

## **Deaf Parenting UK – Press Release on new Ambassador - Rosie Cooper MP and word of supports from Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People**

### **Message from the Chair:**

*In the midst of hot summer, Deaf Parenting UK continue to soar with the increasing numbers of Ambassadors joining Deaf Parenting UK. I am delighted to welcome Rosie Cooper MP who is well-known CODA (child of Deaf adult) and with her experiences of growing up with Deaf parents, she is an avid supporter of Deaf Parenting UK and keen to see Deaf parents have equal access to services without barriers.*

*I am also delighted inform you that Deaf Parenting UK have continued to sought more support from Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled people and our national/ international supporters who have written their messages of support to Deaf Parenting UK. They were so pleased to see Deaf Parenting UK growing strength to strength, being the only one of its kind in UK and worldwide.*

*To learn more about Deaf Parenting UK and to qualify for free membership for Deaf parents/ families, please go to [www.deafparent.org.uk](http://www.deafparent.org.uk).*

*Wishing you all a wonderful summer and may the year bring us strengths in reaching out and supporting to all our families and communities.*

*With warmest wishes*

*Sabina Iqbal  
Chair/Founder of Deaf Parenting UK*

**Note: For all media enquiries/ contact with Ambassadors please liaise with Asif Iqbal, PR/Project Manager for Deaf Parenting UK on [media@deafparent.org.uk](mailto:media@deafparent.org.uk). If you want to know more about Deaf Parenting UK, please email them on [info@deafparent.org.uk](mailto:info@deafparent.org.uk)**

## Notes to editors:

**Deaf Parenting UK** is the first ever charity and small national organisation to be run by Deaf parents for Deaf parents. It represents the needs of Deaf parents in the UK, who have hearing children, deaf children or children with disability.

**Deaf Parenting UK** was established following research done on gaps in services for Deaf parents within the UK. From research, a picture emerged demonstrating the lack of awareness and consideration for the needs of Deaf parents.

Because of communication issues within the home and at school Deaf children often lack access to basic information in the area of personal, social and health, such as growing up, sex education, pregnancy and parenting. Yet the background statistics are:

- **90% of Deaf children are born to hearing parents. As well as mainstream support and information, which is available to parents in general, parents of deaf children have access to information, resources and support via Social Services and organisations providing services to deaf children and their families. Information on parenting is also readily available in print, Video/DVD material and Parenting Classes etc.**
- **Deaf children grow up into adults and become parents and yet few resources and support is available to them in an accessible format. This is particularly with services noticeable as Deaf Adults have a 90% chance of having hearing children where access is a real issue.**

The following is common in Deaf parents' daily lives, as services offered to Deaf parents are sometimes non-existent, very limited or patchy as compared to those available to hearing parents:

**Deaf parents are unable to access mainstream information - parenting skills classes, midwives or health visitors. Deaf parents find it difficult to access or participate in school life adequately due to staff inability to communicate in sign language or because of lack of Deaf awareness.**

**Deaf Parenting UK** offers the following services for Deaf parents and Deaf parents to be:

- Deaf Parenting Skills Workshops for deaf parents with young children, teenagers and expectant parents.
- Befriender Services
- One - to - One Parenting skills support at private home or at own discretion.
- Tailor - made parenting support services to meet Deaf parents' needs.
- DPUK can deliver presentations/consultation meetings giving an insight into the service that we offer.

Deaf Parenting UK have been recognised on local, national and international level especially on recent World Federation for the Deaf's conference where we realised the uniqueness of Deaf Parenting UK as a national organisation in UK. We checked with other countries and there were none like Deaf Parenting UK apart from small projects here and there, but not a formal organisation of Deaf parents for Deaf parents. It shows on how important for Deaf Parenting UK to present itself as a good model for other countries across the world on enabling confidence, supporting and empowering Deaf parents

To learn more about **Deaf Parenting UK** and to qualify for free membership for Deaf parents/families, please visit our website on [www.deafparent.org.uk](http://www.deafparent.org.uk).

## **NEW: Profile & Support from our Deaf Parenting UK Ambassador**

### **Rosie Cooper MP**



Rosie Cooper was elected in May 2005 to be the Labour Member of Parliament for West Lancashire.

Rosie, a board member for Merseyside Centre for the Deaf for over 30 years, has been actively involved in politics since the age of 16, becoming a Liverpool City Councillor in 1973 for Broadgreen. During her 28 years as a City Councillor, Rosie also became the Lord Mayor of Liverpool in 1992-93.

Rosie has also been involved in health issues and the National Health Service for the past 30 years. Rosie has been involved with the NHS as a member of Liverpool Health Authority and then Vice-Chair between 1994 and 1996. In 1996 she became Chair of Liverpool Women's Hospital.

During her tenure as Chair, Rosie successfully delivered Foundation Trust status for the hospital in 2005.

*Rosie said: "I am delighted to be an ambassador for Deaf Parenting UK. As the eldest child of deaf parents myself, I was often my parents' voice. It was during these years that I became aware of the barriers facing people with disability and I had to fight hard to make my parents' voices heard.*

*My political career has very much been shaped by my experiences as a child in a deaf household and I am determined to do everything I can to raise awareness of issues facing the deaf community."*

### **Comments of support from Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People to Deaf Parenting UK:**

#### **Anne McGuire Minister for Disabled People**



*"Deaf Parenting UK sounds like a very interesting and innovative charity, which fits closely with the principals set out in the 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People' report published by the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit in January 2005. As you will be aware, the Office for Disability Issues has a key role in helping Government take forward the report's recommendations.*

*I read with interest your annual report and am impressed with what you have achieved so far. Using well known people to raise awareness of the issues deaf parents face is a particularly effective idea. I hope you will accept this letter as a statement of my support for the work that you do. I hope Deaf Parenting UK continues to be successful in its work and I look forward to being kept informed of its progress."*

### **Comments of support from International to Deaf Parenting UK:**

*"Congratulating to your additional membership. We are as well campaign to establish Deaf Parent Working Group in Swaziland that will oversee the support and action on development assistance as well as care in Swaziland, Africa."* **Makhosini P. Makhubu,**  
**Executive Director, Swaziland National Association of the Deaf**

**Comments of support from DCAL - Deafness, Cognition and Language research centre to Deaf Parenting UK:**

*“The work of the Deaf parents team is a valuable contribution in enabling Deaf children to fully achieve their potential. DCAL supports and congratulates the Deaf parents group on their activities.”*

**Dr Gary Morgan Co-director DCAL**