



Family Futures

Ofsted
Outstanding
Provider

iAdopt Information Pack



**IADOPT IS A LONDON BASED VOLUNTARY
ADOPTION AGENCY THAT IS UNIQUE,
INTERACTIVE AND THERAPEUTICALLY
INFORMED.**

Find out more about our unique services on our website

www.familyfutures.co.uk/adoption

440a Hornsey Road, London, N19 4EB

Family Futures CIC. Company no: 8423617.

Voluntary Adoption Agency Registration no: SC46298

We Are

iAdopt



Family Futures



Family Futures, is a organisation who have been providing therapeutic services to children and adopted families for the past 27 years. Our iAdopt service has been running for the past 16 years, recruiting, assessing adopters for approval. Once you are approved, we help you find your child and support you to become the legal parent of your child.

We understand that the journey to becoming a parent through adoption is deeply personal and can be learning, challenging and emotional process. Our therapeutic assessment and support services are designed to walk alongside you, every step of the way, to give you the personalised support to you and your child.

What makes us unique is our relationship-based approach that includes:

- A dedicated social worker and a therapist with trauma expertise throughout the entire assessment process.
- The dual assessment ensures a more informed and compassionate understanding of your life experiences, ability to reflect on these.
- Identify your strengths and areas that need support in becoming a parent by adoption
- We value collaboration and will always work with you, not just for you, creating a space where you feel heard, respected, and supported.
- Our Social Worker and Therapist have regular consultations to support them with your assessment.

We also recognise the power of play – not only as a tool for child development but as a way to build secure and meaningful relationships between you and your future child. Our approach places emphasis on play as a foundation for connection, trust, and healing.

The aim of our assessment is to obtain the evidence of your ability to be able to be a parent to a child who has a plan of adoption: educate, prepare and empower you to understand the needs of children and develop a parenting style that is therapeutic.

Based in Finsbury Park, North London, we welcome prospective adopters who live within a 90-minute journey of our offices. From the initial enquiry right through to your approval at the Family Futures Adoption Panel, we provide a comprehensive Stage 1 and Stage 2 assessment that is tailored to you.

THE PROCESS

PREPARING YOU TO BE A THERAPEUTIC PARENT AND THE TOOLS WE USE

- A social worker and therapist will be allocated to carry out the assessment with you.
- They will support you through the assessment and to approval at the adoption panel.
- The assessment uses interactive and fun therapeutic tools that you may go on to use with your child.
- The assessment will explore your motivation to become an adoptive parent, your background, skills and experience. We will frame this within the context of adoption.
- The assessment is strength based with areas of support identified to help you as an adoptive parent, we can provide extra support if needed.
- The assessment includes one to one sessions with your social worker and therapist, e-learning, videos as well as reflective pieces of work.
- We will introduce the reasons children need a new family including their early adverse childhood experience and resulting developmental trauma.
- We will explore children's trauma and how this is shown in their behaviour, communication, lack of trust in adults and low self-esteem and confidence.
- We provide strategies to therapeutically reparent your child/ren and help them to heal
- We bring your family and friends into your journey with a presentation on adoption and how they can support you by having a family support network meeting
- We will provide a thorough evidence-based assessment to support you at adoption panel

**“WE BOTH FOUND THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS
INCREDIBLY REWARDING... WE LEFT THEM FEELING
REALLY REALLY WELL ARMED WITH INFORMATION
AND KNOWLEDGE.”**



[You can find our glossary of
assessment tools here.](#)

The assessment process

STEP BY STEP

At Family Futures, we guide you through each stage of the adoption process, each adopters journey is tailored to work with them. Here's an overview of what you can expect:

1. Background Checks

Once have accepted your registration of interest, we'll complete some standard checks to make sure adoption is safe for everyone. These include:

- DBS (criminal record check)
- Medical report
- Personal references
- Overseas checks (if you have lived outside the UK for a period of 6 months or more)

2. Homework

We'll ask you to share more about yourself, including:

- Your support network – who's there for you?
- Your life story, in your own words
- Your CV (work history)
- A personal chronology (timeline of your life)

3. Taster Day

Spend a full day at our office with your assessing social worker and therapist.

- We'll explore how you connect with others
- Talk about who's in your support network and why they matter
- Give you a chance to ask questions and reflect
- Introduce and use therapeutic tools (you may go on to use with your child if they have therapy) in your assessment.

4. Home Visit

Your assessing social worker will visit your home.

- We'll check your home (and pets, if you have them) are safe and welcoming
- Discuss with you our feelings on moving to Stage 2

The assessment process

STEP BY STEP

Assessment and Education

1. Ongoing Homework

We'll continue building a picture of your strengths, experiences and support needs.

2. Training Days

You'll take part in six days of preparation training at our office, delivered in three blocks of two days across 4–6 weeks.

3. Network Meeting

We'll invite your close family and friends to a meeting, helping them understand adoption and how they can support you.

4. Additional References

We may also ask for extra references – for example, from employers or significant ex-partners.

5. What You'll Cover

Our training and assessment help you prepare for therapeutic parenting. Topics include:

- Adult attachment – understanding your own attachment style
- Child development – how children grow and how trauma affects them
- Parenting resources – tools and strategies to support you as an adoptive parent

At the end of Stage Two, you'll have a full assessment that brings together everything you've shared and learned, written up by your social worker you'll be ready to go to adoption panel.

PREPARATION



Adoption is about more than forms and checks, it's also about preparing yourself for the realities of parenting a child who has had a difficult start in life. At Family Futures, we encourage applicants to take practical steps that help build understanding, confidence, and resilience before beginning the journey.

Why Volunteering Matters

Adoption is about more than forms and checks, it's also about preparing yourself for the realities of parenting a child who has had a difficult start in life. We encourage applicants to do some volunteering as it:

It gives you the opportunity to get to know and build a rapport with a child you don't know. Introduces you to a variety of children and give you an idea what types of children you feel more natural with.

Experience children who may have additional needs, behavioural problems and have a practical practice that will help build your understanding, confidence, and resilience.

It also provides evidence of your motivation and ability to work with children, learn and reflect on your voluntary work. This we can share with the adoption panel in the assessment report.

- [Hackney Adventure Playground](#)
- [Young Hackney](#)
- [KEEN](#)
- [Girlguides](#)
- [Rainbow Trust](#)
- [BeanStalk](#)
- [Wizz Kidz](#)
- [The Literacy Pirates](#)
- [Little Kickers](#)
- [Flying Sycamores Forest School](#)

Connecting with the Adoption Community

We encourage applicants to join networks such as Adoption UK or New Family Social. Hearing directly from adopters and adoptees can be both eye-opening and reassuring, giving you insight into the realities of adoption.

Considering Lifestyle Changes

Parenting an adopted child often requires flexibility - whether that's around work, routines, or social life. These early steps help you start imagining how adoption might reshape your everyday life and how you can create space for a child in your family.

READING AND RESOURCES



Preparing to adopt isn't just about the formal process - it's also about learning, reflecting, and connecting with others who have lived it. Here are some recommended resources to help you build understanding and confidence as you begin your journey.

Podcasts

- **Family Futures Podcast** - voices of adopters and adoptees, plus professional insight into adoption and therapeutic parenting
- **The Adoption (BBC Sounds)** - A unique, real-time account of a 19-month adoption process.

Support Networks

- Adoption UK - National online support community for adopters.
- We Are Family - Peer-to-peer support community run by adopters, for adopters.
- New Family Social - A dedicated network for LGBTQ+ adopters.

Books

- **The Unofficial Guide to Adoptive Parenting, Sally Donovan** - Honest and practical advice blending lived experience with trauma and attachment knowledge.
- **A to Z of Therapeutic Parenting, Sarah Naish** - A go-to guide for therapeutic parenting strategies you can use every day.
- **Want to Adopt? Helen Oakwater** - Straightforward preparation tips from an adoptive mother - what she wished she'd known.
- **Flying Solo, Julia Wise** - Inspiring guidance for single adopters, with practical advice on day-to-day parenting.

Other useful links:

- [You Can Adopt Website](#) - information and statistics on adoption, adoption stories
- [Nation Adoption Criteria](#) - find out if you are eligible to adopt
- [First4Adoption Website](#) - support for adopters

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RAAS AND VAAS



Local Authorities & Regionalised Adoption Agencies (RAA)

- RAA's provide adoption services to an amalgamation of local Authority's in a specific region.
- They provide, recruitment, family finding and post order services to the LA's they cover.
- Children in the care of the local authority will be referred to their RAA when the child has a plan of adoption.
- RAA's recruit adopters and will look at their 'in-house' adopters for a 'match' for the child in the first instance.
- If they cannot find a match they will look externally to organisations like Family Futures who are VAA's.

Independent & Voluntary Adoption agencies (VAA)

- Voluntary agencies are often charity status organisations.
- Family Futures is a VAA, non-profit organisation
- VAA's are usually smaller than RAA's
- VAA's Recruit, Assess and Approve Adopters.
- Support adopters to Family Find through a nationwide portal
- Work with the child's LA and support the match and transition of the child to the adoptive home.

“THERE ARE SO MANY AMAZING CHILDREN, AND WITH AN AGENCY LIKE FAMILY FUTURES YOU CAN COMPLETELY CHANGE THE COURSE OF THEIR LIFE.”

Why iAdopt?

- Choosing iAdopt means you'll be supported by an independent, not-for-profit agency with a personal approach and continuity of care from your first assessment through to matching and placement.
- We are by your side when you are searching the nationwide portal to find across the whole of the UK to find the right child for your family.
- We provide direct parenting support from when the child comes to live with you, until the Adoption Order is made
- Social Work support in managing and attending meetings and providing Court reports and when you make the application to adopt.
- Post Adoption Order support, direction and signposting.
- As part of Family Futures, we additionally offer the child's LA a pre-placement multidisciplinary assessment to help you understand the child's holistic needs from the very start. We can offer the child's LA a package of therapeutic treatments to support the placement based on the assessment.
- Our 'Outstanding' Ofsted rating, confirms the quality service we provide, as does our positive feedback.



Family Futures



ADOPTION STORIES

Hear from our iAdopt parents:

Buzz and Jenni

Newly matched adopters Buzz and Jenni shared their experience at our recent information evening. They talk about their decision-making process and preparation before choosing an agency to assess them and why they chose Family Futures. We also get to hear about their experience of navigating the family finding and matching process.

Alex and James

In this special Q&A episode, recorded at one of our adoption information evenings, approved adopters Alex and James share their story - from assessment and matching to parenting a child with additional needs. Interviewed by their assessing social worker Phil Kane, and joined by fellow Family Futures social worker and parent through adoption Caz, they reflect on the impact of therapeutic support, the realities of family finding, and the role of a support network – including what a network meeting really involves.

Hear from our Adoptee's:

Hana's story

Hana, aged 23, speaks to Alan Burnell about the reality of her life growing up as an adoptee and how she felt finding out when she was older about the trauma.

Daniel's story

An adult adoptee aged 36, who is a previous service user at Family Futures. Daniel discusses his early experiences of trauma and abuse, his life in care and as an adoptee, and how his adoptive parents and the long-term therapeutic support he received have helped him heal over time.

Jan's story

Jan shares her experience of adoption with Sue Hughes, assessment services & permanency director. Jan was the first child Family Futures placed through iAdopt. Sue has been part of the team supporting Jan and her mum for the last 14 years.

To start your journey with Family Futures and the iAdopt team, get in touch today!

020 7354 4161

contact@familyfutures.co.uk