

## Adoption Support Services Menu

Children adopted from care can have ongoing needs and you and your child may benefit from post-adoption support. Our Adoption Passport guides you through the services and support available to you.

We provide a range of support services for adopters and their children. Every adopter is entitled to advice about these services and to an assessment of their additional support needs but About Adoption does not have to provide support in response to an assessment. Access to these services depends on your circumstances but you can ask for an assessment at *any time*, no matter how long after the adoption.

**If you have adopted a child from England** and you are within the first three years of the Adoption Order being granted, you may be entitled to make an application to the Adoption Support Fund for additional funding for therapeutic services. Applications are made through the placing agency.

### All adopters are entitled to:

- A copy of your child's permanence report
- A summary of your child's health from the Local Authority medical adviser
- A life story book to help your child understand their early life

### Available services:

- The social workers in Family Placement Services are available to talk over any difficulties and issues with you. They can visit you at home, in the office or they may offer information and advice over the phone.
- Ongoing training to understand why adopted children behave the way they do and how we can reduce their behaviours by adjusting our responses
- Theraplay® activities - Theraplay is a child and family therapy for building and enhancing attachment, self-esteem, trust in others, and joyful engagement. It is based on the natural patterns of playful, healthy interaction between parent and child and is personal, physical, and fun. Theraplay interactions focus on four essential qualities found in parent-child relationships: Structure, Engagement, Nurture, and Challenge. Theraplay sessions create an active, emotional connection between the child and parent or caregiver, resulting in a changed view of the self as worthy
- Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy - Dan Hughes, a Clinical Psychologist, created Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) as a treatment for families with adopted or fostered children who had experienced neglect and abuse in their birth families and suffered from significant developmental trauma. DDP is based on and brings together attachment theory, what we understand about developmental trauma, the neurobiology of trauma, attachment and caregiving, intersubjectivity theory and child development. Troubled children may have had many changes in the people who look after them and find it hard to trust adults. They

may believe that parents aren't safe and can't always be turned to for comfort and help. They may develop insecure attachments and try to stop their new parents from becoming emotionally close to them. The therapy helps the children learn to trust. It is family-based and involves the child with his or her caregivers.

- Play Therapy uses a variety of play and creative arts techniques to alleviate chronic, mild and moderate psychological and emotional conditions in children that are causing behavioural problems and/or are preventing children from realising their potential. The Play Therapist works integratively using a wide range of play and creative arts techniques, mostly responding to the child's wishes. This distinguishes the Play Therapist from more specialised therapists (Art, Music, Drama etc). The greater depth of skills and experience distinguishes the play therapist from those using therapeutic play skills.

Play therapy may be non-directive (where the child decides what to do in a session, within safe boundaries), directive (where the therapist leads the way) or a mixture of the two. Play therapy is particularly effective with children who cannot, or do not want to talk about their problems. The Play Therapist forms a short to medium term therapeutic relationship and often works systemically taking into account and perhaps dealing with the social environment of the clients (peers, siblings, family, school etc).

- An annual family day where all adoptive families can socialise and develop support networks with families who are experiences similar issues
- Support groups where adopters can meet to socialise with each other. Staff are on hand if you would like to discuss any issues or concerns
- Family Placement Services holds an annual conference which focuses on the needs of children who are adopted and fostered. In 2017 Liza Lomax from KCA came to the island to present the Five to Thrive Approach which is an attachment based approach to parenting children who have suffered developmental trauma. Other speakers have included Richard Rose- author of Life Story Therapy with traumatized children, and other life story books.
- Support groups for adopted children during each of the school holidays. We have one group for teenagers and another for younger children
- An extensive library of books in the office that you are welcome to borrow for up to one month at a time
- A quarterly newsletter which is sent out to all adoptive and foster families, which details events and items of interest