

# Children's Social Care Birth Families

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with somerset county council



## Placing your baby for adoption

If you are considering adoption for your baby, we offer support and counselling through this difficult time. We provide you with your own support worker through the adoption process and afterwards, if needed. A baby may be placed with an adoptive family straight from hospital, or she/he can be cared for by foster carers for some weeks following the birth so that you as parent can be sure this is the best option for your child. We will involve you as much as possible in considering the most suitable family for your child. We would hope to arrange a meeting for you with the prospective adopters before the child goes to live with them.

## If your child is being placed for adoption

An adoption plan is considered when your child cannot live in his/her own family, and it is the responsibility of the local authority both to keep you informed and involved as far as is possible, and to find a new family for the child being adopted. If you do not agree with the plan for your child to be adopted, you will need to seek advice from a solicitor who specialises in family law matters. An Adoption Order has to be applied for through the court, your views and wishes will be represented by your solicitor, and an Adoption Order would only be made if the court is certain that this is in your child's best interests. We appreciate this is a very difficult time for you, and we will refer to an independent organisation (Action for Children) who run a service entitled - Birth Family Support – and an individual worker will be available if you wish it who will help you to understand the process and will give you information and support.

## Contact plans

We have to consider what contact, if any, should take place between the child and their birth family after adoption. All a birth parent's rights and responsibilities are transferred to the adoptive parents on the making of an adoption order. It is possible for indirect contact to be set up through Somerset Adoption Agency, which may involve photos and information on the child being provided for the birth parents. The Agency may also be happy to receive information from the birth parents and members of the extended family to pass on to the adoptive family. In some situations there may be an agreement for the child to have a direct contact a birth parent or member of their birth family. Any plan that is made for ongoing contact after the adoption will be written down for everyone involved.

All contact arrangements will be reviewed on a regular basis.

## The future

From the age of 18 years onwards, your child as with any other adopted adult, will have the right to receive a copy of their original birth certificate. This will show the name you gave your child and your name.

There is an Adoption Contact Register where information is recorded which enables adopted people to trace members of their birth family. You can record your name and a contact address on this register. If your adult child chooses to trace you they can get this information from the register.

Your own worker can give you more information about the Adoption Contact Register.

Birth relatives may access an intermediary service to make contact with an adopted adult. Both parties must be over the age of 18 and priority is currently being given to pre-1975 adoption.

## Working together for equalities

Somerset County Council positively values diversity, and celebrates cultural and social differences. Our equal opportunities promise is that we will provide all services of equal quality which meet your needs and fulfil your rights.

You can expect:

- The same good quality of service as everyone else, in the same amount of time, with the same amount of care and consideration.
- To be treated fairly, with respect, dignity and understanding whoever you are and whatever your background.
- Any unfairness or unfair discrimination to be investigated and put right wherever possible.

