

GROUND-BREAKING COURSE FOR SUSSEX GRANNIES RETRAINS THEM FOR MOTHERHOOD SECOND TIME AROUND!

A ground-breaking new course for grandmothers-to-be will be launched in West Sussex on Saturday, 9th October. Designed as a refresher class for grannies taken alongside the mother-to-be; the classes aim to equip the 'granny graduates' for their role as a grandparent and inform them on all things relating to modern parenting. Endorsed by Mothercare, the classes are being run by a registered Midwife and the team behind grannynet.co.uk, a website established to support the nation's 7 million grandmothers¹.

The inaugural grannynet course will be held in The Old School in Cuckfield, from 10am until 4pm on Saturday, 9th October. The class will cover topics such as issues surrounding feeding and sleeping, the latest guidelines on basic first aid as well as the minefield that is modern-day equipment. The class aims to give the granny graduates the confidence to be really 'hands on' when the baby arrives. A second class is also being planned, aimed at those about to become 'granny-carers' - the army of grandparents providing crucial childcare to one in three working mothers². This class will discuss issues relating to weaning, learning and discipline.

Another important role that the course will play is in forging relationships amongst the grandmothers. These substantial communities of over-fifty-year-old women, who are caring for their grandchildren, are currently fulfilling their roles with no support network. Grannynet hopes that their courses will establish a meeting place for today's grandparents, in the same way that the National Childbirth Trust has for mothers.

¹ Future Foundation

² Report by Grandparents Plus, June 2010

Grannynet was established in 2007 by Verity Gill, as a community-based website aimed at British grandmothers that look after their grandchildren. It offers members an interactive forum, as well as tips and advice on a wide range of relevant subject areas like activities, shopping and family life. Verity says: "It's all about enabling our grannies to be the best granny she possibly can, whilst having a bit of fun and sharing their point of view on childcare issues."

Liz Day, Mothercare's Parenting Consultant says of the grannynet course: "The UK's grandparents need more support and a social network just as much as mum's do. At Mothercare, safety is of paramount importance which is why we are delighted to be supporting this class by providing one of our trained car seat fitting experts who will demonstrate how to fit the seat safely and correctly."

Commenting about the grannynet course Verity says: "We are really excited about the launch of this initiative. My mother cares for my two children one day every week and would have loved the opportunity to go on a course like ours. From everyday issues, like how to secure a baby in one of the latest car seats, to vital information such as which and how much over the counter medicines to administer, we hope to make sure our grannies are fully armed to do the best possible job they can for their growing families."

The grannynet course is being offered at a special introductory price of £100 per couple. Refreshments & lunch are included. To sign up please call Charlotte on 07956 227877 or email classes@grannynet.co.uk.

To register your interest in a future grannynet class and to become a member, visit www.grannynet.co.uk

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All media enquiries to: Charlotte Lloyd Owen, Tel: 01444 417852 or 07956 227877 or email charlotte@grannynet.co.uk

Note to Editors:

About grannynet.co.uk: Founded in 2007 by Verity Gill, is the grandparents' website offering tips and support for grandparents.

Commenting on grannynet.co.uk Dr Miriam Stoppard, OBE "All grandparents need support and I can't think of a better way of finding that support than by logging on to grannynet, where grandparents will find lots of useful information and will automatically join a friendly

family network of other grandparents. It's a way of making being a grandparent more joyful and fulfilling than ever before."

This course is based on an original idea from The Jennifer Brown Research Fund supported by PiggyBankKids, charity registration number 1092312.

About Midwife Gill Perks: Gill practices in a stand alone Birth Centre in Canterbury, Kent where she is lead midwife for antenatal education. Gill specialises in teaching and influencing antenatal education and also offers private classes through her company 'GentleBirth'. Gill provides midwifery consultancy to Arup, is a sessional lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University and provides training and workshops for midwives interested in teaching Active Birth. In 2008, she was awarded a bursary by the Iolanthe Midwifery Trust, which recognizes outstanding contributions to maternity care in the UK. www.gentlebirth.org.uk

About Mothercare: Mothercare is the premier global retailer in the mother and baby market, with over 1,000 stores in 51 countries. With its wealth of expertise on parenting issues, its trusted status and expert staff, Mothercare is committed to providing the best products, advice and services to parents and their families.