

### UK children are being bullied because of head lice

A new study by Full Marks has shown that one in ten parents said their child has been the victim of cruel jibes as a result of having head lice. But it's not just children that are suffering – 15 per cent of parents said they had felt victimised by teachers because of infestations.

The common ailment is also leading to children taking days off school – with one in five parents having kept their kids at home because of infections. The survey also revealed that almost three quarters of children in the UK have had head lice with a quarter having had more than five infections.

An embarrassed 12 per cent of mums have lied to other parents about their kids having head lice, eight per cent kept family members in the dark and 13 per cent have denied the fact their child has lice to the school or teacher.

Caroline Green, brand manager for Full Marks at SSL International, said: "Head lice outbreaks are an everyday occurrence, which affect millions of children in this country.

"There is no need for children to take time off school and it's extremely disconcerting that so many children are getting bullied as a result of infections, which can so easily be treated.

Pharmacist and mother of two, Louise Cruickshanks, added: "Head lice outbreaks are very common where children closely interact such as school and pre-school, meaning that the lice can easily spread through head to head contact.

"Common reasons for failure to treat head lice is misdiagnosis, or if parents have not used the product purchased correctly. It is also common to be re-infected if in close contact with someone else who still has a head lice infection. Head lice infections cannot be prevented due to how children interact on a daily basis, there should certainly not be cause for embarrassment. Parental discussion and acknowledgement play a key part in removing the stigma of head lice infections in this country."



### New award scheme recognises the top activities for the under fives

What's On 4 Little Ones, the new parents' web directory, has launched an award scheme to recognise and reward the best pre-school activities across the UK. Sponsored by children's organic food company, Organix, the award programme is now open for voting.

Voting in the national categories is open to all and has already started via the [www.whatson4littleones.co.uk](http://www.whatson4littleones.co.uk) website. Parents can now log on and vote for their favourite activity. Local sessions are being judged by an independent panel and both sets of winners will be announced in March 2007.

A total of 12 awards are

available, in two age categories for both local and national classes. Nominees range from local toddler groups meeting weekly in church halls and community centres to highly organised, branded classes offering specific skills and experiences within a structured format.

In addition to the What's On 4 Little Ones awards, Organix will also contribute the special Organix Award to the activity that shows special attention to the nutrition of the food on offer to the children.

**For further information on the What's On 4 Little Ones 2007 award scheme contact Sam Willoughby on: 05600 703224 or [info@whatson4littleones.co.uk](mailto:info@whatson4littleones.co.uk)**

### JAMIE OLIVER BLAMED FOR SCHOOL DINNERS SLUMP

A recent survey by the BBC has shown that in some areas there has been a 30 per cent decline in the number of secondary school pupils eating school meals.

Caterers are blaming Jamie Oliver for the slump after he introduced new regulations for school meals in September, banning crisps and chocolate and instead introducing healthier options.

But it seems that fruit salad and tortilla wraps are driving pupils away from the canteen and many are turning to packed lunches or worse, local takeaways. Not only are catering services seeing a drop in revenue, but the changes could mean that pupil's diets are in fact worse off.

**Do you think Jamie Oliver has introduced too much too soon? Email with your opinions to: [jenni@flyingstartmagazine.co.uk](mailto:jenni@flyingstartmagazine.co.uk)**

## Red Bull gives Daddy

Wiiings!



Forget scoring the winning goal in the World Cup or being the front man in a number one band, thanks to cult role model Dads such as Brad Pitt, Jamie Oliver and David Beckham, simply being a Dad has never been so cool.

That's why Red Bull has teamed up with Bounty, a provider of products and information for families with young children. Red Bull is including a special pack for new Dads, providing positive energy to support them through this hugely positive lifetime moment.

Red Bull helps deliver mental

and physical energy, ideal for the new challenge of juggling work, nappy changing, lullaby singing, rattle playing and generally being a Daddy.

64,000 new Dads will benefit from the special packs, which are included as part of a bigger pack for new mums, helping support the energy levels needed to balance friends, work and the new family. The packs, specially made with a Dads message, also contain two cans of Red Bull. **For further information visit [www.bounty.com](http://www.bounty.com) and [www.redbull.com](http://www.redbull.com)**



## Help Mums-to-be Prepare Mentally for Motherhood

A new course for pregnant women will for the first time tackle the overlooked but critically important emotional side of becoming a mother. The two-day courses, to be held in different venues around the country during 2007, will explore how mums-to-be really feel when they have their baby. It will prepare them for issues such as their new role and identity, guilt, perfectionism, body image and career decisions.

Course tutor Patricia Carswell explains: "Traditional antenatal and parent craft classes tend to focus solely on the birth and the practicalities of looking after a baby, but say little about the emotional aspects of motherhood. Many women feel emotionally lost once they become a mum, which can lead to depression. By preparing mentally in advance, mothers will feel more in control during this life-changing period. It's something that many mothers tell me they wish they'd known before they gave birth."

Another benefit of tackling these issues in advance is a potentially easier birth. Many health professionals believe that when women address the emotional aspects of their transition to motherhood, the potential for complications in labour is reduced. **Visit [www.coachingformothers.com](http://www.coachingformothers.com) for more information.** Patricia can be contacted on 0845 838 6399 / 01600 861877, or [patricia@coachingformothers.com](mailto:patricia@coachingformothers.com)

## NHS backs Disabled Children's Short Breaks Bill

Children's charity NCH joined over 50 MPs at the Every Disabled Child Matters parliamentary launch in November, and backed a new bill designed to give disabled children and their families the legal right to short break care, without which, many would have no break from being a full time carer.

NCH, which works in partnership to run almost 500 services for more than 160,000 of the UK's most

vulnerable children, young people and their families, is calling for the Disabled Children's Short Breaks Bill to become law to enable local authorities and the NHS to provide appropriate short breaks for 100,000 families with disabled children.

NCH Chief Executive, Clare Tickell, said: "Such an important aspect of support should have been made law a long time ago and the sooner this bill goes through and more funding is made available, the sooner disabled children and their families will be able to benefit from the service they deserve, not the service that their local authority can afford." **For further information visit [www.nch.org.uk](http://www.nch.org.uk)**



STAR

## LETTER

**WELL DONE TO HAVE YOUR SAY WINNER GEMMA PADDISON. A DISNEY V-SMILE AND WINNIE THE POOH TOILETRIES ARE ON THEIR WAY TO YOU.**

"Before I had my daughter I found it really hard to find what the spirit of Christmas was, and now I know. Surprisingly I have found that it is not how much money you spend on your children at Christmas, but rather how you much time you spend with them and how much magic you put into it. I believe that you should encourage the belief of Santa Claus, now I know that this is controversial, but I think as adults we have lost a lot of our ability to just believe in things that we can't see. We have grown to be a very cynical society and I don't want my daughter to grow up the same way. Although I know there will be a time when she finds out that Father Christmas is "not real", but in response I will tell her that there once was a man who made wooden toys for all the people who he loved and cherished around him, and that one man's kindness to the younger generation meant that they too carried on making gift for their loved ones. This kindness has lasted through all the ages and rough times, through wars and hatred. Yet still on Christmas morning we give gifts to our loved and cherished ones. So is it not true then that Santa Claus really does exist, as his legacy and kindness lives in all of us?"