

No One Written Off : Department of Work and Pensions October 2008

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/noonewrittenoff/consultation.asp>

Consultation questions may be found here:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/welfarereform/noonewrittenoff/consultation-questions.pdf>

Letter sent to the Department regarding the consultation.

This is a brief consultation response on behalf of Education Otherwise to the Department, copied in to Kate Bell of One Parent Families/Gingerbread.

Education Otherwise is a membership based organisation that provides support and information for families whose children are being educated outside school, and for those who wish to uphold the freedom of families to take proper responsibility for the education of their children.

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

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

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Last year we made a lengthy submission to the DWP consultation In Work Better Off.

<http://www.freedomforchildrentogrow.org/DWPconsultationresponseInWorkBetterOff.pdf>

There appeared to be no communication between the welfare reform consultation team and the DWP parent employment division, since no one was aware that home education was any kind of policy issue.

We are therefore sceptical about the point of engaging in this new consultation exercise but have nevertheless decided to identify ourselves as stakeholders and to say that we wish to be included in any stakeholder discussion groups.

We have also responded to the SSAC consultation on amended JSA regulations and we are in regular contact with Gill Saunders from SSAC and also with Kate Bell from One Parent Families.

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

We are vehemently opposed to scrapping Income Support. We believe that for some lone parents with additional caring responsibilities such as home educators, Income Support is a lifeline. We believe in a package of support measures rather than compulsion and coercion.

Jobseeker's Allowance can never be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of vulnerable families and lone parents with additional caring responsibilities such as home educators.

We are grateful to Dave Keir and Johanna Blythin at DWP Education Otherwise for the opportunity to comment on the guidance which will be supplied to Jobcentres for the implementation of JSA to lone parents. We hope we have made it clear that we think JSA is utterly inappropriate for our members. We are gloomily awaiting the publication of the Merits Committee report at 10am tomorrow.

In addition, these measures are particularly ill-advised at a time of soaring unemployment.

Fiona Nicholson
Chair Education Otherwise Government Policy Group
Member of Education Otherwise Disability Group
Trustee Education Otherwise