



Children's Guide to Understanding Adoption

This book belongs to:





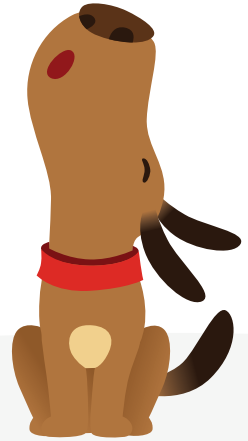
This is a booklet for children who are going to be adopted.

It's a good idea to read this booklet with a grown up you can trust.

If you need this booklet in another language or format, ask your grown up to contact us.

Hi - I'm Pip, and I am going to tell you about being adopted.

- Adoption means growing up in a new family where you will be safe, loved and cared for.
- Being adopted means that you can't live with the people you were born to: your birth parents
- Adoption means becoming part of this new family for always.



Children are adopted for lots of different reasons. For some children, it is because some parents find it hard to look after children and keep them safe.

Foster Families

Foster families look after children and keep them safe whilst social workers try very hard to find children new adoptive families.



Just like you, it was decided it wasn't safe for me to live with my birth family, so I went to live with a foster family.

Adoptive Families

There are all kinds of adoptive families.

- Sometimes it means a mum and a dad together
- Sometimes it means a mum or a dad on their own
- Sometimes it means two mums or two dads



You will have a social worker whose special job it is to make sure you are safe and to find the right adoptive family for you. Sometimes this can take a little while.

What happens when your adoptive family has been found?

When your adoptive family have been found there are lots of special meetings where everyone has to agree they are the right family for you.

You might feel a little bit excited or you may feel a little muddled.

I remember feeling a little worried that my new family may not like me.

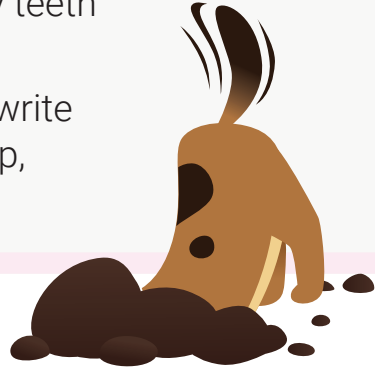
You will see photos and a video of your new family so that you can see what they look like, the sort of house you will be living in and to share all the things they are looking forward to doing with you.



Have you got a question?

You can ask your social worker any questions you like, such as, what will my bedroom be like, who will play with me, who will help me brush my teeth and who will do my hair?

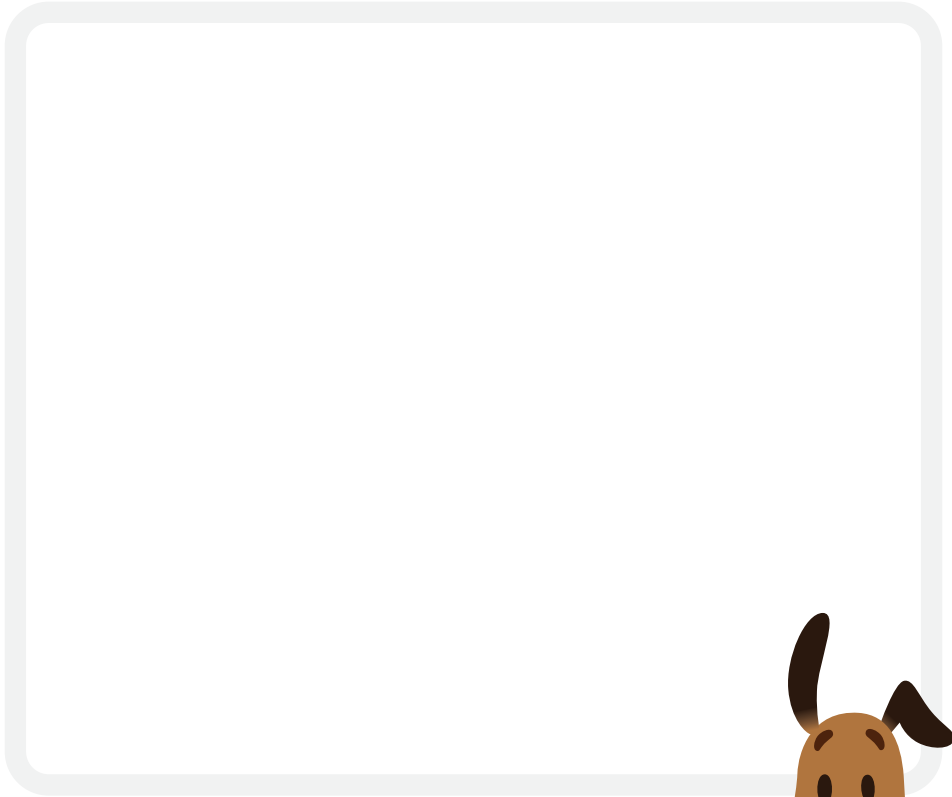
On this page, you can draw or write your questions. If you need help, ask a grown up.



What I want to know

Is something important to you?

If there are things you want your new family to know about you, you can draw or write them here.



You might sometimes feel a little sad and a little muddled. The grown-ups will try to understand and help you.

Your new adoptive family will come to see you at your foster home and get to know you better. You can also visit your new home.



When you're ready

When you're ready you will go to live with your new family in your new home.

Don't worry, you can take your special things with you.

- Your new family will love you, and
- take care of you and keep you safe, just like my adoptive family did for me.

Your new family will make big decisions about you.

These could be as big as deciding which school you will go to or as small as when it's time for your bath!

Living with a new family takes practice.

After a while, a judge who is a wise and important person will be asked to make your family your legal adoptive family, which means you will stay with this family for always. The judge will want to know what you think about this.

Don't worry if you don't know what you think – your social worker will be able to help.



A Life Story Book

Your surname (this is your last name) will also change, so that you have the same surname as your new family.

Your social worker will make sure that you have a special book called a Life Story Book that will explain the reasons why you were adopted.

Adoption@Heart promises to:

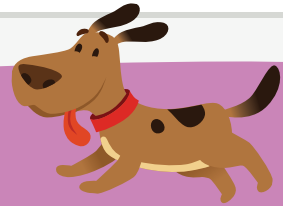
- Help you to understand about adoption.
- Listen to what you tell us about how you feel and what you want to happen.
- Do our best to make sure you don't wait too long for a new family.
- Do our best to help you keep in touch with your birth family if this is decided to be best for you. We will help you understand what has been decided.
- Try hard to make sure you can live with your brothers and sisters if it is decided this is best for you. If this is not possible, we will help you to keep in touch with them.
- Remember that your family background is very important to you.
- Help you to settle with your new family.
- Offer help and support to your birth family (the family you were born to).

People who will help you through your adoption journey:

Your Social Worker is called:

Your Independent Reviewing Officer is called:

Your Social Worker from Adoption@Heart is called:



Useful Contacts:

If you have any problems or worries about adoption, it is best to speak to your adoptive parent(s) first, or if a family is still being found for you, another grown up you trust, such as your foster parent or Social Worker.

For information about adoption support, you or your parent(s) can call **Adoption@Heart** on **01902 553 818** or email **info@adoptionatheart.org.uk**.

*You can also write to: **Adoption@Heart, Priory Green Building, Whitburn Close, Wolverhampton, WV9 5NJ.***

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Telephone: **0800 808 1001** *Website:* **www.nyas.net**

The NYAS provides children and young people with information about their rights and to have a voice and be heard when decisions are made about their lives.

Childline

Freephone: **0800 1111** *Website:* **www.childline.co.uk**

You can contact Childline about anything. No problem is too big or too small. Whatever your worries, it's better out than in.

If you're not happy with your Social Worker or Adoption@Heart and you wish to make a complaint, you can ask a grown up you trust to help. You can complain to:

Complaints Manager, City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton WV1 1SH

Telephone: **01902 551155**

Email: **customerfeedback@wolverhampton.gov.uk**

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate, Store Street, Manchester M1 2WD

Telephone: **0300 123 1231**

or

Children's Commissioner for England

Sanctuary Buildings, 20 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT

Telephone: **020 7783 8330**

Email: **help.team@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk**

Website: **www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk**



**Remember, if you are
worried or unsure about
anything, ask a grown up.**

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Phone: 01902 553 818

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This booklet has been produced with the help of the following group of adopted young people:

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We thank them for their important contributions.



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