

# END CHILD POVERTY once and for all

Charity No. 1099008

Newsletter Summer 2006

## Child Poverty in the News

### What will it take to end child poverty in the UK?

The high profile launch of the new Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) report "*What will it take to end child poverty in the UK*" occupied many recent national headlines, TV and radio news programmes.

The JRF report estimates the impact of Government policies and sets out clearly what is needed for the Government to meet its 2010 & 2020 targets and to prevent poverty for future generations. It calls on the Government to substantially increase parents earning opportunities, benefits and improve the educational achievement of disadvantaged children.

For copies please contact the JRF publications team on [www.jrf.org.uk](http://www.jrf.org.uk)

Read *Unequal Choices* and find out more about the campaign at [www.endchildpoverty.org.uk](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk)



**Unequal Choices:**

Voices of experience exposing challenges and suggesting solutions to ending child poverty in the UK

### UNEQUAL CHOICES

End Child Poverty's new report shows that poverty "is about unequal choices." Over 300 people took part in events across the UK to discuss child poverty and this report brings their voices together.

Recommendations from families & participants included improving access to affordable quality childcare, improvements to benefits & tax credits, fair wages as well as equal access for children to high quality education.

### Other news:

- [The Daily Telegraph](#) asked *Why are school uniforms so expensive?* And focused on the growing trend of putting logos on all items of clothing.
- New research by ippr, covered in [The Times](#) shows that many families are missing out on what the Government calls 'the new frontier of the welfare state' with 4.7 million families needing extra help with the cost of childcare.
- In response to an article setting out our *buy buy buy culture* in [The Guardian](#), ECP wrote that though the average consumer may be spending £37,000 a year on consumer goods, (Mintel Lifestyles report), there are many families who are still having to scrimp and save to buy basic items like fridges beds and cookers.

### In Government:

**Child poverty is the number 1 priority for the Department of Work and Pensions, said the Secretary of State, John Hutton MP, at a recent Fabian Society event to discuss the final report of the Life Chances Commission**  
**End Child Poverty welcomes the renewed commitment from the DWP and calls for it to be copied by all government departments.**



**It has since been announced that the DWP will be auditing all its policies to ensure they contribute to the target to end child poverty, the report of this poverty proofing is due out in the autumn. Mr Hutton has also appointed a new independent advisor, known to many in the sector, Lisa Harker and a committee of experts to oversee this process – three of whom are ECP trustees.**

**In September, Hilary Armstrong MP, the Social Exclusion Minister will set out the Government's action plan with proposals for how they intend to reach those with complex multiple problems and those at risk to tackle the most deep seated social exclusion.**

See our reaction to the latest news at [www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/news](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/news) Do you have any items you would like to see covered in our newsletter? If so then get in touch, email [info@ecpc.org.uk](mailto:info@ecpc.org.uk)



# Campaign Activities

## Events

ECP Trustees have been busy raising the profile of child poverty with a variety of audiences over the past few months. One member of the ECP Board chaired and several other members spoke at a Capita conference on Child Poverty to an audience of civil servants, opinions formers, members of the charity sector and others. Caroline Abrahams, Chair of ECP spoke at the Child Poverty Accord

arranged by HMT, DfES & LGA to ensure local authorities continue their contribution to the child poverty agenda.

ECP and the Fabian Women's Network jointly held an event on *Life Chances before birth – where the early years agenda goes next*. The speakers included Helen Goodman MP, David Piachaud, Professor of Social Policy, LSE and Kate Green, Chief Executive of Child Poverty Action Group and ECP Trustee. This discussion enabled

MPs and representatives from children's charities and women's sector to cover some fairly new ground.

Also the UK Coalition Against Poverty, members of ECP, coordinated the first meeting of the newly reinvigorated All Party Parliamentary Group on Poverty, which is being chaired by John Battle MP and has the interest of about 80 MPs and a number of members of the House of Lords too.

## Party Conference Activities

The campaign to End Child Poverty will have a stronger presence at the party conferences this year than ever before. If you are at one or all the conferences this year then please do come and join us at the following events:

**Trade Unions Congress, Brighton**  
**11.09.06.** ECP & UWC "How can Unions help to end child poverty once and for all?" Speakers include Jim Murphy MP, Minister for Employment and Welfare Reform.

**Liberal Democrat Conference, Brighton**  
**20.09.06.** Campaign to End Child Poverty joint event with Barnardos, CPAG, The Children's Society, NCH, NSPCC and Save the Children. Speakers will include David Laws MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary and Donald Hirsch, Special Adviser, JRF

**Labour Party Conference, Manchester**  
**24.09.06** One Parent Families "Child Poverty – where next for Welfare?" Speakers include Rt Hon John Hutton MP, Secretary of State, DWP and Carey Oppenheim, Chair, London Child Poverty Commission.  
**24.09.06.** Campaign to End Child Poverty joint reception to be held by Barnardos, The Children's Society, NCH, NSPCC and Save the Children with special guest Rt Hon Gordon Brown MP, Chancellor of the Exchequer  
**25.09.06** Campaign to End Child Poverty joint event with CPAG & the Disability Rights Commission on Disabled people and Welfare Reform. Speakers will include Rt Hon John Hutton MP, and Bert Massie, Chair DRC.

**26.09.06** 4 Children, Daycare Trust, ndna, ncma and the Preschool Learning Alliance "Quality Childcare for all" Speakers include Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP, Minister for Children, Young People and families.  
**27.09.06** Campaign to End Child Poverty joint event with CPAG 'Will the Government spend to deliver?' speakers include Ed Balls MP

**Conservative Party Conference, Bournemouth**  
**01.10.06** Campaign to End Child Poverty joint event with Barnardos, CPAG, The Children's Society, NCH, NSPCC, One Parent Families and Save the Children to question if the Government is doing enough? with Rt Hon Oliver Letwin MP joining the panel.

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The **'No place for a child'** campaign run by the Refugee Council and others, featured in ECP's last newsletter, has been hugely successful, 13,500 messages have been received for the Home Secretary and thousands of emails and letters have been sent to MPs, 148 of whom supported an Early Day Motion on the issue. Log on to [www.noplaceforachild.org.uk](http://www.noplaceforachild.org.uk) for more information.

## **Here to HELP Awards**

The Save the Children 'here to HELP' Awards, give young people the chance to make their local area a better place by offering them support to get active, develop local projects and speak out on issues that affect them.

They are able to offer awards of up to £3,000 to young people with solutions to tackling poverty in their communities. Children and young people are invited to submit their proposals at [www.helpyourselves.org.uk](http://www.helpyourselves.org.uk)

**Deadline for applications is October 2006.**

## **Future Plans**

The UN Day for Poverty Eradication is coming up on the 17<sup>th</sup> of October. We want to hear from you about the activities you are planning in your local area between this and the 20<sup>th</sup> of November, International Children's Day.

A number of members of End Child Poverty are organising activities across the regions of the UK and ECP is proposing we build on these to create a

## **Child Benefit's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday**



Child benefit and its predecessor, family allowances, are 60 years old this year. To mark this anniversary the Child Poverty Action Group, as part of ECP, will be launching a campaign in August calling for greater investment in child benefit in order to help larger families and contribute to the goal of ending child poverty once and for all.

Many members of ECP have already agreed to support this campaign once it is launched, if you or your organisation would also like to get involved then do get in touch with us at [info@ecpc.org.uk](mailto:info@ecpc.org.uk) Alternatively you can check out our website [www.endchildpoverty.org.uk](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk) or [www.cpag.org.uk](http://www.cpag.org.uk) next month for more details of the campaign.

## **Reducing moves for young children, the campaign by BAAF**

Many children in care have suffered abuse or neglect and all are in desperate need of stability. Yet many may never find a 'forever family' because of a lack of adoptive parents. Other children will move from one foster placement to another because of a huge shortfall in foster carers across the UK. BAAF is calling on more local authorities to set up schemes to minimise the disruption to each child. Find out more at

<http://www.baaf.org.uk/gi/campaigns/moves.shtml>

## **Shelter Room to Grow**

Overcrowding has a devastating impact on the lives of parents and children. Join Shelter's campaign to call on Ruth Kelly Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, to help overcrowded families visit <http://england.shelter.org.uk/howtohelp/howtohelp-6605.cfm>

month of action. This month would enable all of us working in related fields to show the complexity of the issue of child poverty in the UK and for other organisations to be able to demonstrate their support.

As you will know poverty is fuelled by a range of factors, including poor education, bad health or inadequate housing, poverty cannot be explained away as the result of individual

failure therefore it is vital that we use this time to raise awareness among our communities. Whether it is a children's forum, a local union branch meeting or a conference we would like to hear what you are doing and if it can be linked to other child poverty activities in your area.

Call us on 0207 278 6541 or email [info@ecpc.org.uk](mailto:info@ecpc.org.uk)



# END CHILD POVERTY once and for all

## **LUNA exclusive offer to ECP Members**

Luna are putting on a series of two-day intensive therapeutic arts training for frontline staff. It is a practically based training, aimed at anyone who works in a supportive role with children and young people and would like to know about how to use therapeutic arts to support them emotionally.

Luna is a member of End Child Poverty, and as such, Carly Raby, their Managing Director

has agreed to allow three places per training course free of charge to other services organisations that are members of End Child Poverty. This is to allow frontline staff from smaller organisations the opportunity to access this independent training.

As places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis, please contact Carly as soon

as possible at [carly@lunatraining.com](mailto:carly@lunatraining.com) The course dates for this year are:  
11/12 October Notts.  
22/23 November Derbyshire  
6/7 December London  
Please forward this information to any one who you feel would be interested in attending.  
Information about the course: [http://www.lunatraining.com/training/adults\\_1.asp](http://www.lunatraining.com/training/adults_1.asp)

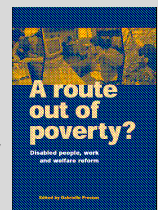
## **Publications of Interest**

**Faithful Cities: A call for celebration, vision and justice** Methodist Publishing House and Church House Publishing, May 2006,

The Commission on Urban Life and Faith, among a number of recommendations to faith communities and Government, examines the current failure of urban regeneration projects to improve the lives of all who live in cities and calls for a debate on 'What makes a good city?' The report argues, the gap between the poor and the very wealthy must be reduced for a just and equitable society to flourish. Price £9.99 [www.chbookshop.co.uk](http://www.chbookshop.co.uk) or [www.mph.org.uk](http://www.mph.org.uk)

**A Route out of Poverty?** Child Poverty Action Group, June 2006

This book explores the evidence linking poverty and disability. Drawing on interviews it examines the experiences and attitudes of disabled parents to paid employment; whether disability benefits and support services are accessible, adequate and appropriate; and the impact government policy has had on their own and their children's lives. It argues that overcoming poverty is essential if the extent of disability and ill health is to be reduced. Price £11.00 [www.cpag.org.uk](http://www.cpag.org.uk)



**Fade or Flourish: how primary schools can build on children's early progress** SMF, July 2006

This well researched paper usefully demonstrates how much can be achieved within the primary school system to reinforce the excellent work to tackle inequalities that is occurring within a child's early years and reinforces how essential it is to sustain these efforts to ensure that life chances of children in poverty are improved over the long-term. Price £10.00 [www.smf.org.uk](http://www.smf.org.uk)

**If you would like to contact anyone at the End Child Poverty campaign about the information in this newsletter, for submissions for future newsletters or any other matter then please do get in touch at End Child Poverty, 94 White Lion Street, London N1 9PF tel: 0207 278 6541**



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## ECP Member's Comment

**Janet Allbeson, Policy Consultant, One Parent Families discusses the Child Support Agency:**

“One Parent Families strongly believes that child support can help reduce child poverty. Children in lone parent families are more than twice as likely to be poor as children with two resident parents (48 per cent compared to 21 per cent).

If we had an effective child support system in the UK, that would make a difference. At present, a third of non-resident parents are failing to pay the child support they owe, and only a quarter of parents with care on benefit receive any child support.

In considering future reforms, One Parent Families has argued that parents with care on benefit should be allowed to keep all the maintenance they are paid, without their benefit being reduced – just as happens with Working Tax Credit. This would boost the incomes of the poorest and would be likely to encourage more non-resident parents to pay, if they felt that the money was going to their children rather than the Treasury. Research shows that receipt of child maintenance is also positively associated with lone parents moving into work. Having the money whilst on benefit, ensures that the lone parent can plan for the future and better manage the transition between benefits and work.

In the long-term, we think a system of 'advance maintenance' is what is needed to secure the incomes of lone parent families, whilst still requiring separated parents to pay child maintenance. Lone parents would have the security of payment, whilst the State collects maintenance owed from the non-resident parent.

Would a better child maintenance system lead to greater child poverty among children living with non-resident parents? Little research has been done on this. We do know, however, that four out of five non-resident parents are not living with other children. US research indicates that there was an increase in poverty among fathers but that this was much smaller than the decrease in poverty among single parents and their children. Overall, an improved and effective child support system would help reduce child poverty.”

**Do you have a comment on a current topic that you would like to share with other End Child Poverty members?**

**If so then please contact us at [info@ecpc.org.uk](mailto:info@ecpc.org.uk) or 0207 278 6541**

On 24<sup>th</sup> July, following the recommendations of an independent report on child support in the UK by Sir David Henshaw, Work and Pensions Secretary John Hutton announced the government will replace the CSA with a more streamlined and tougher new body. For details see [www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/news/#CSA](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/news/#CSA).

The Conservatives' Shadow Works and Pensions Secretary, Phillip Hammond said the hundreds of thousands of families trapped in the CSA "shambles" wanted to hear about a timetable for moving them onto the new system of assessment. "But what they have got is yet another delay for further reports and more consultation. They will feel let down once again," he protested." [http://www.conservatives.com/file.do?def=news.story.page&obj\\_id=131118](http://www.conservatives.com/file.do?def=news.story.page&obj_id=131118)

David Laws MP Shadow Works and Pensions Secretary for the Liberal Democrats responded by saying "The CSA must be abolished and replaced with a new organisation with complete access to income details and the ability to deduct money at source from those who refuse to pay." <http://www.libdems.org.uk/news/csa-should-be-abolished-now-laws.html>