



A Children's Guide to Adoption Support



Adoption Matters Northwest tries to help the children and parents we work with, to make their lives happier and to treat everyone well.

A Children's Guide to ADOPTION SUPPORT

Who is this Guide for?

This guide is for children who have been adopted.

What is adoption?

Lots of children can't live in the families they were born to for many reasons. Lots of families want to have a child to live with them who was not born to them. Being adopted is a way for you to legally belong to a new family forever.

What Adoption Matters Northwest does

The government wants all children to be healthy, safe, able to feel good about themselves and enjoy and do well in life. Sometimes children and families need help before all these things can happen.

We can give help and advice to adopted children and their families or put them in touch with other people who may be able to help.

We have social workers who for many years have supported adopted children and their families. These social workers also work with birth families so can help you to understand the reasons why you were adopted.

Questions children ask us

Lots of children may feel confused about things to do with being adopted!

Shall I tell people?

How much shall I tell and to who?

Why was I adopted?

Where is my birth family now,
are they OK?

Can I see or hear from
my birth family?

Can I meet other adopted children,
are there books for children
about adoption?

Why am I so angry or sad?



Who should I tell about being adopted?

You can choose who you tell and how much you tell them but you need to remember that once you have told someone you can't un-tell them.



Can I see or hear from my birth family more or less than I do now?

This is called contact and can mean letters, cards, photographs or visits. When you were adopted people decided what was the best sort of contact for you and your birth family. You can ask for this to be changed and this can happen if your mum, dad and other people involved feel this is the right thing for everyone.

How do I find out more about why I was adopted?

You may have a book, a letter or both that tells you about your life before you were adopted. A lot of children and young people have questions or want to know more about their life before they were adopted. If you have questions or need to know more you could ask your mum or dad or we could help you to talk to your mum or dad about this.

Why am I sometimes angry or sad?

A lot of children feel this way from time to time. If you have muddles or are sad or miss people it is ok to talk about it. There are some people whose job it is to help children understand why they feel angry or sad and they are therapists or social workers. They can also help your family to understand how you feel.



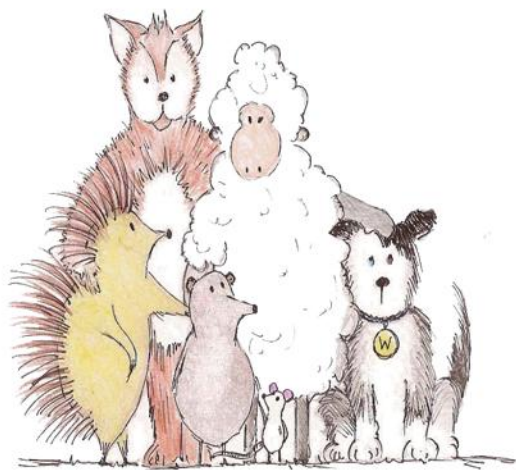
Sometimes things can be up,
sometimes things can be down!!!

What else can we do to help?

Sometimes children and young people need help in getting on with people in their adopted family. One of our social workers can come and help you and your family with this.



We can listen to what you have to say about contact and make sure that the people involved know and understand how you feel.



We can help you to meet other adopted children. We have parties and social events and sometimes run a group for adopted children.

We have books for children about adoption.

If you think that you have been treated unfairly by a local authority or one of its workers we can try to sort this out with them for you or put you in touch with someone who is called an advocate whose job it is to speak for you. There is a list of addresses at the end of this guide.

If we can't help you then we will try to find someone who can.

What do I do now if I want some help?

You should begin by talking to your mum or dad but some children find this hard to do and so you may choose to talk to a family friend, teacher or another grown up you trust. There are other people you can talk to and we have written down how you can contact them on the back page of this guide.

Once you are 18 years old you can decide for yourself what else you might like to know and if you want you can ask us to help you to get in touch with members of your birth family.



Your views matter

You can tell us if you think we have done something well or if you have any suggestions about how our service could be better.

We try very hard to listen to you and do our best for you but sometimes people get things wrong. If you think that we at Adoption Matters Northwest have made a mistake or got things wrong please tell us about it because we will want to try to put it right. This is called making a complaint and you can make a complaint by writing, phoning, emailing or filling in one of our complaints leaflets.

When your complaint has arrived at Adoption Matters Northwest we will have a look at what you feel is wrong. This will usually take around 10 working days. Someone will explain to you what will happen in this time and if it is going to take any longer we will talk to you about this.



We hope that we will be able to agree with you about what must happen to make things right quickly and to make you happy. If you feel you are still not happy, we would ask a senior person in the agency to talk to you.

Along with this guide we will give you a leaflet which explains in more detail our complaints procedure.

Useful Addresses

Ofsted

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Anne's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA
Tel: 08456 404040
E-mail: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Welsh National Assembly Office:

Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales
National Office
4-5 Charnwood Court
Heol, Billingsley, Parc Nantgarw, Nantgarw, CF15 7QZ
Tel: 01443 848450
www.csiw.wales.gov.uk

Children's Rights Director

Roger Morgan
33 Grey Coat Street, London, SW1P 2QF
Tel: 0207 979 2000

Children's Commissioner for Wales

Penrhos Manor, Oak Drive, Colwyn Bay, Conwy, LL29 7YW
Tel: 01492 523333
E-mail: post@childcomwales.org.uk

Childline (helpline freephone) 0800 1111

www.childline.co.uk

Children's Legal Centre

Freephone 01206 873820
www.childrenslegalcentre.com

OTHER USEFUL ADDRESSES

Talk Adoption (freephone) 0808 808 1234

E-mail: actionline@talkadoption.org.uk

Forums: www.afteradoption.org.uk/bulletinboard

National Youth Advocacy Service

90-105 Argyll Street, Birkenhead, Wirral, CH41 6AD

Helpline (freephone): 0800 616101

E-mail: help@nyas.net 0151 649 8700

If you need this leaflet available in another language or format please contact us at:

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14 Liverpool Road

Chester

CH2 1AE

Tel: 01244 390938

Fax: 01244 390067

E-mail: info@adoptionmattersnw.org

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