

Hints and Tips

for successful introductions

FAMILY
ADOPTION
LINKS

We're really keen to ensure that the introductory phase is a success for all involved. Our adopter community gave us their unique insight to create this guide.

Before the introductions...

- Work on creating the right mindset for the introductions to flourish. Be open-minded, honest, flexible and patient.
- Preparation is key, write down any questions you may have, ensure you've read everything you've been given and think about what this might mean in the short, medium and long term.
- If possible, build relationships with the foster carers before formal introductions commence. Phone, Facetime, email and What's App are all great, soft ways to gently get used to each other. Discuss with your worker what is possible.
- Find out if there are any appointments (hospital/school) that are happening prior to introductions and ask if it would be helpful for you to attend.
- Ask when your Child Appreciation Day is going to take place (this is where everyone involved with the child meets to talk to you about them. It can include nursery workers/health workers/their social worker etc.)
- It may be possible to speak to a recent adopter about their experience of matching. Ask your Social Worker if this is something you're interested in doing.
- Set up a What's App group for your family and friends. That way you can send a single message keeping everyone updated at once.
- When you get the call to tell you about your child, it's a great idea to record it. The call will go by in an exciting blur so the recording will be a handy point of reference. It's important that you ask the worker's permission to record the call.
- Adopted children thrive on routines and it's important to think about any changes you might want to make and how to handle these changes.

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During introductions...

- Matching and introductions involve different people. Why not use the table below to make a note of who's who?

Role	Name	Responsibility	Contact details
Child's Social Worker			
Foster Carer and family			
Your Social Worker			
Foster Carer's Social Worker			
Independent Reviewing Officer			
Health Visitor			

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During introductions cont'd...

- Every professional involved in introductions is working towards helping you and your child have the best possible experience. They're all on your side and are there to help so do ask if there's anything you need.
- Be kind to yourself. Schedule in time for a massage, a walk or dinner with friends so that you have time to relax and enjoy yourself.
- Don't worry if you get asked the same questions by different people, it's not a trick to catch you out, just part of the process.
- Think about who is the best person to answer a question, for example, if the foster carer tells you something you're unsure about get in touch with your Social Worker so they can check it out.
- Relationships during introductions might not always feel easy. It's important to speak to your worker about this and together you can work out the best way forward. Please remember this situation is unique for everyone involved.
- You will feel tired! It's such an exciting and overwhelming time so please talk to your family about the best way they can support such as making meals for your freezer, helping with washing and other practical tasks.
- Foster carers (and their family) have loved and cared for your child and as a result experience grief and loss during the introduction process. Their fostering Social Worker should be there to support them but if anything doesn't feel right to you, please speak to your worker who can make sure they receive the support they need.



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Post introductions...

- After an intense period of being supported and visited by lots of professionals, it can feel disconcerting once these start to reduce. Rest assured that support is still available if you need it.
- Your Social Worker will have outlined all of the support available to you - think about what support may suit you and make the most of it.
- Please remember that asking for help, guidance or support (from any source) is normal.
- Adopter Support Groups are an invaluable source of information, friendship and advice, find out more about your local group by clicking the links below.
- You will want to be the perfect parent but no-one else expects this of you so take the pressure off.
- Invest in a digital photo frame and update it regularly so that your child can see their journey with you (great for attachment) and you can see the progress that everyone has made
- Celebrate all of your child's (and your) achievements with the 'Little Wins' book or use an online app - try the Grid Diary. Record everything and read it back to yourself and your child to remind yourself how brilliantly you're doing.
- Expect some unknowns - this is part of parenting.
- If you're finding things difficult, tell your Social Worker. They're very experienced, will understand and will help you consider what support is needed.
- Adopted children thrive on routine and boundaries. Know what yours are, stick to them and enable them to flourish.

Click to find your local support group...

[Lincolnshire and Rutland](#)

[Leicestershire](#)

[Leicester](#)

[Northamptonshire](#)

[North Lincolnshire](#)

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What to do if you're feeling uncertain about anything?

- Don't worry. This is a natural feeling when becoming a parent
- Speak to your worker and let them know how you're feeling. Be open.
- Don't feel like you can't ask for a 'pause'.
- If there's an element that doesn't feel it's working for you, please say. Together everyone can work towards a solution. It's not just one person's responsibility to ensure introductions go well.
- Get as much information as you can before Adoption Panel and say if you think there is something missing.

