

Press Release Wednesday 24th April 2008

National Teachers' Strike 24th April 2008

Today's teachers' strike is exposing the severe shortages of suitable, affordable childcare in many areas of the country - particularly for older children and those with special needs.

Home educators are painfully aware of this shortfall. Many parents opt to home educate as a result of their children's experiences in schools where their special needs have not been met or where the children have been the victim of bullying.

As a consequence of Labour's welfare reforms, lone parents who home educate are now being told by JobCentre Lone Parent Advisors that they must put their children in school or leave children at home while they go to work.

From November 2008 home educating parents with a youngest child over 12 years of age will be affected but by 2010 parents of home educated children as young as 7 will be required to leave their children for a minimum of 16 hours a week.

In many cases this will leave parents with a choice between compromising the wellbeing of their child or forcing the family into further poverty, since the Government's much-touted wraparound childcare in extended schools is not open to home educated children.

Home educating is a 24/7 experience for lone parents who bear the full financial burden of educating their children at home. Home educating single parents are also largely ineligible for respite care or additional support when their children have special educational needs.

Every child educated at home is saving the taxpayer up to five thousand pounds a year, with significant additional savings to the Exchequer if the home educated child has special educational needs.

Reference for Editors

<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/lone.htm>

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

Ann Newstead, EO National Media Contact
08445 868839, 07870 115231, mediaco-ordinator@education-otherwise.org

Fiona Nicholson, EO Government Policy Group Chair
fiona_j_nicholson@yahoo.co.uk

End