



Plymouth
Parent
Advocacy
Project

What is Adoption?



What is adoption?

What does it mean for my child?

What does it mean for me?

An Easy Read Guide

Why have I been given this booklet?

This booklet will support you to understand what adoption is.

It is very important that you get legal advice if this is happening to you.

Important words have been underlined.

The words in **bold** are explained at the back.

What is Adoption?



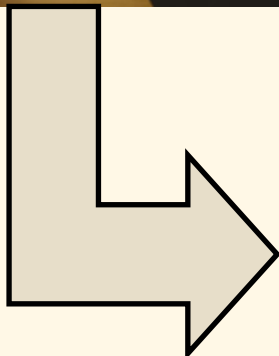
Adoption is where your child goes to live with, and becomes part of, another family.



You will not know the family, and they may live far away.



You may choose to have your child adopted or a Judge may decide that it would be better for your child to live with another family.



(Please note that in the Family Court, Judges do not wear gowns and wigs).



If the **local authority** plan is for your child to be adopted then your child's social worker should tell you.



If you do not agree that your child should be adopted you can **contest**. This means that you can argue against this plan.



You must get legal advice from a family law Solicitor. You will not have to pay for the Solicitor. You can get legal aid.



You need to have good reasons to contest or have another plan such as another family member willing and able to bring up your child.



At the final hearing the Judge will listen to what everybody thinks about what is best for your child. If they decide your child should be adopted they will make an **Adoption Placement Order**.

The Judge will only do this if there is no other choice.



This means your child will **not come back to live with you.**



Once the **Adoption Placement Order** has been made, Adoption Social Workers will look for a new family for your child to grow up with.



You will still be your child's legal parent until an adoption order is made.

You might continue to have contact with your child until your child goes to live with their new family.



All families hoping to be adoptive parents go through strict checks to make sure they are the best people to take care of your child.



When choosing a family the Adoption Social Worker will think about your religion and beliefs and where you come from. But choosing a loving family for your child will come first.



You might be able to meet the family chosen to adopt your child.



You can still appeal the placement order but only if:

- The court allows you to.
- You can show that there has been a big change in your life.



Appealing an Adoption



What does appealing an adoption mean?
What does it mean for me?

An Easy Read Guide

If you think enough change has taken place talk to a Solicitor straight away.

We have another booklet on appealing an adoption.



After your child has been living with their new family for a few months, there will be an adoption hearing.



You will get a letter telling you about this hearing.

You can go to this hearing, but you cannot disagree to the adoption unless the court says you can.



At the Adoption Hearing, an Adoption Order is made.



This means you will no longer have parental responsibility.
This cannot be changed.

Application Number 1234567 /1 OBN 004298

CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY

BIRTH		Entry No.
Registration district	Sefton North Sefton North	The Metropolitan Borough of Sefton
1. Date and place of birth	CHILD Twenty First June 2009 Southport Maternity Hospital	
2. Name and surname	John Philip SMITH	3. Sex Male
4. Name and surname	FATHER Philip John SMITH	
5. Place of birth	Southport	6. Occupation Carpenter
7. Name and surname	MOTHER Margaret Valerie SMITH	
8. Place of birth	Southport	9. Occupation Housewife
10. Name and surname of informant	JONES	11. Address of informant (if different from place of birth)
	18 Station Road Southport	
12. Name and surname of informant	Mother	13. Qualification
14. Usual address of informant (if different from above)		
15. I certify that the particulars stated above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief	M. V. Smith	Signature of informant
16. Date of registration	Twenty Eighth June 2009	17. Signature of registrar J. Brown Registrar
18. Where given after registration, and surname		

CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a register of Births in the District above mentioned. Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office on 3 August 2012.
CAUTION: THIS IS A COPY OF A REGISTER OF BIRTHS. IT IS NOT VALID FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES. IT IS NOT VALID FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES. IT IS NOT VALID FOR IDENTIFICATION PURPOSES.
WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF BIRTH.

Your child will have a new last name, but you will not know what that is. Sometimes their first names will be changed too. The adoption team might tell you if this happens but the adoptive family may ask them not to.

If you have letterbox contact the family should write to you using the child's birth name.



There will be a support plan made for your child.

This includes plans about any future contact you may have with your child.



This might include seeing your child sometimes but it is very unusual for you to be allowed to see your child after adoption.



If the court and the adoption agency agree, you may be offered letterbox contact.



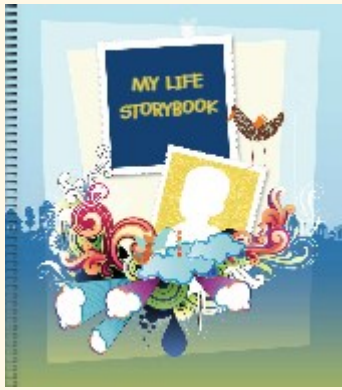
Letterbox Contact



What is the adoption letterbox service?
How do I use it?
Who can support me?

An Easy Read Guide

Please see our booklet about letterbox contact for more information.



There will be a life story book made for your child to keep.

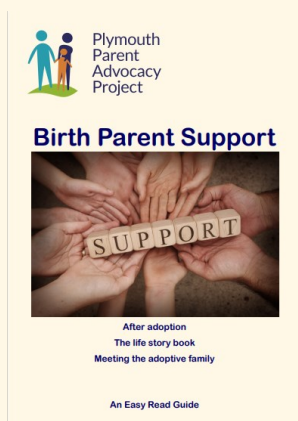


You can help to make this book by giving the social worker important information about your family and you.



Support with letterbox, the life story book, and the possibility of meeting the adoptive family is part of a support package from social services.

This is called Birth Parent Support.



We have a separate booklet explaining how all this works.

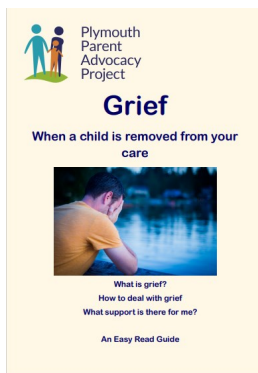
Your feelings



It is really difficult to have your child adopted. You may feel lots of **emotions**.



How you feel may be similar to **grief**, which is when something or someone you love is taken away and you feel like you are in **emotional pain**.



Please see our easy read booklet about **Grief**.



It is important to talk to someone about what is happening to you and your family.



This could be talking to a close friend or a member of your family.



Counselling would be a good way to help you work through any difficult feelings.



Attending a support group could also help.

What does that mean?



Local Authority

This is an organisation in charge of important services such as local schools, social care and waste collection.



Adoption Hearing

This hearing in court happens a few months after a child has been placed with their new family. It is when the adoption is made final and cannot be changed.



Adoption placement order

This is court order allowing the local authority to place the child with a suitable adoptive family.



Adoption Order

This means the adoption is final. Full parental responsibility will now be given to the adoptive family. An adoption order does not end when the child is 18. They will always be a member of their new family.



Emotional / Emotions

These are different types of feelings that can change how you think and how you feel.



Counselling

This is a when a trained therapist listens to you and helps you find ways to deal with emotional issues.



Parental Responsibility

A parent's or caregiver's duty to take care of the child.



Appeal

You can ask the court to stop the adoption but only if the court thinks that enough changes have been made. We have another booklet on [Appealing an Adoption](#).



Contest

When you can say that you do not agree with the local authorities plan and want the Judge to think about your plan.



Letterbox contact

This is when you can write to and receive letters from the adoptive family.

Notes

Thank you...

Authors: Kate Cowling and Ellen Honey, Plymouth Parent Advocacy Project © February 2022

With thanks to:

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Jackie Sillett

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Swindon Advocacy Movement (SAM)

Images:

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**This booklet has been made with and for
parents with a learning disability**

**If you have any questions or concerns, please
contact:**

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**This booklet is one of eight in a series talking about
what happens after a child is removed:**

- **What is Adoption?**
- **Special Guardianship**
- **Supervision Order**
- **Birth Parent Support**
- **Appealing an Adoption**
- **Long-term foster care**
- **Letterbox Contact**
 - **Grief**



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