



# FATHERS 4 JUSTICE

## 'out of control' needs before children's' FamilyMatters

### FEEDBACK

**TALKING POINT:** Last week's Fathers 4 Justice debate feature, published in Family Matters.

**N** reply to the comments from Fathers 4 Justice East Midlands co-ordinator Fraser Chaburn in last Monday's Family Matters.

The point that I was trying to make that does not appear to have been highlighted by Jill Gallone, is that, at four years of age, my daughter Jane (not real name), is already displaying signs that she does not wish to go to her father for access visits. However I am bound by a court order that has been imposed by my ex-husband to more or less force her to go against her wishes as she is deemed too young to have responsibility.

As I mentioned, her father provides no more than what which is ordered by the CSA, either financially or in time or effort between visits. Simply showing interest in her life may go a long way towards improving my opinion of him and his family. And yes, for a four-year-old child to be dragged out of bed and driven through rush-hour traffic for an hour before school at 8:45am is most definitely detrimental to her well-being. Any person with the child's welfare in mind could see that.

Outstanding, irritating, aggression, retaliation and militancy, all words used by Mr Chaburn, are in their inception filled with negativity, and are never going to lead to a satisfactory outcome for any of the parties in this situation, particularly the children.

I don't forget that they, after all, are the most important people in these scenarios. Throughout Mr Chaburn's reply his focus has been on the adult (himself) and not the needs of the child involved, and this appears quite obviously to be the focus of Fathers 4 Justice.

This is the reason I find them so infuriating. My point quite simply is this, that in continuing in the same manner, the group continues to remove the focus from the child to highlight their own agenda. I suggest that a re-evaluation of over-inflated pride by those "adults" involved, whether the absence be father, mother or grandparent, will have a more beneficial outcome.

What does it matter that any parent has a legal right to see a child, if that is diametrically opposed to the needs and wishes of that particular child? This should be the case ONLY if it is in the best interest of THE CHILD.

I am appalled that Mr Chaburn continues to extol what I believe to be the myth that the resident carer is almost always vindictive. I truly believe that the basic motivation instinct of any protection towards their offspring would not be a fox bite back if her young were threatened? The sheer fact that Mr Chaburn admits that F4J has links to threats to people's own cases, suggests that their loyalties do not rest with their own children but with their own pompous egos.

Again I state, these children grow, and develop in response to their experiences. They become thinking individuals with opinions of their very own. I support the notion of equal resource parenting, but fail to see how this can be achieved when one of the parents is wearing his underpants over his eyes? So Mr Chaburn I do hereby turn down your most gracious offer of joining Fathers 4 Justice. I have a child to concentrate on!

**Just email me at address supplied**  
✉ More letters on this subject coming up next week. To join the debate, e-mail family@derbytelegraph.co.uk or write to: Family Matters, Derby Telegraph, Meadow Road, Derby DE1 2DW.



**TALKING POINT**  
**HANK goodness you're here on time - we're starving!** is not the kind of pre-interview welcome I'm used to but, after four days of living on next to nothing, I feared the University of Derby students I was meeting might actually be contemplating eating me.

My arrival at their digs in Uttoxeter New Road, coincided with their main meal of the day, which, by combining resources, the four students managed to put together for £2.

One supplied pasta, another a tin of tomatoes, another a loaf and another - luxury of luxury - some cheese. They also allowed themselves a clove of garlic to brighten up a bland sauce.

"This is what we've been living on for the last four days," said David Twomey (32), president of the university's People and Planet Society, which led a \$2 (£1.06) a day challenge to demonstrate just how tough life is for people in poorer countries.

Some two billion people in the developing world survive on the paltry sum of \$2 a day.

For five days at least, from March 5, around 30 University of Derby students did the same.

As well as underlining the world's inequalities, the event, part of Derby's Fair Trade fortnight, will help the university in its bid to become the first university in the country to gain Fair Trade status - something David hopes will be confirmed by the end of term.

But the students were not simply making a statement. They also gained sponsorship and, when all the cash has been counted, hope to have £3,000, which David and fellow Third World Development students Kevin Mundy (23) and Kevin Rayson (21), will personally deliver to a Widows' Co-operative in Gambia, which they are due to visit as part of their course next month.

"It's great because we can follow this through from beginning to end," said David. "And, as students on our course go to Gambia by plane, we will be able to find out how the money has benefited people. The Widows' Association wants to use the money to buy a herd of goats to enable people to have milk and cheese."

"At least we have plenty of shops and markets nearby to buy food and drink. You forget that other people haven't."

In fact, Derby's Guildhall market has seen a lot of the students in recent days. They swear by it for bargains and, with money so tight, have saved on every penny. "We could only have survived on £1 a day as a team," explained David. "You couldn't afford to do it otherwise, we have met every night to share a meal together."

Nevertheless, by day four of their five-day \$2 a day challenge, they were hungry - very hungry - particularly David and Kevin Mundy.

"You do start to obsess about the things you can't have," said Kevin. "I've almost run out of



**TOUGH TASK:** Around 30 University of Derby students had to eat, drink, work and play (though there wasn't much play) on just a five for the best part of a week.

As part of Derby's Fair Trade fortnight, which has just drawn to a close, 30 University of Derby students survived on the equivalent of \$2 a day (£1.06), the amount two billion people live on in the developing world. Jill Gallone found out how a group of them got on.



**TEAMING UP:** University of Derby students, from left, Kevin Rayson, Beth Sherlock, David Twomey and Kevin Mundy tuck into a pasta dish they cobbled together for £2 by pooling resources during the \$2 a day challenge.

tobacco and soon won't be able to smoke.

"It's a lot harder than I thought it would be. If the money was just to cover food you could manage but that I had to go to transport and university costs too. I had to pay to get an assignment printed and we have to buy folders to present our work in so the money's been really stretched."

The students, who normally live on between £30 and £50 a week, also discovered that legs were made for walking.

"We've walked miles, and miles," said Beth Sherlock (21). "I turned up at one lecture but it was very red-faced. It was only a 35-minute bus but it was all uphill."

"One trip on the student bus is £1 so we've been walking everywhere," said David.

"And that's made us even hungrier," laughed Beth. "One thing I have noticed is that you can't afford to live healthily on such a small amount because veg is so expensive. I've had to buy rice



**LIVES OF CONTRAST:** Right: The Mothers at their debut gig last May. From left, Henry Hinds on bass, Alice Wilson and Claire Armstrong on vocals, Izzy Drury on drums and Beth de Lange on guitar. Left: A different side of life for Beth de Lange, seen in Normanton's Arboretum Park with her son Oliver de Lange (16).



**BIG APPLE:** The glitz and glamour of the New York skyline by night.

**DERBY** mums who rocked their way into the national limelight after starting their own punk band - because they wanted a break from childcare chores and dirty nappies - are nursing a golden moment.

Apply named punk rockers The Mothers, who formed last year, have been invited to perform in America.

The five-strong band will go to New York in May to join the fourth annual Mampalooza - a festival for mothers who rock. They plan to sign a selection of their self-penned songs, which cover aspects of being a mum, including pregnancy, having twins, being a step-mum, nits and cooking the tea.

"We're really excited," said singer Claire Armstrong (37), of Moss Street, Derby. "We recently found out that 'mum rock' was big in America, and then we got this invite."

"It's great for The Mothers and it is great for Derby. We're putting this city on the map and we're really pleased about that."

"Obviously we've got to find the cash to go and that's going to be tough for us, but it's important that we go. We really want to meet the other bands and share our music with them."

The Mothers, who describe themselves as a raucous but fun-loving bunch, performed their debut gig in Derby last May. Since then they've played several more gigs, the last one being on Mother's Day a couple of weeks ago.



**A** punk rock band made up of Derby mums have received a dream invitation to take their music to America. Wendy Roberts reports.

The UK. We got together because we felt we needed a complete break from all our maternal duties. "We've been meeting in my cellar every week so we can sing and play our instruments. We absolutely love it."

Band member Henry Hinds, who has a two-year-old daughter, Jasmine Cope-Hinds, has made it her mission to fund finding.

"I contacted pet shop Pat Farm in Beeston, and the manager said the store would give us a donation. I don't know how much it might be, but we're grateful for that," she said.

"All we've got to do is find money for our flights. Some of the American band members have offered to put us up when we get there, so we're not going to need hotels. It's really exciting."

After the Evening Telegraph broke the story about The Mothers' first gig last May, the band have been inundated with press attention. An article appeared in The Guardian and the women were invited to appear on GMTV.

Local radio and TV covered their first gig at The Ve Jim, Derby and, following that, the band recorded a CD and set up their own website.

Drummer Izzy Drury (32), of Fleet Street, Derby, is a full-time mum to two-year-old twins Frances and Louis, and Floyd (four). Despite having three



**FORCED TO STAY OFF SCHOOL - DOCTORS' ORDERS!**

**M**ondo: The doctor says my sore throat is infectious so I can't go to school today or tomorrow. Hooray! I am sure my teachers will miss me. Not! God is smiling down on me. Gave me oodles of time to dwell on my great weekend, which was a blast! My team won at football, and then I went to watch Derby County play at home. Had to make notes, as I was writing the fan's view of the match for the Evening Telegraph. But devotion to duty has its drawbacks. I insisted on staying to the very end, then had to get stuck in the usual after-match city centre gridlock - for one and a half hours! He wasn't pleased. Anyway, back to me being off school and periously ill (tee-hee). Today I finally received my Livestrong and Slant Lip-Speak Lip wristbands, as did my brother and sister - and mum, and dad. For anyone who doesn't know, these are fashionable wristbands sold for charity. Mum says they look like they're from the swimming baths. They do but they're cool. Tuesday! Did nothing all day - again. Still too poorly to venture to school with my terrible infection. Just following doctor's orders! Spent the day watching Monty Python and the Holy Grail over and over again, which my brother thought quite sad. Having reflected on a little, I can see his point. But I can't help watching hilarious films. It keeps me out of trouble with mum, dad and stepdad. After that, had a game of Football Manager 2005 and won the Champions League with Derby - and one with David Beckham for a bargain price. Rams chiefs, you know where I am if

**"Still far too poorly to venture to school with my terrible infection."**

you need me.

**Wednesday:** Can you believe my luck? First the doc signs me off sick and today, when I should have gone back to school, it's a teacher training day. It feels like Christmas. Me and brother are off, yet again but my sister's school is open as normal (ha! ha). She's not a happy bunny. She is in one of her very sulky moods anyway because she's jealous of mine and dad's new mobile phones. She often sits staring at them in awe. Tough! Anyway, with another day of sickness to enjoy, I went down to the local driving range, where I ended up hitting five golf balls about five yards, and then did a little target practice with the ball while swinging. The ball ended up over the trees and I never saw it again. Oh well. I

**Thursday:** All good things come to an end. I had to go back to school for another dose of Saturday. This is a particular teacher torture which involves writing your notes about the board for forcing you to sit micks. Had to do a mental maths test in which I got 22 out of 30. The person who sits next to me glomed as he got 28. Mind you, I was feeling extremely poorly. All say "yaaaah"

**Friday:** Football training was cancelled due to bad weather, so I stayed in the warm, feeling quite sorry for my friends who HAD to train. Because they had an important match in the morning. Mum was in a nice mood. I went up against the radiator watching their faces turn ice white as they battled the elements.

**Saturday:** Won again in the final, fourth in our league. Afterwards I managed to overcome my sore throat problems by drinking a huge McDonald's. Surely that awful antibiotic medicine mum has been ramming down my throat all week, has worked. Frothing is, it's not only when it goes into your body that it stinks!