

# Adopting as a Single Parent

**Initially, I didn't think as a single adopter I could adopt - I'm not sure why but I thought that it would be a factor that could hold me back in adopting. So, I decided to spend some time researching on the internet to find out the facts: can you adopt if you're single? I quickly found some information that revealed to me that I would be able to adopt; I was thrilled. Excited to find out more, I rang the first number that came out from the internet search, which I believed to be a local authority number. However as the person taking my initial phone call was so helpful and informative, by the time I realised I had rang a VAA, in this case Adopters for Adoption, instead of a local authority I was confident that I wanted them to help me on my adoption journey as it just 'felt right'.**

## First Steps

My initial phone call had been so informative, by the time it came to the first stages of my adoption process, I knew exactly what I needed to do. At the time, I was living in a flat that didn't have a garden so I knew I wanted to move house in order to build a family in a home that offered a garden to the potential child I was going to adopt. Therefore, I acted on this right away before moving any further along in the process. During this time, Adopters for Adoption were very accommodating and put my application on hold for me whilst I sorted out the logistics of finding a new home.

When I returned to the process, I began the initial stages by filling out the Registration of Interest form - this was a really long document to get through however all of the information required on the form certainly felt relevant and important to the overall adoption process. There were times that I got stuck on specific questions and the team at AfA were all incredibly helpful throughout this process as they constantly provided me with additional information whenever I needed it.





“ The team at AfA were all incredibly helpful throughout this process. ”

## My Experience of working with Adopters for Adoption

My experience of working with Adopters for Adoption was really positive, they were always a phone call away at times when I needed support and advice from their experienced team. If there were ever any issues that arose, in terms of how my application was progressing within their timescales and standards, AfA were quick to act to solve any matters that could potentially affect my application to adopt. Due to this, I was assigned a new social worker during Stage 2 of the process, as AfA felt it would be beneficial to help speed up the process and move forward more positively. My new social worker was fantastic and I cannot thank her enough for all of the hard work she did and how at ease she made me feel during this stage of the process – everything seemed to go to plan much more easily and I was extremely grateful for this.

## Family Finding and Support

April is AfA's designated family finder and she was so supportive throughout this process – I really can't thank her enough. When I initially began the family

finding process, I wasn't completely sure on what I was looking for; all I can say is that once you see your future child; you just know it's the right fit! I first met my daughter, Ellie, at her foster home and it honestly felt right from our very first meeting.

Since adopting Ellie, AfA have offered the most amazing post-adoption support. They have helped so much in finding additional support for Ellie which has been instrumental in ensuring she gets the help and care that she needs. She now attends play therapy every week and this is through support gained via the adoption support fund – this is a service available to all adopters with an adoption order.

## Moving in

For me, moving in at home went really smoothly. Ellie even settled in well at school and we soon found that she loved school! Her school have been a fantastic support network in welcoming her and making pupil premium money available to her so that she gets access to the additional support she needs when she's inside and outside of school. This really helps to keep things as consistent as possible for Ellie so that she can be cared for in the best way possible. When selecting a school for Ellie, I was very particular, as a teacher myself, I knew that I wanted to find a school that could offer her necessary support both academically and pastorally, rather than solely focusing on her academic results.

## Reflection as a Single Adopter

Having a support network is vital when adopting as a single adopter as you will definitely be grateful of the support of your family and friends throughout the process. The training that I attended during Stage 1 were so beneficial in helping me think of all the changes that I needed to make so before having Ellie, I began to adapt my life by doing things as though I was already a single mum. Therefore when Ellie arrived into my life I was prepared and somewhat used to being a single parent.

I would also recommend attending the support groups that are provided by AfA; they provide the perfect opportunity to ask any questions you have as well as facilitating the opportunity for your adoptive child/ren to meet other adopted families. Ellie thoroughly enjoyed from meeting other adopted children and I really benefited from the chance to talk to other parents that understood our situation.

If I could offer just one piece of advice to anybody entering the adoption process; it would be to just be patient. The process does take time but it is completely worth it. When you start the matching process just believe that you will find your child as when you see your future child, you really will just know.