

International Informed Choice Policy

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 It is NDCS's policy, reflected in its vision, values and in its support and campaigning over many years, to ensure that every family of every deaf child is supported with the information they need to make genuinely informed choices in the best interest of their child.
- 1.2 In the context of our international work, Deaf Child Worldwide shares this policy and recognises the importance of providing full and impartial advice to deaf children, deaf young people and their families as early as possible and throughout the child's life.

2. Child Rights Framework

- 2.1 Deaf Child Worldwide recognises the rights of all children as enshrined in international human rights instruments, most significantly the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). Our work is informed by the four general principles of the UNCRC, namely:
 - a) The right not to be discriminated against
 - b) The best interests of the child
 - c) The right to survival and development
 - d) The right to be heard

3. Childhood Deafness

- 3.1 Deaf Child Worldwide uses the term 'deaf' to refer to all levels of permanent hearing loss be they mild, moderate or profound. Any level of hearing loss in childhood will have an impact on the way in which a child acquires and learns language (either spoken or sign) and on the way in which a child's cognitive and emotional understanding develops.

4. Position Statement

- 4.1 We aim to ensure that clear and impartial information on deafness and on approaches to the development of language and communication is available to deaf children, deaf young people and their families.
- 4.2 In addition we aim to ensure that deaf children, deaf young people and their families know what opportunities are available to them locally. This includes knowing about in-country services and support that are available, including audiology services; hearing technology and support; education and work opportunities and any benefits available to disabled children and their families. It also includes information about the availability and location of peer support groups for parents and for deaf young people. We will do this by working with local partners to ensure that families have access to accurate information that is presented and delivered appropriately and in ways that are easily understood.
- 4.3 Where options and services are limited, Deaf Child Worldwide works to ensure that deaf children, young people and their families understand their rights and

have access to information which will allow them to advocate for good quality and wide-ranging service provision so that informed choice can become a reality.