

Press Release Wednesday 14th November 2007

Anti Bullying Week 19th - 23rd November 2007

Education Otherwise is a voluntary organisation which supports families whose children are educated outside the school system. Many families first turn to Education Otherwise when their children are being bullied at school.

For many families whose children have endured years of bullying it comes as a shock to discover that while education is compulsory, school is not. Latest figures suggest that there are around 50,000 children who are home educated.

In some cases the families will have seen something about home education in the media, or researched it on the internet. The decision to take children out of school and educate them at home is not something the family takes lightly.

Education Otherwise has a website giving information about home education and also offers a national telephone Helpline service. Families who join Education Otherwise can link in to a support network enabling them to get touch with others who have been in a similar position. Parents tend to ask: is it legal; do I have to be a teacher; what if the school won't let me take my child out; do I have to tell anybody; what happens with the local authority after I take my child out of school; how will my child meet other children; how will I know what to teach; what about exams?

A spokesperson from Education Otherwise Disability Group commented that children with a disability are at even greater risk of being bullied at school than their peer group. Figures from Mencap reveal that 82 per cent of children and young people with a learning disability have experienced bullying, while the National Autistic Society states that 40% of children with autism and 60% of children with Aspergers Syndrome have experienced bullying in school.

Carole Rutherford said "We have had parents telling us that they have been told by teachers that bullying can be character building. This is frankly unbelievable and is totally unacceptable when a child is already trying to cope with a disability."

Reference for Editors

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

Education Otherwise website

0845 478 6345

Education Otherwise Telephone Helpline

Ann Newstead

EO National Media Contact

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Carole Rutherford

EO Disability Group spokesperson

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http://www.mencap.org.uk/html/campaigns/anti_bullying_more_info.asp

Mencap Anti-Bullying Campaign "Don't stick it, stop it".

<http://www.nas.org.uk/content/1/c6/01/18/57/bullying.pdf>

National Autistic Society Report "B is for Bullied."

End