



Safer Stronger Adoptive Families

An evidence based approach to
post adoption support

*"How can we even thank you enough for all you have done. You have bought
our family back together and we will thank you forever"*

SSAF Adoptive Parents

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"The agency is piloting a new adoption support programme for adoptive families in crisis. ... Feedback from families, children and referring social workers has been very encouraging"

Adopters for Adoption Social Care Inspection Report;
Ofsted 28 Feb 2018

What is Safer Stronger Adoptive Families (SSAF)?

SSAF is an effective and practical therapeutic parenting programme, developed to provide structured yet personalised post adoption support. A clear and focussed Family Action Plan outlines what is needed to improve family functioning, whilst evidence-based approaches support the family to achieve their stated goals and agreed outcomes and prevent family breakdown.

The model was piloted in 2017/18 through the Department for Education's (DfE) Innovation and Improvement Grant, and has consequently been approved as an eligible therapeutic parenting model for funding via the Adoption Support Fund.

The model can be used with adoptive children of any age and there are no restrictions on how long a family has been together.

How is the model delivered?

The model is delivered by a Triple P® trained therapeutic Support Worker, providing both group and 1:1 sessions with families in their home over a 14 week period, with 3 further phone review sessions over the 12 weeks following the programme. This ensures the support is personalised to their challenges and behaviours in the home, and offers a measurable and rewarding method of learning new coping skills and behaviours.



Family members are able to see and record their achievements and goals throughout, giving them real ownership and involvement in the process. The model makes use of a number of evidence-based outcome measures that support this goal based approach, including dynamic action planning and rating scales through the Outcomes Star™, and measurement of parenting behaviours through the Parenting Scale.

As a result of the programme, families can experience increased stability, resilience and 'normality'. This can create the additional benefit of providing a platform from which further therapy or support can be undertaken where necessary.

Does it work?

Over 60 families with adoptive children ranging from 8-19 years of age have benefited from the SSAF programme as a result of the DfE pilot. Of those families who have completed the programme, both the children and parents in the cohort showed **improvement in all areas** of the Outcomes Star™. Most notably, **81% of parents/carers demonstrated improvements in the area of setting Boundaries and Behaviours** with an average improvement of 35%. In addition, **64% of children and young people demonstrated improvements in the area of Feelings and Behaviours**, with an average improvement of 23%.

How much does it cost?

Delivery of the SSAF Programme to an adoptive family with one funded child is £2,960 inclusive of travel and expenses. There is an increase in this rate of just 25% for each additional funded child in the household, offering an efficient use of the individual Adoption Support Fund limits for families with sibling groups.

"We have been on a couple of courses before and have found that we've definitely taken the most from SSAF as the strategies are very practical and have had a really positive effect when supporting the girls"

SSAF Adoptive Parents



How can families access this support?

Families can make contact with their Local Authority Adoption Support Social Work team. Following an initial Assessment of Need, Adopters for Adoption will receive the enquiry for support from the Local Authority directly. A suitable SSAF Worker will be allocated and a Service Level Agreement drawn up detailing the costs and expected start date; we are able to support the authority in completing the Adoption Support Fund application if needed at this stage.

Session Framework

Week 1	Initial meeting, introductions of FSW and programme, questions, assessments, PCA
Week 2	Ideal future, Outcome Stars™ and action plan - online. Collect assessments
Week 3	Attachment - session with parents - feedback assessments
Week 4	Attachment - session with child/teenager
Week 5	Interacting as a family - influences on child/teen behaviours
Week 6	Encouraging positive behaviours
Week 7	Practical family session: practising skills
Week 8	Midway review - Outcome Stars™ & action plan
Week 9	Behaviour support
Week 10	Practical family session: practising skills
Week 11	High risk times/planned activities
Week 12	Practical family session: practising skills
Week 13	Programme close
Week 14	Final review, assessments, Outcome Stars™ & action plan
Week 16, 20, 26	Follow up phone calls