

Saving Childhood & Families

A Green approach to addressing the crisis facing children and families

Rupert Read, Bennet Francis and Laura Middleton

Foreword



“Families are feeling the burden of government cuts. One in five mothers regularly misses meals so her children can eat¹ and there has been a marked increase in child poverty since the Coalition government came to power. Families and especially children must be protected from the impacts of austerity.

Society as it stands, works for big business– the bankers and the elite. I want society to work for the voiceless and powerless – for children, for families and people like us.

The Green Party is the only political party taking our children’s rights to a childhood seriously, with a long-term vision of how to protect children and families. Our radical plan for children and families is wide-ranging in addressing inequality. It would bring about access to free childcare for those on lower incomes and affordable childcare for those wanting to return to work, plus it offers measures to get our children away from computer screens and playing outdoors again.”

Green Party, Dr. Rupert Read

Rupert’s vision for children and families:

1. **Affordable Universal Childcare** - Investment in more free childcare (extend free childcare to under-threes for vulnerable families and single parents.)
 - a. Create a childcare system that is supply-funded and more affordable for parents: childcare should account for less than 10 per cent of a family’s disposable income.
 - b. More affordable childcare to parents of three-and four-year-olds and families where mothers are already in work.
2. **Greater parental leave rights:** shared maternity/paternity package (one month's leave after the birth for both parents, then for a further 22 months of leave)
3. Creating a thriving **job-sharing and part-time careers market**
4. **Protecting children's right to a childhood:**
 - a. Banning adverts aimed at children
 - b. Investing in measures to get children away from television/computer screens and outdoors again; reconnecting children with nature
 - c. Stopping the over-testing of children. Formal education must not start at age two, as proposed by the Coalition Government.
5. **Protecting Children’s Centres** from Coalition cuts. They must not be closed.
6. Making the European Parliament **take children's rights seriously** and become a global 'Child Rights Champion'.

¹ <http://www.netmums.com/home/netmums-campaigns/families-in-crisis>

7. **Ending the need for foodbanks** by creating healthy, affordable and sustainable food supplies and addressing the cost-of-living crisis *at source*. (See http://www.theecologist.org/blogs_and_comments/commentators/2384762/food_banks_a_radical_plan.html)
8. **Reforming the rental sector** to stop high, unaffordable rents.
9. **Creating strong local economies:** providing green jobs/ apprenticeships and a future for our children.
10. **Ending Austerity:**
 - a. Ensuring that tenants who are struggling to pay council tax are not visited by bailiffs, or have to pay bailiffs fees.
 - b. Ending the “bedroom tax”
 - c. Ending child poverty
 - d. Scrapping universal credit, which will penalise childcare options for those on low incomes, and looking toward a citizen’s income scheme instead.

The Eastern Region Green Party fully backs recommendations from a recent Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) report on childcare² and is campaigning to make them into law. The report notes that affordable childcare allows and supports mothers with younger children (aged up to two) to enter/re-enter work, and mothers whose youngest child is between three and five to increase their hours. On this basis, the Eastern Region Green Party calls for:

- More affordable childcare for mothers with children aged up to two, for low-skilled and for lone parents, in order to enable them to enter/re-enter employment.
- More affordable childcare for parents of three and four-year-olds and families where mothers are already in work, in order to enable mothers to increase their working hours.
- The introduction of a greater flexibility in childcare provision, so that parents have more choices; and better access to flexible working opportunities. This requires greater accommodation from employers for different working options.
- A radical overhaul of the universal credit programme. This policy may lower childcare support for families on low incomes. Furthermore, tax-free childcare will not only be biased towards higher-income families, but childcare costs will continue to outpace the support offered in the proposals. This means that childcare costs for parents are likely to remain high for the foreseeable future. It also means that costs will continue to constrain employment decisions, especially for mothers.

Find out more: www.eastern.greenparty.org.uk/families



#GreensForFamilies



Facebook/GreenRupertRead

² <http://www.ippr.org/publications/childmind-the-gap-reforming-childcare-to-support-mothers-into-work>

Saving Childhood & Families

A Green approach to addressing the crisis facing children and families in the UK

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Introduction

There is a crisis facing children and families in this country and the Green Party is the only political party taking a profound and long-term approach to solving it. Families are struggling to balance the demands of the rising cost of living with the impacts of austerity. We believe that people should not have to choose between heating their homes and feeding their children. The measures outlined in this report will address inequalities at source and seek to create an environment and society that works for us all – so that we can raise healthy, happy and secure children.

Currently the UK lags behind many other European countries in supporting parental leave. Greens will therefore seek to extend maternity/ paternity packages in Britain through the EU. However, as certain key European institutions act primarily in the interests of big business, financiers and the elite, we will seek to reform them so that (where possible) they work for the voiceless and powerless – notably for children and for families.

The report discusses a number of measures: We want to end the statutory testing that is being imposed upon children at an ever-earlier stage in their lives and the wholesale privatisation of the education system. Furthermore, here in the East, we have seen a shocking increase in the demand for Food Banks, with 56 now operating in the region. We want to end the need for foodbanks by creating healthy, affordable and sustainable food supplies.

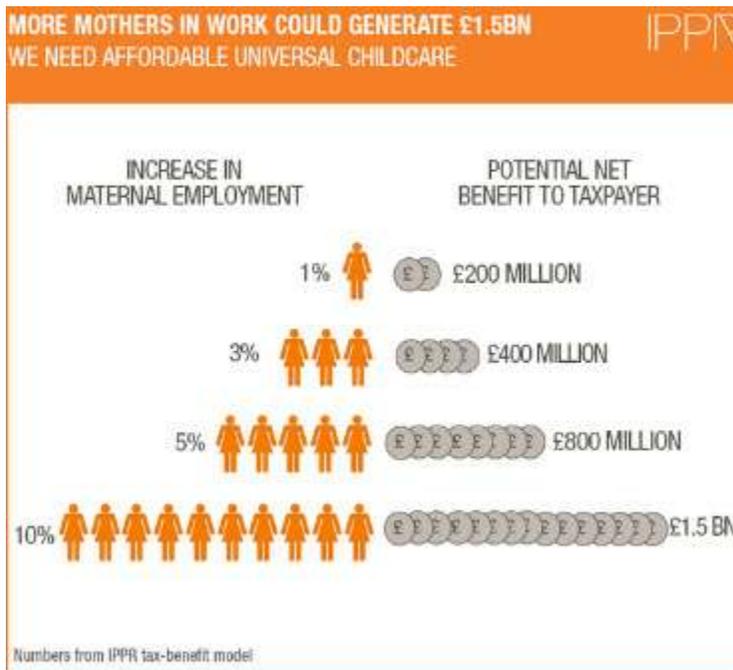
We want to ban all advertising aimed at children and want the other main parties to acknowledge the threat to our children's freedom posed by unregulated online advertising and advertising on television. Pre-school age children spend approximately 4 hours each day looking at screen-media, possibly much longer³. Children under 8 years old are unaware of the persuasive intent of advertising. We are the only party that will tackle head-on this switch to digital and screen-based activities and the psychological damage children have suffered from the decline in outdoor play that has taken place over the last 60 years.

Childcare

³ Tandon, P.S., Zhou, C., Lozano, P., & Christakis, D.A. (2011). Preschoolers' total daily screen time at home and by type of child care. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 158, 297-300.

Despite overseeing this wholesale destruction of support for less advantaged parents, the Coalition has still claimed to be on the side of families through its flagship family policy - the extension of the Tax-Free Childcare Allowance. This scheme does nothing to support those who cannot afford the pre-tax market-rate for childcare, which is rising much faster than inflation⁴. The policy represents yet another Coalition tax-cut which ignores those in genuine need. Most shockingly, research by the IPPR⁵ indicates that the scheme is likely to artificially drive up the cost of childcare, thus pricing out lower-income families still further.

As Greens, we would tackle the childcare problem at source. We are the only party to pledge to implement the IPPR recommendations for free childcare up to the age of two for low-skilled and single-parent families, to ensure mothers and fathers are able to get back into work as soon as possible. We would also expand childcare provisions for 2-5 year olds, providing supply-side funding to ensure costs do not exceed 10% of disposable household income for any parent, and free for those in receipt of family tax credits. At present, families in receipt of family tax credits and Universal Credit are eligible to have up to 85% of childcare costs subsidised. However, these subsidies only cover the academic year, so families are left with higher childcare bills during school holidays. Providing childcare free at the point of use for low-income families would allow more parents the satisfaction of meaningful work. We believe that the current supposed need for austerity is not an adequate argument against implementing these changes. IPPR research suggests that we can afford these changes to the childcare system and that there could in fact be a wider economic benefit of up to £1.5BN to the UK economy if affordable childcare was introduced (see below).



⁴ IPPR, *Mind the Gap: Reforming Childcare to Support Mothers in Work*

⁵ IPPR, *Mind the Gap: Reforming Childcare to Support Mothers in Work*, p.39

The Eastern Region Green Party also recognises the wider social benefits of effective childcare policy. It is shameful that only 67.5% of working age women with dependent children are able to work in this country, while Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands have rates of around 80%. Women with children who *wish* to work should be *able* to work. Following the Swedish model, we support the provision of childcare outside of regular working hours and the greater availability of conveniently located childcare centres. This should help ensure that parents who do not work “nine-to-five” jobs or who live in deprived areas have equal access to childcare provision. As figure 1 shows, a 10% increase in maternal employment is an affordable policy, with the potential for a £1.5bn increase in tax revenues.

Parents’ Working Rights

We want to end the silent stigma faced by women, whereby choosing to have a family negatively affects their career options and on returning to work they are penalised with either lower pay, or accepting lower-skilled work due to a lack of available part-time careers.

A House of Commons study found that 14% of women returning from maternity leave found their jobs under threat⁶. Despite this worrying figure, employment law reforms, introduced by this government, mean people wishing to defend their rights in court now face punitive up-front legal costs - £1200⁷ – which were previously borne by the employer. This policy, widely condemned by the legal profession⁸, risks the creation of a two-tiered legal system, in which basic employment rights are the preserve of those who can afford them. As well as fighting to reverse this change, the Greens would go further, campaigning for better representation for people who face a threat to their statutory maternity and paternity rights. Only 8% of unfair dismissal cases were successful at hearings in 2011-2012⁹, suggesting that the current system is vastly skewed in the favour of employers.

A shared maternity-paternity leave package is an important move towards ensuring women have equal opportunities to continue their career after childbirth, and this scheme (due to come into effect in April 2015) is a step in the right direction. Even the new rules, however, will not be sufficiently flexible to effect wholesale change of the way we approach parental leave.

We would extend parental leave rights much further to create a child-friendly parental leave policy. This would include a shared maternity-paternity leave package of one month leave after the birth for both parents, then a further 22 months of leave to be shared between them. However, even this would only be a small step towards insuring our commitment to equality translates into practical results.

⁶ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/personalfinance/10267223/Up-to-50000-women-a-year-cant-return-to-jobs-after-maternity-leave-study-finds.html>

⁷ <http://www.newstatesman.com/uk-politics/2013/07/what-todays-introduction-employment-tribunal-fees-really-means>

⁸ <http://www.pattinsonbrewer.co.uk/mylegalopinions/is-the-governments-new-employment-tribunal-fees-structure-simply-a-recipe-for-confusion-and-injustice/>

⁹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/218497/employment-trib-stats-april-march-2011-12.pdf

What is needed is a change of culture in the way we think about working practices, not just in the way we think about gender roles. Many women are compelled to resign after returning from maternity leave because their employers refuse their preferred option of continuing in their role part-time. Those who are able to work part-time do not receive the pay they deserve: the government estimated the gap in median pay between men and women to be 9.6% in 2012, but when part-time workers are factored in, this figure rises to as much as 21%. While 28% of women in work earn less than the living wage per hour, nearly half (47%) earn less than the living wage per week¹⁰.

To overcome this, Greens will support targeted measures to encourage the normalisation of job-sharing and flexible working hours. For example, we would introduce a requirement for employers to specify whether or not a job was sharable when advertising it, and to create a job description that made it clear why this was the case. This would make it easier for people to appeal against potential unfair dismissal using existing legislation, as well as encouraging more openness to job sharing. Not only should such measures allow women with children to be properly valued by the labour market, but it could also create a huge number of additional jobs.

Education

The head of Ofsted announced his recommendations in April that primary education should begin at the age of two, suggesting that structured assessment of skills in speaking, literacy and numeracy should also begin at this young age. This is the latest example of a policy-making trend in which statutory testing is imposed upon children at an ever-earlier stage in their lives.

We believe that such testing robs children of their right to childhood, places them under unnecessary pressure and introduces them to the idea of failure at a time at which it may be damaging for the rest of their lives. There is no evidence that an early start raises standards. On the contrary, international comparisons suggest that some of the most successful education systems are those that formally begin when children are as old as seven¹¹, with Finland being a case in point (6.7 on average¹²). Earlier testing inevitably leads to earlier distinctions on the basis of ability. The most recent PISA assessment is clear that the degree of “vertical stratification” within school systems is inversely related to their success¹³. Consequently, the streaming of infants is a particularly disturbing prospect.

The inescapable evidence is that the ability of children starting primary school is directly linked to their household income¹⁴. The solution does not lie, as Education Secretary Michael Gove claims, simply in ‘teaching poor children how to add up’¹⁵, but in fighting for a fairer and more

¹⁰ Estimate of Jackie Longworth of Fair Play South West, based on 2012 ONS data

¹¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/10301328/Too-many-assessments-far-too-soon-for-schoolchildren.html>

¹² PISA Results 2012: What Makes Schools Successful? Volume IV, p73

¹³ <http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-volume-IV.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/system/files/poorer-children-education-full.pdf>, p.18

¹⁵ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/10302249/Start-schooling-later-than-age-five-say-experts.html>

equal society, in which parents are guaranteed a true living wage and can share the freedom of wealthier parents to give their children the best start in life.

Ensuring a high standard of teaching also has a role to play in revitalising our education system. Greens in the Eastern Region are fundamentally clear that this cannot happen in the context of the privatisation of education, via the creation of academy schools and the imposition of private-sector-style incentives and sanctions. We already have bitter experience of the latter in this part of the world (e.g. in greater Norwich, and in Bedfordshire and (in relation to 'Free Schools') in Suffolk.). The genuine improvement of teaching, as a public service, can only happen when teaching as a profession gets the respect it deserves. To achieve this, we need an economy in which salaries are dictated less by market forces and more by social value. There are now 511 Academy schools in the East, with more already approved. Creating academies involves the transfer of public assets (the school properties) to a private entity with no compensation for their value, takes the running of the school out of democratic control, and prevents local authorities from deciding how to allocate funds across schools, as well as taking away their ability to set teachers' pay. We cannot let this continue. Changes to teachers' contracts recently attempted by the Coalition, and Labour's refusal to oppose the "Free Schools" programme, make it clear that only the Greens have what it takes to stand up for the rights of teachers and the pupils they educate. Indeed, Greens are already using our position in the European Parliament to block the secret trade deals threatening to complete the colonisation of the public sphere by multinational private interests.

Protecting Childhood in the Digital Age

The debate around protecting children in the context of digital technology has so far focused on the need to control pornography. It has led to new rules, whereby service providers maintain secret blacklists of banned sites, at their own discretion, and have been found in some cases to permit pornographic and illegal content while blocking educational web pages¹⁶. However, much less attention has been given to the need to protect children from sexualised and inappropriate imagery in all media, not just in the form of online pornography.

A YouGov poll in May revealed that 65% of parents did not feel that the 9pm watershed was sufficient to protect children from inappropriate content, especially as "catch-up" services such as BBC iplayer are now accessible on many televisions, as well as via computers and tablets. 69% reported that they had no parental lock on their televisions¹⁷. We believe that the idea of the watershed needs to be reviewed for the digital age, to examine the possibility of an opt-out setting on catch-up services in all formats which would restrict content so that programmes originally broadcast after the watershed can only be accessed after 9pm. We also support the Child Eyes initiative, which aims to prevent newspapers with a "sex sells" business model, such as the Sun and the Daily Sport, as well as so-called "lads' mags", from being sold on the lower shelves at children's eye level, where children's magazines may be nearby.

¹⁶ <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-25430582>

¹⁷ http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/rabu8qa9d0/YG-Archive-Pol-Sunday-Times-results-140502.pdf

It not just sexual and violent imagery, however, that can have a corrosive effect on children's lives. None of the three old parties have acknowledged the comparable threat to our children's freedom posed by under-regulated television advertising, and practically unregulated online advertising. Studies have shown that pre-school age children spend around 4 hours a day looking at screen-media, possibly much longer¹⁸. Children under 8 are unaware of the persuasive intent of advertising, and older children often have difficulty distinguishing marketing material from other content. In recognition of the power advertising has to invade the minds of the young, Ofcom regulates what can be advertised during children's programming and before the watershed, although they do not prevent marketing from being directed specifically at children. Online, meanwhile, children are bombarded by a confusing array of advertising of all kinds and at all hours of the day and night. In the USA, companies have already faced attempted legal action for the exploitation of minors, using unsuspecting children to carry out viral marketing campaigns via social media¹⁹.

We will support the extension of legal controls on television advertising to online platforms including social media and digital apps. Furthermore, we want to see an end to advertisements directed specifically at children, who are not in a position to make an informed judgement about implicit value claims they make. However, this must go hand in hand with measures designed to get children away from computers and televisions altogether, and to focus their energy on outdoor activities and creative pursuits. There have been numerous studies linking screen-time to obesity and ill health in children²⁰. It has also been associated with irregular sleeping patterns in three-year-olds and to sleep disturbance in 6-12-year-olds. There are also studies suggesting that the more time pre-school children spend in front of a screen, the less time they spend on constructive problem solving and creative play²¹, and that language acquisition may be retarded in the under-3s²². There is also a strong body of evidence for Nature Deficit Disorder: children have suffered psychologically from the decline in outdoor play that has taken place over the last sixty years.

It is for this reason that Greens in the Eastern Region support the expansion of several existing community-led initiatives to make sure activity and creativity are a central part of the

¹⁸ Tandon, P.S., Zhou, C., Lozano, P., & Christakis, D.A. (2011). Preschoolers' total daily screen time at home and by type of child care. *Journal of Pediatrics*, 158, 297-300.

¹⁹ Horovitz, B. (2005, October 19). P&G 'buzz marketing' unit hit with complaint. *USA Today*.

²⁰ Wijga A. H., Scholtens S., Bemelmans W. J., et al. (2010). Diet, screen time, physical activity, and childhood overweight in the general population and in high risk subgroups: prospective analyses in the PIAMA birth cohort. *Journal of Obesity* 2010, Article ID 423296, 9. <http://www.hindawi.com/journals/jobs/2010/423296/> (retrieved March 2, 2012); Landhuis, E. C., Poulton, R., Welch, D., and Hancox R. J. (2008). Programming obesity and poor fitness: The long-term impact of childhood television. *Obesity*, 16(6), 1457-1459; Jago R., Baranowski T., Baranowski J. C., et al. (2005). BMI from 3-6 years of age is predicted by TV viewing and physical activity, not diet. *International Journal of Obesity*, 29(6), 557-564

²¹ Wyver, S. R. & Spence, S. H. (1999). Play and divergent problem solving: Evidence supporting a reciprocal relationship. *Early Education and Development*, 10(4), 419-444.

²² Vandewater, E. A., Bickham, D. S., & Lee, J. H. (2006). Time well spent? Relating television use to children's free-time activities. *Pediatrics*, 117(2), pp.181-191

NB all these studies are taken from bibliography of Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood, *Selected research on screen time and children*

contemporary experience of childhood. The film [Project Wild Thing](#) shows a vision of childhood reconnected to the natural world, and encourages parents to devote some time each day to “wild time”. This involves families turning off screens and going outside to explore their natural environment, with the help of the Wild Network – a list of community organisations that can help kids connect to nature. Greens will also work to prevent schools from being opened without any sports field or playground, to ensure there is always time in a child’s day for peer-led play activity.

Child Poverty

In 1999, Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats came together to set a legally binding target to eradicate child poverty in the UK by 2020. Fifteen years on, and child poverty is on the rise again, with the Institute for Fiscal Studies predicting that nearly a million more children will be living in poverty in this country between now and the 2020 target. We must end child poverty, but Greens believe that traditional approaches to firmly tackling it are not working because of the limits of economic growth. We do not subscribe to the notion that austerity is necessary in its current guise. Instead, we seek to: protect a welfare safety net for those who need it; provide energy-efficient and affordable housing; introduce a living wage; create green jobs and ensure the creation of healthy, affordable and sustainable food supplies.

No-one should have to choose between feeding their children and heating their homes. Here in the East, we have seen a shocking increase in demand for foodbanks, with 56 now operating in the region. All the evidence points to this increase being linked to changes to the benefit system enacted by successive governments since the mid 2000s. Coupled with rising food prices, which have doubled in the last 10 years, many parents are struggling to feed their families, with a 2012 Netmum’s survey finding 1 in 5 mothers regularly skip meals so that their children have enough to eat²³.

While the work foodbanks do is admirable, it is unacceptable that it should be necessary in any decent society. We will fight to restore the safety net that has for generations been a cornerstone of our British society. We will campaign to ensure work pays, by guaranteeing a true living wage for all. We will also support the creation of healthy, affordable and sustainable food supplies by providing access to allotments, following the model of community-lead agriculture projects in the East, such as Peterborough’s [Green Back Yard](#).

In addition to food prices, the charity Barnardo’s, has identified the growing “fuel gap” as a serious threat to children’s wellbeing, as rising energy prices mean that more and more families are forced to spend less on fuel than the Department for Energy and Climate change estimates is necessary to heat homes adequately.²⁴ Long-term exposure to cold homes has been linked with increased hospital admission rates and a higher incidence of asthma in children. Ultimately rising fuel prices affect everyone, but it the most vulnerable young people in this country who suffer most.

²³ <http://eastern.greenparty.org.uk/news.html/2014/04/01/fasting-to-end-hunger-in-britain/>

²⁴ http://www.barnardos.org.uk/pricedoutreport.pdf?utm_source=press&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=pricedout

We therefore need immediate action to tackle fuel prices, not just empty promises and attempts to repeal hard-won environmental protections that serve the common good. The Greens will work to roll out a scheme of free home insulation, which will generate efficiency savings for all. As part of the [Green New Deal](#), we will implement large-scale investment in renewables, especially community-lead micro-generation. This will overcome the stranglehold which the “Big Six” energy companies have over fuel costs. Our programme would be funded by a clampdown on corporate tax evasion and targeted taxation to rein in the worst excesses of the financial sector. Such a policy also means that energy costs will ultimately fall, without the need for government involvement, as traditional sources of energy, such as oil and gas, get more expensive as stocks run out, whereas renewables become cheaper as the technology matures.

Average proportion of household income needed to be spent by households living in poverty in order to heat their home to an adequate standard	
2004	7%
2005	7%
2006	9%
2007	10%
2008	10%
2009	11%

(Barnardo's)

Young people

Youth unemployment in the UK stands at over 19%, and although unemployment is falling overall, the difference between the proportion of young people out of work and the national average remains disturbing. Indeed the EU Commissioner Lazlo Andor argued in April that the government's measures, in response to youth unemployment, were “not sufficient to deliver”²⁵. At the same time, Unicef reported that the UK has the lowest percentage of young people in further education among the major developed countries²⁶.

25 <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/apr/07/government-failing-tackle-youth-unemployment-laszlo-andor>

26 http://www.unicef.org.uk/Images/Campaigns/ReportCard11_CYP.pdf



Source: Unicef

After the Liberal Democrat U-turn, the Greens are the only party that can be trusted to abolish tuition fees throughout the UK, bringing us into line with Scotland and our Scandinavian neighbours. But more than this, we want to blow the cobwebs of class out of the system of further education and training. Furthermore we want to ensure that work becomes rewarding for all, in particular young people. Successive governments have promised to deliver apprenticeships to get young people into work, but have left us far behind other countries, with some of the highest numbers of young people not in education, training or employment (NEETs) in the developed world. New research from the Prince's Trust has shown that NEETs are twice as likely to feel 'unable to cope' as their peers.

The Coalition's much-touted apprenticeship grants have subsidised big companies such as Morrisons (who in 2012 were providing a tenth of all apprenticeships²⁷) to take on staff to carry out basic tasks that do not constitute meaningful training. Over two-thirds of apprentices are internal applicants²⁸, meaning that in many cases companies are being subsidised to "train" workers to perform jobs they already do, while underemployed or unemployed young people are excluded, and since they can be paid less than the minimum wage, they take jobs away from those who could be fully employed. Meanwhile, their counterparts in Germany are enrolled in structured, three-year apprenticeships with a theoretical and practical component, learning a trade in some of the most technically advanced industries.

Here in the East, the Labour-led council in Norfolk and the Conservatives in Suffolk have blocked Green efforts to secure long-term investment in apprenticeships. Greens will seek to make it easier for companies to take on apprentices by pushing for the creation of government-backed apprentice agencies, which take on all liability for the trainee, as well as providing mentoring throughout the programme. By reducing the legal risk for companies, we will make training young workers an attractive prospect for cutting-edge Green Technology firms, creating a highly skilled "green collar" workforce to support the transition to a sustainable economy. For more details on how we intend to create a "green collar" workforce in this region and what impact the new green technologies could have, see our report: [Time for and Energy Revolution in the East](#).

²⁷ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-17564255>

²⁸ <http://www.theguardian.com/education/apprenticeships>

Projects and Initiatives We Support

Child Eyes

- A campaigning group that seeks to end the daily bombardment of children with sexual imagery, focusing on the sale of “lads’ mags” and newspapers such as the Sun and the Daily Sport at an eye level where children may see them.
<http://www.childeyes.org/>

End Child Poverty

- The campaign to put pressure on the main political parties to honour their pledge to end child poverty by 2020.
<http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/>

Families and Schools Together (FAST)

- Save the Children, in partnership with Middlesex University organises courses of 8 weekly meetings with parents and their children at primary schools where large numbers of children receive free school meals, which are then continued by parents after the 8 weeks. Children take part in structured activities together in reading, writing and maths, with a focus on encouraging good behaviour and a positive attitude to learning, allowing parents to get more involved in their children’s education so they can provide better support at home.

Leave Our Kids Alone

- A campaigning group that seeks to end all advertising to children of primary school age and younger, recognising that children are less able to understand the purpose of advertising messages and to resist their influence.
<http://www.leaveourkidsalone.org>

Parents’ Forums

- Every school should have a Parent Council or Forum, in which parents can meet with the governing body of the school and discuss the development of school policy, so parents have a voice when it comes to their child’s learning.

Project Wild Thing – The Wild Network

- Project Wild Thing is a 2013 documentary film directed by David Bond, as well as a ‘film led movement’ to return to a vision of childhood free from the worries of modern life, in which children are able to explore their natural environment and experience the wild. It promotes the Wild Network of charities and community organisations which can help children get closer to nature, including the Wildlife Trusts, the RSPB, the National Trust and countless others.
<http://www.projectwildthing.com/>

Pupil Voice

- The campaign to fulfil our obligations under Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure children have a say on matters that affect their own lives. It includes initiatives such as the UK Youth Parliament, and school student councils.

<http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/united-kingdom/fast>

Save Childhood Movement -Too Much Too Soon Campaign

- The campaign for evidence-based policy-making for early years learning. The organisation puts pressure on the government to treat the early years as a unique stage in a child's life, in which the value of play activity is recognised, and not to treat this age merely as a preparation for school.

<http://www.toomuchtoosoon.org/>