

**Devon Adoption Support Service offers specialised support and advice to adoptive families in Devon.**

## Who are we?

Our team includes three social workers and a part time manager who are all experienced in working with adoptive parents and children.

Another part time manager acts as Devon's Adoption Support Services Adviser and is responsible for the Letterbox Service, and services for adopted adults.

We also provide an independent counselling service for birth relatives.

As part of the Devon Adoption Team we work closely with our colleagues in the Assessment Team, who recruit adopters and place children with them for adoption.

## How can we help?

All children can be demanding, but adopted children often have additional needs and many adoptive families benefit from some help and advice at times.

Many families are dealing with life story and identity issues. Adopted children often need help understanding their past as they grow up and social workers may be able to help you find new ways to talk about the past with your child.

Contact arrangements can change over time and it may help to discuss this and how it can affect your child.

Adoptive parents often have extra demands to deal with because of the special nature of adoption. Sometimes difficulties arise from early experiences which influence your child's behaviour at home or at school, and we may be able to help you find ways to manage this.

## What can we offer?

The social workers in the support team are available to talk over difficulties and issues with you. They can visit you at home if you would like, they may see your children (with your permission), or they may offer information and advice over the phone.

We co-ordinate a number of events throughout the county; these include regular local meetings for adopters to meet each other and hear about specific topics of interest.

We arrange social events for families and children to get together.

We host an annual conference about adoption and invite a speaker to lead the day.

We send a newsletter to all adopters twice a year with news of events around the county and other items of interest.

### Who else can help?

We work closely with the educational psychologists attached to the team and they are able to help with difficulties arising at school.

The Medical Advisers for Adoption are available for specialist medical advice.

We have a monthly clinic for parents at The Consultancy, an independent post adoption service, which can provide expert advice on a range of complex problems.

We are starting to develop other services to support families and children at home and away from the family home. We have links with colleagues in:

- the Joint Agency Child Abuse Team
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Joint Agency Team for children with special needs

and we may be able to help you access their services.

### Contact us

If you like to talk to us about any adoption issue or come to one of our events call **0845 155 1013** or email [adoption@devon.gov.uk](mailto:adoption@devon.gov.uk)