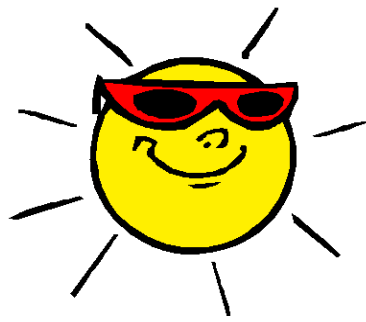




Deaf Parenting UK



## WELCOME!!

### Update from Asif Iqbal DPUK Project Manager



The recent conference held on 7th July 2010 was very successful. Your support and ideas are important in helping us influence the decision makers. The DPUK website will be regularly updated with news and we are on our way to creating fact sheets on how to support deaf parents by explaining their rights.

These too will be on our website as soon as possible.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of our new ambassador, Eileen Hayes MBE. A mother of four, Eileen is author, magazine columnist, trained counsellor and frequent broadcaster on TV and radio. Her background includes teaching, psychology, health promotion and research on ante- and post-natal care and education.

A regular contributor to the media on family topics, on programmes like, *"The Wright Stuff"* and *Jeremy Vine*. Eileen has also made several series of Practical Parenting tips for Living Channel, and presented a parenting slot on BBC series *A Family of My Own* and *Everyone's Got One*. She was Editor-in-Chief of *Your Family* magazine and website for five years. Eileen has published several books on childcare, including *Understanding Your Baby*, *Understanding Your Toddler* (Egmont), *Crying* (Pan MacMillan), *Tantrums* (Hamlyn) and *Crying and Comforting* (Dorling Kindersley).



Sabina & Eileen at our recent conference

Eileen told us "Being a parent is always challenging and all parents have difficulties at times no matter what their circumstances. Deaf parents will face all the same challenges as hearing parents, but may face extra barriers in accessing supports that they needs and therefore need specialist support/ help to overcome such barriers, whether this is being able to attend a Deaf parenting skills workshop run by deaf parents using BSL, or some peer support from parents who have already been there. Deaf Parenting UK is available to give them the information, advice, support and confidence they need around parenting and promote well-being within families."

We were delighted that Eileen was able to join us our recent Deaf Parenting Conference 2010. She told us "the conference was a lively, stimulating event and I found the workshops thought-provoking in many ways concerning the need to think about improved access for deaf parents to services many other parents take for granted.

I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to meet the work team from DPUK and a number of the other ambassadors, and was really impressed by their energy and commitment."

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As a result of the recent election, two DPUK Ambassadors—Maria Miller MP and Mike Penning MP were appointed Ministers in the new coalition government.

Many congratulations to them both



**Maria Miller was appointed as the new Minister for Disabled people**



**Mike Penning MP was appointed as Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport**

### **Breakthrough Independent Living Awards, Manchester 16th June 2010**



Breakthrough UK Manchester held its third Independent Living Awards Ceremony in Manchester Town Hall on 16th June. The awards highlighted and celebrated commitment to the independence of disabled people. Awards were made to organisations who evidenced innovation and commitment beyond what is currently accepted as good practice.

We were pleasantly surprised that Deaf Parenting UK was recognised and highly commended in this peer support category.

### **Deaf Parenting UK to meet Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace**



Sabina and I were delighted to be invited to attend one of Her Majesty The Queen's annual summer garden parties. We were invited in recognition of our services to the Deaf community and we were thrilled to attend. We met The Queen and Prince Philip, and we spoke to Prince Michael of Kent about our work. It was a wonderful afternoon and such an honour to find ourselves drinking tea in the garden of Buckingham Palace! As you'll see from the photograph, Sabina is expecting baby number three in two months' time.

Congratulations also to Mrs Janie Hughes, mother of our Editor, Ceri, who has also been invited to a garden party at the Palace in recognition of her work for a cancer charity.

### **DPUK receives support from Lynne Featherstone**

We were delighted to receive support from the new Equalities Minister – Lynne Featherstone MP. Lynne has recognized the work of Deaf Parenting UK. Lynne sees us the innovative lead in working with Deaf parents - putting them in touch with a support network of other Deaf parents and receiving support from our staff who are Deaf parents or have Deaf parents. Lynne, who is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Equalities) in the Government Equalities



Office said: *"The awesome responsibility that parents shoulder to fight for their children is made less lonely and difficult because of Deaf Parenting UK whose work is so very much needed. Parenting is difficult under any circumstances - but when our children have something which makes their life more difficult - then we parents need support to fight those fights - but also to know that we are not alone."*



We are delighted to announce that we received funding from Bristol Primary Care Trust for two years to support a project to deliver parenting skills. This only applies to deaf parents who live in the Bristol area. If you live in Bristol and would like to be involved in these parenting skill courses, please contact Radha, Coordinator via [info@deafparenting.org.uk](mailto:info@deafparenting.org.uk)

Finally, we do appreciate parents are worried about their children's exams recently. I'm sure all parents are relieved that exams are over and they can now spend as much time as possible with their

children during the summer holidays.

Please tell us your stories about your holidays so that you can share your experiences with the readers.

**Happy summer 2010!**

### EDITORIAL

For some parts of the country the advent of Summer has brought some extremely high temperatures and sunny days. After a particularly long and cold winter, this fine and warm weather is very welcome for most. Especially as we're now into Summer holiday season for schools there is an opportunity to enjoy some family time outdoors. We hope you'll also have some time to relax and enjoy this issue of our Newsletter. As you'll soon see there has been a lot going on since our Spring issue to update you on.

DPUK continues to thrive and the recent, successful conference is testament to this. In addition to touching increasing numbers of Deaf parents and their families, as the organisation grows it has the ability to reach and influence a much wider sphere of decision makers. The recent change in Administration has now resulted in two of our ambassadors taking roles right in the heart of the most prominent discussions affecting many – Maria Miller and Mike Penning's appointment to senior roles in Government provide a fantastic opportunity for the needs of Deaf parents to be taken very seriously. Read more about these appointments in Asif's update. You'll also see a photo of Maria presenting Asif with a certificate to recognise the work of DPUK at the recent Independent Living Awards Ceremony.

DPUK continues to be receive recognition for its services to the Deaf Community. Whilst these awards and plaudits are wonderful to receive, they also serve an important purpose in increasing the awareness of DPUK and in turn, awareness of the needs and rights of Deaf parents.

As someone still grappling with basic BSL, I am always very interested to read about the experiences of others in learning BSL. Asif recently introduced me to the BBC Ouch! Website which has very many interesting features and news for people with a range of disabilities. I was particularly interested to read Charlie Swinbourne's account of signing with his baby daughter, Martha. [http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/features/signing\\_with\\_my\\_baby.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/features/signing_with_my_baby.shtml) The website features a range of very interesting articles and important resources <http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch/>. A sure indication of a good website is one that you find yourself returning to regularly to find out what has been updated and to revisit information that you've browsed to previously – in the last few weeks I've found myself returning to Ouch on a very regular basis! I hope you find it useful.

On the subject of useful websites, don't forget that the DPUK website is kept up to date and features a wide range of vital information and helpful resources. Find the website at [www.deafparent.org.uk](http://www.deafparent.org.uk)

Enjoy the good weather while it lasts! We'll be working on your Autumn newsletter – please send any contributions by 24 September 2010.

*Ceri Hughes, Deaf Parenting UK Newsletter Editor*



## STOP PRESS!! Deaf Parenting UK hold successful conference for Deaf parents – “Are we Equal?”

Deaf Parenting UK Conference 2010 was held on Wednesday 7 July 2010 in London and attended by mostly Deaf parents and professional/ service providers working with Deaf parents, co-chaired by Professor Waqar Ahmed and Dr Lesley Jones, both well-known in the research field of Deafness & Ethnicity. We also had a range of speakers – Anne Bristow from Association of Director of Adult Social Services (ADASS); Surinder Sharma, Department of Health (Equality & Human Right Unit) and Professor Alys Young from Manchester University; two local Deaf parents/ families on their personal experiences/ perspective, as well as two workshops, one from Child Health programme Unit of Dept of Health jointly with the Family Nursing Partnership programme; and National Association of Family Information Services, who gave presentations on the theme: ‘Are We Equal? in accessing to Health, Social Services and Children’s Education’, of which many Deaf Parents experienced numerous of barriers.

The theme of the conference ‘Are We Equal?’ is something that many Deaf parents can relate to. Although, 90% of Deaf parents are likely to have hearing children, accessing to health services, social services and their child’s education (especially in the mainstream) are proving to be the major battles for many parents. During the conference and workshop, delegates were given an insight on the following three key areas that affect Deaf parents the most:

- Educating professionals about the needs of Deaf parents across Health, Social Services and Children’s Education;
- Access to Health, Social Services and children’s education is vital for many Deaf parents but are Deaf parents equal?
- Deaf parents to be informed about their rights and entitlements.

In her presentation, Professor Alys Young highlighted the lack of social services support for Deaf adults and children, especially when there is no specialist Sensory/ Deaf services team in place. Her research shows that more than half of local authorities in UK do recognise children of Deaf parents as ‘children in need’ and provide support for them, other local authorities have certain criteria in place (e.g. some children of Deaf parents are seen as ‘young carers’ for others this is dependent on the family situation) that need to be review before they the children of Deaf parents can be classified as ‘children in need’. The conference called for all children of Deaf parents to be seen as ‘children in need’, and needing support and access to appropriate resources.



From L-R Professor Waqar Ahmed; Susan Daniel (Chief Executive of NDCS & DPUK Ambassador), Professor Alys Young, Anne Bristow, Sabina Iqbal, Dr. Lesley Jones, Surinder Sharma, Pat Tulloch and Penny Allsop.)

Sabina Iqbal said that *“the conference is an excellent opportunity for Deaf parents to share their concerns regarding accessing to Health, Social Services and their children’s education. The Human Rights Act has emphasised that every parent has the right to enjoy family life. Furthermore, the Government’s policies: Every Parents Matter and PEAL have confirmed that every parent has the right to be involved in decision making affecting their child’s educational future. But how can they if they are unable to access to information and choices? Furthermore the Government’s Personalisation Agenda, enables Deaf/ disabled people (including those who are parents) to have more independence and control over their lives but again, how can they have control if they don’t have access to the information and resources needed to make it happen?”*

*Despite the Disability Equality Duty & Disability Discrimination Act (which also covers Health, Social Services and Education), very little has been done to address the issues that Deaf parents face. For example, there is inconsistency in policies regarding who pays for BSL interpreters when accessing to health services, such as the family GP. Lack of Deaf awareness, attitudes and lack of information (and limited access to it) to the three key services – Health, Social Services and Education - needs to be tackled to enable Deaf parents to participate in their daily lives without barriers, which many other hearing people take for granted”*

Conference Chair, Professor Wagar Ahmed Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Enterprise, Middlesex University & Deaf Parenting UK Ambassador, stated at the conference that he *“was honoured to have the opportunity to chair this excellent conference. Sabina and Asif are an inspiration to us all. Their energy, drive and determination has enabled Deaf Parenting UK to achieve so much with so little resource and in such a short space of time. They and other Deaf parents at the conference demonstrates that Deaf parents, like all other parents, are committed to bringing up their Deaf and hearing children to the best of their ability and resources. It is important for health, education and social services to work with Deaf parents as partners in the design and delivery of outstanding services.’*

Clarissa Williams, Former Head teacher and President of National Association of Head teachers (NAHT) & Deaf Parenting UK Ambassador, making her second visit to the DPUK conference said, *“the latest DPUK conference brought together an impressive line -up of speakers with important up to date information to share on the position of Deaf parents in today's world. However there is still much to be done to fight ignorance and prejudice in some sections of society. Too many deaf parents describe feeling isolated and frustrated in dealing with day to day situations. DPUK has done a great deal to bring this sense of isolation into the open and together we must continue to maintain a strong public voice in bringing about whole scale entitlement for **all** deaf parents to have equal access and rights. Indeed, I am very proud to be associated with DPUK. ”*



**Clarissa Williams**

# NEWS

## Media Opportunity: Channel 4's Jo Frost: Extreme Parental Guidance:



### **ARE YOU DEAF PARENTS OR HAVE A DEAF CHILD?**

Deaf Parenting UK is working in partnership with the production company that makes Channel 4's Jo Frost's TV programmes. She is well known for her previous programmes, including *Super Nanny*. We are keen to find deaf Parents/families who are willing to take part.

Jo Frost is looking for parents in need of expert advice to take part in the returning series of Channel 4's Jo Frost: Extreme Parental Guidance.

Are you deaf Parents or is your child hard of hearing? Have you struggled with their behaviour or that of their siblings as a consequence? Do brothers and sisters act up because they don't get as much attention as they would like? Are you worried that your child has been bullied? Are they angry because they are different?

If any of the above sounds like something you and your family are struggling with, Deaf Parenting can put you in touch with the programme.

Deaf Parents have featured in the equivalent *Super Nanny* programme in the USA.

<http://billcreswell.wordpress.com/2008/10/09/supernanny-deaf-preview-captioned/>  
(Please note this is a preview with subtitles)

For more information, please e-mail to [media@deafparent.org.uk](mailto:media@deafparent.org.uk) with your name, details of your family, address, location of where you are based and the best contact details for us to get in touch with you (email/fax/SMS and Minicom.)

All details you provide will be kept secure and protected at all times.

## The Baby Show NEC, Birmingham 21-23 May 2010

The Baby Show took over Birmingham's NEC in May for a 3-day celebration of all stages of pregnancy and early motherhood. Like the London Baby Shows, the Birmingham event will see the UK's most-loved parenting brands showcase the most innovative baby products with the likes of Sainsbury's, Ella's Kitchen, Organix and Bebecar UK already signed up. Leading experts on a range of baby and childcare issues will once again take to the Persil & Comfort Pure Stage with Prima Baby to provide insights and advice; making The Baby Show in Birmingham is the next must-see event for parents and everyone with an interest in babies. Special thanks to volunteers Hayley Day and Arlene Curran who give up their time to support the DPUK stand.



Nicola Tempest, Alan Douglas, Libby Douglas  
18 months old.



Claire Dowdican



Wendy Roberts, who works for the local Derby Telegraph newspaper, has contacted Deaf Parenting UK and is keen to find Deaf parents/families living in Derby. DPUK is unable to share members' details with the Derby Telegraph owing



to the Data Protection Act but have advised Wendy to write a letter which we can distribute via our newsletter, website and e-mail groups. So, if you are deaf Parents living in Derby and want to share your experiences, please contact Wendy directly and let us know how you get on.

**Letter from Wendy Roberts, Feature writer of Derby Telegraph**

***Hello DPUK members,***

*My name is Wendy Roberts and I write features for the Derby telegraph.*

*I am keen to find families from Derby who would be interested in appearing in the newspaper. I would really like to interview a family with either hearing parents and deaf children—or hearing children with deaf parents.*

*I can only imagine that there are many families in this area who fit this bill—and I'd really like to find you! It would be interesting for our readers to find out more about you and how you run your life and cope with everyday things!.*

*If you are interested please get in touch with me. I'd come to see you and conduct a short interview—then we would arrange for a photographer to come and take a few family pictures.*

*I can be contacted on email: [wroberts@derbytelegraph.co.uk](mailto:wroberts@derbytelegraph.co.uk) I work in the office on Wednesdays and Thursdays 8-4pm. My number here is*

**01332 29111 ext. 5653**

*Best wishes and thanks for your support*

*Wendy Roberts*

**Deaf Parenting UK support the Deaf Sports Personality of the Year Award 2010**



Deaf Parenting UK sponsors two awards and will be presenting them at the 'Deaf Sports Personality of the Year Award 2010' on 27th November at Wembley.



"Deaf Parenting are delighted to support this vital event in recognising the achievements of our deaf sport champions who were otherwise neglected by the mainstream media. Also, some of our deaf sport champions are parents who have families of their own—no mean feat when training for the Deaflympics. We wish the Deaf Sports Personality of the Year Award 2010 every success".

# NEWS

## Deaf Children Young People and Family Conference, Birmingham 19th May 2010

Deaf Parenting UK was represented at the Deaf Children, Young People and Family Service. This Charity is seeking the view of service users, referrers and organisations who support deaf children and families since it started in October 2009 and how it should develop next. This is an opportunity for service users and any other professionals or organisations to have their say.

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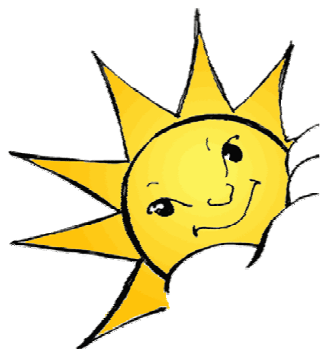
## The CODA UK and Ireland 2010 Conference, Brighton

This conference , promoting the positive attributes of having deaf parents, will be held on 21st and 22nd August 2010 in Brighton. Drama, arts and crafts will be available for children. Sabina is invited as guest speaker for this event.

**Entry Fee: adults £5, children– free of charge**

For further information: e-mail:  
**[codaukandireland@live.co.uk](mailto:codaukandireland@live.co.uk)**

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## Deaf Advocacy + Justice 4 Deaf People is pleased to launch and host this first Deaf-led Deaf Diabetes UK (DDUK) Conference on 29th July 2010

DDUK Conference will provide an excellent opportunity for Deaf Diabetes + for deaf people/Deaf parents who do not have diabetes and are interested in diabetes matters to meet NHS Professionals.

- Dr Rowan Hillson, MBE National Clinical Director for Diabetes
- Dr. Stephen Thomas, Clinical Director for Diabetes, Healthcare for London
- Sabina Iqbal, Chair/Founder of Deaf Parenting UK

The conference aim is to:

- Raise awareness of the needs of Deaf diabetes's access to the NHS Diabetes Care + Services plus information.
- Identify gaps in the NHS Diabetes Care + Services
- Highlight concerns + to offer possible solutions
- Inform Deaf people who do not have diabetes to be aware of diabetes risks + preventative measures
- And the needs of Deaf parents and their view about their children's needs who may have diabetes.

For more information:

**[www.justice4deaf.com/DDUK-Conference-Information.html](http://www.justice4deaf.com/DDUK-Conference-Information.html)**



## Signed Stories: Sabina Iqbal's BSL translation of First Time Nursery Book on ITV

Signed Stories has a very simple goal—to help improve the literacy of deaf children nationwide by allowing them to share in the joy of storytelling.

They are also designed to provide useful advice and guidance for parents, carers and teachers of deaf children and for the deaf parents of hearing children.

Books enrich all our lives—they are a vital part of a happy childhood. We thank all the writers, illustrators and publishers who have made them freely available; the sponsors and the celebrities who are supporting this not-for-profit venture and the many organisations collaborating with us.

Everyone—deaf or hearing—can use Signed Stories. Please keep coming back to see new books as they arrive and please tell your friends and work colleagues about this free website.

First Time Nursery Book, ITV, which Sabina Iqbal, Chair/Founder of Deaf Parenting UK has translated into BSL, is now on Signed Stories on :

[http://www.signedstories.com/world/browseall/index.cfm#/player/First\\_Time\\_Nursery](http://www.signedstories.com/world/browseall/index.cfm#/player/First_Time_Nursery).



## Citizens' Advice Bureau BSL guides available.



Deaf Parenting UK : *"It is fantastic to have the information/advice on debt, employment rights, anti-discrimination and benefits in BSL. This will enable us to have full access to information and make informed choices. In the past we have relied on support from another third person using BSL to explain the information. By having a BSL version on the CAB website means deaf people are able quickly to understand which information/advice to use. The CAB website is an additional resource useful for deaf people in an accessible format. We will add the link of this website to our Deaf Parenting UK website."*

**The guides are at:**

**[www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/bsl.htm](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk/index/bsl.htm)**

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## Fourth Deaf European Parliamentarian Elected

Dr. Gergeley Tapolczai, the first European Union deaf board member to be elected to a national parliament, in this case, Hungary. He is also the fourth European Deaf Parliamentarian following the footsteps of Ádám Kósa, MEP (Hungary), Helga Stevens (Flemish Parliament) and Helene Jarmer, (Austrian Parliament). His party FIDESZ holds the majority of seats in the newly elected Hungarian Parliament.

**[http://www.eud.eu/news.php?action=view&news\\_id=91](http://www.eud.eu/news.php?action=view&news_id=91)**

# FEATURES

**Deanne Bray, Deaf Actress and Television Star, USA Teacher, Mother and Wife.**

The [Hearing Loss Association of America](#) features actress [Deanne Bray](#), whose is guest starring as [Emma](#) on the NBC series, [Heroes](#). She appeared on the September 28, October 5, and October 12 episodes.

From [Heroes Wiki](#): "Emma has the ability to see sound waves as beautiful lights. Her power can also shoot out the sound waves as a concussive blast if heavily pressured enough. She demonstrates this by playing her cello so furiously that a blast of 'sound' leaves a scar on the wall."

Deanne has a severe hearing loss and wears a hearing aid in her left ear. She was previously the star of the PAX-TV series, *Sue Thomas, F.B. Eye*. Based on a true story, the series followed the adventures of Sue Thomas, a deaf woman working for the FBI in Washington, D.C. Although the series ended in 2005, it was one of two highest rated shows on the channel.

Read Barbara Kelley's feature, **Deanne Bray—A Hearing Loss Hero**, by clicking this link: [DeanneBrayFeature](#). Be sure to click on the link once and then again when it appears a second time. The pdf should download to your desktop and open immediately.

Deanne is married to [Troy Kotsur](#), an actor who is deaf. Kotsur was on the Lifetime series, *Strong Medicine*, and guest starred in *Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye*. He was also on the special deaf themed episode (December 13, 2008) of *CSI: NY* and an episode of *Scrubs*. Kotsur is also an award-winning director. Deanne and Troy have a four-year-old daughter, Kyra Monique.

I am fortunate to be able to photograph the majority of the covers for *Hearing Loss Magazine*. I would love to have flown to Hollywood to shoot this latest cover and feature, but alas, there wasn't a budget for it. The cover photo was provided by Los Angeles-based [Felicity Murphy](#).



*I love teaching because it leads me to learn new things every day. It's rewarding to be able to guide individuals to higher level of thinking by being creative in analyzing and evaluating a situation or concept. Often they end up teaching me with their way of looking at things!*

**Being a mom is a blessing.** My daughter, Kyra, is now a toddler and so much fun to watch. Children's first teachers are their parents. However, many teach their parents to look at the simplest things with a new perspective. For instance, when Kyra was a baby, she was taught to sign milk the way everybody signs milk (squeezing a cow's teat) but whenever Kyra wanted milk, she'd pound with her right hand (with a hand shape of a 5) on her right side of her chest indicating that she wanted breast milk. She was 9 months old at the

time. (I breast fed her until she was 20 months old.) I never taught her that gesture. I analyzed that she was signing the concept correctly in her own way. That's where her milk came from! She doesn't drink milk from a cow yet so she didn't bother signing that way even though I signed it many times. She insisted her way, pounding her chest. Eventually, she started signing milk like milking a cow when she started drinking cow's milk at 14 months

**A wife...** Often people say that marriage isn't easy. Being married for almost a decade, I would say I'd agree. It isn't a piece of cake but sharing your life with someone you love is worth every moment. If two people can look for ways to improve themselves with similar values in life, cherish their lives together and yet still be independent as individuals with understanding, love, patience and respect, that's the way to do it. I keep in mind of a quote I once read, "There is no way to be a perfect wife but there are many ways to be a good one." My husband, Troy, is such a gentleman and a wonderful father. I often think about how much I enjoy sharing my life with him.

**Acting...** I have been born into the entertainment industry with Dad being a lighting director and business agent for the motion pictures. I grew up riding paramount studio's bicycle around the

studio lots peeking in to watch actors and crew work. Dad took me on long road trips to locations and I'd watch dad work and actors stay pretty. I used to watch movies that have not been released yet. I was pretty much ahead of the game! I missed quite a bit of what was being said since I don't hear everything but I sure have SEEN a lot.

Acting has been an interest of mine growing up. I have had the wonderful opportunity to star in my own TV series, Sue Thomas: Fbeye. Guest starred in a few dozens TV shows, and have done films as well as stage plays in theatre. The more characters I meet, the more better I understand people in real life that have similar traits in the characters I play. Some

feel that acting is therapeutic but I don't look at it that way. I jump in, explore the character and bring the character to life the best possible way as I can. It's not therapy to me but it's art and it's work.

[http://deafness.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=deafness&cdn=health&tm=5&f=00&su=p284.9.336.ip\\_p736.9.336.ip\\_&tt=2&b t = 0 & b t s = 0 & z u = h t t p % 3 A // www.deannebray.com/](http://deafness.about.com/gi/o.htm?zi=1/XJ&zTi=1&sdn=deafness&cdn=health&tm=5&f=00&su=p284.9.336.ip_p736.9.336.ip_&tt=2&b t = 0 & b t s = 0 & z u = h t t p % 3 A // www.deannebray.com/)

<http://cindydyer.wordpress.com/2009/11/02/deanne-bray-from-nbcs-heroes/>

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## **DIVERSITY, DIFFERENCE & DIAGNOSIS**

### **D3 The Sounds Of Silence, Australia**

*"Karli Detman provides a window into her family's world, in which she and her husband, who are both deaf and their three children, who can hear. Illustration is by Paula Mills*

*My husband, Simon, and I often joke that our children – Bernhard, eight, Magnus, six, and Opal, two – were born with special needs. They can hear. As children of deaf parents, they are growing up in a culture that has much strength but does not automatically cater for the stimulation their 'extra' sense requires. While the world views deaf people as having special needs, the perception is reversed in our community, and the fact that our children can hear means they have specific requirements that we, as proud parents, have to extend ourselves to meet.*

*Our commitment to this started early when, despite a strong genetic possibility of deafness, Bernhard was born hearing. Simon and I were mindful of providing sensory experiences in all their forms, and Bernhard's baby days were a mosaic of kisses and raspberries on the fairy-floss softness of his skin, and adventures in the garden. In the afternoons, we'd come inside and I'd smile and clap as Bernhard made experimental baby signs with soft, dimpled hands. Often, before a nap, we'd play around with fairytales and classic stories in Auslan.*



*Simon and I were confident we were doing a great job as our children climbed from the cuddly cocoon of babyhood into the broader realm of childhood. Still, occasionally a pensive mood overcame me and I wondered: did my children hear? They heard in the literal sense, of course, but just as one person can watch a sinking sun and see exactly and plainly that, while another sees a symphony of reverence and hope lighting up the heavens, there were differences, I presumed, in the experience of hearing.*

*Dancing with my children, I enjoyed the feeling of the musical beats vibrating in my heart, but was aware of the paradox the different sensory input we were receiving created as we lived the same moment, but experienced the layers and nuances of it in different ways. "What does music sound like to you?" I'd sign to my children, following the advice of an older, wiser deaf lady who urged me to "ask into life" what I couldn't imagine. "Like fairies tip-toeing outside my bedroom window on a frosty morning," Magnus said once, taking my breath away.*

*Still, the fact that I am extremely deaf has limited my ability to imagine the auditory world they live in. Simon speaks well, and is adept, in particular, at making jokes, creating a bridge into their world that I can't share, but celebrate the existence of.*



At times, particularly when my hearing aids are transmitting such a cacophony that I turn them off and revel in the velvety peace, I see silence as a blessing, and the quieter world we live in as a gift to our children. This idea was reinforced recently when Magnus lay cuddling and scratching his teddy bear – a sure sign that a hefty dose of comfort is required. “School is too noisy,” he burst out when I lay beside him and asked in Auslan if he was okay. “Assembly is noisy. Class time is noisy. Play time is noisy. No matter where a kid goes, he can’t get any silence!” Laughter is a universal language, and there was plenty of it in our house that afternoon!

In addition to obsessing over the needs of our ‘Three Wise Monkeys’, I have learned to be insightful about the impact of my own childhood experiences. My husband was an only child born to deaf parents, but was raised bilingually, learning both Auslan.”

[www.webchild.com.au](http://www.webchild.com.au)

26 March 2010

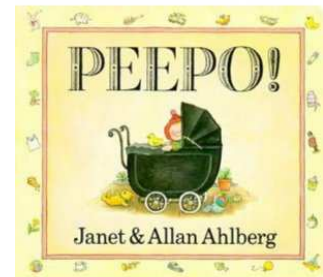
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### **Read Our Annual Report:**

Deaf Parenting UK's 2009 Annual Report is now available from our website. Read more about our progress, initiatives and achievements and let us know what you think. <http://www.deafparent.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/DPUK-Annual-Report-ended-31st-December-2009finalb.pdf>

### **DPUK Sponsors Peepo!**

Deaf Parenting UK is delighted to sponsor the Children's Classic book on the ITV Signed Stories website – Peepo!



This is a beautifully illustrated rhyming book by Janet and Allan Ahlberg and has become a classic for babies and toddlers based on the game that parents play with their babies.” Peepo! can be found on Signed Stories website <http://www.signedstories.com/page/index.cfm>.

**If you would like to submit an advert or a feature relating to parenting in the DPUK Newsletter,**

**Please contact the DPUK Project Manager for details,**

**e-mail: [info@deafparent.org.uk](mailto:info@deafparent.org.uk)**

**Deadline for next newsletter is 24th September 2010**

## Alton Towers – a fantastic, fun day out

As part of the Tesco Mum of the Year award that Sabina won earlier in the year, we were delighted to receive tickets for Alton Towers for some Deaf parents and their children. In addition to the tickets we received coach travel, all of which were donated by Merlin Entertainment and Tesco. DPUK worked closely with Harrow Deaf Club who chose the venue of Alton Towers and enlisted some volunteers to spread the word and as a result the places were fully booked in matter of weeks. In addition to the Deaf parents and children from the London area, we a few families from the North of England at Alton Towers too. As you can see from the photos, everyone had a fantastic day of fun at Alton Towers! We were delighted that everyone had such a great time and we had some great feedback from those who were part of the trip, there's a postcard from Amritpal Nangla of Harrow Deaf Club, overleaf :



Here we all are – on our way to Alton Towers



Renuka (Deaf mum) and Akshay



Manisha and Ashok (Deaf parents) with Mayur and Rahul



Mahmood (Deaf father) and Bilal (Deaf son)



Jyotika (Deaf mum) with Kimmy, Christopher and Emma



Jevgenijs (Deaf father) and Eriks (Deaf son)

## ***Postcard from Alton Towers.....***

On 26<sup>th</sup> June 2010, we went to Bentley Day Centre for a gathering to go on a deaf trip to Alton Towers; a lot of effort went in planning this special deaf trip.

Our local deaf community are really grateful to Asif Iqbal from Deaf Parenting UK and Harrow Deaf Club as we would like to participate with deaf community and strengthen the bond between deaf people. As a deaf community we like to encourage young people to get involved in learning as much as they can about deaf culture, deaf issues and so on. It was down to Asif



Iqbal, from Deaf Parenting UK that we were able to go on this trip - he has been planning the Alton Towers trip since March 2010, including organising a coach and tickets for the theme park! Some members, Deaf parents, brought their own family and friends and we came together as one happy community. It was a refreshing experience to meet new people, getting know others –the whole experience was unique and fun. In the coach, the Deaf people were signing away, sharing the laughter, taking photos of each other to remember

the day. The little kids sitting at the back of the coach playing games with each other and chatting, making jokes with adults. This experience has made this local Deaf community grow closer and therefore making a stronger and happier deaf community. We would like to say thank you to Harrow Deaf Club and Deaf Parenting UK. We did enjoy and appreciate this amazing family adventure on this deaf trip to Alton Towers.

## **Sun shines on Dacorum Mela**

Dacorum Mela 2010 took place on a beautiful sunny day - Saturday 10 July at the Market Square in the Hertfordshire borough. The event brought together different communities from across Dacorum who came through together to enjoy a festival of traditional music, food, dance and entertainment. The Mela, (a Sanskrit word meaning 'gathering' or 'festival') was organised by the Global Pindd Community Group and the Council, which celebrates Dacorum's diversity and community spirit.



Although temperatures rose to a scorching 30C, residents, borough staff and members of then community/ voluntary sector came together to celebrate with community groups from around the borough as they showcase their heritage and traditions through dance and music. Special guests at the event were Sabina Iqbal, Chair/Founder of Deaf Parenting UK; Mike Penning, MP & Deaf Parenting UK Ambassador; and The Mayor of Dacorum Councillor Roger M. Taylor

Councillor Colette Wyatt-Lowe, Portfolio Holder for Community Services and Public Protection, said: *"The Mela is a great opportunity for all residents in the borough to experience a taste of the diversity we have here in Dacorum, through a fun day of music and entertainment. We are also pleased to be launching our Communities Together Pledge at the event. The Pledge gives individuals the chance to show their commitment to making it happen."*



Sabina Iqbal, the first Deaf Asian woman ever at the Mela, launched the Council's Communities Together Pledge and gave speech in British Sign Language (BSL) and voice-over via BSL interpreter, explaining more about the Pledge. The Pledge sets out a vision of how Dacorum's communities can all live and work happily together. It brings together the thoughts of local residents, community and voluntary organisations and councillors.



In her speech, Sabina said: *"I am proud to be here for Communities Together at the Dacorum Mela 2010 with the Mayor of Dacorum and Mike Penning MP, who is also one of the ambassadors for Deaf Parenting UK. May I say that being an Asian Deaf woman, I am delighted to see all the communities coming together from different cultures and faiths so thank you to everyone who helped to make this happen. Today is a great opportunity for all residents to experience a taste of the diversity we have in Dacorum. We are also pleased to be launching the Communities Together Pledge which was developed by residents, councillors and representatives from the voluntary and community*

*sector. This is part of a wider Neighbourhood Action initiative which has been consulting with communities and groups all over the borough to find out, by working together, how we can improve the area for the benefit of everyone. We would like to encourage everyone to sign up the Pledge to demonstrate their commitment to making it happen. The pledge is being circulated by volunteers around the market square; please ensure to sign up by the end of the day."*

After Sabina's speech, all the children were given a balloon which they released together at the end of a countdown to signify their support for the Communities Together Pledge. Seeing so many balloons float off together in the sky was a fantastic sight.



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# NOTICE BOARD



## Deafinitely Youth Theatre



Starting May 2010  
meeting every week

For deaf and hard  
of hearing people aged  
16 - 24 living in  
Greater London

## Deafinitely Youth Theatre Groups

Deafinitely Theatre, Britain's leading Deaf-led theatre company has two youth theatre groups for young deaf and hard of hearing people living in London. From the end of May 2010, the groups will meet every week to have fun and learn new skills at the same time.

Aged 16 - 24? Want to join in? Please email  
info@deafinitelytheatre.co.uk or text 07503 879 382.



### North London

When?: Tuesday evenings,  
5.30 - 8.30pm  
Where?: Clean Break,  
2 Patshull Road, Kentish Town,  
NW5 2LB

### South London

When?: Monday evenings,  
5.30 - 8.30pm  
Where?: Unicorn Theatre,  
147 Tooley Street, SE1 2HZ



www.deafinitelytheatre.co.uk

## Family Focus magazine

Do you currently receive Family Focus magazine? It's the newsletter of the Family and Parenting Institute and addresses a whole range of issues that are important to parents. In the most recent issue the range of topics addressed included inequality, paternity leave and information on the review of NHS Children's services. It's easy to subscribe to the free newsletter online at: <http://www.familyandparenting.org>

## CODA UK and Ireland Conference 2010- (Child of Deaf Adults/ Hearing Mother Father Deaf)

**Saturday, August 21, 2010 at 10:00am**

**Sunday, August 22, 2010 at 3:00pm**

**Location: Brighton**

### Launch of the CODA UK and Ireland Website!!

**All are welcome including Deaf parents  
with hearing children, hearing  
individuals with one or both parents  
Deaf (CODA/HMFD), Student/Researcher  
learning/studying CODAs or anyone who  
wants to show support and celebrate  
the launch of the website!!!**

### Workshops:

**Drama/Arts and Crafts for Kids  
CODAs as Interpreters**

**Presentations by Guest Speakers  
to be announced:**

**CODA Achievements/ Experiences**

**Ticket: £5 Adults/Kids Free**

**Email: [codaukandireland@live.co.uk](mailto:codaukandireland@live.co.uk) for  
more information about the event,  
transport and accomodation.**