

Supporting Families Through the Adoption journey

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Find-a-Family

- Adoption agency since 1985
- Over 300 children adopted
- Initially primary-school aged children
- Always had philosophy of open adoption
- All children have opportunity for contact

The Children

- Aged 0-8
- Abuse and/or neglect, (including in-utero)
- May have specific needs
- Large sibling groups



The Adoptive Families

- Single/partnered including same-sex
- With or without children
- Some general criteria eg minimum age, residency, domicile, probity checks, good health, financial stable, character references

Initial Processes

- Telephone enquiry
- Information Session
- Barnardos' process
- Openness in adoption



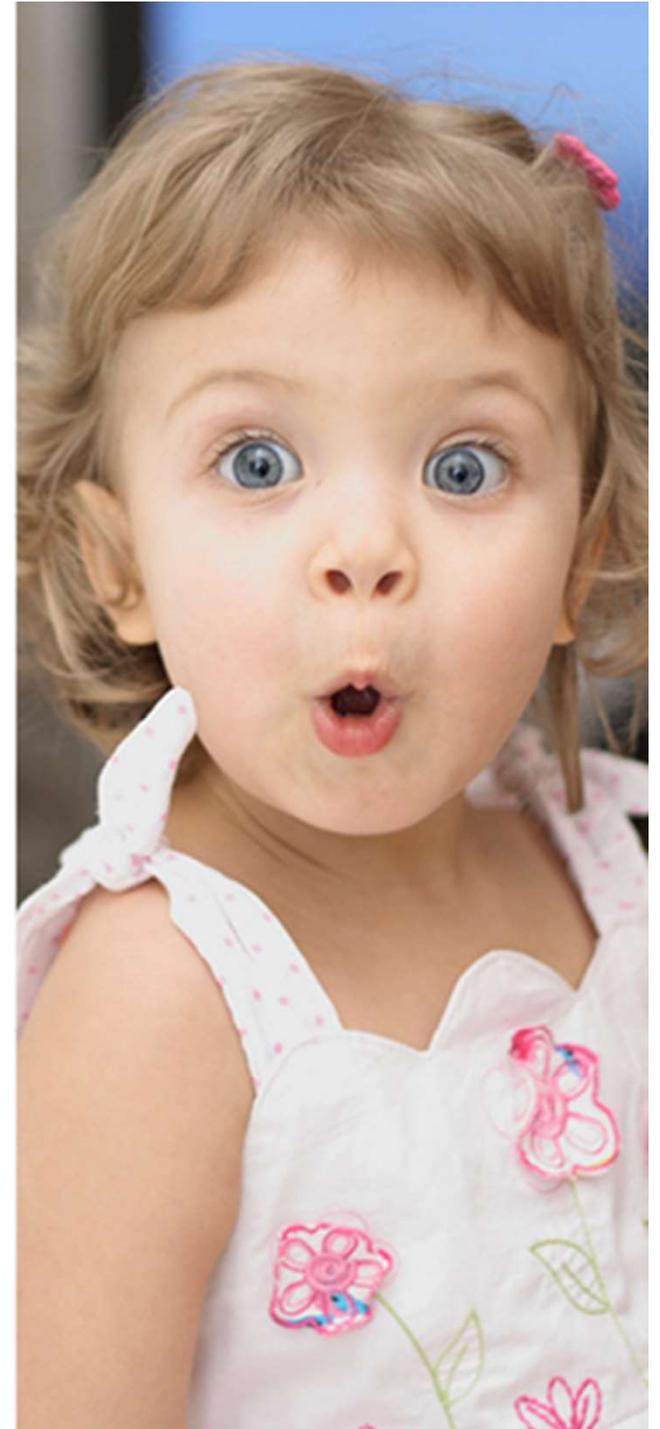
Assessment

- Key competencies
- Dual authorisation
- Commitment to openness
- Role in contact
- Relationships



Initial training

- Development of Identity
- Supporting contact
- Being open about adoption and birth family
- Being curious about the past
- Celebrating uniqueness
- Communicative openness



We
believe
in
children.



The Birth Family Relationship



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Approval and Placement



Supporting Birth Parents

- Make contact with parents as soon as the child is accepted into the program.
- Information and participation.
- Be open, honest and transparent.
Acknowledge and name their fears.

Supporting Carers

- Comprehensive assessment and training
- Regular home visits and support
- Acknowledge fears
- Support to assume autonomous parenting
- Support to facilitate contact
- Regular reviews

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Working Together

- First meeting within one month.
- 6 monthly reviews.
- Keep families informed.
- Regular consultation.

Casework Practice

- Complex and emotional – requires sensitivity and empathy
- Regular consultation, meetings, visits
- Continuity of case manager
- Clear practices, timeframes, processes
- Formal documentation & accurate recording
- Respect



Contested adoptions: Minimising Impact

- Complex, stressful
- State the reality and be honest so parties are prepared
- Parties need to maintain respectful relationships

Contested adoptions: After final orders

- Early relationships critical for the future
- The child needs to see their two sets of parents relating
- Positive relationships can be maintained

It is the relationships that are developed between all parties that underpin the stability and success of the adoptive placement.