

childwise

Childcare news for parents

Childwise Issue 38 Spring 2010
Daycare Trust National Childcare Campaign

NATIONAL CHILDCARE CAMPAIGN

daycare
trust

Childcare charter

Join our election campaign and get your voice heard



National childcare week
fabulous short break to be won in our
children's art competition

Welcome

Welcome to the Spring 2010 edition of *childwise*. At this exciting time of year with a general election approaching, Daycare Trust is determined that your voice as a parent is heard throughout the election campaign.

All parents want their children to have the best start in life and the evidence shows that high quality childcare can improve children's social, communication and learning skills. Enormous progress has been made in childcare; there is much more choice, more financial support and higher standards. But much more still needs to be done. In many areas, quality is still not good enough to enable children to reach their full potential and often the cost of childcare makes it too difficult for many parents to be able to work. This is why Daycare Trust has published its Childcare Charter and is calling on all political parties to make childcare a priority during the upcoming election.

In this edition we outline what our Childcare Charter is calling on the next Government to commit to and how you can add your voice to our childcare election campaign. There's various ways you can make sure your voice is heard, from sending the enclosed postcard to your MP to becoming one of our Parent Panel. Join in our campaign and we will ensure childcare remains at the top of the political agenda.

In this *childwise*, we also give you details of how you can become involved in this year's National childcare week and how your child could be in with a chance to win a fantastic short break with Haven Holidays in our art competition.

Thank you for your continued support.



Alison Garnham
Chief Executive

Prepared to share your childcare experiences?

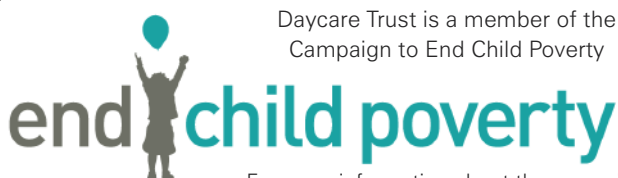
Join our Parent Panel

Daycare Trust is on the look-out for parents with strong opinions and powerful stories about childcare to share as media spokespeople for us.

When childcare issues hit the headlines, or when the media are covering our campaigns, your perspective on childcare can make all the difference to a story. Many newspapers like to have case studies and broadcasters usually like to speak to parents if they are covering an important story like the cost of childcare, lack of provision and accessing childcare for disabled children. **Get your voice heard.**

By joining our panel you can undertake media training, gain a range of new presentational skills and build confidence in public speaking. We would fit in any requests around times you're free, and you would never be obliged to do anything you weren't comfortable with.

If you're interested in finding out more, and helping Daycare Trust raise the voice of parents louder, email press@daycaretrust.org.uk or call **020 7940 7525**.



Daycare Trust is a member of the
Campaign to End Child Poverty

For more information about the campaign
visit www.endchildpoverty.org.uk

Daycare Trust's Childcare Charter

The campaign to make childcare a key election issue

With the general election imminent, support for families is fast becoming a hot political issue. To illustrate how important the issue of childcare is for parents, Daycare Trust has published a Childcare Charter, a six point manifesto designed to put the issue of childcare at the heart of the election. And to coincide with the charter, Daycare Trust and Bounty Parenting Club have released new research which shows that for many mothers, childcare policies will have a heavy influence on their voting intentions.

The research 'Keeping mum: childcare as a vote winning issue' surveyed over 2,400 mothers, and included questions about how likely they were to vote for a party that proposed to limit or remove funding on a number of family and childcare initiatives. The overwhelming evidence is that for many mothers, childcare pledges will play a major factor in how they choose to vote.

7 out of 10 mothers said they would be less likely to vote for a party that reduced or removed the 12.5 hours of free childcare a week that all 3 & 4 year olds are entitled to. Two-thirds would be less likely to vote for a party that would cut or limit tax credits or childcare vouchers. Sure Start Children's Centres and child trust funds were also identified as services mothers were protective of, with any party attempting to make cuts likely to suffer at the polls as a result.

The survey's findings clearly illustrate that any party hoping for success at the election will have to demonstrate they are committed to making childcare a priority issue, and deliver firm policy promises on issues such as flexible working; more financial help with childcare, and improved childcare provision. In order to demonstrate this commitment, Daycare Trust is urging all candidates to sign up and back our Childcare Charter, which calls on the next government to:

- 1. Aim to spend 1% of GDP on early childhood education and care so that all children get the best start in life**
- 2. Extend free places to ensure that all children benefit from early childhood education and care**
- 3. Extend parental leave and make workplaces family-friendly**
- 4. Fill the gaps in provision and guarantee extended schools**
- 5. Make childcare affordable for all parents**
- 6. Celebrate Sure Start Children's Centres and extend the range of services on offer.**



You can read the whole Daycare Trust Childcare Charter by visiting www.daycaretrust.org.uk

You can make a difference

Daycare Trust is also calling on parents, supporters and childcare providers to join our campaign, as we urge politicians to pledge the family support that will really make a difference for families. Whilst much has been done in recent years, there remains a long way to go.

There are many ways people can get involved, and full information can be found in the campaign toolkit, available on our website.



You can help in the following ways

- 1. Spread the word** about our Childcare Charter, and encourage friends and colleagues to sign up.
- 2. Sign the enclosed postcard** and send it off to show your support.
- 3. If you are a childcare provider, tell your parents about our campaign** – with a mention in your newsletter or link on your website, and get them to sign up by ordering your own supply of Childcare Charter postcards. To place your order, email campaigns@daycaretrust.org.uk.
- 4. Write to the Prospective Parliamentary Candidates (PPCs)** who are vying to become your next MP and ask them to support Daycare Trust's Childcare Charter.
- 5. Write to your local newspaper** to challenge the local candidates and spread the word to other parents.
- 6. When you meet candidates on the campaign trail, question them about their commitment to childcare policies.**
- 7. Help Daycare Trust make the voices of parents and carers even louder:**
 - become an active member of Daycare Trust's Parent Network and Parent Panel – visit our website for more details and an application form;
 - become a fan of 'Daycare Trust – the national childcare campaign' on facebook;
 - follow us on twitter, [@daycaretrust](https://twitter.com/daycaretrust).

For further information, email campaigns@daycaretrust.org.uk. Together, we can ensure politicians deliver the childcare policies that parents and children need.

National childcare week 12-19 July

Daycare Trust's National childcare week, now in its 13th year, aims to promote the importance of investing in childcare, out-of-school activities and early years provision, to strengthen and contribute to children's play and learning, and provide a strong foundation for their future.

We very much hope that you will join Daycare Trust to celebrate National childcare week through the various events and activities planned for the week.

Children's Art competition

Kindly supported by The Children's Mutual

We are asking children and young people of all ages to celebrate childcare and to enter our art competition. The overall winner will receive a fantastic short break at a Haven holiday park. And all runners up will receive goodies and vouchers. Finalists will be invited to an awards ceremony during National childcare week, where they will meet our judges: Keith Chapman, creator of Bob the Builder, Fifi and the Flowertots and co-creator of Roary the Racing Car; Sonali Shah from CBBC Newsround and Naomi Wilkinson from Five's Milkshake.

"What I want to be" art competition for children aged 2-10 years

We are calling all young artists to enter our children's art competition. Send us your drawings, paintings or collages to illustrate what you want to be when you grow up.

There are three age categories:

- Pre-school (2-4 years)
- Primary (5-7 years)
- Junior (8-10 years)

"Aspirations for the future" competition for children aged 8+

For older children, we want you to show us through art what your aspirations are for the future. Whether you want to conquer Mount Everest, swim the channel or be a teacher. Your entry should be sent with a caption, telling us why this is your aspiration.

There are two age categories:

- Junior (8-10 years)
- Senior (11+)



"What I want to be" book

All the winning entries plus selected artwork will be published in a special booklet to mark National childcare week. Included in the book will be quotes from celebrities and famous faces telling us what they wanted to be plus top tips on how to succeed in their profession.

See the enclosed form for further details. **Closing date for entries is the 18 June.** We look forward to receiving your entries.

Support National childcare week

We want as many people as possible to get involved and hear about National childcare week. There are a number of ways that you can participate and if you're developing your own ideas, don't forget to let us know.

Find out what is happening near you

We will be compiling a calendar of events so please visit our website:

www.daycaretrust.org.uk/nationalchildcareweek

Organising your own event

Why not organise your own event or activity to celebrate the creativity and talents of children? Speak to your nursery, play-scheme, childminder, crèche, after-school club or Sure Start Children's Centre about your ideas. We will be happy to provide promotional materials and add your event to our calendar of activities. Please email us at: nationalchildcareweek@daycaretrust.org.uk

National childcare week is kindly supported by: The Department of Children, Schools and Families, The Children's Mutual, Chapman Entertainment, Smith Martin Partnership, NES Arnold, Haven Fun and Fitness.

Childcare for disabled children

Choosing the right childcare is a hard enough task for any parent but if you have a disabled child, the challenge to secure the right childcare and get help to pay for it can be an extremely difficult one. Many parents report lack of information, inconsistency in service provision, being charged extra for childcare for their disabled child and inaccessible and non-existent services.

Local authorities have a duty to secure childcare for any working parents who need childcare and to offer brokerage to parents who can't find childcare. This is particularly important when a child has a disability as some providers may be reluctant to care for a child with a disability and may not have relevant training or experience. Equally there will be providers who are highly skilled at working with children with a disability or additional needs, and the local authority can play a key role in ensuring parents know who these providers are and how to get in touch with them to discuss their child's needs.

Daycare Trust has developed a new guide for parents on choosing and paying for childcare for disabled children. The guide takes parents through what services should be offered from birth; the duties of local authorities; childcare options; support that should be offered by childcare providers and how to get help to pay for childcare for disabled children. Through the Governments' Aiming High for Disabled Children

programme, childcare services for disabled children should be top of the agenda for local authorities. Over the last couple of years 10 local authorities have been running pilot programmes looking at the best ways to enable disabled children access to childcare (DCATCH). This April, all local authorities will benefit from additional funding specifically to help disabled children access the childcare that they want without the costs being passed on to parents.

To order your booklet contact Daycare Trust information service on 0845 8726251 or email: info@daycaretrust.org.uk



Join our Parent network

For your free subscription to *childwise*, please fill in the form below and join Daycare Trust's parent network. Return completed forms to: Daycare Trust, 2nd Floor, Novas Contemporary Urban Centre, 73-81 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 0NQ

I am a parent and would like to join Daycare Trust's parent network and receive my free copy of *childwise*.

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Telephone _____

We may occasionally contact you about other publications and services we offer. If you do not wish to be contacted please tick this box.

NATIONAL CHILDCARE CAMPAIGN

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