

DPUK Newsletter

WELCOME!!

Update from Asif Iqbal DPUK Project Manager

Wow! Winter is here already with lots of snow - the big freeze has started early!

I hope you all are keeping warm and safe when you are out and about - be aware of the ice. Many children love snow and have lots of fun sledging—that brings back some childhood memories for me. Some schools have been closed recently, due to the bad weather, this can be disruptive for many parents especially for those who work!

The festive season is now definitely here, Eid (Muslim festival), Diwali (Hindu festival), Christmas and Hannukah mean that this is important time for families and friends to get together.

Good News...

There is lots of good news to tell you about in this newsletter. I'm delighted to share with you that I have become a Father for the third time! My wife Sabina gave birth to our daughter Rubi on October 16. Rubi weighed a whopping 8lb and is doted on by her proud sister and brother Samaira (4.5yrs) and Areeb (2.5rs old).

We also give a warm welcome back to Nicole Campbell, who just returned to her role at Deaf Parenting UK, from her maternity leave. Many thanks to Radha Manjeshwar for her hard work, in covering Nicole's maternity leave. We hope to see Radha helping out at our future events.

Looking back at the year, we have achieved so much and our involvement in the recent Deaf Sport Personality of the Year Award was the icing on the cake. We sponsored two awards - Unsung Hero and Third Personality of year award and presented these awards at Wembley Stadium in late November. There were around 900 people in the huge audience. Some of them came to me and said they were delighted to see awards recognised by Deaf Parenting UK. Read more about the wonderful event on page 9.



Plans for 2011:

We have exciting plans for next year including:

National Family Week 2011

Working in partnership with the National Family Week 2011. To celebrate the week, we have Theme Parks Tickets to give away for Deaf parents with children under 16yrs old. The tickets are valid for Spring 2011 until Oct 2011. Please contact :

Nicole Campbell, DPUK Coordinator at info@deafparent.org.uk.

Follow us on Twitter!

In addition to all of the usual ways to keep in touch with us, you can now follow us on www.Twitter.com.

Go to www.twitter.com/deafparentuk to follow us and read the latest news and development which we'll be posting here. You can also send us your news, views and feedback. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

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The Baby Shows 2011:

We are working in partnership with The Baby Show in ExCel (February) and Earls Court (October) once again in 2011. Please email me if you are interested in attending.

Deaf Parenting UK 10th Anniversary Awards 2011

We will be organising an awards event to celebrate our 10 years anniversary of our charity. To kick this off, we are running a competition in which YOU can be involved. The event is for Deaf parents/ families as well as professionals who work with Deaf parents.

Competition:

Tell us one thing you would like to see happen on this special day? How do you want to celebrate it? What is your idea?

Please email your ideas together with your details to media@deafparent.org.uk by 31st January 2011. The winner will receive a family trip of 4 to a Theme Park* of their choice. (* run by Merlin Entertainment Group)

Support from Sarah Teather MP, Minister of Children & Families supports Deaf Parenting UK

Asif Iqbal, Media/Project Manager: *“Welcomes our new Minister of Children & Families, Department of Education – Sarah Teather, MP, who recognises the importance of our charity and the work we do in supporting Deaf parents.”*

Sarah Teather MP, Minister of State for Children and Families: *“I would like to pay tribute to the tremendous work of Deaf Parenting UK. This organisation ensures that the needs of parents are not overlooked and it is our collective responsibility to ensure parents receive the support they need. I wish you all the best for the future”.*

Please note that over the holiday period Deaf Parenting UK will be closed from 23rd December 2010 till 4th January 2011.

Christmas wishes:

In the meantime, Deaf Parenting UK want to wish you all a happy festive season with your families and loved ones and a Happy New Year 2011.

Asif Iqbal
Media/Project Manager

Editorial.....

It's that time of year again when we reflect on the events of the past twelve months and start planning what the next year might look like. As I reflect back over 2010, Deaf Parenting UK has had another year of tremendous achievements. DPUK, Sabina and Asif have all received a number of important accolades. Whilst recognition and reward are always nice to have, they represent something much more important. Each nomination, each commendation and award and each invitation to an important event represent a chance to put Deaf Parenting UK and, most importantly the people and issues that the Charity stands for, firmly in the public eye and into current consciousness. This in turn helps DPUK to fulfil its aims of empowering and supporting Deaf Parents and highlighting the current gaps in services that exist and impair access to necessary information and support.



There's a lot to look forward to in 2011. Deaf Parenting UK celebrates its 10th anniversary. You have the chance to celebrate too with a visit to a Theme Park with your family if you submit the winning the idea for celebrating this special day. A great motivation for sharing your ideas!

I'm not one for making New Year's resolutions. They usually involve giving up chocolate, but January is a cold and dreary month and is entirely the wrong time to make such a promise to myself! One thing that I do resolve to do, however, this year is encourage more interaction with you – the readers of the Deaf Parenting UK Newsletter! This really is YOUR newsletter and we want it to reflect the news and information that you want to see and we want to hear more about you, your families and lives. Please do get in touch and let me have your thoughts on the newsletter, what you'd like to see and your stories and pictures. You can reach me, anytime, at cerihughes73@googlemail.com or send us your thoughts now, via Twitter. Tweet us at www.twitter.com/deafparentuk.

I wish you and your families a happy and peaceful holiday season and every happiness in 2011.

Ceri Hughes
Newsletter Editor



Sabina Iqbal, named as one of the European Muslim women of influence 2010

The Connecting European Dynamic Achievers Role Models (CEDAR) Network Launch Event and European Muslim Women of Influence Gala took place in Madrid, Spain on 30th October 2010. This was to celebrate the European Muslim Women of Influence finalists and The Connecting European Dynamic Achievers Role Models Network's first major event.

The Event was attended by high profile female business leaders especially Cherie Blair, (wife of Former Prime Minister Tony Blair), Ms Farah Pandith, Special Representative to Muslim Communities, US Department of State, Senior Advisor Communications, Dr Emmanuel, UN Alliance of Civilizations and Sasha Havlicek, Chief Executive Officer, Institute for Strategic Dialogue. Cherie gave an opening speech on her personal experiences of being a female lawyer and

There are an estimated 23 million people of Muslim heritage in Europe. European Muslim women are a diverse and dynamic demographic group playing a vital role in a wide range of cultural, economic, professional and social spheres across Europe.

Razia Iqbal, Special Correspondent and presenter, BBC, hosted the awards and announced 10 winners named on European Muslim Women of Influence List 2010. Sabina was one of them. The judges confirmed that although it was very difficult to choose the 10 winners from 26 finalists, all winners chosen were seen as real role models for others. On receiving her award Sabina gave an inspirational speech about her experience and her passion for empowering and motivating others. This resulted in a standing ovation from the audience.

After the gala, Sabina said *"It was humbling to meet all the finalists and learn about their work. I was stunned to receive the award; I hope I will serve as a positive role model for other Muslim women across Europe and internationally. It is important for us to continue inspiring and nurturing our future generation of younger girls/ women of all diverse groups and spread the message of empowerment. They are the ones who look up to us as positive role models and learn from us what we can achieve. I hope they get the encouragement and support they need to achieve their potential"*

President Honours Georgia School for the Deaf Parent with 2010 Citizens Medal

US President, Barack Obama has awarded Kimberly McGuiness, a Georgia School for the Deaf (GSD) parent, and 12 others with the 2010 Citizens Medal, the nation's second-highest civilian honour. "What unites these citizens – what makes them special – is the determination they share to find a wrong and right it; to see a need and meet it; to recognize when others are suffering and take it upon themselves to make a difference," said President Obama. "These honourees' lives stand as shining examples of what it means to be an American. And today, we have an opportunity to tell their stories; to say thank you; and to offer them a small token of our appreciation."

GSD director Lee Shiver nominated Ms. McGuiness. "Kimberly McGuiness has been a true champion for deaf students," said Shiver. "Her persistent letters, phone calls, and visits to state legislators helped spur the passage of the Deaf Child's Bill of Rights in Georgia." McGuiness has led workshops, counselled parents, and changed lives by raising awareness and support for deaf education. McGuiness received the Citizens Medal for demonstrating the results one citizen can achieve for an entire community.



Sabina, Asif and Rubi Iqbal attend the No 10 Eid Reception

Sabina and Asif Iqbal and their newborn baby Rubi (5 weeks old), were invited by Prime Minister David Cameron to attend the Downing Street Eid Reception in November, hosted by Baroness Warsi, Minister without Portfolio & Co-Chairman of the Conservative Party. The event was attended by a mixture of celebrities, politicians, sport personalities, Business, Army & Navy chief officials and inspiring individuals.



Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg was also present at the Eid Reception and welcomed both Asif and Sabina and congratulated them both for their achievements.



Sabina Iqbal: *"I was surprised and delighted to receive an invitation from the Prime Minister David Cameron to his Eid Reception and it was delightful to meet the Prime Minister and other VIPs and it was a good opportunity for networking. Rubi was the centre of attention and at the same time, was the first youngest baby to visit No.10 and it was suggested that who knows, she may be our future Prime Minister!"*

Sabina is Working Mum of the Year 2010

Sabina was thrilled to be invited to the Mum and Working Awards 2010 and to be awarded a 'Working Parent of the Year' Award.

Congratulations to Sabina

Asif Iqbal was appointed to the Disability Advisory Panel, British Council

Connecting the UK to the world and the world to the UK, the British Council is the UK's international cultural relations body. In an inter-dependent, turbulent world we believe that creating opportunities for people to understand each other better, work together more and learn from one another, is crucial to building secure, more prosperous and sustainable futures for us all.

Our activities - whether in the arts, science, sport, English teaching, and climate change or education - nurture greater trust and understanding between different countries and cultures. They also build strong international links to and from Britain, opening doors for the UK onto the rest of the world and for the world back to the UK. Our work gives people - both in Britain and across the hundred-plus countries we work in - opportunities to learn, share and connect worldwide.

After his appointment Asif said, *"I felt greatly honoured. I am looking forward to working with the British Council Disability Advisory Panel and to provide disability equality to the mainstream population via the British Council and worldwide"*

Thanks to Deaf Wellbeing of Women in South Gloucestershire

We have gratefully received a generous donation from Deaf Wellbeing of Women in South Gloucestershire. Sabina visited the group earlier in the year to give a talk on Deaf Parenting UK and the work we do. As part of their group activities since Sabina's visit, they have raised some money and donated some to DPUK. We are really grateful to them for their support and their donation.

Fun at Chessington Zoo



(l-r: Oscar, Owen, Ollie and Orion)

We were delighted that the Rowley family were able to take advantage of the theme park tickets from Merlin Theme Parks that we were able to make available as a result of Sabina's Tesco Mum of the Year win, earlier this year. Here they are at the Zoo having a great time.

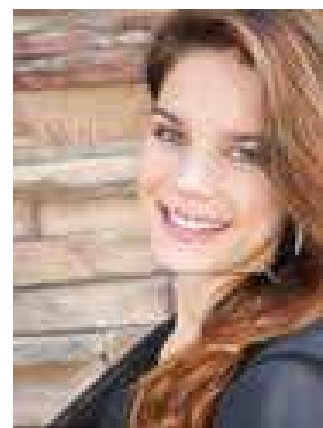
Dad, Derek, told us "we thoroughly enjoyed every moment and very much appreciated the attention you gave us and your superb hospitality. Visiting such a wonderful Zoo was a rewarding experience and we thank you and your team for allowing us such a wonderful opportunity – it was greatly appreciated."

Deaf Parenting UK are planning family fun days in 2011. If you are interested in joining us let us know by e-mailing info@deafparent.org.uk

Julie Abbou crowned Miss Deaf International

Julie Abbou was recently crowned Miss Deaf International 2010. Already Miss Deaf France, Julie was installed as the new Miss Deaf International at the ceremony in Las Vegas recently.

Miss Deaf International is a organisation that pledges to empower, enhance and support today's ever changing and ever growing community of Deaf Women. It provides a platform for contestants to demonstrate their unique talents, intellect and beauty and share their personal and humanitarian goals. Julie will now spend her year as an Ambassador for the Deaf community. It's a role that requires dedication and energy – Julie will travel to meet influential leaders and share the educational, social and intellectual values of women everywhere. We wish her luck in her position and in her quest to raise awareness of the issues affected Deaf women in today's society. To find out more about the awards and about the contenders, visit <http://missdeafinternational.com/>



Deaf Parents in Bristol and surrounding areas:

Deaf Parenting UK-Bristol are running two Deaf Parenting Skill courses. One course is for deaf Parents with teens, and one is for deaf Parents with children aged 0-9 years. Please see our flyer on pages 13-15 for more information and an application form.

Deadline for next newsletter is Friday March 4th 2011

Rival party leaders have been hailed by the Family and Parenting Institute for promoting the benefits of paternity leave



Labour leader Ed Miliband announced that he would take two weeks of statutory paternity leave following the birth of his second son Samuel. His political opponent, Prime Minister David Cameron, also took paternity leave following the birth of his daughter Florence in August.

Dr Katherine Rake, CEO said: "How heartening it is that taking paternity leave is becoming a norm in front bench politics.

"Our new generations of party leaders are younger, and are experiencing for themselves the immense challenge of balancing work responsibilities with raising small children. David Cameron and Ed Miliband are showing a welcome awareness of their status as role model fathers."

But Dr Rake added that there was still much progress to be made for new fathers. She said: "UK families are looking to all political parties to work to allow fathers to be fully engaged parents from the outset. But some feel unable to take up their paternity leave rights at work - and statutory paternity pay is less than minimum wage."

This is the time to ask for extra support from family and friends willing to give it! This could be babysitting or just being on the other end of the phone when you need to let off steam.

Here are some top tips for Dads:

1. If you live with your baby's mum, make sure you take it in turns to see to the baby at night, so you both get some sleep and all the responsibility isn't on one of you.
2. Be as hands-on as you can be – change nappies, read stories, play games – so you get to have that bonding time with your baby.
3. When the baby's been settled for the night or taking a nap, is usually the time parents are rushing about trying to do all the cleaning up and getting things ready for the next day. Try to use some of this time to just be together doing the things you did when it was just the two of you – from watching TV to having a chat (or a moan...)
4. Even if you're back at work, try to take on a share of the housework to give your partner a break.
5. The sooner you have a go at the everyday things – changing nappies, bathing, cuddling at 'crying time' – the less intimidating they will be. Know that your partner is new to this too – don't assume she has all the answers.
6. Let your partner know that you want to share the responsibilities with her, to reassure her that you care.
7. Prioritize activities – if your baby is keeping you up all night, make sure you rest when you get a chance.
8. Take one step at a time – you can't know everything and you won't get everything right the first time. Being a new parent is one of the biggest challenges anyone can go through, take your time and keep trying.

Source: <http://www.parentlineplus.org.uk/default.aspx?page=viewarticle&module=articles-view&id=2&tags=25>

STOP PRESS.....

Richard Jones has been appointed Deaf Parenting UK's new Ambassador for Wales. Richard, Deaf father of three, is a part-time Researcher and Development Officer for Deaf Access Cymru, and also a freelance consultant. On his appointment to this position he said: "As an Ambassador for Deaf Parenting UK, I hope to play a part in promoting positive experiences of Deaf Parents in the UK." Look out for an interview with Richard in the next edition of the newsletter.

CODA Profiles Richard Griffiths OBE, son of Deaf parents and world-class actor.

British character actor Richard Griffiths came from radio and the classical stage where he built up an early reputation as a Shakespearean clown, with larger-than-life portrayals of Henry VIII, Falstaff in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" and Bottom in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" with the Royal Shakespeare Company just a few of his standout credits.

The son of deaf parents, he learned sign language at an early age and, interestingly enough, developed a talent for dialects which allowed him to show off in a number of ethnic portrayals. In films from 1975 both here and abroad, his better roles have been in both contemporary and period pieces, such as Gorky Park (1983), Withnail and I (1987), and recently the 'Harry Potter' series as Uncle Vernon Dursley. Typically cast as comic relief in serious fare, he is well known in England for a number of comedy series including Pie in the Sky (1994).



Stay in touch with Deaf Parenting UK in lots of ways

Visit our website: <http://www.deafparent.org.uk/>

Be our friend on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=15694229889>

You can now also follow us on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/deafparentuk>



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

FEATURES

Deaf Parents and School interpreters

Sharing on notes or thoughts online in web logs (blogs) as a means of communicating and sharing experiences and opinions is increasing and people who would never have considered themselves as having the potential to be published authors are regularly sharing their views amongst accomplished writers and commentators.

One blogger, Philip Booth, has recently posted his comments on Deaf Parents and School interpreters, which are copied below, directly from his post. You can comment, or read more of what Philip has to say by visiting his blog and sharing your thoughts. You'll find it at <http://ruscombegreen.blogspot.com/>

Here are Philip's comments:

"Should deaf parents have to pay for sign interpreters at school? Or should schools or the County pay? Well I am in no doubt that interpreters should be paid for by the statutory services and for more than a year I have been involved in emails and several meetings to try and gain some clarification on this issue.

I was contacted by deaf parents of a local school in Gloucestershire who were seeking funding from the County Council to pay for sign language interpreters for profoundly deaf parents at school plays, large school meetings etc. It was suggested that the extra funds to pay for sign language interpreters could come from the school's "delegated budget". However in my view this would appear to be discriminating against the school as I understand that budget is normally spent on resources, repairs, maintenance etc. The deaf parents concerned to press on to use interpreters, as it will decrease the fund to buy resources for the children at the school.

I contacted Disability, Pregnancy & Parenthood international (DPPI) who set out [here](#) what schools must do - they note that it is their "understanding that under the DDA, the LEA is responsible for providing communication services for deaf parents at LEA meetings such as choosing schools, and the school is responsible for covering school meetings." They also note that: "It is the deaf parents' right to access interpreters under the DDA....It is the school's responsibility, as the service provider, to make their service accessible and as part of this

to work out where the funding is coming from. Under the DDA, 'discrimination' can only be applied to an individual not the organisation."

Deaf Parenting UK gave a similar answer as did the Gloucestershire Deaf Association. I also had contact with the County Council Officers, Equality Officers at SDC and a meeting at the school with the parents and interpreters.

The school have been very understanding and agreed to fund interpreters from the start for parents evenings but I think the parents have chosen to try and lip-read and write down conversations so as not to impose the school to dip into their fund for education to pay for interpreters. There is still an issue with regards to interpreting school plays and other such events - it is all very well to have the script but this misses vast amounts and much of the spontaneity.

I specifically requested that this issue of interpreters be raised at the Schools Forum so that it could be clarified across the County and was delighted when this was agreed and a report put forward for December last year. Here is the brief summary put forward by the Council Officer:

Funding for British Sign Language interpreters.

Schools Forum Date: 2nd December 2009.
Type of Decision: For decision.
Background Documents: None.
Author: Keith Elliott, Acting Head, Advisory Teaching Service.

Background: The situation has arisen where a small primary school has on roll the children of profoundly deaf parents whose first language is British Sign Language. The school has paid for interpreters to support the parents at meetings to enable them to access and support their children's learning. Under the Disability Discrimination Act this is where the responsibility lies. The costs are £95 per two hours or part thereof plus travel expenses. Over the academic year 2008-09 the cost to the school was £600 for three consultations including one on the non-academic yet important issue of internet safety. One of the children will transfer to secondary school in



September 2011. Following discussions with secondary school colleagues it is likely that the future cost of this support will also be approximately £600 per year once the child transfers. The Advisory Teaching Service is aware of one other family where both parents are profoundly deaf, they have a child under two so have not required this type of support as yet. Interpreter support for other disability and minority ethnic groups is paid for by the setting. **Proposal:** That the county council agrees to accept responsibility for the provision of British Sign Language interpreters for deaf parents and that £2,000 be made available for this annually.

Recommendations: That Forum decides on whether or not funding for British Sign Language interpreters for deaf parents should be made available from the 2010/11 DSG.

Well it seems that this was dropped from the December meeting without letting us know - councillors never got to even see the recommendation - so my **delight disappeared quickly** - the Officer who had written the report had left and his replacement judged it not to be important. The new officer said on the phone to me that he considered it was the schools responsibilities to pay and that many schools had unusual or different costs - they could not make an exception. I suggested that this should be a trial scheme, recognising there were many different needs but that issues like this should be addressed from the County rather than an individual school.

In other areas the Council rather than the school bear the costs - the campaign continues to try and get recognised the rights of deaf parents to be able to take an active and full part in all aspects of their children's education. I finish with a comment from another deaf parent:

"What we want is for them to recognize the needs of local people with various disabilities to access school events. Would the County allow a wheelchair user to look through a window to watch a school play?"

Posted by Philip Booth, 15 April 2010:

<http://ruscombegreen.blogspot.com/2010/04/deaf-parents-and-school-interpreters.html>

SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR 2010



BBC's Sport Personality of the Year has been staged since 1954 with a very popular audience so a ceremony that celebrated and recognised the sporting achievements of the Deaf community was long overdue. The awards ceremony, held at Wembley Stadium in November was a spectacular event.

The organisers explained: *"As we are aware that there may be plenty of discussions of Deaf Sporting achievements socially at deaf pubs, clubs or amongst friends but no official recognition has ever been given to exceptional achievements across Great Britain or United Kingdom. E.g. At Summer Deaflympics events Great Britain may have achieved some amazing results but with lack of official recognition which is a shame. So this is our opportunity to encourage our athletes/organisers/coaches and motivate them with praise from the public on a special night."*

SPORTS PERSONALITY OF THE YEAR:

Winner:- Sponsored by Managing Partners Limited,
Second place:- Sponsored by Unitron UK and Third place:- Sponsored by Deaf Parenting UK.

This prestigious award will be given to the outstanding sportsman or woman whose actions have most captured our imaginations during 2009/2010.

Winner:- Rajeev Bagga (Badminton):-
Winner of a silver medal in the men's singles at the Taipei Deaflympics. He is also the current All-England & European Veterans Singles champion (hearing).

2nd:- Lauren Peffers (Athletics):- Two silver medals in Taipei for 400m & 800m, further medals at this year's European Championships, and participation in mainstream national athletics events clearly show that she has the potential to reach Olympic standard

Third:- Sponsored by Deaf Parenting UK.

3rd:- Jamie Matthews (Squash):-
Currently the World Deaf Squash Champion, he also won the Surrey Closed Championship (hearing) in January 2010. He also plays professionally on the men's tour around the world and has a respectable world ranking of 250.



TEAM OF THE YEAR: Sponsored by SignVideo

This will be awarded to the team (more than ONE player in a team) that has achieved the most notable performance in British Deaf sport during 2009/2010.

Anthony Sinclair & Catherine Graham (Mixed Doubles Tennis):- Victory for Sinclair and Graham secured Britain's first Deaflympics mixed doubles gold medal for more than 50 years and Britain's only gold of the Taipei Deaflympics.

OVERSEAS SPORTS PLAYER OF THE YEAR:

Sponsored by KJW Accountants Limited

This award will be given to the overseas sportsman or woman who has made the greatest impression on the world of sport during 2009/2010.

Terence Parkin (Swimming & Cycling):- Terence Parkin won seven golds at the Taipei Deaflympics in 2009 and also went home with a bronze medal in the Individual Road Race in cycling.

COACH OF THE YEAR: Sponsored by Signamic

This will be awarded to the Deaf coach who has made the biggest impact on British Deaf sport during 2009/2010.

Roanna Simmons (Ladies Football):- The first Deaf Women to gain the FA Level 3 UEFA B Coaching Licence, she coaches for several coaching projects for Fulham FC and NDCS

YOUNG PLAYER OF THE YEAR: Sponsored by Me2 project, Deaf Friendly FC projects and NDCS. This will be awarded to the outstanding young sportsperson aged 18 or under during 31st Dec 2009 & 2010.

Hannah Fitton (Swimming):- She won one silver and three bronze medals at the recent Deaflympics.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

Sponsored by AC2.com Productions and Actual Signs

This is a special award honouring someone who has made a major impact on the world of sport in his or her lifetime.

Chris Gwynn

UNSUNG HERO: Sponsored by Deaf Parenting UK

This award recognises those who selflessly devote their time and efforts to enabling others to play and enjoy sport.

Derek Simmons:- His heart has always been in trying to ensure that all Deaf people are treated equally and with the respect they deserve within sport.



FAN OF THE YEAR: Sponsored by BSLworks

This is a special award for outstanding fan who always attend the British Deaf sports and efforts to build a morale for the teams & fans.

Marcella Stratton:- She is recognised everywhere at home and abroad and is known for drumming up fanatical support as well as her colourful costumes.



Deaf Parents Shown Love by Tom Stafford

As a little girl, Marianna Stewart remembers sitting on the curb outside the Deaf Club in Brooklyn, N.Y., thinking “these people are the greatest people — the best people in the world.” As a hearing child of deaf parents, “I knew there were differences,” Stewart said. And one was most obvious. Whether it’s because smiles, frowns and intense body language are so much part of what she calls “the grammar” of signing, she’s not sure. “But the love,” Stewart said, pausing briefly. “What a difference with deaf people. The love is there.”

Stewart last year got a chance to return some of that love to her deaf mother, Edwina Olsen, by helping to organize Springfield’s first Mother Father Deaf Day at Covenant Presbyterian Church, where Stewart’s husband, Raymond, is a pastor. “She loved the service, and we had many deaf friends come,” Mrs. Stewart said. Her mother has since died of ovarian cancer. But the event founded by Children of Deaf Adults International and supported locally by the Springfield Foundation continues.

Remembering

“Now the tide has turned. Now deaf people are very proud and consider it a gift to have deafness,” said Mrs. Stewart. “But at that time, going back, you didn’t want to be deaf.” Although most deaf children today grow up learning American Sign Language, her parents both went to schools for the deaf that did not allow signing. They instead encouraged lip-reading and other techniques for learning the spoken English of the hearing world. “Their first language was really English, and they read lips well,” Stewart said. Only later did they study ASL.

Her parents John and Edwina Olsen had to communicate with both a deaf son and a daughter with hearing. “They would sign to him and then talk to me,” Stewart said. “So I learned to understand more than I could actually use. But I was embarrassed that I couldn’t sign fluently. So after I left home, I took lessons.” Deafness added other aspects to home life that still makes Stewart smile. One was the face-to-face communication, meaning hugs accompanied exchanges of good morning and good night. Another was how her mother ended arguments. “If she was mad and didn’t want to hear what you wanted to say, she’d close her eyes.” Finally, because her parents sat her in front of the television news so she’d be exposed to spoken English, Stewart said she grew up speaking in a Midwest accent, not with the accent of the Brooklyn where she was raised.

Till the cows come home

Her parents’ deafness also affected relationships outside the family. “On a Saturday night every month, (her parents and their deaf friends) would take turns going to each other’s houses.” Unable to communicate easily during the work week, “they would stay out until 4 in the morning” to catch up with one another’s lives. Stewart said. “We’d hang out in our pyjamas and talk and eat,” often watching captioned films her deaf uncle helped to caption as part of his work. Then a teletype machine came into their home. “It was our first phone communication,” Stewart said. The teletype came in part because her father was a printer — another thing that was part of the earlier era. “It’s what deaf boys were trained to do,” Stewart said. In much the same way, the family ended up travelling to the same South Florida spot where other deaf people vacationed.

Individuals, still

Stewart is still amazed at how sociable her parents were, her mother’s unusual skill with written language demonstrated in crossword puzzle skills, and the level of misunderstanding the deaf often confront. Now a student in the interpreting program at Sinclair Community College, Stewart is struck at how technology is changing life for deaf people and how attitudes in the deaf community embrace deafness in a new way. An example is the disapproval by some of the term “hearing impaired.” The objection is that the label carries the implication that it’s the people, not their hearing, that are impaired. Stewart’s view: “You have to accept the gifts you receive.” Just as “I wouldn’t be who I am” without having grown up in a deaf family, she said, “my parents had this gift of being who they were” in part because and in part independent of their deafness. And so on this Mother Father Deaf Day, she hopes to remember her parents in the way many others will remember their own parents on Mother’s and Father’s days: as the loving people they were.

NOTICE BOARD



Our address is:
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LONDON WC1H 0PD

www.deafparent.org.uk
info@deafparent.org.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>



Deaf Parenting UK

Hi everyone,

Exciting news!

Are you a Deaf parent with teenager children living in Bristol area, this course may be right for you?

New dates for Workshops for Deaf Parents with Teens (children aged 9 upwards) is to be held at

Where: St Paul's Children Centre
Little Bishop Street
St Paul's
Bristol BS2 9JF

When: Saturday 15th Jan 2011
Saturday 29th Jan 2011
Saturday 12th Feb 2011
Saturday 26th Feb 2011

Time: 10.00am to 3.00pm

Do come along and get to meet other parents as well as sharing your experiences and to learn from others too. The workshops and crèche are free, please book places for yourselves and your children, if they wish to come along – booking form attached.

The suggested topics are as follows:

- Healthy eating with the family
- Communication with the family
- Keeping fit with the family
- Behaviour management
- Budgeting with the family
- Challenging teenagers
- Drug, alcohol or any other misuses
- Sex education



Do let us know if there is anything in particular that you would like to see happen during the workshop sessions.



Deaf Parenting UK

Hi everyone,

Exciting news!

Are you a Deaf parent with young children aged up to 9 years, living in Bristol and surrounding areas, this course may be right for you?

New dates for Workshops for [Deaf Parents with children aged 0 - 9](#) is to be held at

Where: St Paul's Children Centre
Little Bishop Street
St Paul's
Bristol BS2 9JF

When: Saturday 12th March 2011
Saturday 26th March 2011
Saturday 9th April 2011
Saturday 16th April 2011

Time: 10.00am to 3.00pm

Do come along and get to meet other parents as well as sharing your experiences and to learn from others too. The workshops and crèche are free, please book places for yourselves and your children, if they wish to come along – booking form attached.

The suggested topics are as follows:

- Healthy eating with the family
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- Drug, alcohol or any other misuses
- Sex education



Do let us know if there is anything in particular that you would like



Deaf Parenting UK

Parenting Skills Course Application form

(Please tick one)

Deaf parenting course with teenagers

Deaf parenting course with young children

Mr /Mrs /Miss /Ms.....(full name)

Address

.....

.....

Post code

Telephone/textphone

Mobile / SMS

Email

I would like crèche provision for my children

Name of children

Age

..... boy/girl

..... boy/girl

..... boy/girl

Please return the form to Hilary Sutherland

By email (Hilary@hilarysutherland.co.uk) Or by fax 01454 324408