

***NORTHERN REGION CONSORTIUM
OF
ADOPTION AGENCIES***

**HAVE YOU THOUGHT
ABOUT
ADOPTING A CHILD?**

***This is an information leaflet for people
who are thinking about adopting a child.***

March 2009

NORTH TYNESIDE MBC

Tel. No. 0191 200 1040

Lesley Whalley
Team Manager – Adoption Team
The Offices
Platform 1, Station Mews
Tynemouth Station
TYNEMOUTH
NE30 4RE

CUMBRIAN REGION

**CATHOLIC CARING
SERVICES**

Tel. No. 01772 732313

Anne-Marie Ranson
Catholic Caring Services
218 Tulketh Road
Preston
PR2 1ES

**CUMBRIA SOCIAL
SERVICES**

Tel. No. 01228 607138

Jill Greaves
Adoption Services
3 Alfred Street North
Carlisle
Cumbria
CA1 1PX

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Families for children with a varied range of disabilities are also required.

Children come from different cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds and require families who can respond to these specific needs.

Most children placed for adoption will have memories of their previous family. Adopters need to be able to accept this and help the child understand their birth family history.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

95% of social work time in adoption work can be spent searching for families who can care for children over 5 years of age. However 95% of enquiries received about adoption are usually for children under 5 years of age.

3 **Children's previous carers.**

When plans are being made to place a child for adoption, birth family members are invited to become involved in this process. Many children may need to have some form of contact with their family or previous carers either by face-to-face contact, telephone, letters, or by the exchange of general information between both families via the adoption agency.

Children benefit from growing up in an atmosphere of openness about their past and this is done best by the new adoptive carers accepting their past family. Every adopted person has the right to have access to their original birth certificate and family history. Many adoption agencies will also help adoptees find out more about

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REDCAR & CLEVELAND SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 01642 304500

Joanne Stoddart,
Family Placement Team Manager
Department of Adult and Children's
Services

Accommodation and Support
West Locality Base
Overfields, Daisy Lane
Ormesby
MIDDLESBROUGH TS7 9JF

STOCKTON SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 01642 526218

Jackie Ward
Family Placement Team Manager
Council Offices
Town Centre
Billingham
TS23 2LW

MIDDLESBROUGH SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 01642 201961

Jane Wilson
Family Placement Team Manager
Children, Families & Learning
Middlesbrough Teaching & Learning
Centre
Tranmere Avenue
Middlesbrough
TS3 8PB

HARTLEPOOL SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 01429 523878

Glynis Howe
Family Placement Team Manager
Social Services Department
Aneurin Bevan House
35 Avenue Road
Hartlepool
TS24 8HD

NORTHUMBERLAND SOCIAL SERVICES

Kate Locke
 Family Support and Placement
 Services
 Tweed House
 Hepscott Park
 Stannington, Morpeth
 Northumberland
 NE61 6NF

Tel. No. 01670 534450

SUNDERLAND SOCIAL SERVICES

Jenny Parkin
 Direct Services for Children
 Penshaw House
 Station Road
 Penshaw
 Houghton-le-Spring
 DH4 7LB

Tel. No. 0191 566 3200

SOUTH TYNESIDE SOCIAL SERVICES

Terry Fitzpatrick
 Family Placement Unit
 16 Barrington Street
 SOUTH SHIELDS
 Tyne & Wear
 NE33 1AN

Tel. No. 423 8500

What is the Northern Region Consortium?

The Consortium involves all the adoption agencies in the North East of England and Cumbria. These are local authority social services departments as well as voluntary agencies.

They work together to ensure that a sufficient choice of families is available for any child who needs to be found a permanent family placement.

The Consortium is very grateful to a group of adoptive parents who worked in collaboration with them to compile this leaflet.

INFORMATION ABOUT ADOPTION**1. What is adoption?**

Adoption is the legal process by which children, who cannot be brought up by their own parents, become a full and permanent member of a new family. Legal parental responsibility is transferred to the new family by the granting of an Adoption Order by the Courts.

2. The children who wait for adoption placements.

Most children waiting for adoption are over 5 years of age and many of these children have different educational and health needs. Some children need to be placed with brothers or sisters so applicants who are able to take small family groups are particularly welcomed.

People undergoing fertility treatment.

Most agencies would ask you to follow the treatment programme through to its conclusion if you wish to, rather than considering adoption at the same time as continuing to explore further treatment. Couples who are unsuccessful with this need to have a period of adjustment in their lives before contemplating adoption. Trying to cope emotionally with both processes at the same time is unmanageable.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact one or more of the agencies listed.

5. **What happens when you contact one of these Agencies?**

If you decide to make contact with one of the Adoption Agencies listed in this booklet you should ask to speak to a Family Placement Worker. They will listen to your particular interest in adoption and will try to provide you with the information that you require.

The worker will be able to tell you if their Agency is currently recruiting new adoptive parents for the age of the child that you are considering.

If you are clear that you want to find out more about caring for either a school aged child, a family group, or a child with disabilities, the agency will normally make arrangements to meet you to talk in more detail about adoption.

If the agency you contact is not able to respond to your enquiry they may suggest that you contact another agency within the Consortium if it is felt your request might meet the needs of a particular agency.

NORTH EAST REGION**BARNARDOS**

Tel. No. 0191 300 1240

Giuliana Montixi
Children's Services Manager
Family Placement Unit
1 Lumley Court
Drum Industrial Estate
CHESTER-LE-STREET
DH2 1AN

DFW ADOPTION

Tel. No. 0191 386 3719

Margaret Bell
Director
Agriculture House
Stonebridge
Durham
DH1 3RY

GATESHEAD SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 0191 433 8333

Anne Roberts
Fostering & Adoption Unit
Council Offices
Prince Consort Road
Gateshead
NE8 4HJ

NEWCASTLE SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 0191 278 8500

Deborah Herring
Children's Social Care - Adoption
Cragside House, Heaton Road
Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE6 1SE

DURHAM SOCIAL SERVICES

Tel. No. 0191 370 6100

Kathryn Boal
Durham Resource Centre
Fostering & Adoption
Durham County Council
Littleburn Business Centre
Mill Road
Langley Moor
County Durham
DH7 8ET

their birth family history, and where appropriate, assist them in tracing birth family members.

4. Who can adopt?

People wanting to adopt need by law to be at least 21 years of age.

Most Adoption Agencies prefer to consider people who are over 25 years of age as it is believed that some experience of adult life and a high level of maturity are essential, in order to cope with the modern demands of parenting by adoption.

Couples who wish to make a joint application to the courts do not need to be married.

Same sex couples can adopt.

Agencies are required to look at the stability of the applicants' relationships.

Single people may also adopt. Agencies welcome such enquiries, given the needs of some of the children who wait for adoption placements. Many single people also have particular skills and experience that can be offered to an Agency.

Families who already have children of their own.

Many people who have had their own families are unaware that they are also able to adopt a child. All the agencies in this Consortium welcome enquiries from parents whose children may be older or have grown up and left home. Agencies would like the opportunity to talk to such families about permanent family placements for children who may otherwise remain in local authority care.

adoption is the path to take at this time. The relationship you develop with your worker will enable you to discover what is likely to be the best match for you.

To conclude the Home Study the worker will compile a report which is shared with you. They also interview your previously chosen referees. The agency also undertakes police checks and looks at your health record during the assessment process.

7. What about support after placement?

There is a legal requirement upon all adoption agencies to support adoptive placements up to a child's adoption order. Both the child's social worker and your family's adoption worker have varying degrees of contact with you throughout this period. By agreement this can be increased or reduced as you and the child require.

8. Post Adoption Services.

After adoption orders have been granted by the courts, services can also be provided if the family request them. Families can require support in a number of ways and many get some of the best help from meeting with or knowing other adoptive families. Some agencies also provide support groups after adoption for families who want this.

Some families do not look for continued contact with agencies after adoption. In these situations the families will have been made aware that they can approach their agency at any future stage should they need any advice or additional information.

Adopters' Statement

"Adopters have said that you should be aware that your life will never be the same again. There will be times when you wonder if it is all worth it. Don't worry! It is!"

9. Other leaflets and information available to you.

B.A.A.F. Leaflet: Meeting children's needs through Fostering and Adoption.

B.A.A.F. Booklet: Adopting a child.

Adoption UK Leaflet: Checklist for Adoptive Applicants.

* Be My Parent Newspaper: Issued by B.A.A.F.

* Adoption UK Newsletter: Issued by Adoption UK

* both these publications feature children who require permanent fostering or adoptive placements.

B.A.A.F. is the British Agencies for Adoption and Fostering. Their address in this region is:

B.A.A.F.
Mea House
Ellison Place
Newcastle

Tel. No. 0191 261 6600

Adoption UK is the self-help organisation run by adopters.

Their address is:

Adoption UK
Lower Boddington
Daventry
Northamptonshire
NN11 6YB

Tel. No. 01327 260295

LIST OF AGENCIES

Select an agency or number of agencies within your home area that are listed on pages 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13. If you telephone, please ask to speak to a **Family Placement Worker**. If you prefer to write, the addresses are listed for you.

Many enquirers decide from the outset that they wish to 'shop around' several of the agencies listed, in order to find the agency that they would like to proceed with. After this initial phase only one formal application can be made to any one agency at any one time.

The primary responsibility of Adoption Agencies is to meet the needs of the children who require permanent family placements. Therefore they cannot always provide a service for childless couples. This can sometimes lead enquirers to feel that they have been told that they are not suitable to parent a child. This of is not the case.

6. **How are people prepared for the tasks of adoptive parenting?**

a) Preparation Courses.

All the agencies in our Consortium provide adoptive applicants with thorough preparation for the tasks applicable to adoptive parenting. This usually involves attending a preparation course together with other people who are also thinking about adoption. These courses are often co-led by adoption workers and adoptive parents. There is usually ample opportunity during these meetings to talk with a range of adoptive parents and learn about their experiences of family life, and how life has changed since the child's arrival. Some agencies will also arrange for applicants to visit adoptive families during this process.

b) Home Study

Following the preparation course the Home Study begins. This is a further opportunity for you and the agency to explore whether