

# Improving Lives and Futures



Adopters Training Programme  
**2011–2012**



# Hello and Welcome,

to the 2011 – 2012 Training and Development Programme for Adopters and Prospective Adopters.

Judging by the feedback from last year, you found the quality and variety of the courses very helpful. This year we have continued with some of the same themes, including Theraplay, Contact and Education, but we have also expanded the range to include new courses that we hope will prove equally popular and informative. We are pleased to include training from independent trainers such as the Theraplay Therapist Steve Layzell, as well as training on education from Adoption UK and Louis Sydney's workshop on Social Networking and its impact within an adoption context. We are excited to offer the 2 day 'Beyond Consequences' programme which is delivered by Family Futures, the London based agency which specialises in therapeutic work for children who have experienced early trauma and who have attachment difficulties.

We have also divided the programme into two distinct areas – those courses that are suitable for Prospective Adopters and those that are targeted for Adoptive Parents. We hope that this makes it clearer for everyone when it comes to choosing from the course list.

As Adoption Support Services Manager, it is part of my job to help set up and run a variety of support groups in the community. I am delighted that many of you who attended the formal training courses last year also enjoyed the more informal support groups and gatherings, such as the Coffee Mornings we held throughout the County, and the Summer and Autumn Picnics. We also launched our Essex Newsletter this summer as part of providing information about adoption issues to the wider adoption community in Essex.

We recognise that training is not only about advancing your learning and sharing your experience and expertise with others, it is also about being part of the adoption community and having an opportunity to meet others who share similar experiences and can offer mutual support. So we hope there are courses and workshops here that will suit you and offer this possibility, and we very much look forward to seeing you at the various events.

It is important to have your feedback so that we can continue to improve our service to you in the future. If you have ideas about post approval training topics you would like to see included in subsequent programmes please do let us know, either through your adoption social worker or via the feedback forms that you will be given at the courses.

Once you have browsed through this brochure, you can complete the enclosed Booking Form and return it to us via email to [adoption.training@essex.gov.uk](mailto:adoption.training@essex.gov.uk), or in the stamped addressed envelope provided.

Best wishes and I hope you enjoy the training.



**Marie Higgins**

Adoption Support Services Manager



## Quick Reference Guide For Prospective Adopters

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## Quick Reference Guide For Adopters

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## Course:

### Matching and Introductions – and – The Essex Approach to Life Story Books

(Led by Essex Adoption Service Family Finders Team)

This course provides an overview of how children are matched with adoptive parents and the planning of introductions. We discuss the emotional needs of all those involved, including children, adoptive parents and foster carers, during the weeks leading up to and following placement. We will also explain why and how we undertake life story work and write life story books for children placed for adoption.

## Length:

1 day course

## Who Should attend?

Prospective Adopters awaiting placement

## What you'll get from it?

- You'll learn about the matching and introductions process
- Get an understanding of your child's feelings of separation and loss
- What to expect during the early weeks of placement
- Learn how to interpret information about your child's history
- Learn how you can gain 'ownership' of the Life Story Book to use into the future

Date	Time	Venue
11th November 2011	10am – 4pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT
22nd February 2012		
28th June 2012		

## Course:

### Communicating and Connecting

Early Communication and Language development  
(Led by Siân Ansell Early Language Consultant ECaT)

Adopted children often have a background that includes neglect, which can greatly impact on their ability to communicate. This workshop offers an opportunity to explore early language development and the role parents can play in supporting, developing and extending these essential skills.

Each person will receive a 'Sack Full of Sharing' with resources to take away and use within your homes.

## Length:

½ day course

## Who Should attend?

Prospective Adopters awaiting placement

## What you'll get from it?

- An understanding of communication and early language development in young children, and how neglect and trauma can impact this
- The role communication plays in a child's emotional wellbeing
- The role adoptive parents can play in supporting and developing children's early communication skills

Date	Time	Venue
19th November 2011	9.30am – 1.30pm	Writtlewick Family Centre, 62 Chignall Road, Chelmsford CM1 2JB
17th March 2012		
14th July 2012		

## Course:

### The Principles and Use of Theraplay – For Prospective Adopters

(Led by Steve Layzell, Theraplay Therapist)

This training is aimed at giving prospective adopters the opportunity to learn about Theraplay and how to use play activities to make connections with children. The session will help with understanding the impact of play and how to help children focus their energy on positive activities.

## Length: Who Should attend?

1 day course

Prospective adopters awaiting placement

## What you'll get from it?

- An understanding of Theraplay (interactive play therapy)
- Learning how to use Theraplay principles in the home setting
- Understanding the importance of play for your child's social and emotional development and learning potential

Date	Time	Venue
28th January 2012	10am – 4pm	Writtlewick Family Centre, 62 Chignall Road, Chelmsford CM1 2JB
5th May 2012		
28th July 2012		

## Course:

### Being a Champion for your Child at School (Children who Struggle at School)

(Led by Adoption UK)

The workshop this year will focus on how children learn and the impact on the brain of stress, trauma and loss. Participants will look at ways in which social and emotional problems can lead to behavioural difficulties and can get in the way of children's ability to learn. The course will look at effective interventions and provide practical 'tools' to help parents work with schools.

## Length: Who Should attend?

1 day course

Adoptive parents of school age children  
(or near school age)

## What you'll get from it?

- By the end of the day, you will have explored the impact on the developing brain of early stress and trauma and how this effects learning
- Advice and guidance on how to advocate for your child
- How to access educational support
- How to assist teaching staff to understand your child's individual needs

Date	Time	Venue
10th January 2012	10am – 4pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT

## Course:

### Making Contact Work – For you and your child

(Led by Essex Adoption Service, Post Adoption Team)

This will be an opportunity to discuss the issues you may have around Letterbox and/or Face-to-Face contact with your child's birth family. It will address the challenges that contact poses for adoptive families and look at what research tells us about how contact can impact on adopted children's identity and self-esteem.

## Length:

½ day course

## Who Should attend?

Adopters whose children have on-going letterbox and/or face-to-face contact with birth family members

## What you'll get from it?

Parents will at the end of the day

- Have had help in thinking about and managing your feelings about contact
- Explore ways to manage individual contact situations and how to make it work
- Better understand the impact of contact on a child's sense of identity
- Understand the benefits of contact for the stability of your adoptive family

Date	Time	Venue
27th January 2012	9.30am – 12.30pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT
14th June 2012		

## Course:

### The Principles and Use of Theraplay – Incorporating 'How to Tune Into your Child'

(Led by Steve Layzell, Theraplay Therapist)

The training will focus on how to use play activities to make connections with children and young people. The approach helps to enhance children's development, attune attachments and improve family relationships.

This course also focuses on the way we connect with the internal world of our children. Parenting strategies will be covered as well as information on how to create a nurturing, positive environment for children.

## Length:

2 day course

## Who Should attend?

Adoptive parents and prospective adoptive parents who have children placed with them

## What you'll get from it?

- An understanding of Theraplay (interactive play therapy)
- Learning how to use Theraplay principles in the home setting
- Looking at Neuroscience research – how the brain works
- Understanding the importance of play for social and emotional development and learning potential
- Exploring the ways in which children express their feelings
- How to pick up on your child's non-verbal signals

Date	Time	Venue
10th and 24th February 2012 (2 day course)	10am – 4pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT

## Course:

### The Principles and Use of Theraplay – Follow-Up Workshops

(Led by Steve Layzell, Theraplay Therapist)

The two half-day workshops offer participants the opportunity to share their experiences of using the Theraplay principles. Adopters will be guided with ideas of how to use what they have learned, building on their newly acquired skills gained from attending previous training sessions.

## Length:

2 half-day workshops

## Who Should attend?

Adopters who have attended previous Theraplay programmes

## What you'll get from it?

- Building on your understanding of Theraplay (interactive play therapy)
- Sharing what worked well / what didn't / what alternative activities would work best in individual cases
- How to continue to use Theraplay principles in everyday life

Date	Time	Venue
9th March 2012	9.30am –	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT
30th March 2012	12.30pm	

## Course:

### Beyond Consequences, Logic and Control – A love-based approach to parenting Attachment Challenged Children

(delivered by Family Futures)

The workshops move away from the challenging reward and punishment approach to parenting, which can often exacerbate conflict, to a more holistic approach which invites adopters to step into the child's internal world and demonstrates how to actively respond to their child's behaviour rather than reacting out of fear.

The aim is to educate and empower parents towards an understanding of their children's internal world and how the brain is impacted by stress, and how to apply the 'Beyond Consequences' approach to parenting traumatised children.

## Length:

2 day course

## Who Should attend?

Adoptive parents

## What you'll get from it?

- An understanding of the mind / body connection and the importance of this for understanding behaviour
- The aim of the workshops is to empower parents towards an understanding of the Stress Model and how they can apply this in their parenting of traumatised children
- An understanding of the impact of trauma on the developing brain

Date	Time	Venue
18th and 25th April 2012 (2 day course)	10am – 4pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT

## Course:

### Social Networking – The Impact for Adoptive Families

(Led by Louis Sydney, Child and Adult Psychologist)

The aim of the workshop is to help adoptive parents reflect on how to support and inform children and young people, who now use multiple technologies to explore and engage in their relationships.

This training is for adoptive parents and aims to explore social networking and how it can be encouraged to be a positive aspect of our children's lives. The focus of the workshop will not be on the technology, although this issue will be addressed.

## Length:

1 day course

## Who Should attend?

Adoptive parents with children of all ages

## What you'll get from it?

- You'll explore the use of Facebook and the potential for making unmediated contact with birth family members
- Consider the implications of this for Letterbox/Face-to-Face contact for your children
- Using case studies and discussion, the workshop will focus on the wider issues of identity, attachment and peer relationships

Date	Time	Venue
10th May 2012	10am – 4pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT

## Course:

### Building Your Child's Self-Esteem

(Led by Essex Adoption Service, Post Adoption Team)

The programme will concentrate on helping adoptive parents increase your child's self-esteem. This is an important area of growth for adopted children since it is a foundation for their emotional, physical and social wellbeing.

This workshop proved very popular last year with adoptive parents who have children of all ages.

## Length:

1 day course

## Who Should attend?

Adoptive parents with children of all ages

## What you'll get from it?

- An understanding of what self-esteem is and how many adopted children need help increasing this
- Understanding the impact of low self-esteem on adopted children. This will include issues such as identity and behaviours such as lying, anger, guilt and shame
- To help you gain practical skills and activities that you can take away and use with your adopted child

Date	Time	Venue
7th June 2012	10am – 4pm	Essex Records Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford CM2 6YT

# Course:

## The Principles and Use of Theraplay – Saturday for Dads

(Led by Steve Layzell, Therapist)

Based on the 2 day programme, this 2 day training event is aimed specifically for adoptive fathers, giving them the opportunity to learn about Theraplay and how to use play activities to make connections with their children and young people.

# Length:

2 day course

# Who Should attend?

Adoptive fathers

# What you'll get from it?

- An understanding of Theraplay (interactive play therapy)
- Learning how to use Theraplay principles in the home setting
- How interactive play can positively affect the developing brain
- Understanding the importance of play for your child's social and emotional development and learning potential

Date	Time	Venue
26th May and 23rd June 2012	10am – 4pm	Writtlewick Family Centre, 62 Chignall Road, Chelmsford CM1 2JB

# How to apply for the training courses

**How to select the right training for you:** acknowledged and you will be sent confirmation of your place approximately 3 weeks prior to the date of training.

Once you have browsed through the brochure, you can choose the right course or courses for you. You could also discuss your training and development with an adoption social worker. This will provide an opportunity to plan your training needs in advance.

Please contact BSA on the above telephone number or e-mail address if you have not heard anything by that time.

If for any reason the course needs to be cancelled or merged, you will receive confirmation at least 14 days before the activity is due to take place, or at the earliest time if this is not possible. In the event of emergencies, you will be contacted directly.

## How to apply:

Applications must be made on the enclosed booking form. Further booking forms can be obtained by contacting:

Business Support Assistant (BSA)  
Area 1 EUG, County Hall  
Chelmsford CM1 1YS

**Tel:** 01245 434032

**Email:** adoption.training@essex.gov.uk

The completed applications must be sent to BSA at the above postal address, or via the above email address.

## If you are unable to attend a course due to illness or other events:

Once you have been allocated a place, please make every effort to attend as there may be a waiting list for places. However, should circumstances prevent you from attending, please contact BSA as soon as possible (details above).

## Dates and Venues for Training Courses:

The quick reference guide at the front of this brochure will provide you with the dates of the training. Venues are shown under each course.

## Refreshments provided on courses

Refreshments will be provided on all courses, however we are unable to provide lunch and ask that you please make alternative arrangements. Feel free to bring a packed lunch as there are areas for this purpose, alternatively you can use local facilities.

## Receiving Notification of Training and Development activities applied for:

Your application will be

# Useful Contacts

For further information on aspects of adoption, the following national organisations may help.

## British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)

Saffron House  
6–10 Kirby Street  
London, EC1N 8TS  
**Telephone:** 020 7421 2600  
**Fax:** 020 7421 2601  
**Email:** mail@baaf.org.uk  
**Website:** www.baaf.org.uk

BAAF works with everyone involved with adoption and fostering across the UK. They also produce a wide range of books, leaflets and other publications.

## Intercountry Adoption Centre

First Floor  
71–73 High Street, Barnet  
Hertfordshire EN5 5SJ  
**Advice Line:** 020 8447 4753  
**Fax:** 020 8440 5675  
**Email:** info@icacentre.org.uk  
**Website:** www.icacentre.org.uk

An information and advice service on inter-country adoption. For prospective adopters, adoptive families, adopted people and adoption professionals.

## Adoption UK

Linden House, 55 The Green  
South Bar Street  
Banbury, Oxfordshire, OX16 9AB  
**Helpline:** 0844 848 7900  
**Telephone:** 01295 752240  
**Fax:** 01295 752241  
**Email:** helpdesk@adoptionuk.org.uk  
**Website:** www.adoptionuk.org.uk

Adoption UK provides support, training, friendship and information to adopters and prospective adopters.

## Post Adoption Centre

5 Torriano Mews  
Torriano Avenue  
London NW5 2RZ  
**Advice Line:** 020 7284 5879  
(open 10am – 1pm Monday to Friday)  
**Fax:** 020 7482 2367  
**Email:** advice@postadoptioncentre.org.uk  
**Website:** www.postadoptioncentre.org.uk

The Post Adoption Centre provides independent advice, counselling and support to anyone affected by or dealing with adoption.

## Adults Affected by Adoption – NORCAP

112 Church Road  
Wheatley  
Oxon OX33 1LU  
**Helpline:** 01865 875000  
**Email:** enquiries@norcap.org  
**Website:** www.norcap.org.uk

Self-help for adopted adults and their birth and adoptive families, especially with searching and reunion.

## Barnardo's Post Adoption LINK

54 Head Street  
Colchester CO1 1PB  
**Tel:** 01206 562438  
**Email:** link.project@barnardos.org.uk  
**Website:** www.barnardos.org.uk

Barnardo's provide an Information Helpdesk, access to peer support groups, training workshops, conferences, events for children and young people and access to small grants.

**This booklet is issued by**

Essex County Council Schools, Children and Families  
Adoption Services.

You can contact us in the following ways:

**By post:**

Business Support Assistant  
Essex Adoption Service  
EUG 1 County Hall  
Chelmsford CM1 1YS

**By telephone:**

01245 434032

**By email:**

[adoption.training@essex.gov.uk](mailto:adoption.training@essex.gov.uk)

**Visit our website:**

[www.essex.gov.uk/adoptionservices](http://www.essex.gov.uk/adoptionservices)

The information contained in this document can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

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