



Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting

Campaigning for Improved Relationships Between Divorced Parents & Children in the Jewish Community

Press Release

13 July 2004

JUMP Attends Pioneering Conservative Party Family Access Summit in Westminster

Members of the support and lobby group, ***Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting (JUMP)***, attended a groundbreaking meeting hosted by the newly appointed conservative Shadow Secretary for State for the Family, Theresa May MP, in Westminster on Monday 12 July 2004.

The Conservatives appear to be committed to developing policies to meet the needs of today's family. In her invitation to JUMP Theresa May stated:

“Challenges that face families in the 21st century require a holistic approach which effectively offers realistic and workable solutions to family problems. We understand that this needs an approach, which clearly recognises the important contribution that family plays in society, and aims to promote and strengthen that role by putting families at the top of the agenda. We specifically aim to look at the issues concerning access for non-domicile parents, the issue of access for



Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting

Campaigning for Improved Relationships Between Divorced Parents & Children in the Jewish Community

the wider family, particularly Grandparents, and the problem of international abduction of children by one partner.”

Senior members of the Shadow Cabinet and representatives of the major national parenting and grandparent support groups attended the meeting. Key note speakers included the Leader of the Conservative Party, Michael Howard MP and Lady Catherine Meyer, President of PACT (Parent and Abducted Children Together), whose first husband abducted her children to Germany. Sir Bob Geldof, a fervent campaigner of fathers parenting rights was unable to attend because of other commitments but sent his apologies and was due to meet with Theresa May MP, after the Summit.

Mr Howard highlighted the growing problem of divorce in the UK and recognised that family life has changed dramatically as consequence. He commented that many aspects of current Family Law need to be reviewed and went on to say, “There should be a strong presumption in favour of equal rights for parents to have an influence on the upbringing of their children. The absence of that presumption means parents with residence have found it far easier to obstruct the other parent's access to their children and their ability to have a say on how their children are to be brought up.”



Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting

Campaigning for Improved Relationships Between Divorced Parents & Children in the Jewish Community

A JUMP spokesperson said: “Many of our members have had to deal with their relationships with the children being seriously diminished or completely lost as a result of a conflictual marital breakdown. Why should our children lose out on a relationship with one parent when this happens? The way forward to try and achieve justice has, we believe, got to be to challenge the legal system and the Family Courts in this country. If the starting position for both parents were a legal presumption of parenting rights then the "winner takes all" attitude would be forced to change. Everyone in the legal, medical and therapeutic communities are in total agreement that for children two fit parents are better than one. All that is needed now is for the Government to give wider powers to the Courts so that they can effectively stop the emotional abuse of children caused by selfish, intransigent resident parents. We are positively encouraged by the Conservative Party’s initiative today to raise awareness of these fundamental parenting issues that we face.”

- End-



Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting

Campaigning for Improved Relationships Between Divorced Parents & Children in the Jewish Community

Background Information on Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting (JUMP)

JUMP (www.jump-parenting.co.uk) was formed in December 2001 to raise awareness of contact problems children and parents face following marital separation and divorce in the Jewish community, and to try and effect a real change in perceptions and attitudes within a religion which is so family orientated but is not really reacting to the increasing rate of divorce and these associated problems. A JUMP spokesperson said, "We hope to achieve essentially the opportunity to be an equal parent that would be fully supported throughout all areas of the Jewish community."

JUMP has already met with a number of Rabbis and Jewish social, medical and legal representatives. The group ran a successful Professionals Forum Meeting in December 2002 and is planning a number of initiatives in 2004 to increase awareness of these issues more widely within the Jewish Community. JUMP's latest efforts include the production of a Jewish Parenting Plan based on the Lord Chancellor's Department document, which addresses specific Jewish contact issues over religious holidays and the Sabbath. The group have also recently met representatives from the Chief Rabbi's Office and are hoping to meet with the Chief Rabbi towards the end of the year who recently stated in his BBC



Jewish Unity for Multiple Parenting

Campaigning for Improved Relationships Between Divorced Parents & Children in the Jewish Community

Radio 4 broadcast: "We need to support both parents, even when they split apart. Children need time with both; and it's their needs that really count."

Although JUMP's focus is clearly to support Jewish parents who experience these post-divorce contact difficulties, the group have also made positive links with other national groups including the Coalition for Equal Parenting (**CEP**), the Equal Parenting Council (**EPC** - <http://www.equalparenting.org/>), Families Need Fathers (**FNF** - <http://www.fnf.org.uk/>), Mothers Apart From Their Children (**MATCH** - <http://www.matchmothers.org/>), the **Grandparents Action Group**, Parent and Abducted Children Together (**PACT** - <http://www.pact-online.org/>) and **Fathers 4 Justice** - <http://www.fathers-4-justice.org/>).

Important Note

As many members of JUMP are still involved in legal proceedings involving contact arrangements with their children post-separation/divorce it is important for their children's sake that their identity is protected.

Press Contact

Telephone: +44 (0)844 3578112

E-mail: jump.parenting@ntlworld.com

Website: www.jump-parenting.org.uk