

### Children and cheap don't add up

adapted from an article by Joanna Moorhead

- 1 Hands up if you'd like a three-day weekend? Or a six-hour working day? Or a cheaper holiday? There are polls 35, even before someone sets up the e-petition to check; so it can only be one of those feather-knocking-over moments to hear that about 170,000 Britons have put their names to a call for holiday companies to cut their prices in high season. The petition condemns firms for cashing in on school holidays. In its wake, education secretary Michael Gove has suggested a cut in air passenger duty to reduce travel expenses for families.
- 2 Air passenger duty or no air passenger duty: it's going to be cheaper to holiday in term time, when demand is lower, than in school vacations, when everyone wants to be away. So even if the cost is shaved a bit, some parents will still choose to take their kids away when they should be in the classroom.
- 3 The bottom line is, we all have to make choices – and when you're a parent, you've already made one big choice, which has as a consequence that from here on you'll have to shell out a lot more cash, and your life will be a lot less convenient for many years into the future. As a mother of four I can honestly say there are many silver linings to family life, which really is a joy and a privilege: but I fear cheap holidays will never be among them.

*The Guardian Weekly, 2014*