



# Deaf Parenting UK:

*Are We Equal?*

*In accessing to Health, Social Services and Children's education*

**Sabina Iqbal**

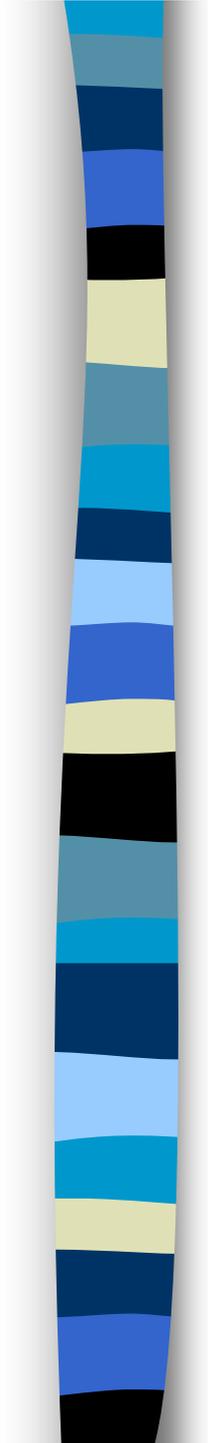
**Chair/Founder of  
Deaf Parenting UK**



**Shortlisted**



**Deaf Parenting UK**

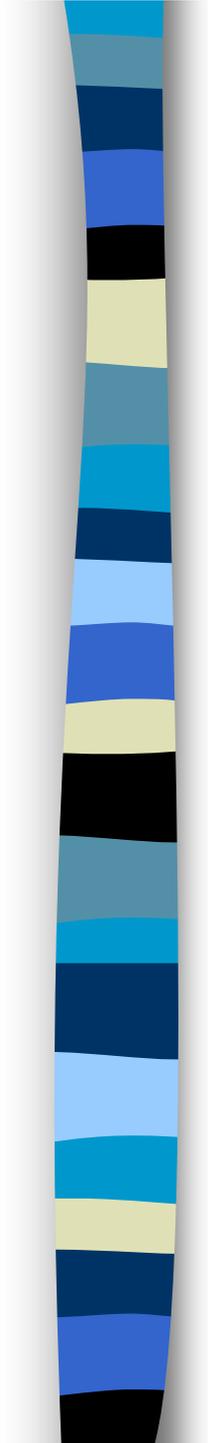


# Deaf Parenting UK

Deaf Parenting UK founded in 2001, following a research done on gaps in services for Deaf parents within the UK.

The aims of Deaf Parenting UK as an independent organisation are to:

- Enable confidence, empower and support Deaf parents/parents to be.
- Identify the gaps in services for Deaf Parents and make recommendations.
- Work with public services including Health, Education, Social Services and mainstream parenting organisations to improve access to information and services to Deaf Parents.

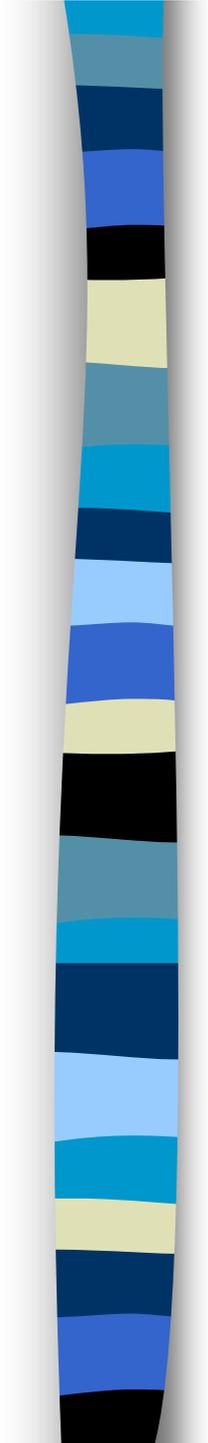


# Gaps in Services:

Many Deaf parents reported difficulties in accessing to:

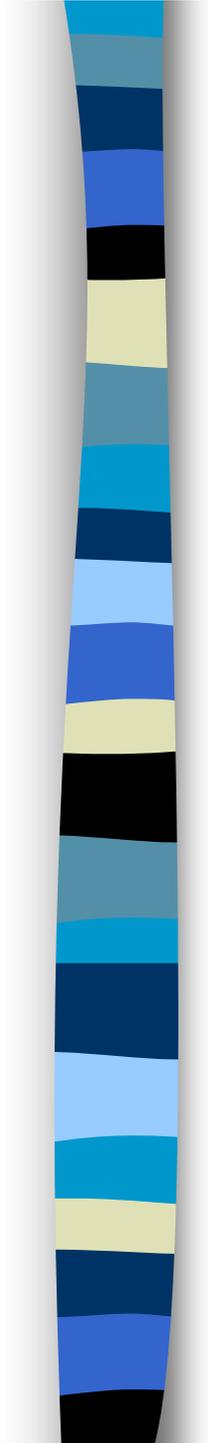
## Health:

- Refusal from GP/ clinics/ hospital to provide BSL interpreters and relying on hearing children/ family members to interpret instead
- Not aware of child development or healthy eating when their children go through each stages from early years to teens and adulthood
- Lack of access to make informed choices on health for themselves/ their children.
- Lack of parenting support



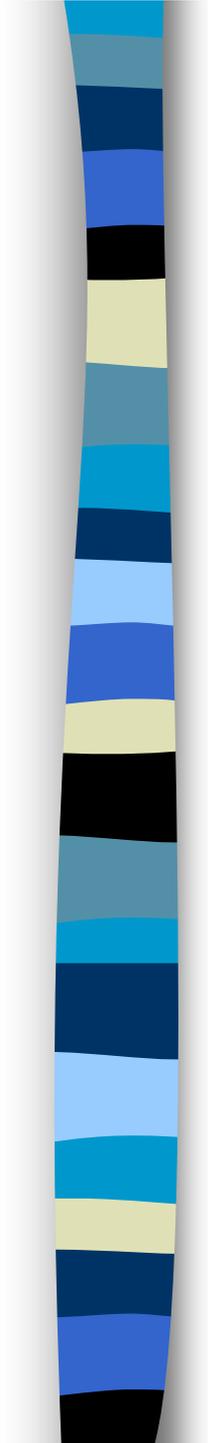
## Social Services

- Lack of awareness of the support that are available from Children & Family Services and Early Years services
- Refusal to provide BSL interpreters aswell as lack of Deaf awareness, lack of specialism on Deaf needs made it difficult for Deaf parents to benefit fully from the services on offer
- Lack of clarity as to the definition of '**child in need**' for hearing children of Deaf parents
- Lack of parenting support to prevent family breakdown
- Being frighten that involving social services would lead to child(s) removal from Deaf parents. Also in some cases without reasons.
- High numbers of enquiries from parents and professionals involved at crisis stage including Court on this matter.



## Children's Education

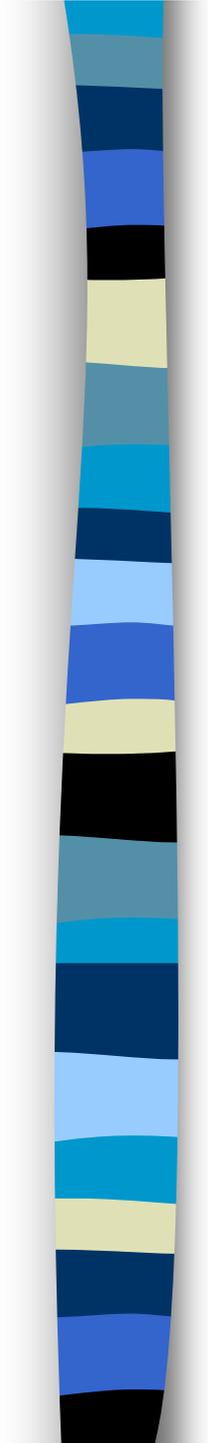
- Most parents found it harder to find the right school especially when parents are not aware of choices available for their child and no interpreting provision despite DDA (90% of them have hearing children)
- *Every Parents Matter* and *PEAL* confirmed that every parent have the right to be involved in decision making of their children's educational future but how can they if they are unable to access to information and choices?
- Nursery refusing SMS to communicate with Deaf parents
- Call for Deaf Parents Friendly Charter to Government
- Choosing the right school for the child and accessing to child's education is always difficult



# Request for Support:

## Our research shows Deaf Parents:

- Suffer from poor communication within their own extended families, fail to engage effectively with other parents and become very isolated.
- Their needs are primarily linguistic and cultural and they fail to receive the support they need and so continue to lack in confidence and remain confused and feeling vulnerable.
- Frustration and isolation can be expressed in chronic anxiety or depression, sometimes tipping over into psychosis (mental health)
- 2009 Request includes:
  - 57% were for parenting supports to Deaf parents/ families.
  - 22% request from parents/ professionals for legal advice/representation where Deaf parents were at crisis stage.



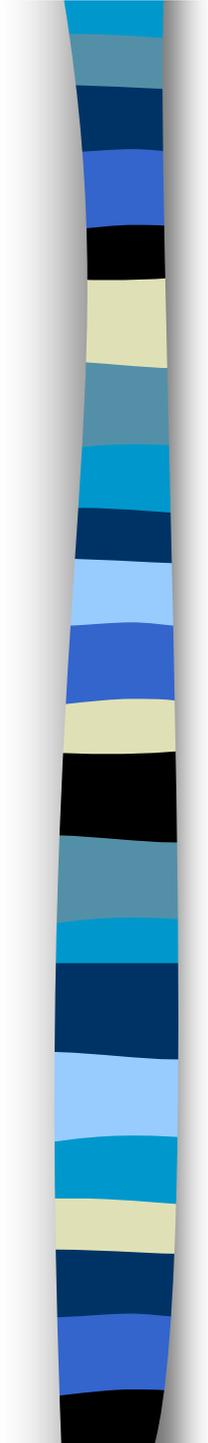
# Challenges:

- Are we Equal? in accessing to Health, Social Services and children's education
  - History
  - No changes since the 2001 research in USA
  - Importance of this conference

For service providers especially with:

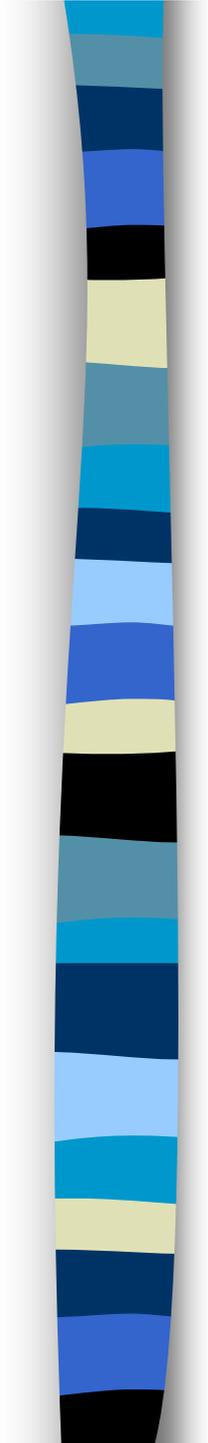
- Disability Discrimination Act (DDA),
- Disability Equality Duty (compulsory for public bodies),
- Human Right Act and other equality laws

Deaf Parenting UK continue to campaign for equality and use every opportunities e.g. conferences, media, newsletters and working with partners.



# Working together:

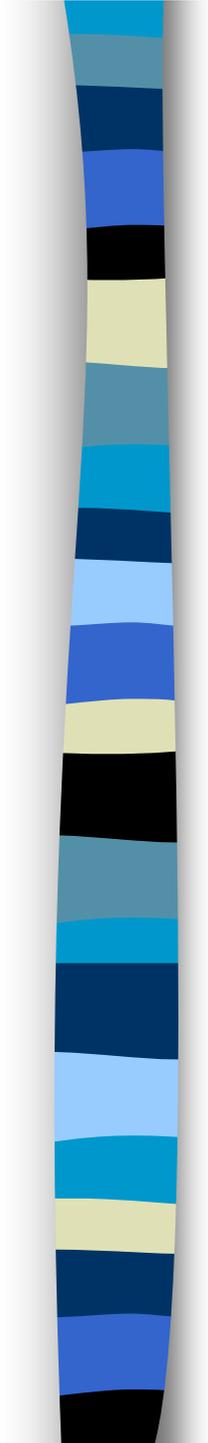
- **Information/ Advices** and support for Deaf Parents and professionals working them.
- **Website/ newsletters / factsheets**
- **Working in partnership with partners – DCSF, NEP**
- **Consultancy services** which can be tailor-made to meet the needs of professionals and their organisations
- **Deaf Parenting Skill courses and services in BSL by Deaf Trainer** to many Deaf parents, covering all aspect of parenting which is free for Deaf parents and funded by regional funding bodies
- **1:1 Parenting Support**, for some Deaf parents especially those with additional support needs and is tailor-made to meet the parents' specific needs.
- **Membership**
- **Family Events for Deaf parents and their children**
- **Our professionalism & expertise** of working with Deaf parents and to date, we gained **16** awards.



# Your Conference, Your Say

Are we Equal? It is fundamental of human right for individual to enjoy family lives without barriers and no reason why Deaf parents should be excluded.

- Your opportunity to say what you needs
- Share your experiences of challenges and frustrations
- Challenge and influence to Government and service providers of what you need
- Raise issues, concerns and debate of what should happens.
- Your conference, take what you learn and put forward ideas/ suggestions for changes, let make things happen for Deaf parents.



## Questions for you to think about throughout the day:

- 1. Your experiences on gaps in services locally?*
- 2. Ideas/ suggestions of what you want to see happen in your local areas?*
- 3. What can you do to make things happen for Deaf parents in local areas?*