



A Child's Guide to **ADOPTION SUPPORT**

You can contact our Adoption Support Team between 9am- 5pm on 01204336097 or at adoptionssupport@adoptionnow.org.uk or via our webpage www.adoptionnow.co.uk

Talking About Adoption

If you are reading this book, or having it read to you, it is because you will be growing up as an adopted person. This booklet will help to answer some questions you might have about adoption. It also tells you who can help you if you need support with any of these things.

Your family may have already shared some of your early life story and information about your adoption as you have grown up. It is natural to have questions at some point and we hope this helps to answer some of them. You may not want to talk about your adoption right now, but this booklet will help you learn about all the things you can do whenever you feel ready.

▶ WHAT IS ADOPTION?

Adoption means belonging to and growing up with a new family when you cannot live with the family you were born into.

▶ WHY WAS I ADOPTED?

If you were adopted when you were very young, there might have been things that you didn't understand or even know about. There are many reasons why it's not ok for a child to stay with the family they were born into. It could be because your parent(s), have not been able to look after you so that you grow up healthy, or they may have hurt you. If you ask your adoptive parents they may be able to help you find out more. Your adoptive parents, or you, could contact a member of the adoption support team to talk about this.

▶ WHAT HAPPENED BEFORE I WAS ADOPTED?

Some children have a life story book. This is a book about your life before you were adopted. If you don't have one of these books, ask your parents and they can help you to make one. You, or your adoptive parents, could talk to an adoption support worker about this and the information that might go into your life story book.

▶ **WHAT DO I TELL PEOPLE AT SCHOOL?**

Some people want to tell everyone they meet that they're adopted. Some other people don't want to tell anyone. You can choose to tell who you want. If you do not know who you want to tell, or what you might say, then talk to your parents. You can all sit down as a family and decide. Again, if you need help in deciding, you can talk to your family or an adoption support worker.

▶ **HOW MANY OTHER CHILDREN ARE ADOPTED?**

Lots of children are adopted every year. About 5,000 children are adopted every year in England and Wales. Some of these are babies, some older, some are adopted with their sisters and brothers, some are adopted from different countries, and some are adopted by people they know – like relatives and friends of the family.

Adoption Now have social events and groups for adopted children, young people and their families. If you would like to know more about these please contact us on 01204336097 or at adoptionnow.org.uk.

▶ **WHO IS AN ADOPTION SUPPORT WORKER?**

Our Adoption Support team work with adopted children/young people. They like to get to know you and your family and can understand what you are feeling because they have worked for a long time with many children who have been adopted and their families.

Our team helps adopted adults who wish to find out more information about their adoption.

We also support birth parents too, so our workers can help you understand what your birth parents may feel.



Helping Support you and your family

As you are growing up there may be times when you have strong feelings about things. Often when we have strong feelings, like hurt or anger or excitement, we don't know where they come from and they can affect the things we do.

Sometimes these feelings can affect your parents too – if you don't understand how you feel then it's difficult for your parents to understand how you feel and how to help you. The adoption support workers can come to meet you and your family to work out how to help. They will talk to you and your family and try to find people who can help you understand your feelings, and help your parents understand your feelings so you can work things out together.

You can ask your parents to contact us if you might need some help with your feelings or have questions.

You can use this page to make notes or ideas.

I FEEL....

CONFUSED ABOUT...



I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT...



WORRIED ABOUT...



HAPPY THAT...



WHAT CHANGES WOULD HELP ME...



I WONDER IF...

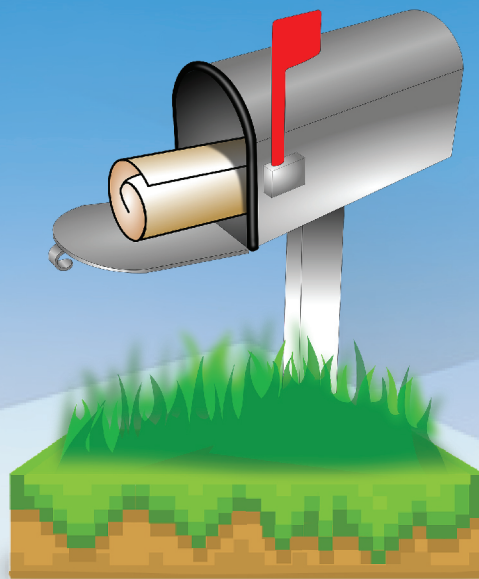


Letterbox Service

Adoption Now help and support adopted children, young people and their families with a letterbox exchange or contact with birth relatives. These exchanges all begin as adult to adult so you will not always be involved in this contact until you are older or ready to do so.

Each family situation is different, which means that some people can send and receive letters and some don't have any contact at all.

Whatever your situation may be there is always support available for you, you adoptive parents and your birth relatives at Adoption Now.



There are other organisations and people whose job it is to help you too, you can talk to them if you prefer:

ADOPTION NOW



CHILDLINE



Freephone: 0800 1111

ChildLine counsellors are trained staff and volunteers who all have experience of listening and talking to children and young people about their worries or problems.

NATIONAL YOUTH ADVOCACY SERVICE (NYAS)

Telephone: 0808 808 1001 Website: www.nyas.net

The NYAS advocacy service gives children and young people information about their rights. They can help you make complaints if you are not happy and they can also help you to have a voice and be heard when decisions are made about you.

CORAM'S CHILDREN'S LEGAL CENTRE

Telephone: 020 7713 0089

Address : 1 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ

Website: www.childrenslegalcentre.com

Coram Children's Legal Centre, part of the Coram group of charities, promotes and protects the rights of children in the UK and internationally in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER

Telephone: 0800 528 0731

Email: advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk Address: The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings

20 Great Smith Street London SW1P 3BT

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The Children's Commissioner's role is to protect the rights of all children in England, and to make sure that children and young people have a say and are listened to when adults are making big decisions about things that affect them.

A useful website about adoption and your rights: www.cafcass.gov.uk

Ofsted can be contacted via email at enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

or by telephone on 0300 123 1231

We always love to hear from you, not just about your own adoption but how we can improve our help to support to families. If you are interested in becoming an advocate for adopted young people, simply having your voice heard about issues or wish to become involved in consultations about our service let us know - we would welcome your help – Get in touch and let us know!

You can contact our
Adoption Support Team
between 9am– 5pm on



01204 336097



adoptionssupport@adoptionnow.org.uk



adoptionnow.org.uk

