressed interest in Rachel Pinney's Creative
Listening techniques adapted for children - Children's Hours Workshops
to aquire and discuss this are now held twice monthly in London NW3.
ENQUIRIES AND DETAILS-JENNY SENIOR, KINGS LANGLEY 66799.
Rachel would also welcome contacts prepared to host children having more
intensive therapy, who need company, for outings, visits etc. If you can
help or are interested please phone 01 609 5568

Community researching Continuum Principals (Lied loft 75) seeks new
members and welcomes visits from children out of school. Please contact;
POPPY GREEN & TERRY MURPHY, THE CONTINUUM TRUST, STONE HALL MILL, WELSH
HOOK, WOLFSCASTLE, DYFED SOUTH WEST WALES.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS

WEST LONDON and anyone else who can make it - let's meet in the middle of the COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTE Thursday 24th April, about 11am. If it's fine we could go to the Holland Park adventure ground etc. later. Bring a picnic 01-904-7155 PLUS, have you got kids? Can you get to Shepherds Bush? Raymond and Kim Laifearaigh, Greta 5, and Oonah 3, would like to get a

group going - science etc. - 01-740-9425

MILTON KEYNES WINTER GATHERING REPORT. We had a lovely weekend, the sun was shining, though it was cold. It was nice to see so many friends old and new, it was especially good the way everyone helped together to make the weekend such fun.

The weekend started early on Friday evening with me at the railway station to meet Joan Hoare, where I met a motley bunch of Wallaces and Wades amid the commuters. A few hours later we had about 40 people in the hostel, with the warden looking suitably pensive at the hoards of children and multi-coloured teenagers. We were also able to place another 20 people with Milton Keynes families, to whom we must say a big THANKYOU. We must also thank Stephen Mott and Betty Ball for organising an earth education walk, also Francesca Farrant for bringing her parachute.

The three things I shall remember most are:- the sight of about 60 people in the village hall on Saturday night having a communal supper; someone's burnt toast setting off the fire alarm; being plunged into darkness whenever the lights overloaded the circuits. Thankyou all for coming, see you soon. JAMES GOMMON.

MILTON KEYNES. The group is flourishing at the moment with large numbers of new enquiries; some new members and some new or impending arrivals to members families.

The group meets regularly each week as well as occasional organised visits. On Fridays we go to the Community Workshop where the children (and adults) have a go at painting; pottery; woodwork; candlemaking; enamelling etc. Other activities include swimming; horse riding; music workshop. Recent events include a visit to the Post Office, sorting office and a pancake party.

SOUTH BUCKS EO MEETINGS, AND ANYONE ELSE WHOSE INTERESTED.

FRI. APRIL 11th - Hampden Hall Farm unit. SUN. JULY 6th Picnic at Stockgrove County Park with MK Group. SUN. AUG 17th Swimming at Jane Burns smallholding. (other dates to be fixed soon, we aim to meet monthly from April) Further details from JULIE WEBB HADDENHAM 290773.

SHROPSHIRE, WORCESTER, W. MIDLANDS, ETC., We are in easy reach of all the above counties and invite all members to come to a get together in the countryside. We'd like to make new friends and see our old friends again. JUNE 14th ALL DAY. HEATH FARM HOUSE, BRIDGEMORTH. PHONE BRIDGMOUTH 66016 FOR DIRECTIONS. See you in the summer. JOHN HELEN LOCKLEY

KENT. Last meeting was held on 12th FEB. '86 Victoria Park, Ashford. Despite cold weather approx. 40 families arrived from Dartford, Sittingbourne, Hythe, etc. The children enjoyed the paint, glue and dough, the more robust made maximum use of the 'white stuff' for snowballing, sledging and building snowmen. The afternoon passed quickly and I'm sure that everybody left having gained something from their contact with each other. NEXT MEETING! RICHARD AND MARY FRYD'S BEULT HOUSE. CHURCH WALK. HEADCORN. MAIDSTONE. SAT. 26. JULY. 11am. TEL. 891269



NORWICH & NORFOLK

1985 seemed to be the year that EO activities in Norwich and surrounding areas really took a turn for the better. We now have 55 families registered with EO, although not all with children out of school. We have a regular newsletter N.E.O.N. (Norwich EO News) which comes out bi-monthly, it can be obtained by sending 6-2nd class stamps to :- SIMON MIDDLETON, 23 PLUMSTEAD RD. NORWICH.

This tells of our various groups that have been started - regular museum classes, with the Education Officer at the museum, who is very interested and helpful to EO'ers. A regular under 5's music group and occasional 5 week sessions with various crafts people and musicians, full use of the school library and of the teacher's centre, can easily be negotiated if needed, thanks to fairly liberal Education Officers who have been most helpful and co-operative.

I would like to invite other national EO members, to meet us at a camping holiday, booked from Aug.27th - Sept. 3rd., at a conservation centre just outside Norwich. The centre is called How Hill and is run by a trust as registered charity. Facilities included in the 365 acres are woodland, river for boating, hides for observing rare birds and butterflies, several old churches, marshlands, formal gardens and is only a short distance from the sea. Cost is about £1. per person, per night. Please could you let me know by the end of June if you are interested in coming, so that we can gauge numbers etc. Look forward to seeing you - ANNE CLARK
33 ORCHARD ST. NORWICH NR2 4PR. TEL. 667053 (Norwich)

HERTS

Herts members continue to meet fortnightly on Tuesdays 10-12am at Apsley Community Centre, corner of Durrants Hill, A41, Hemel Hempstead, followed by swimming. Buses and Euston line trains stop within 200 yards. Bring your own lunch and activity. 75p per person including swimming. Please telephone JUNE GRANT (HEMEL HEMPSTEAD 64020) or MARY READ (BERKHAMPSTEAD 4524) to confirm.

Another 'exchange of skills' day will be held 10.30-4pm. Friday May 16th at Friends Meeting House, Paynes Park, Hitchin (in centre of town). Bring your own lunch and activity. Please telephone FRANCES HOWARD (HITCHIN 56294) to confirm.

At the last meeting we experimented with salt; tried Calligraphy; spinning and were shown the Pictogram system. ALL ARE WELCOME.

LEICESTERSHIRE

Leicester EO are going to have regular bi-monthly meetings at John Storer House, Wards End, Loughborough, Leicester. They will be held on the 4th Saturday of every-other month, at 10am. NEXT MEETING :- MAY 24th in the 'Round Table Room'. Wheelchair access, park, shops & Leisure Centre nearby. John Storer House is a community centre & refreshments are available. EO'ers from other areas welcome.

We try to provide interesting activities for the children - so far, Pop-up-card making; Peg dolls; Lino cutting & printing; shadow puppets etc, and invite families to bring a toy or game to share. So far about 10 families have taken part.

PHONE ASHBY (0530) 416734 for more information and details of other meetings and activities.

Education Through The Press

Edited by Janice Owen with contributions from Sarah Guthrie

'Britain has the poorest state education system in the industrialised world' said Dr John Rea retiring head master of Westminster School. 'Few children stayed after the age of 16 because the system had so little to offer' (Tel. 12.2.86)

Many parents obviously agree with him as 'independant schools are experiencing a boom. An unusually large number of inquiries come from parents with low incomes'. (TEL.4.1.86)

And the government too, as Sir Keith Joseph plans to open direct grant primary boarding schools for bright children from inner city areas. (TEL.16.11.85)

THINGS TO COME?

The Nat. Assoc. of Head Teachers proposes that compulsory education should continue to age 18. 'Common education for all the traditional school type should end at 14. Pupils would then be channelled into four years education, training and work experience mixed to suit the individual student', receiving an allowance at 16 with an increase at 17. (TEL.5.2.86)

TEACHERS

Secondary school heads are complaining of a 'near fatal haemorrhage' of their best teachers who are leaving to start their own businesses, emigrate, or enter better paid jobs. A third who have left were science and maths specialists. (TEL.5.2.86)

Thus the government is planning to offer a £1,200 'carrot' on top of the normal grant to anyone accepted on a teacher training course in maths, physics, craft, design and technology and chemistry. (TEL.21.12.85)

But applications for graduate teacher training places dropped by 28 last year, with higher figures for maths and physics. (TEL.21.1.86)

More secondary school heads are leaving and more local authorities are finding it more difficult to replace them. 10,721 teachers took premature retirement last year, more than 3,000 of them before the age of 55. (TEL.30.12.85) A record of 2,424 were pensioned off on 'Breakdown pensions'. Most Authorities report an increase in stress related illnesses among their teachers. (TEL.9.12.85)

One dedicated headmaster committed suicide after being 'torn apart' in the cross fire between parents and striking teachers. The last straw was abusive mail from parents whose children were sent home at lunchtime. (TEL.6.12.85)

A large number of teachers who are also parents are undergoing a period of bordering on schizophrenia—as teachers withdrawing from all after-school activities including homework marking and lesson preparation while as parents worrying about their own children missing education. (TEL.4.11.85)

EXAMS

Sir Keith Joseph is irresponsible to insist on scrapping 'O' levels and CSE in favour of the new GCSE exam when teachers have not been prepared for it. 'Thousands of young people could have their academic chances ruined' said the Nat. Assoc. of Head Teachers. (TEL.17.2.86)

Prof. John Tomlinson of Warwick University's Institute of Education said that 'alternatives to written exams and testing subject knowledge would have to be found if education was to make any real headway. Education is in danger of collapse unless a new vision and leadership could be created and participants everywhere came to feel it was worthwhile and respected'. (TEL.3.1.86)

At present more than a third of fifth formers in Inner London secondary schools are unable to cope with further education without special provision. (GUARDIAN 21.1.86)

SEX

A Headmaster who denied having sexual intercourse with a 14 yr. old pupil was found guilty and jailed for 18 months. (TEL. 14.12.85.)

Another Headmaster who also acts as a youth development officer is on bail accused of sexually assaulting a 15 yr. old boy. (TEL.8.1.86)

An unidentified teacher admitted on TV that he had sexually assaulted 2,000 children, one every three days average. (TEL.23.12.85)

Seven teachers in Los Angeles are to stand trial on 135 charges of molesting nursery school children and forcing them into bizarre sex games and rituals. (TEL.11.1.86)

A pamphlet on 'Gay and lesbian rights' called 'Changing The World' produced by the GLC has been submitted to Sir Keith Joseph as an example of classroom indoctrination. It calls for 'The richness and diversity of homosexual experience to be reflected in the curriculum'. (TEL)

'Further checks to prevent those with a record of sexual offences against children from getting jobs in areas such as teaching and social work will be introduced on April 1st' said Mr. G. Shaw, Minister of State, Home Affairs. (TEL. 18.1.86)

DRUGS

A 5 yr. old boy has become a glue sniffer, according to the Birmingham Advisory Committee on Solvent Abuse, which has become used to dealing with cases among 8 and 9 yr. olds. (TEL.6.11.85)

A Head teacher of a prep school, who ran a seminar on the dangers of drug abuse and who has banned typing corrective fluid in his school also says, 'I think every child experiments with cigarettes and later alcohol and I would think it pretty unimaginative if they didn't'. (TEL.19.2.86)

The Nat. Assoc. of Head Teachers have agreed to no longer attempt to wear pupils off drugs, glue sniffing and alcohol but will bring in parents and the police immediately.

VIOLENCE

In a study based on conversations with some 50 youngsters involved in violence, all the interviewees saw school and teachers as powerless and not submitting them to any serious authority backed by effective actions. They felt that teachers should have much more power in schools and that pupils needed more moral education and more firm uncomplicated guidance on right and wrong. (TEL.18.1.86)

The 'Poundswick 5' are being home tutored. (TEL)

A 12 yr. old boy who threw a tennis ball which hit a dinner lady blinding her in one eye, must pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of the damages awarded her. (TEL.27.11.85)

A 'Crime League Table' of 16 Comprehensive schools has been drawn up by police in Sheffield. Rates vary from 7% of pupils involved in crimes (the worst) to 0.18% (the best) (TEL. 2.11.85)

After fighting between pupils at the new Comprehensive School in Liverpool, 7 boys have refused to return to their classes because the Head would not guarantee their safety in writing. (TEL.13.2.86)

In JAPAN-3, 15 yr. old schoolboys have been arrested for attacking 6 teachers. A schoolboy aged 15 hanged himself in his dormitory after being beaten by fellow pupils. Last year bullying caused several suicides in Japanese schools. (TEL.7.12.85 & 24.1.80)

A 15 yr. old girl died after being covered with spray shaving foam at an end-of-term disco. Messing about with foam aerosoles has become an end-of-term ritual in many schools. (TEL.23.12.85)

ADULT STUDENTS

Jane Shepherd, 30, whose dyslexia was not discovered until she was 22, has just graduated with distinction from the Open University. (TEL.28.1.86)

Mature students who lack normal university requirements are more likely to get a good degree and less likely to drop out - but they may outgrow their friends and spouses. (TEL.31.1.86)

READING

Oxford University Press are producing a new reading scheme called the 'Oxford Reading Tree'. Test results show pupils making the same progress in one term that took a year with other schemes. Teachers using it say it helps a child to love books. It includes stories, flashcards workbooks, story cassettes and games. (TEL.31.1.86)

SUCCESS STORIES

Sixth formers at a Manchester Grammar School won 2nd prize in a major national video film making competition with an entry dealing with the training of police horses and have been asked by Manchester police force to produce a full length video about the training of the police! (TEL.3.2.86)

Pupil from sevenoaks school have helped to develop a 'Moonwriter' machine for the blind based on an alphabet developed by Dr Willeams Moon more than 100yrs ago which is simpler than braille. (TEL.6.2.86)

Sharnbrook Comprehensive, Beds., Has made profits of more than £2,000 from their company 'Eggs Unlimited' which produces and markets eggs, poultry, and pigs. They also Keep sheep and have a thriving horticultural unit. (TEL.30.12.85)

JARGON

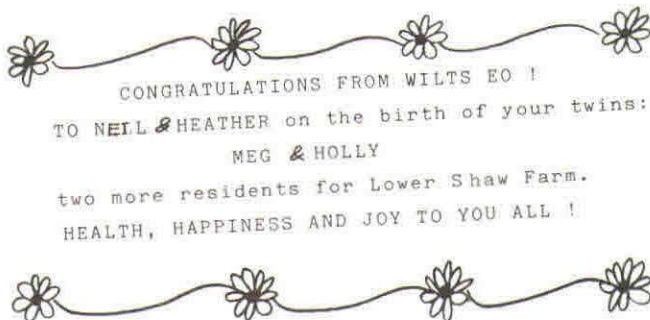
A happy note to end on - you may now impress/decive your LEA inspector by describing your childrens play as 'Uninstructed motor activity' (TEL.5.2.86)

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MEG & HOLLY

two more residents for Lower Shaw Farm.
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2ND HAND EO RECOMMENDED BOOKS WANTED

Particularly John Holt's TEACH YOUR OWN
Also any other books people have found
helpful or inspiring, but no longer need.
I'm a very poor single parent.

Ms. A. ROSLYN MADDEN. 34 MOUNTWAY
WELWYN GARDEN CITY. HERTS. AL7 4LB

red logo on white says
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10 YEARS OLD

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E.O. AND THE ONE-PARENT FAMILY

No room for me to do more than mention a couple of groups not discussed elsewhere in the supplement. These are Gingerbread (for all one-parent families) and Cruse (for those whose spouses have died). Both these organisations are bursting with advice and practical help (e.g. Gingerbread's holidays) and have local branches whose addresses will be in your library. Julie Webb.

Maggie Swatridge writes: I think most of us are terrified of the almost inevitable financial insecurity, and of 'what people will say' possibly, but I'd like to encourage those who believe that home education is both/either best or necessary for their child(ren).

It's probably worthwhile to approach DHSS and Citizen's Advice Bureau or similar about support so one does not have to take part in a desperate hunt for adequately paid employment but feels able to be a full-time 'stay at home' E.Oer. The Court and Conciliation services may sort out suitable arrangements to allow this.

In many ways, especially if husband's prospects are dodgy or he's 'troublesome', it may be better to investigate a monetary lump settlement to be used for the 'bricks and mortar' of a suitable home (even if it's not possible to stay put in the family home) as the DHSS may well allow for mortgage payments as well as covering rates, etc. Life on 'supplementary' may require good budgeting (suggested reading: Shirley Conran's 'Superwoman' and Shirley Goode's 'The Goode Kitchen') but it does at least ensure a regular income (plus milk and vitamins, free dental treatment and prescriptions) with you 'in charge' of it. A single parent family cannot run quite like most normal so-called dual-headed ones. So, look positive; actively CHOOSE your lifestyle. Aim to create an easy-care home and economy so chores do not become just that, 'chores'. Joint participation may be difficult especially in early years; more people at home for longer periods will inevitably mean a continuous 'lived-in' look: accept it, and provide plenty of baskets and shelves! Nobody should ever mind a 'busy' look about a place: anyone who does is probably insecure themselves, so don't worry about the neighbours.

It is far better to spend the daytime doing things together with the children, far less exhausting than trying to keep an eye on them, or keep 'assisting', whilst fitting in those major chores. It can actually be quite peaceful doing the washing-up in the evening, and you can choose a suitable TV or radio accompaniment (as long as you don't try to do too much in one go). Home education, confidently and freely undertaken, can help both parent and offspring to find interest and understanding of their (new) life.

However, as one usually feels more 'vulnerable' I do feel we ought to recommend that 'witnesses', like a friendly E.O co-ordinator, are present at meetings with 'Authority'. But don't let 'kindly' folk make you believe E.Oing is impossible for a single parent. It may need more note-scribbling but life may be very much easier and fulfilling this way. Another old chestnut is 'You must have interests of your own', 'You must do your own thing'. There's nothing wrong with being interested in your children, E.O. and all things that evolve even if one can't show or pursue an accepted 'personal' hobby. E.O. opens whole new worlds, not only to the kids. Nor is it clinging.

To summarise the problems and advantages then:

3 categories: 1) Finance (see above)

2) Practicalities:

only 1 pair of hands

working out safe procedures, e.g. for walking out, car, visits, shops, kitchen

minimum fuss

living: repairs, shops, etc. part of E.O

Generally, necessary to assume that all children will have to accompany you everywhere

3) Support:

E.O-writing, phone, magazine, visits, if possible.

Relatives - may take much 'education' (may be scared)

Other single parents

Neighbours - watch attitudes, often have to clock-watch because of school

Pluses:

No strict timetable
Standards kept are your own, and your EO kids'
Way of life, interests, can also be your own
No extra work, possible worry, etc. of a husband!
Camping with EO families?
No social status to have to keep up with - let yourself
be the 'eccentric'
Clarifies life's priorities and enjoyments
Encourages increasing self-sufficiency, confidence,
DIY, variety, organised chaos
Time to experience nature, music...
Reduction of pressure to 'do', produce stilted end-products
Encouragement of use of the imagination, enterprise with
different 'local' resources
Keeps children in touch with reality and gives them
confidence to cope

Maggie adds: I strongly recommend keeping the double bed. EOers have time for those precious 'early-morning cuddles' so they lead on to most valuable and cosy discussions of philosophy, psychology, rhyme and song...as well as plans for today!

In the next piece, Cathy Sunshine discusses the advantages of living as part of an EO community when you're EOing as a single parent:

I never even considered 'normal' schooling an alternative for Robin (7) and the local Steiner school didn't attract him, so we're living (since Sept.) in a caravan in the garden of a large and friendly EO family, in a budding community in N. Wales which considers integrating children one of its priorities, along with fun, personal growth and an ecologically balanced lifestyle. "Teaching" comes very hard to me, and my patience runs out fast, so I'm not one of yer natural 'home educators'. I have no system or curriculum to follow, but rather want to provide Robin with an environment where interested adults are pursuing various crafts and skills, with time to share with interested children. Personally, I can share chanting, nature walks, rockpool investigations ad infinitum; and as I relax into country life I can see my tolerance of my shortcomings increasing by leaps and bounds, and my interests and abilities expanding.

I think it's very important for Robin to have plenty of other people, of all ages, to interact with at this stage, besides me, as I grow out of my own childish behaviour patterns with him. For myself, being around other parents who have unshakeable faith in children's intelligence and ability to learn from daily life is incredibly supportive.

As Robin is starting to be interested in reading we may sit down with a book (we like the Puffin 'Step Ahead' system) and every so often we talk about numbers. He enjoys writing cards to his grandma; and I feel that playing on the moors all day is equally, if not more, valuable. As a community we have a music and drama workshop and a science workshop every week, where some of us share our enthusiasm in these areas with the children; and we're slowly learning to let go of the "teacher/pupil" syndrome in these more formal situations. I think it works for us because we're living in an environment we both love, that nourishes and supports us, both with regard to the people and the closeness of nature. When Robin goes to spend time with his father, in a totally different environment, I am confident that their love for each other is enough to help Robin through any adjustments he needs to make. And as far as his "education" goes, he has the advantage of quite another view of the world, and I'm sure is greatly enriched by it.

Inbetween our arguments Robin and I have a very close relationship, since there's just us. I see this as one of the very positive aspects of single-parenting. In the context of a larger supportive community, home-based learning works very well for us.

Peter Lawrence writes about his efforts to educate his two children at home, the problems he encountered, the way these were finally resolved for him and the lessons he draws from his experience:

Teaching a 6 and 8 year old at home on my own wasn't easy. Naomi (6) had never been to school and Julien (8) had had a number of disastrous attempts, first in a traditional private school, then a small village school and then, after some home education, in a Steiner school. None of these seemed to work: he lacked any form of positive motivation and always became very upset at the thought of getting up to go to school.

So after all this, and a period of relative inactivity in a fairly normal matrimonial environment, I found myself alone with the children. I felt they would be motivated by my enthusiasm and put together a programme which I hoped would give them routine, structure, freedom and security.

We had formal work in the mornings, basically the 3Rs and LOOK science projects. The afternoons were free. The week was structured with swimming lessons twice a week and horse-riding and pottery once a week for both children. In addition, Naomi had a drama class and Julien a chess club. The remaining time was filled with painting, drawing and nature study.

It seemed to work well but for two fundamental difficulties: I could only be in one place at a time and motivation in the 3Rs was still a problem, as it had been for Julien since he was five. Now it was rubbing off onto Naomi. It was this motivation issue, particularly in regard to reading and writing, which led to Julien being taken out of school. It seemed to make little difference, and with a two year age gap it was so difficult to leave one and sit down with the other, as their reading and writing skills are so different. It was tiring and frustrating, and I began to think 'Is it all really worth it?'

At this point, as it happened, a judge ordered them to school (I am still at home looking after them) and hey presto! the children have changed. They've settled into school remarkably well and are both happy, outgoing, confident and enthusiastic. They've improved their reading and writing skills at an incredible rate and they love it. Both of them like reading aloud now, something which Julien would never do, but now I can't stop him.

But then neither of them had any choice and neither did I - and there I think is probably the crux of the matter: I am sure there is no simple answer to their success as there are so many factors involved, far too many to mention here, but I do sincerely believe that the answer lies with the parent(s) and their attitude.

As a family we were always concerned and worried about their education, always dissatisfied with the options, always looking for something better. And I think here lies the problem. This uncertainty had rubbed off onto the children, and they felt nervous and insecure, especially as they could see their peer group all going to school and having to make the most of it. Why should they be different? Now, after the court order, there are no choices, there is no point in being dissatisfied. It is a matter of getting on with it and it's up to the kids to make the most of it; they have done and they have my total support. After all, isn't that all we can do, give them support and encourage them positively in whatever it is they do? The Scottish Health Education poster "Children learn what they live" is something that I feel presents all our problems in a nutshell. My recent experiences with my children seem to me to prove it.

This contribution, from Alvena Hillier, considers the problems faced by a single parent EOer who has to be away from home for part of the day, for work or study reasons:

I had been on my own for five years when I withdrew my daughter, then 6, from school because she was unhappy. I was therefore confident within a familiar situation of being a single parent and used to making decisions.

I took the decision and acted before informing my ex-husband or my immediate family, although my family were very much more upset than my ex-husband. He has never interfered, nor tried to dissuade me. He lives some way away and doesn't see the children often. Other members of my family have a traditional public school background, thoroughly disliked, but seen as a means to an end, i.e. procuring a good job. Might have had some validity years ago but not now in my opinion. I do not see this as a reason for education, having liberal views on this. They reacted even more strongly when I withdrew my son at the end of his prep schooling, especially as he had won an assisted place to a minor public school. (I withdrew my daughter the year before). Although my son, now thirteen, had always disliked school, I thought the male influence of his all-boys prep school important in order to provide the man model lacking at home. I came to the conclusion that either his happiness or male influence would have to be sacrificed and decided his happiness was more important. He had, after all, tried school for six years. He had a horror of going on to secondary school, and his health had definitely suffered from the pressures of school as he spent much of his time off sick.

The strongest reaction came from the small community in which we live. I had already labelled myself as different by being divorced. I had also started college as a mature student. This was the last straw for many people, and we were all embarrassed at being seen out during school hours. Thankfully, three years later most people have accepted the situation. Those people who really helped me were my friends who had similar liberal views on life as me and with whom I could discuss first the idea of home education and then the practicalities.

As I have already mentioned, I had started college when I withdrew my daughter. It was the college course which had awakened me to the fact that learning was fun, stimulating, definitely to be enjoyed. Coincidentally, there was a programme on TV at the same time featuring an EO family in Wales. It appealed to a friend of mine who immediately withdrew her two boys and she offered to take my daughter for the times I was at college. She (my daughter) was naturally social but was becoming pale and tearful after only two years in the Infants.

My son stayed on for another year. The end of his primary schooling seemed to be the natural break. I was then about to start my final year at college and was relying on my friend to take both children. To my dismay, she became too unwell to continue and I was faced with the dilemma of sending them to school or not completing my course. Luckily, I was able to find another friend to look after them. She did not approve but needed the money! I was able to pay for this out of my grant - quite generous for a mature student with no adult dependants. No formal education took place during this year but my son needed time to adjust. He wasn't sure whether he wanted to be at home - just that he didn't want to go to school.

During this time we had our first visit from the Education Advisers: two, one for Primary (my daughter) and one for Secondary (my son). They came together and were very pleasant. Once they knew I was at college their attitude changed and we discussed education conceptually rather than what we were doing practically. I believe the fact that I was a single parent did arise (I think I mentioned it) but it certainly was not a factor used against me.

I think that there are differences in being a single parent with home educated children rather than additional problems. I have tried to use these differences to advantage, e.g. the running of the home has to be done by both men and women; the fact that I can do those jobs traditionally done by dads. Financially, there are drawbacks. Of course, I am not available for full-time, paid, outside work. (This is a further source of criticism by my family, as they feel I am throwing my degree away. I feel I am using it to the full!). Like many single parents I receive supplementary benefit. There are

savings to be made by the children being at home, and all the free resources are exploited as much as possible. The children can see where the money goes and why they can't have everything they want. My son is heavily into pop music and managed to mend my elderly record player through sheer determination. Not the same as a stacking Hi-Fi but at least he can play his records! My daughter, now ten, is a great joiner: Guides, ballet, violin, piano, amateur dramatics, and this puts an extra strain on the family budget especially with the travelling involved. But we manage somehow. I realise that an undiluted diet of me is not good for any of us, so I cannot discourage any outside activity. I pay a friend a token amount to give my son an art lesson a week, and they spend a lot of time talking. Another friend, who does supply teaching, has offered to give either or both French lessons, but neither wants to learn. My son started French lessons at prep school and so, dislikes it.

I splashed out on correspondence courses in Maths for them both, as I felt shaky in this area, but now I just buy the text book and carry on. The publisher was happy to supply single copies of the text book. From last September we have followed selective BBC TV programmes with the teachers' notes obtained by an EO friend who states she is a school for the purpose (perhaps this information is privileged!). This gives the week some structure, which I prefer, and I knew I would need some of the load taken off my shoulders during my pregnancy. We liked the history and English courses on the whole, and we all had criticisms of some of the content. We now have a bouncing addition to the family - just a few weeks old at the time of writing. Thanks to the children being familiar with the running of the house, and being able to cook, we all take a share in looking after baby, and this gives us all time to study.

So far I haven't discussed the disadvantages of having no-one to have the children if I want some free time. I realised when I decided to have them at home that we would be together all the time, or nearly all the time. I must admit that we do grate on each other sometimes, but because the home is geared to there usually being something to do, boredom (a source of irritation) is rarely a problem. And because we all want EO to work, we tend to sort out differences as they arise. I like my children's company and will always be grateful to them for their tolerance and understanding when I was at college. Our house isn't big but we each have our own room to which we can retire for privacy which is respected. I also do not have the problem of having to divide my time between a partner and the children - our activities, meals, etc. are arranged to suit ourselves.

Through being EO Co-ordinator for Devon and giving occasional talks on the subject I feel very committed to the concept of home education and this fact reduces much of the conflict which the situation might produce.

Candida Fawsitt describes her epic search for the right way to combine home education with a sociable setting in which to live. The first part of her account was first printed in October, 1983 in the Notting Hill NCF newsletter:

Children with one parent have clear advantages if that parent can find ways to use the one-to-one relationship to establish foundations for emotional stability and create an environment of optimum learning.

With this in mind, let's firstly consider practicalities. I recommend reading 'One Parent Families' by Diana Davenport (Pan). This combines endless advice with encouragement and understanding from a woman who reared eight children single-handed. The appendix lists helpful organisations including the National Council for One Parent Families, 255 Kentish Town Road, N.W.5. Tel: 01-267 1361. I have found them extremely helpful and sympathetic with problems as varied as legal, housing, mortgages, social security, paternity suits, immigration and emotional dilemmas. You can ring 9.30-5.30 or just drop in. Unfortunately

there is only one central office. As Diana Davenport says: "we could do with branches, like banks, on every high street".

I cannot in good faith recommend the self-help organisations. There is only one experience more limiting than a room full of single parents and that's a coach full. Self-help groups do little more than perpetuate the existing circumstances, i.e. if you're surrounded by people with the same problem, the group problem intensifies. Isolation can be better overcome by going out every day and talking to people and if possible helping them; being open to others and visiting places where there are people to meet: single parents must reject not only being isolated and ostracised by society but also pigeon-holed and thereby segregated.

OK, this is all very idealistic, but as individuals we can change the pattern by including our children in our lives both at home and at work, thus engendering social integration for our children to perpetuate when they become adults. Of primary importance is a whole and close relationship with our children and a life-style where the child is welcome to come along and so learn through experiencing. It is not necessary to have money to do this and possible to encompass many experiences while managing on an income as meagre as supplementary benefit. See, for example, 'Discovering London for children' by Margaret Pearson (Shire).

Alternatively, it is possible to choose a job where your child can accompany you, preferably not a sedentary or static occupation but one where the child can participate or play without being physically restricted. I know single parents who have achieved this while pursuing: photography, theatre, weaving, painting, interior decoration, gardening and cooking.

Jobs can also be shared with children in our own homes. I have been helped to accept and benefit from my situation by allowing my son to be involved in my activities. I believe him to be a person no more or less than I, and these early years are an opportunity for me to learn/re-learn with him through his experience. He was born two years ago, at home, after an active, drug-free labour. I still sleep with him and breastfeed if he needs comfort. I give him the opportunity to learn without forcing anything on him; he chooses what he wants to do, sleeps when tired, eats when hungry and continues without interruption when engrossed in an activity. These principles of nurturing seem innately right to me, ethically, morally, and philosophically sound, and I have recently re-discovered them in the following books: The Continuum Concept by Jean Liedloff (Futura), Magical Child by Joseph Chiltern-Pierce (Paladin) and The First Three Years of Life by Burton L. White (W. H. Allen). Studying child development theories and the educational theories of Montessori, Steiner and John Holt have given me a direction and a sense of being and purpose. I am a single parent, but primarily a mother and educator. What sense would it make to pass this unique responsibility on to anyone else?

Postscript

Well, it's February, 1986 and things have changed: the National Council for One Parent Families, once happily funded by the GLC, is now under threat from government grant withdrawals; Jean Liedloff's 'Continuum Concept' is to be reprinted in May, and a 'Continuum' newsletter published to coincide, and - we are no longer a single parent family!

The search for a wholesome situation where Julian can be out of school has seemed endless. Among many ideas explored were the following:

- 1) Stay put: top flat, central London. Tried to get regular EO gatherings locally with no success. Not enough contacts here for me or Julian, too isolating, no access to grass and trees, too much access to concrete jungle and carbon monoxide.

- 2) We visited communities and rejected them because: they didn't allow children enough freedom; children weren't allowed any toys and were offered work instead of playing; I couldn't accept him walking out of the house into traffic; children aren't allowed to know who their parents are; conflicts arose between my desire to stay with Julian and other adults encouraging me to leave him with them and do my own thing (despite his protests).
- 3) We visited communities and were rejected for: being a single parent - they'd had a difficult time with one and decided we are all the same; you can't share the work-load like a couple could; a woman alone with a child must be after someone's husband; "you remind me of my mother"; people involved with various therapies: not wanting to be involved with therapies.
- 4) We have endeavoured to start a community and faced the following difficulties: finding a place to purchase when not enough people were ready; another single parent having an affair with someone's husband (this split up the group); not being able to find enough likeminded people; not being able to convey my vision: feeling unhappy in a group of couples; feeling even more dispirited in a group of single parents; finding my real family unwilling to come with me; being unable to find ways of creating an extended family situation. Middle-class trendies come in droves: what about the rest of society, other age groups, single people, OAPs? How to make contact? Finally dissatisfied with the process of advertising ('Resurgence', 'Time Out', 'Communes Network', 'WOOFERS' Annual' etc.) seeing it as an offshoot of computer dating. How do you find people? Decide to give up looking and maybe it'll happen.
- 5) Attempted to buy a disused Catholic Priory with seventy-one nuns' cells - to run it as an alternative healing and birth centre: got gazzumped.
- 6) Joined a travelling theatre company. Excuse to visit the Avignon Festival. Production of King Lear involving ghoulish masks and bloody spectre acting: Julian terrified. Back to London, tail between legs.
- 7) Start my own theatre company - advertise in 'Stage' for 'Ex-actors with children they want to educate themselves'. No takers. Seemingly, the acting profession has little time for educating its own children, too worried about being upstaged. Still open to starting a puppet company and have kept my old union dues going.
- 8) Investigate religious groups which incorporate alternative education but can't stomach the restrictions - anyway can there be a right way? All ways are right if they get you there.
- 9) Find a substitute father. Aaaaagh! - forget it. See 'Mamas and Pappas', a dial-a-man service for single mothers: all right if you aren't fussy.
- 10) A trip to the Canaries to buy a small-holding in the mountains: property absurdly cheap but red-tape military - a Kafka nightmare.
- 11) Then there was SEED (A Forest Garden Village). Last heard of in California. News of them welcomed.
- 12) Shall I visit Stephen Gaskin's 'The Farm'? They say you can only make love if you want a child - well, so what? I'm single, I wasn't thinking about making love with anyone. Yes, but it's one hell of a restriction if I did want to - and do I really want to live on tofu for the rest of my life?
- 13) So many people I meet talking about 'Alternative Village': of course, that's it, only in the total environment of a self-sufficient 200 strong 'green village' can home education be truly supported! (Whatever happened to Cartwheel?).
- 14) Greentown in Milton Keynes: a government directed project to build an alternative village within the perimeter of the city. But will anyone ever cough up the money for it without the usual red-tape restrictions of a 'mortgageable' property coming into play?
- 15) Join 'A Village' group, which had a piece in the Feb. NL. Yes, lots of interesting things happening. Contact with them highly recommended to anyone searching for a group and friends.

16) Answered ad in 'Guardian': 'Ideal Small Community'...If you would like to discuss your ideas with a view to forming...please ring'. Turned out to be based on BIG business, a production line, a mansion in the country, a town house, money, money, money.

17) Visit group buying a redundant Bagwan residence with bidets to boot. Do we need a bidet for our boots?! Didn't we start by searching for the simple life?

18) Autumn '84 Green Gathering at Molesworth was the start of Rainbow Fields Village, an excellent demonstration of anarchic principles working positively: pity the land belonged to MOD! Over thirty children out of school there, but by the way, not by design. I got myself a tipi but never quite got there. Then there's Tipi Valley in Wales, and the Peace camps, all situations where children are with families. I am full of admiration for the Greenham Women and others, but don't feel right living without men.

19) What about visiting individual EO members? Share ourselves, our gifts and abilities and gain an extended family. Never would anyone in their wildest dreams imagine a more varied group of people than the EO membership. It has to be experienced to be believed and even then leaves the brain spinning. I have met a few families in EO I see on a regular/irregular basis, but my naive assumption that I would have much in common with most members was soon discovered to be a non-starter.

20) Finally, the softest of all options: Steiner. I'd always said that if nothing else materialised for Julian and me, I would take a Steiner teacher training course and give Julian over to the Steinerites in a school where I was teaching. Well, come last Autumn, Julian having reached his fourth birthday, I moved to Forest Row and began the course. By October I'd dropped out. I have no quarrel with Steiner, but school is school and freedom is freedom.

SO - now I write from a beautiful, wet valley in SW Wales where a community is forming. There is no selection process. I've had pleasure in selecting myself. There's no rejection process either. If I want to go I'll have to reject myself. Julian is not pressurised by nine-to-five or anything else. He continues as he has been, educating himself, and come his fifth birthday, I see no reason for things to change. Ideas flow from different surroundings, familiar surroundings, people, places, aspects of life absorbed. Academic stuff can wait. He's involved with making, inventing, imagining. He stopped feeding at two and a quarter and still sleeps with me. Finding a man/friend who understands these ways is consoling, but I thank god I had the courage to feel what was right and reject unright advice, during these years of being alone.

What I have learnt through all this travelling and meeting people, is that the lot of the single parent differs little from that of the married women whose husband is out at work, who is isolated with small children and pressurised by her peers to return to work and give the responsibility for her children's welfare and education over to an institution, i.e. child-minder, pre-school group, nursery, creche, au-pair, etc. Continuum Concept has made me look again at women in primitive groups and to realise how much support they receive from each other: women in Bushman tribes, etc. doing daily tasks together while the men were out hunting. Maybe men's and women's groups in contemporary society are a substitute for this necessary comradeship, though how engineered are the circumstances where we come together to share our problems rather than meeting to work and play together with our children.

The right solution isn't easy to find, as I think I have demonstrated. Our addresses over the past four years fill as many pages in a friend's address book! I still keep an open mind but feel my current situation is capable of providing the wholesome environment, the comradeship and support needed, both for us and others. If anyone would like to discuss these ideas or obtain more detailed information about any of the options mentioned, I will be pleased to help. Please write to me at:

The Continuum Trust, Stone Hall Mill, Wolfscastle, Welsh Hook, Haverfordwest, DYFED, South Wales.

EDUCATING ARCHIE

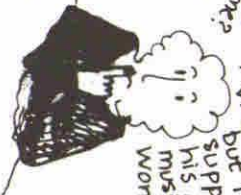
by SSG 1986

but how can you do SCIENCE subjects at home?



Answers: Mum's dropped her for a instant

Well, Leonardo da Vinci managed, but I suppose his Mum must have worried...



and Mrs G. goes back in time...



I'M WORRIED



about Leonardo da Vinci. He really needs a fully-equipped laboratory and a computer and a PET.

quietly dear Mummy's daydreaming



MUM I'M BORED

Ms. daVinci, they have not been invented yet how can you do this stuff at home? thought though it's



well, Aristotle managed all right & I don't think he went to school - but I suppose his Mum must worried...



The Kipper

is a magazine for children by children full of Jokes and Competitions

Return your order - Fish to: KIPPER, 21 DESIGNER HIGH RD

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567 LIVERPOOL TX

LEGAL REPORT



Gill and Tom Forsyth, one of our two families in long-standing legal conflict, have been acquitted in the magistrate's court on their new attendance order, because the LEA withdrew it's summons. The LEA had run into difficulties in it's attempt to overturn the appeal which the Forsyths won in the High Court: there have been so many procedural errors that the LEA is unlikely to succeed, but there may not be a clear conclusion in favour of home education. The best we can hope for is probably a technical victory. In that case they will not have to pay the major fine involved, but they have still incurred costs of £2000 before going on to legal aid. Any financial help would be welcome, either through the Family Support Fund or direct to them, (contact list West London).

Barbara and Ken Hooley, who have been home educating for several years, are suddenly being subjected to intense harassment, but they have kept their heads, got a good solicitor, and all the help and advice available. Threats of a place of safety order, interim care order and care order have been successively withdrawn as social services admit that they do not have sufficient evidence for them. They still have to deal with problems on several fronts, however, Leeds seems to have pulled out all the stops to make them a test case because the LEA has just lost two cases.

Three families have joined EO in the midst of legal proceedings. For two of these we suspect racial prejudice is compounding poor communications. We put them all in touch with a good solicitor, which is the most we can do when a problem has reached this stage.

Three member families have been summonsed but not yet tried under s.37 (LEA not satisfied) and we are helping them to negotiate with their LEA's, with a view to getting the summons withdrawn. We have just heard that two have succeeded. We could do with some support from experts in court procedure and presentation, and some expert witnesses. We have had some response to our request for names of good solicitors, but more are always welcome.

Two other families were in conflict with the LEA under s.37 although a summons had not been issued. They were in a strong position educationally, and in each case the trouble was due to one prejudiced but senior education officer who was 'not satisfied' because he wanted to get the children into school on principle. They have both been helped to reach a satisfactory conclusion, but there are other families who are still having trouble.

We keep hearing of LEA's who, to put it charitably, are misinforming families of their rights. Often the culprit is an EWO, but one recently was an assistant director of education, who was well aware of the legal position when challenged. We should be grateful for details if you come across this.

One LEA (Merseyside) is trying to statement gifted children - are there any others?

LEGAL STATISTICS 1985/6

We know of 30 families who are or have been under serious threat of being forced into school in the last year.

Of these, 8 are difficult to help for various reasons, though they have been offered various types of help; they have nearly all been prosecuted, mostly before joining EO.

5 families have reasonable LEA's, are educating well, but had problems within the family; one left EO; and with the help of the co-ordinator the others are on good terms with their LEA.

The remaining 17 are educating well but have unreasonable LEA's. A few have made minor tactical errors which would not signify if the LEA were well-meaning, but often it is difficult to find any reason

except personal prejudice. Of these 8 are in active conflict, and 9 have won, or nearly so.

And hundreds are home educating without any bother.

ANNE WADE (WEST LONDON) ON BEHALF OF LEGAL GROUP.

AVOIDING A STATEMENT OF SPECIAL NEEDS

We have had several requests for details of how families have avoided statements of special needs.

In one case, an hour's closely-argued discussion with the co-ordinator and the parents (who were very firm and clear about what they wanted), resulted in a sensible, caring special needs adviser agreeing that making a statement would cause unnecessary stress, and the child's interests would best be served by informal cooperation.

Another child had been handicapped from birth. The family had pressure to agree to a statement quite early. They kept putting the authority off on the grounds that the child was developing so quickly now that any statement would be out of date before it was made. They investigated the local provision for special needs and were not satisfied. When it came to the term in which he was 5, they asked if they could wait until next term (knowing they had the right anyway) because he had just about reached a 3 year old level in each area of development, and was not ready to go on to the next phase. The next term they said much the same, and again it was accepted. In the meantime they had been working on all their professionals (G.P. paediatrician, health visitor, physio- and speech therapists) to convince them that home education was appropriate. Eventually they had collected letters from all of them, all backing them up. The LEA had as much information as if they had had a statement made, but the parents kept control of the situation. The LEA were being asked to follow a course of action which save paperwork and money. There had been no battle and there was no question of losing face. After considerable delay the LEA wrote to the parents saying they could educate the child at home for as long as they wished.

The parents were very polite and cooperative. They assumed that the LEA was primarily concerned with the child's welfare, and seemed to call out the positive side of the officials they met. It seemed at first that they might be bullied into line, as they were very wary of doing anything which could lead to court; but they found strength as necessary because they were fighting for their child. Above all they were very clear about what they wanted and how they would go about it.

Some practical points they made:-

1. The staff ratio was less favourable than the 1:1 situation at home.
2. The child's emotional age should be taken into account: he had only just learned to relate well to members of his own family; a normal child would not be expected to separate at this stage.
3. Too much energy would be used on travelling, adapting to a strange environment and coping with the demands of school, at a time when he needed every scrap of energy for his remedial programmes.
4. The present arrangements for these would be disrupted when they were working well. (Weekly sessions with physio- and speech therapists, with mother meanwhile working intensively with him for several hours a day under their guidance.)
5. It would prevent him from attending a normal playgroup, where he was beginning to be integrated - this was a stimulating environment at an appropriate level,

providing far better role models than would be available in a special school.

Another family seems to have stopped a statement in the early stages by moving to another area. If a statement has been made for a child and the family then moves to another authority's area, they return to square one: if the child comes to the attention of the new LEA they may make a statement, but they may only use the the original reports if the parents agree, and if the previous statement is less than three years old.

Some LEA's (eg ILEA and Chesire) will not make statements unless the parents agree to it. If you want to avoid drawing attention to yourself you could ask at the local advice bureau or centre whether this applies to your area. If they do not know, ask them to find out for you. If that is the case, you just have to keep refusing. There may be increased pressure from professionals within the area who for various reasons want the child statemented, or there may be genuine cooperation with your arrangements. One family had a visit from an educational psychologist (which seems to be the common way for assessment to start) and explained they would continue to home educate. He has visited again twice, urging them to start a statement with a view to sending the child to an assessment centre. There isa strong possibility that this psychologist is mainly concerned about keeping up the numbers in a unit for which he has some responsibility. On the other hand, MARGARET Gilbert (South London) was visited by an educational psychologist who was interested and enthusiastic about what they are doing with Kitty (Downs); and the chairperson of the local special education panel (which decides the'fate' of statemented children) told her in a public meeting that as her child would not be going to school, she did not need a statement.

In the last NL. we spoke of losing EO rights if statemented, but this was too sweeping. If a statemented child is registered at an ordinary school and the LEA propose to transfer her to a special school, presumably she would have to be deregistered at some point, and the parents would then have a chance to exercise their 'otherwise' rights under s.36 of the 1944 Act and s. 7 of the 1981 Act:

'...it shall be the duty of the authority to arrange that the special education provision specified in the statement is made for him, unless his parent has made suitable arrangements.'

An LEA might act in an underhand way: has any child been taken from one school to the other during school time by the authorities? Once registered at a special school, the child cannot be withdrawn without the LEA's consent, which might make it difficult to remove her except by moving from the area. One family asked for a statement in order to make the LEA pay for a school which they believed to be particularly appropriate for the next stage of their handicapped child's development, after several years of home education. Their educational psychologist assured them that if it did not work out they could withdraw the child, and they went ahead on this assumption. When they checked with the LEA, they were told that if they did this unilaterally they would be prosecuted.

The LEA has the right to insist on a statement being made, but all need not be lost. You have various rights to control the wording and if you wish to 'make suitable arrangements' as above, you should try and get it worded so that the needs as defined are compatible with what you can provide. Ultimately you can refuse to send him to the deignated school, wait for the LEA to be 'not satisfied' and challenge them to prove your provision is not suitable, like anyone else. If it is suitable, if you know your rights and have support, and obviously will pursue it to the end, without being unduly provocative, they will probably reach some agreement with you.

Sylvia Jeffs (021-706-6460) is experienced in this area, and families with special needs are welcome to ring her and discuss the strategy for arriving at an acceptable statement.

The above is our present understanding of the situation: please let us know if you think we are wrong or if your experience is different.

ANNE WADE

EO FAMILY SUPPORT FUND

GUIDELINES FOR THE OPERATION OF THE FUND

- 1) The everyday running of the fund; receiving and distributing money, will be the responsibility of the trustees and treasurer. The Treasurer of Education Otherwise will be an essential signatory to all cheques issued by the Family Support Fund.
- 2) The trustees are answerable to the Core Group for major changes in the use to which the fund is put and undertake to present an annual report on its activities to the Core Group.
- 3) Members of E.O. can apply to the fund for financial assistance either by direct application to one of the trustees, or by asking their local coordinator or a member of the legal group to contact the trustees on their behalf.
- 4) Each case will be dealt with on its own merits, taking account of the financial resources currently available, and the nature of the dispute. The points below are only general guidelines.
- 5) People will normally only be eligible for assistance from the fund if they are:
 - a) Members of EO.
 - b) Involved in a dispute (or the threat of) with a Local Education Authority or other government department which is imposing a financial burden on them.
 - c) Are not able to meet that financial burden without hardship.
 - d) Have generally acted in good faith towards their LEA.(This is not to suggest that families need have initiated contact with the LEA).
- e) **Are** keeping, or intend keeping their children out of school for educational, ethical, or religious reasons.
- 6) Assistance will only be for incidental expenses concerning dealings with LEA's. The fund is unlikely to consider paying legal costs, fees or fines.

Andy Jackson.
Cherity Laniado
James Fearnley
Trustees

Following Consultation, it has been decided that for the coming year 10% of income from membership fees, will be put aside for the F.S.F.

BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND:
23RD TO 26TH MAY

Once again it is the time of year which many of our members look forward to, i.e. the UNSTONE GRANGE Meeting.

Whilst I have never been to Unstone Grange, I have heard a lot about it, and the enjoyment which people have experienced by spending the May Bank Holiday weekend there.

The most important thing which I have to do is to thank JOAN HOARE for her contribution to the weekends, that of organising them, and I hope that my own efforts might go a little way towards being half as successful as Joan's have been in the past. I think I speak for the majority of members when I say a great big THANK YOU!

I, on the other hand, have been given a boost by having had a volunteer to undertake the task I was most dreading - that of finding activities for the children for the weekend. As a "first-timer" and new organiser, the task was beginning to look harder and harder, wondering if everything which has to be done will be done in time and everything run smoothly when the crunch comes. Hopefully it will!

Alison Mafham has kindly come forward with ideas for the children's activities and will be organising these, but would welcome any suggestions in addition to those which she will be mentioning in this newsletter. Anyone with any ideas should, therefore, contact Alison direct, either by letter or 'phone, her number is 0244-677452, her address being on the list of officers.

ACCOMMODATION:

Those people sleeping in the house will have to bring their own sheets or sleeping bag and pillow cases; blankets and eiderdowns are provided. Residents will be assigned a room number according to the size of their party, however, those unable to be accommodated in bedrooms and who are sleeping on the lounge floor are requested to be prepared to move their things to enable the room to be used during the daytime. Anyone requiring a cot are requested to bring their own.

Camping space is available for tents for up to 6 families and for about 4 vans. Visitors using these facilities are asked to provide their own cooking facilities as the kitchen in the house should be reserved for its residents. A cooker and sink are available in the outhouse with water available.

Anyone wishing to visit during daytime hours only are requested to bring their own picnic and drinks and are requested to use the booking form in order that we may be aware of the numbers in attendance.

The kitchen in the house is equipped with cookers, fridge, food storage space, crockery, cutlery, cooking utensils, washing-up liquid. There is a small Grocers in Unstone and shops in Dronfield including a fish & chip shop and Chinese takeaway. There is also a swimming pool and sports centre in Dronfield.

The weekend is strictly self-catering and everyone is asked to clean up after themselves in order that those people using the facilities after them may find them as they would wish to find them, in a clean condition!

Cancellations: Unfortunately, we are not in a position to refund monies for last minute cancellations as we must cover our expenses.

CORE GROUP MEETING AGENDA-PROVISIONAL
UNSTONE GRANGE SUNDAY 25th MAY 1986

- 1) Apologies.
- 2) Minutes: amendments and signing
- 3) a. More members needed for EO Association Ltd. to ensure a quorum AGM's.
b. All associate members to have right to attend Core Group meetings, plus AGM's and General Meetings (if any) - Joan.
- 4) Reports of officers and committees
 - a) Membership secretaries
 - b) Enquiries secretary
 - c) Co-ordinators secretary
 - d) Publications secretary
 - e) Treasurer-insurance, silk screen for T-shirts
 - f) Public relations officer
 - g) Research committee
 - h) Family support fund
 - i) Legal committee
 - j) Steering committee
- 5) Rolling fund local groups
- 6) Covenants - any further progress or information ? - Alison
- 7) Auditing accounts - Alison
- 8) Stock taking for auditing purposes - Joan
- 9) Fund-raising sub-group - Joe et al
- 10) Get-together for teenagers - Meg
- 11) Affiliations - June
- 12) Child Benefit for over 16's educated at home - any further developments ?
- 13) Later Years - Bruce
- 14) Southampton questionnaire - anyone know anything about it?
- 15) Registering under Data Protection Bill - Joan
- 16) Future venues - Featherstone Castle, Haltwhistle, Northumberland, near Hadrian's Wall - Joan
Somewhere needed for September
- 17) AOB

All members are welcome to attend Core Group meetings. Please send any further items for the agenda to me, JOAN HOARE. Would officers please do a report in writing to give to me at the meeting as this makes life easier for me ? If you cannot attend a meeting then please send me a report by post. Thanks.

Suggestions for future venues always welcome.

JOAN HOARE, 25 MOOR OAKS ROAD, BROOMHILL, SHEFFIELD S10 1BX.

TEL: 0742 666605

* LATE NOTICES * LATE NOTICES *

There will be a supplement on EO children with special needs in the June Newsletter. Members are invited to contribute, names and addresses will be withheld if requested. Send contributions to - SYLVIA JEFFS, 16 ST. BERNARDS ROAD, SOLIHULL. B92 7BB

Co-ordinator needed for DERBYSHIRE. Please contact CO-ORDINATOR SEC. ADDRESS ON BACK PAGE.

ACTIVITIES AT UNSTONE GRANGE

Activities at Unstone Grange weekends have always been many and various. I look forward to their being so again during the last weekend in May.

I hope to be able to arrange a full programme of activities for children and would welcome ideas and offers of help.

So far I have only made plans for the Saturday, which include the rehearsal and performance of a puppet play, (assuming I can collect enough hands to manipulate 18 puppets!) and a 'weight watchers' tea party - which won't be quite what you expect?

For Sunday no plans have been made as yet. I shall be absent from the scene of children's activities for part of the day at least, owing to a prior engagement (i.e. Core Group meeting) Perhaps there is someone coming to Unstone Grange who would like to take charge of the activities for that day? If so I would be delighted to hear from them.

An open discussion on the Techniques of and materials for, teaching a particular subject, is an event which has proved both enjoyable and useful in the past. I wonder of there is anyone who would like to organise such an event for the Saturday evening? If there is, I would, once again, be very pleased to hear from them.

ALISON MAFHAM. 3 PARK ROAD WEST, CURZON PARK, CHESTER CH4 8BQ
TELEPHONE. 0244 677452

THE EDUCATION INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE AT UNSTONE GRANGE

Andy & Diane Anderson, 95 Derrington Avenue, Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 7JA
TEL. 0270 664060 23rd - 26th May

A large collection of educational books and some material, will be displayed in the games room at the top of the drive. For those parents who would like to do something of an educational nature with their children, there will be things to do and use, also giving an idea as to which items might be wished to be purchased in the future. Due to requests from members, we will be willing to sell a lot of the items on display, there and then. Further details will be sent out a few days beforehand on receipt of SAE and stamp. Offers of help from anyone attending appreciated, including those with knowledge on various subjects.

INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE

Andy and Diane Anderson, 95 Derrington Avenue, Crewe, Cheshire.
CW2 7JA TEL. 0270 664060

AN INFORMATION/ORDER FORM LIST IS AVAILABLE: The list contains used and recommended books and materials and can be used as a guide to assist those seeking suitable educational material for children of all ages.

MEMBERS ARE OFFERED THE USE OF THE RESOURCE CENTRE - If anyone has queries of problems with regard to what educational material etc. is available, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time, by phone, letter or visit. What we don't know we'll try to find out. Please feel free to use us.

As we get no funding from any source, would you ALWAYS include SAE for reply.

WHEN RECOMMENDING ANYTHING - PLEASE GIVE AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE. When recommending a book etc., please give title, author, publisher and price if known, and a rough idea of the age group it would be useful for.

UNSTONE GRANGE

BOOKING FORM

CHARGES, per person, per night:

	<u>Adults</u>	<u>Children</u>
	£ p.	(3-16 yrs) £ p.
Residential (in House)	4.00	3.50
Sleeping on floor in main lounge	2.00	1.00
Camping (Tents)	1.50	1.50
Camping (Van)	1.50	1.00
Day Visitors	1.00	-

NAMES:

Age (if
under 16)

ADDRESS:

Tel. No: _____

Proposed period of stay:

	<u>Nights</u>	<u>Days only</u>
Friday, 23rd May	Yes/No	Yes/No
Saturday, 24th May	Yes/No	Yes/No
Sunday, 25th May	Yes/No	Yes/No

Delete as applicable.

For those staying overnight, will you require accommodation:

In the house (beds)	Yes/No	For:	Camper Van	Yes/No
" " " (on floor)	Yes/No		Tent	Yes/No

Payment:

	<u>Total</u>
Adults... .. No: _____	£ _____
Children (over 3 but under 16) No: _____	£ _____
Non-returnable booking fee to cover administration	£ 0.50p
TOTAL:	£ _____

Cheques/Postal Orders should be made payable to EDUCATION OTHERWISE, and sent, together with the booking form to:

Pauline Thomasson (Mrs.), 4, Waggon Road, Bolton, BL2 5AB.

Preference must be given to members who book for the whole weekend to ensure that the costs are covered.

ACCOUNT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE. 19 SEPT. 1985 - 18 JAN. 1986

In hand on 19 SEPT. 1985		7254.93
<u>INCOME</u>		
From subscriptions	6207.65	
From sale of EO publications	297.18	
From sale of T.Y.O.	439.45	
From Subscriptions to G.W.S.	166.78	
From advertisements in the NL	158.00	
From meetings (Wick Court Oct 1985)	108.10	
Profit from week in Wales 1984, donated by organisers.	35.00	
Interest on funds in deposit account.	166.87	
<u>TOTAL</u>		7579.00
<u>TOTAL INCOME PLUS FUNDS IN HAND</u>		14833.96
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
<u>Regular</u>		
Production and distribution of NL and contact list	1902.32	
Production of other publications	25.60	
Purchase of T.Y.O.	244.80	
Subscription to G.W.S.	204.13	
Meetings(Wick Court Oct '85; Lower Shaw Farm '86)	873.50	
Subscriptions (Childrens Legal Centre)	18.50	
Co-ordinators expenses	294.79	
Officers expenses	984.96	
Legal Group expenses	40.20	
Bank Charges	30.71	
<u>EXTRAORDINARY</u>		
Public meeting in Kent	43.46	
Conversion of computer material	34.50	
Expenses of EO representation at Cnf. on Family Edctn.	5.00	
Purchase of book for chairman	5.00	
10th Anniversary T.shirts.	390.22	
Printing of S.I.N.C.	1559.00	
Donation to Essex group	25.00	
<u>TOTAL</u>		6381.69
In hand 18 JANUARY 1986		8452.27

OUR NEW CONSTITUTION

Diligent readers of that least interesting of the NL's regular features, the Core Group minutes, will have noticed that, after many delays, EO now has the doubtful honour of being both a limited company and a registered charity. We have taken these steps in spite of reservations, partly to protect our officers from the chill winds of unlimited liability, partly to present a more readily acceptable public face to the world, which as we grow may be useful to us.

The vital point to make, however, is that these changes will make no fundamental difference to the way we conduct our affairs. We are not now a bureaucracy in the making, run by experts and lawyers who can tie everyone else up in red tape. There is no need to understand the finer points of our 'off the peg' constitution as somehow curtailing the right and possibility of attending or taking a full part in Core Group meetings. These meetings are still not only open to all members, all members are genuinely welcome to attend them, so that we can remain an organisation, run by the membership, however large we may become.

BRUCE COX

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATION OTHERWISE ASSOCIATION LTD.

a precis:

(N.B. The Council Of Management is more popularly known as the Core Group.)

1) Legal definitions

2) The Association is registered with 100 members, which the Council can increase.

3) The provisions of section 110 of the Act shall be observed by the Association. Every member of the Association should sign a written consent before becoming a member, or sign the register of members.

4) The Association is established for the purposes expressed in the Memorandum of the Association.

5) Members of the Association shall be those subscribing to the Memorandum and others admitted by the Council.

General Meetings

6) One General Meeting should be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) to be held every calendar year with a maximum gap of 15 months between each. First AGM to be within 18 months after incorporation.

7) Other general meetings shall be called Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM).

8) The Council may convene an EGM whenever they think fit: a member may requisition an EGM as provided by section 132 of the 1948 Act.

9) An AGM, and every meeting convened to pass a Special Resolution requires 21 days notice in writing, specifying place, day and hour (and business if special). EGM's require 14 days notice.

10) The accidental omission to give notice to anyone shall not invalidate the meeting.

Proceedings at General Meetings

11) All business transacted at EGM's and AGM's is deemed special, apart from consideration of accounts, reports from the Council and Auditors, election of members of the Council in place of those retiring and the appointment and Remuneration of the Auditors.

12) The quorum for a General Meeting is 20 members.

13) Without a quorum after half an hour of starting, the meeting is dissolved or adjourned. The Council can decide when and where the next meeting is to be held. If a quorum is not present within half an hour after start of the meeting, the members present shall be deemed a quorum.

14) The Chairman of the Council shall chair General Meetings. If the usual Chairman is not present or refuses to preside, then another may be chosen as Chairman.

15) The Chairman may, with consent, adjourn meetings; no new business may be included in the adjourned meeting. If the adjournment is more than 30 days, notice must be given as for the original meeting.

Articles Of Association

16) Voting is to be by a show of hands, unless a poll is demanded by the chairman or by 3 members in person or by proxy. Except where a poll is demanded, the declaration by the chairman, plus the entry in the minute book is sufficient evidence of what happened.

17) Any poll demanded shall be taken how and when the chairman directs. The result of the poll shall be deemed the resolution of the meeting.

18) No poll is allowed on the election of the Chairman or on any question of adjournment.

19) The chairman has a casting vote.

20) The demand for a poll shall not impede other business.

Votes of Members.

21) Every full member has one vote.

22) At any General Meeting only full members who have paid their subscriptions and been registered are entitled to vote.

23) Votes may be given on a poll either personally or by proxy. On a show of hands a member present by proxy may not vote, but a proxy for a corporation can. A proxy need not be a member.

24 - 27) Instructions for appointing proxies.

Council Of Management (popularly known as the Core Group)

28) The Council is to number between 14 and 19 people, until otherwise decided by a General Meeting.

29) The first members are the subscribers to the Memorandum.

30) The Council shall consist of Chairman, General Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Publications Secretary, Enquires Secretary, Co-ordinators Secretary, 8-10 regional representatives and up to 3 others.

31) Extra members to the Council can be appointed from members of the Association but only up to the maximum number, lasting in office until the next AGM, when they will become eligible for re-election.

32) No-one who is not a full member of the EO Association Ltd., can be on the Council.

Powers Of The Council

33) The business of the Association is managed by the Council. The Council can pay any expenses incurred by the formation and promotion of the Association. It may not enact the business of General Meetings. It may act according to the regulations of the Articles of Association. No regulations passed by a General Meeting shall invalidate a prior act of the Council, made in good faith, which would otherwise have been valid.

34) A vacancy on the Council shall not invalidate any business. If members fall below minimum, the Council can still act to fill the vacancies, but for no other purposes.

Articles of Association

Secretary (i.e. the official post of Company Secretary)

35) The Secretary shall be appointed and removed by the Council according to section 177 of the 1948 Act. The Council may also appoint an assistant secretary, who may act as the Secretary if necessary.

The Seal

36) The seal of the Association is to be used only with the authority of Council and should be affixed to any document in the presence of the Company Secretary and at least one member of the Council.

Disqualification of Members of the Council

37) A Council member is disqualified if:-

- A. He becomes bankrupt.
- B. He becomes of unsound mind.
- C. He ceases to be a member of the Association.
- D. He resigns his office.
- E. An order is made against him under section 188 of the Act.
- F. He is removed from office by resolution.
- G. He ceases to be a member by virtue of section 185 of the Act.

Rotation of Members of the Council

38) At each AGM one third of the members of Council shall retire.

39) The longest standing members shall retire first. They are eligible for re-election.

40) When a member retires the vacancy should be filled. The retiring member may be re-elected, unless it is expressly resolved not to fill the vacancy, or the meeting does not approve the members re-election.

41) No new member can be elected without 4-28 days notice to the General Secretary, including notice of his willingness to stand.

42) The Association in a General Meeting may alter the rules about numbers of Council Members and their rotation.

43) A Council member may be removed by Extraordinary resolution and another qualified member may be appointed by Ordinary Resolution.

Proceedings of the Council

44) The Council may meet together and regulate their meetings as they think fit. They may determine the quorum necessary for the transaction of business. Unless otherwise determined, a quorum is one third of members of Council. Unresolved questions arising in meetings shall be decided by majority vote, the chairman having a casting vote.

45) Meetings may be called by any Council member. A member absent from the U.K. is not entitled to a notice of a meeting.

Articles of Association

46) The Council shall elect a chairman for a period they determine. If he is absent from a meeting they may choose someone else to act.

47) A quorate Council is competent to deal with any business.

48) The Council may delegate any of its powers to a committee which shall conform to any regulations imposed on it by the Council. The committee shall report to the Council on any decisions taken.

49) All acts done in good faith by the Council or its committee or its agents shall be considered valid, even if discovered later not to conform technically with the provisions of the articles.

50) Proper minutes shall be made of all the meetings of the Association, of appointments of officers, and of meetings of committees. These minutes, signed by the chairman, shall be sufficient evidence of the transactions of the meeting.

51) A resolution in writing signed by all the members of the Council (or of a committee) shall be valid without a meeting.

Accounts

52) Proper accounts must be kept of:-

A. Income and expenditure and the matters in respect of which such income and expenditure take place.

B. Sales and purchase of goods.

C. Assets and liabilities.

53) The account books should be kept at the office or any other place the Council decides and should always be open to inspection by Council members.

54) No non-Council member may inspect the books, except by agreement.

55) The audited accounts and balance sheets, plus proper reports of auditors and Council, must be presented to each AGM and circulated to all members of the Association not less than 21 days before the meeting. The Auditor's report shall be open to inspection and be read at the meeting.

Audit

56) The accounts must be audited annually by one or more qualified Auditors.

57) The Auditors shall be appointed and their duties regulated in accordance with sections 159-161 of the Act and section 14 of the Companies Act 1967. The members of Council are treated as being Directors as mentioned in these sections.

Notices

58) Notices may be served upon members of the Association either by post or personally.

59) Only members with addresses in the U.K. are entitled to notices by post.

60) Postal Notices shall be deemed to be served the day after posting, if correctly addressed and stamped.

Dissolution

61) Clause 9 of the Memorandum of Association applies.

" Copies of the precis or full copies of the constitution may be obtained from JEAN SHEPHERD. Please send S.A.E."

MEMORANDUM OF ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATION OTHERWISE ASSOCIATION LTD.-a precis

- 1) The name is to be Education Otherwise Association Ltd.
- 2) The registered office will be situated in England.
- 3) The objects of the Association are:-
 - A) To advance public education by providing support for parents doing education otherwise.
 - B) To provide recreational facilities for those who need it by reason of their age, infirmity, poverty or social circumstances, and to the public at large.

The Associations powers are :-

- a) To promote classes etc. for the advancement of education.
- b) To buy or lease property
- c) To sell or let such property
- d) To undertake charitable trusts
- e) To borrow or raise money
- f) To invest money
- g) To support connected charitable purposes
- h) Anything else to further its aims

Provided that :-

- 1) Any property held, which is subject to the trust, can only be dealt with as allowed by the laws of that trust.
- 2) The objects don't extend to employer/employee relationships.
- 3) If the Association holds any property subject to the jurisdiction of the Charity Commissioners, it cannot sell, mortgage, charge or lease that property without the lawful consent of the parties concerned. The property must be responsibly managed.
- 4) Income and property can only be used to further the objects of the Association. None of it can be paid to members of the Association as dividend, profit etc. However,
 - A) Expenses can be paid to members for services rendered.
 - B) Interest not exceeding 2% less than base rate can be paid on money lent by members.
 - C) Rent can be paid for property let to the Association by a member.
 - D) Fees may be paid to a company to which an EO member belongs, provided that he or she does not hold more than 1/100 part of the capital of the company.
- 5) No alterations can be made to the memorandum or articles of the Association without the approval of the charity commissioners.
- 6) The fourth and fifth paragraphs of this memorandum contain conditions to which any licence granted to the Association is subject to section 25 of the companies Act 1981.
- 7) The liability of members is limited.
- 8) In the event of EO Association Ltd. being wound up, each member (or within one year of ceasing to be a member) must contribute up to £10 towards debts and expenses.
- 9) If there is any money or property left over after EO Association Ltd. is wound up, then it is to be given to a similar charity, or if no such charity exists then to another charity.

If any members would like the full version of the memorandum or precis versions of the articles, memorandum or trust deed, please write to:-
JEAN SHEPHERD and enclose an SAE.

FIRST MEETING OF COUNCIL (REFERRED TO AS CORE GROUP) OF EDUCATION
OTHERWISE ASSOCIATION LTD.

SUNDAY 26th January 1986 9.30am MILTON KEYNES YOUTH HOSTEL

Present:- Bruce Cox; Joan Hoare; Felix Polkowski; Joe O'Connor; Martin Chillmaid; Jean Shepherd; Janet Everdell; Caroline Grant; Bob Wade; Anne Wade; Mirjan Bush; Jennie White; Bruce Wallace; Jean Lovius; Meg Robertson; June Grant; Andy Anderson; Mick White; Angela Montfort-Bebb.

- 1) Apologies received from Alvenia Hillier.
- 2) Minutes of last meeting approved and signed.
- 3) Education Otherwise declared wound up. Its assets and liabilities transferred to Education Otherwise Association Ltd. (EOA Ltd.), the company agreeing to take over these assets and liabilities. A minute to this effect was signed by those present.
- 4) Further members admitted to EOA Ltd. by original signatories to company deed.
- 5) Proposed by Bruce Cox, seconded by Bruce Wallace that people serving as officers for EO should continue to do so for EOA Ltd. Approved.
- 6) The following powers of treasurer approved:-
 - a) To open bank accounts with Royal Bank of Scotland plc.
 - b) To transfer monys from EOA Ltd. to EO Charitable Trust when surplus funds available.
 - c) Signatories to cheques are Alison Mafham; Ken Mafham; Jean Lovius; Bruce Cox and Joan Hoare. Only 2 required to sign at one time.
 - d) To make decisions over funding which is not routine, or controversial.
 - e) To give officers floats.
- 7) The following powers of secretary were approved:- to call meetings and take minutes.
- 8) The following powers of Steering Committee were approved:- to take decisions between meetings of financial and or possibly controversial nature.
- 9) We approved Alison finding an auditor.
- 10) We decided to hold next AGM, third week in September at Wick Court if possible. Meg asked to investigate.
- 11) Core Group resolved to call anyone subscribing to newsletter an associate member. Core Group will meet regularly with associate members to discuss future activities. Bruce Cox proposed, Bruce Wallace seconded, all associate members have right to be accepted as full members of EOA Ltd. and to attend all Core Group meetings.
- 12) REPORTS OF OFFICERS COMMITTEES.
 - a) Membership Secretary - Bruce Wallace
Membership 1610 on 23rd January 1986. Average joining rate 50 per mnth, 'drop out' rate has declined. Bruce estimated there were 500 primary age children and 270 secondary age children being educated at home. We could consider dividing the country into north and south and have a membership secretary for each section. Receiving subscriptions for GWS could also be passed on if necessary.
 - b) Enquiries Secretary - Janet Everdell
Janet reported she was carrying heavy workload with many crisis calls particularly involving school phobia. She felt unable to keep up pace much longer. We agreed to discuss how to share work after officer's reports.
 - c) Co-ordinators' Secretary - Andy Anderson
Co-ordinators are still needed for Dorset, Gwent, Dumfries and Galloway. Co-ordinators MUST inform Andy if they move - they are still not doing so. Co-ordinators useful address list is done, but some addresses need checking.

d) Publications Secretary - Jean Shepherd

Cost of producing and sending out NL every 2 months now £850. New contact list was due out in April. We decided to continue having contact list supplement stapled into middle of NL as this was cheaper. More contributions needed for subject supplements.

e) Treasurer - Alison Mafham (read out in her absence)

Balance of funds on Dec.18th 1985 was £6272.14 in credit. Printing of SINC cost £1559. Bill for screen-printing of T-shirts £390.22 which is expected to be recovered from sales. The printer had been invited to increase his profit margin from £43 to £100 on each batch of NL's this was paid for Dec. NL. The printer conveyed his thanks via Alison to Core Group. £50 had been advanced to Sarah Guthrie to make advanced weekend booking at Lower Shaw Farm for 10th anniversary celebrations. £25 had been sent to Sandie Cottee for use by Essex group as agreed at last CG meeting at Wick Court on 13th Oct. 1985

Insurance of publications

We agreed to pay £50 to insure publications held by membership secretaries.

Public liability insurance

We were unsure what insurance covered us for and what procedure should be, if we exceeded the 10 meetings per year as stipulated by the policy. Alison is investigating.

T-shirt Silk Screen

We are buying silk screen produced for T-shirts 3 years ago. We agreed to ask Alison to do this.

Public Relations Officer - Joe O'Connor

There will be an article on EO in March Young Observer. Book of helpful contacts for parents of teenagers is to be published by Penguin containing an entry for EO. Joe has received 25 calls a month as a contact number. Lynette Cameron's work on child benefit for over 16's being educated at home has been featured in 'Daily Telegraph'. The 'Times' was also interested. He now has good list of members and children willing to be interviewed by media.

h) Research Committee - Anne Wade

The School Phobic Association had put people in touch with us as a result of Pat Knox's work. Lynette Cameron has been working on Child Benefit for over 16's. Questionnaire has been sent out from Southampton Core Group had no knowledge of this: request was made for details.

i) Family Support Fund - (read out by Jean Shepherd)

Guidelines for dispensing money had been made. No amendments needed, they will be put in next NL. Discussed whether a proportion of membership fee should be contributed to FSF, there has been little response to appeals for money. We agreed to consult Alison on proportion which could be given, this could be variable according to EO's finances.

k) Steering Committee

Mary Carter and Lynette Cameron are working together over Child Benefit for over 16's being educated at home.

13) Distribution of Enquiries Secretary's workload

We discussed how job could be split up. Decided to keep Janet's current phone number as central number for sake of continuity. Janet was to get completely new private number. Central number would have answering machine with recorded message, passing on enquirers to one of group of named people. Asked Janet, Rob, and Anne Wade and Peggy Thomes to form a sub-group to do necessary organisation. Agreed EO would fund any expenses. New number to go in London phone book under name Education Otherwise.

14) Constitution

Every signed up member of EOA Ltd. should receive copy of the constitution. All members can have copy on request. Precis of constitution will appear in next NL, plus short explanatory article. New members will get a copy of precis and article.

15) Rolling fund for financing local groups.

This money would be loan repayable to local group and would be set up with £200. We agreed to consult Alison about this. The existence and terms of fund are to be advertised in NL. Asking Alison to do this.

16) Stock taking for auditing purposes

This needs to be done. Letters have to be sent to co-ordinators asking for count of publications held. Hardware also needs to be listed.

17) Fund raising

In order to appeal for funds, specific and costed proposals are needed. It was felt something was needed for older children in particular. A sub-group was set up to look into ideas, consisting of; Martyn Chillmaid, Joe O'Connor, Meg Robertson, Andy Anderson, Bruce Cox and Jean Lovius.

18) Get-together for teenagers

Meg Robertson willing to host a get-together at her house, possibly in week before weekend at Wick Court. Teenagers to do organising themselves. Get-together would be subsidised, Meg will refer to Steering Committee when clear on costs.

19) Copyright laws

No problems with these. Copyright subsists in every literary work if written in U.K. by qualified person, who is defined as British subject. A collective copyright resides in editor of magazine. Extracts up to 400 words allowed, provided they are credited.

20) Pat Knox's work on school phobia

Her letter had been published in NL, individual letters have been sent M.P.'s. £34 has been spent, including £10 for printing article and £20 for postage.

21) Affiliations - June Grant

June and Janet will get together to find out what NL's we receive via affiliations. It was suggested the NL's from affiliations be brought to weekends for people to read.

22) Child Benefit for over 16's educated at home - Lynette Cameron Received Lynette's report on Saturday before CG meeting. Her case was going to DHSS Tribunal, the 'Times' and 'Daily Telegraph' interested in it. The DHSS setting itself up as arbiter of education and treating everyone differently. There was an anomaly between 2 Acts of Parliament, one which gave parents right to educate children at home, and another which penalised them for exercising these rights. There were 4 avenues of complaint for families deprived of child benefit.

1) DHSS Tribunal

ii) Constituency M.P.'s who can put written questions

iii) Letters from EO members to Ministers and Shadow Ministers.

iv) Ombudsman - for complaints about discrepancy in DHSS dealings with parents.

The meeting expressed its thanks to Lynette for her work.

23) Status of LEA's as members of EO - Bruce Wallace

We agreed there should be special membership of LEA's and other institutions. There will be special membership pack made up for them without contact list, and with covering letter. Bruce will distribute these. Also agreed that people not on contact list, should not receive one.

24) New exam system - Joe O'Connor

External syllabuses will be available which omit continuous assessment so there will be no problem for home educators.

25) Resources Centre and enquirers - Joe

Resources Centre was important to new inquirers and should be mentioned in membership form. This will be done when form are re-designed and re-printed.

28) Harassment by LEA's - letter by Sarah Guthrie
Sarah has been contacted by a number of families who had been harassed by LEA's who misinformed them over education Act. Joe thought national press coverage of 1,2 or 3 clear cut cases of harassment and misinformation by and LEA would prevent further cases. Joe agreed to contact Sarah to try and organise this. Bruce C. said Roland Meighan would be addressing a conference of school inspectors and the like: we agreed Bruce should approach him with suggestions about how EO and LEA's might regulate their dealings with each other, as this conference would obviously be good forum for getting our ideas across.

29) Publicity for 10th year celebrations.

Agreed that article in 'Guardian' a good idea. A video was available from BBC about home education, which could be hired by groups if wished. Arne Lovius had approached BBC about an Open Space programme with no success. We agreed Sarah should do anything she thought suitable.

30) EO stall at alternatives fair in Accrington - letter from Andrea Lowe and Dot Bolan

Agreed to pay £10 for hire of stall. Andy will supply 2000 leaflets. We thought 10th year anniversary T-shirts would not interest anyone outside EO.

31) Minutes

These people should personally receive copies of minutes.

- a) All officers of EO whether present or not.
- b) People who send their apologies
- c) All people present at meeting

32) Caroline Grant reported she thought Osmanam Centre in Wales would be a suitable venue. The place near Formby was no longer being let. Wales might be possibility for MAY 1987 or SEPT. 1986 if Wick Court not available,

35) Thanked Valerie Common for organising weekend at Milton Keynes.

34) AOB

- a) Copyright deposit - we agreed that copies of publications should be deposited with British Copyright Office and an entry made in British National Bibliography.
- b) Bruce Cox wished to organise camp for about 20 children between ages 9-13 at field centre at Thornham Magna in Suffolk. We agreed to underwrite this with £200.
- c) We agreed to make up shortfall in covering costs of weekend at Milton Keynes. Valerie will work out exact amount.
- d) Bruce Wallace will do printed letter to send out with membership packs. Bruce and Bob Emmett will discuss how to speed up communications between co-ordinators and new members.
- e) Under new Data Protection Act EO must register its computerised list of members and addresses. We will ask Bob to look into this.
- f) Thanks were expressed to Chairman for his clear and patient direction of a long meeting.

* LATE NOTICES *

* LATE NOTICES *

GINN MATHS - Is there anyone using this excellent scheme who would be interested in sharing packs of workbooks? (now only available in packs of 8) PLEASE CONTACT, KATE KENT 174 FOSTER HILL ROAD, BEDFORD MK41 7TB

GREEN GATHERING 1986 to be held in Suffolk, AUGUST 19 - 24.
Anyone with practical ideas, offers of help, transport, skills e.g. music, dancing, crafts, martial arts, orienteering etc., particularly for children in 7 - 15 age range, please contact EVE 01 341 0751 OR WRITE 25 RATHCOOLE AVENUE, LONDON N8

EO OFFICERS

General Secretary	Joan Hoare 25 Moor Oak Road, Sheffield South Yorkshire Tel: 0742 666605
Membership Secretaries	Bruce and Christine Wallace 25 Diabaig, Achnasheen Ross-shire IV22 2HE Tel: 044581 225
Enquiries Secretary	Janet Everdell 25 Common Lane, Hemingford Abbots, Cambs PE18 9AN Tel: 0480 65774 (not after 9pm)
Co-ordinators Secretary	Andy Anderson 95 Derrington Avenue, Crewe Cheshire CW2 7JA Tel: 0270 664060
Public Relations Officer	Joseph O'Connor 4 Coombe Gardens, New Malden Surrey KT3 4AA Tel: 01 942 0286
Publishing Secretary	Jean Shepherd 9 Cranbourne Gardens, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL7 3NF Tel: 0707 339750
Treasurer	Alison Mafham 3 Park Road West, Curzon Park, Chester Tel: 0244 677452
Assistant Treasurer (Renewals)	Bob Emmett 8 Queensway, Liddell Park Llandudno, Gwynedd LL30 1YJ
Reviews Editor	Helen Holland Inholm Farm, Plumpton Green Near Lewes, Sussex Tel: 0273 890405

WHERE TO GET WHAT

Current and Old Newsletters SINC, Early Years, Teach Your Own.	} Membership Secretaries
Stationery, Introductory Literature, Envelope re-use labels (£1.50 per 100), Membership forms, Posters and handbills.	} Co-ordinators Secretary
Growing Without Schooling	Jill Gillings, Seacrest, Clayhead, Baldrine, Isle Of Man



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

Our principal aims are as follows:-

- To: Encourage the provision of alternative learning situations outside the school system.
- To: Re-affirm that parents have the primary responsibility for their children's education, and that they have the right to exercise this responsibility by educating them out of school.
- To: Establish the primary right of children that full consideration, with due allowance for their age and understanding, shall be given to their wishes and feelings regarding their education.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Send a 9" x 4" s.a.e. to:
25, COMMON LANE,
Hemingford Abotts,
Cambridgeshire,
PE18 9AN

