



# All about **you** and adoption

Birth families



Who finds your new family?



Who can you talk to?



**Plus** important phone numbers and addresses

# All about you and adoption

**We all need to grow up feeling happy, loved and looked after.**

But sometimes our birth parents can't look after us properly. If this happens we need a new family to take care of us for the rest of our life. This is called adoption.

This booklet should help you understand more about adoption. If you want to talk to anyone about what you read here there are plenty of people who can listen or help. You'll find out more about who they are and how to get in touch with them in this booklet.

## Birth families

**Your birth family is the one you were born into.**

You'll always be related to members of your birth family and some adopted children may see their birth family from time to time, or get letters from them. You may have birth brothers or sisters who are adopted like you and who live with your new adoptive family, or another family. Or your birth brothers and sisters may still live with your birth family.

You should have a life story book to give you details about your birth family and background.



## Who finds your new family?

**Lots of people are involved in deciding if you should be adopted and if it will be the best thing for you.**

Social workers help children and families who might have problems or need some extra help. They see if birth families can still live together and if they can't they will find new homes and families for children. Social workers are careful to make sure your new family are right for you and will be able to look after, love and understand you.

Your social worker finds out all about you and your birth family and looks at the reasons why you can't live together any more. Social workers work with a group of wise people, called the adoption panel, to decide the best way to make sure you're happy, loved and looked after in the future. Some of the people in the adoption panel might have been adopted themselves, and some have worked with children and young people for a long time and know all about finding the best homes and families.

continued



## Who finds your new family? (continued)

If it's decided you should be adopted they'll start looking for a new family for you. Your social worker and adoption panel will make sure they find the family who suits you best which is called 'matching'. You will hear all about the family and see photos before you meet up with them. Once you have lived with your new family for at least ten weeks you will go to court and meet with the judge, who is the person that will decide whether you should be adopted.

Once everyone is sure adoption is the right thing for you and that you will be happy the judge will sign a paper called an Adoption Order, which means you are part of your new adoptive family forever.

While all this happens your social worker will talk to you to make sure you're happy and know all about what is going on.

If you were very young when all this happened you may not remember all of it but you can still talk to your adoptive parents or the adoption support team about it. Your life story book should help you find out more.

Because so much care is taken in finding the right family for you all of these checks, visits and meetings can take a while, sometimes up to a year.



# Who can you talk to about adoption?

**Adoption can be a bit confusing at times and you might have lots of questions.**

If you're making a new start with your new adoptive family you might feel scared at times, and we don't want that. If you ever have any questions or worries there are all sorts of people who can help and understand how you are feeling. If you are fostered you can speak to your foster family. You can talk to your adoptive family, your social worker or our adoption team. They've got lots of experience working and listening to children and young people. They'll make sure you are listened to and can be involved in making decisions.

**The adoption support team works with your adoptive family to help them in lots of ways:**

- To give your family ideas on the best ways to keep you well and safe at home or school
- To ask other people to give you extra help if your school, doctor or parents think you need it
- To help your family talk to you about adoption and your birth family so you understand your background
- To help you have news about the people from your past and tell them you are ok.

You might want to meet and talk to other adopted children and young people. In Derbyshire there are days out and activity days where you can meet them and their adoptive parents. There are also groups and activities just for children and young people.

# You are **im** important

Making sure you're happy is the most important thing for us. We follow rules, called the National Adoption Standards, to make sure everything is done properly. We make a promise every year to do our best in every adoption we arrange – this is called our Statement of Purpose.

## What do you think?

My new family should be...

These people are important to me and I'd like to stay in touch with them...

## Things I like and things I don't like

I like to do

I like to eat

I don't like to eat

I don't like

## Important phone numbers and addresses

You – or your adoptive family – can get in touch with some of these people if you ever need any help or to ask any questions. If you are unhappy and need to speak to someone new you can so don't worry about anything – ask someone for help!

Your social worker is

**Derbyshire's adoption support team's duty social worker** (available 9.30am to 1pm Monday to Friday) on **01629 532280**, email [adoption@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:adoption@derbyshire.gov.uk) or write to:

Adoption support manager, Adoption Service, Derbyshire County Council, County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG.

**Steve Lowe**, Derbyshire's Children's Rights Officer **01629 532029** or mobile **07919 211 841**.

**Rosie Key**, Derbyshire Advocacy Co-ordinator **01629 532029**.

**Roger Morgan**, UK Children's Rights Director, (hosted by Ofsted), contact via website [www.rights4me.org](http://www.rights4me.org)

**Ofsted** [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk) and look for links to parents and carers or children and young people.

**Derbyshire's Multi-Agency Teams** support children, young people and families. To speak to a team member Call Derbyshire on **08456 058 058**.

**VOICEyp** – advice, information and advocacy services for children in care [www.voiceyp.org](http://www.voiceyp.org) or call freephone **0808 800 5792**.

**After Adoption** helps anyone affected by adoption. Visit [www.afteradoption.org.uk](http://www.afteradoption.org.uk) or call freephone **0800 0568 578**.

**Talk Adoption** [www.talkadoption.org.uk](http://www.talkadoption.org.uk)

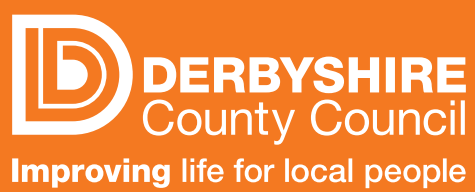
**Children's Commissioner for England** [www.11million.org.uk](http://www.11million.org.uk)

**NSPCC helpline** **0808 800 5000** or [www.nspcc.org.uk](http://www.nspcc.org.uk)

**Childline** **0800 11 11** or [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

**Voices of the Child in Care** **0800 800 5792**

**Children's Legal Centre** **01206 873 820**



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