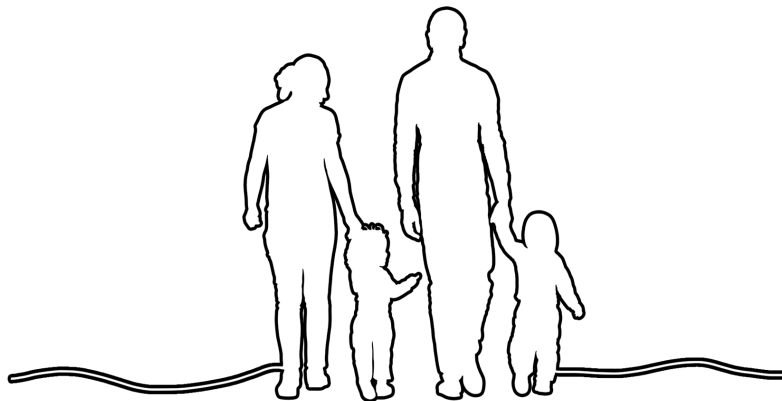


# Talking Adoption: Resources pack



**NORTH WEST  
INNOVATIVE  
MATCHING  
PROJECT**



The North West Early Permanence Project



**Adoption  
England**

regional adoption agencies working together

# Welcome

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Welcome to your Talking Adoption resources pack!

Talking Adoption videos were put together with the aim of supporting prospective adopters learn more about some of the common additional needs seen in children who are adopted, and other relevant topics.

When applying to adopt, you are constantly learning new concepts and ideas. This pack is designed to support your learning alongside the Talking Adoption videos, and will reference many of the pieces of research our speakers have mentioned.

This pack is split by each video available for you to watch. Not all of the videos will be relevant to your particular adoption journey, however, each will present you with new information and ideas you may not have come across before. The additional resources are not exhaustive, but will help you with any concepts you have not come across before.

The videos and resources pack are designed to complement the training also offered by your own adoption agency. These videos will be available to you throughout your approval and matching journeys, and beyond. If you have any questions, your Social Worker will be best placed to support you.

We hope you find these helpful.

Catrin Gibney (NWIMP) and Jen Mallinson (NWEPP)

2024

# Trauma

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## Key learning points:

- \* Trauma can have an holistic impact on those who experience it: Emotionally, physically, and psychologically.
- \* Trauma can occur at any time, even while a child is still in the womb.
- \* Although people who have experienced trauma at the earliest stages of their lives may not remember the traumatic experience, the brain has still been impacted and may still respond to certain stimuli in ways which may seem confusing to them and others.

## Additional resources:

**[Serve and Return:YouTube](#)**

**[Adverse Childhood Experiences:YouTube](#)**

**[Window of Tolerance: YouTube](#)**

**[Childhood Trauma and the Brain:YouTube](#)**

## Books:

**[The Body Keeps the Score: Bessel van der Kolk](#)**

**[Parenting a Child who has Experienced Trauma: Dan Hughes](#)**

**[Therapeutic Parenting in a Nutshell: Sarah Naish](#)**

# Genetics

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## Key learning points:

- \* Genes carry the information from each biological parent, which can lead to genetic differences or inherited conditions.
- \* Genetic testing can only tell us a limited amount of information. It can identify a person's genetic differences and what that *may* mean, but cannot make predictions or guarantees: Two people with the same difference may not be affected in the same way.
- \* Genetic testing is still developing and it cannot always give an answer.
- \* Testing is not right for every person. If you have concerns, you should speak with your GP in the first instance.

## Additional resources:

[www.geneticalliance.org.uk](http://www.geneticalliance.org.uk)

**Unique Charity: Supporting families with children with genetic differences, including guides on particular disorders.**

**Genetic and genomic testing: NHS website**

# FASD

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## Key learning points:

- \* Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder can impact on a person's learning and behaviours, but physical features are only seen in 10% of cases.
- \* FASD occurs when the mother drinks alcohol during pregnancy. This can happen no matter the timing or how much is used.
- \* A diagnosis may only be given where there is **proof** that alcohol use occurred during pregnancy.

## Additional resources:

### [National Organisation for FASD](#)

[FASD : Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust](#)  
[\(fasdclinic.com\)](#)

[NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde: Downloadable information on FASD and easy read guides](#)

[Me and my FASD: Created by specialists for young people with FASD](#)

**Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Parenting a child with an invisible disability: Julia Brown and Dr Mary Mather (2014)**

# ADHD

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## Key learning points:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder. It is often associated with restlessness and poor impulse control, but there are several different types, which can all have different impacts.
- People with ADHD **are** able to pay attention to things, but have difficulty in controlling, directing, and sustaining that attention, especially to things which don't immediately interest or excite them.
- There is a genetic link to ADHD; a child whose parents have it, have a 60% chance of having it too.
- There are different types of ADHD, and will affect each person differently.

## Additional resources:

**[ADHD Foundation](#): Full of resources and up to date research on ADHD and associated disorders. Information available for families and professionals.**

**[Let's Talk About ADHD](#): YouTube video from NCMH**

**[The route to diagnosis](#): NHS**

# Autism

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## Key learning points:

- \* Autism is a lifelong, developmental disorder which affects how impacted individuals see and interact with the world. Each person diagnosed will be somewhere on the 'spectrum', which indicates how severely they are affected.
- \* Boys and girls can be affected differently by autism, with girls tending to 'mask' their behaviour more than boys, which can delay or prevent a diagnosis being made.
- \* Autism is thought to be linked to a person's genetics, but research is still underway into the causes.
- \* There is no cure for autism.

## Additional resources:

**National Autistic Society: Full of resources and up to date research on autism, as well as support available.**

**What is masking?: From Christine and Paddy McGuinness, Our Family and Autism.**

**Social Stories: National Autistic Society**

# Learning needs and developmental delay

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## Key learning points:

- Child development covers several different categories, including gross and fine motor skills, and communication. Where there are delays in more than one area, this may be referred to as **Global Developmental Delay**.
- Developmental delay and learning needs can have genetic, or environmental cause, or even both.
- Support for both will be able from health visitors, school staff, and paediatricians where necessary.
- Developmental delay can *potentially* be overcome with additional support. However, this is not true for every child.

## Additional resources:

[Interactive Child Development Timeline: NHS Glasgow](#)

[What is Portage: National Portage Association](#)

[Mencap: A UK learning disability charity](#)



# Education and attachment

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## Key learning points:

- For children of school age who are placed for adoption, a break from school is seen as hugely beneficial: Developing attachments with their main carers should take priority.
- Without developing these attachments, feelings of being unsafe can make it very difficult for children to take on any learning.
- It is important schools have a good understanding of your child's needs and are equipped to support them properly.  
When selecting a school, you may want to ask about what additional training they have undertaken, and their experiences of caring for children who are adopted or have experienced trauma.
- Reach out to your Adoption Support team if you have any concerns regarding school.

## Additional resources:

[Trauma and School: Not Fine in School](#)

[Education Support: First4Adoption](#)

[Adoption UK: Services for Educators and Professionals](#)

# Blood borne virus and experiences in utero

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## Key learning points:

- Even in the womb, babies are able to hear and sense what is going on in the world around them. They are sensitive to the hormones released at times of stress, called Cortisol. This can have an impact on their physical and emotional development.
- A child's experiences in the womb may be considered by professionals when looking at how to support a child.
- Blood borne viruses include Hepatitis B&C, HIV, and Syphilis.
- Screening should take place during pregnancy, but might be missed if there is lack of engagement or consent.
- Treatment can take place shortly after birth if there are concerns

## Additional resources:

[The In-Utero Experience: PDF](#)

[What we learn before we're born: TEDtalk video](#)

[BBV screening in pregnancy: NHS](#)

# Early days of placement

## Key learning points:

- In the early days of caring for a child in a Foster to Adopt placement, or as a temporary carer, there will be both practical and emotional challenges to consider.
- Support will be available from your Social Worker and Local Authority throughout this time. It is really important you are open and honest about things, so help can be provided.
- It is important to consider how you can create a sense of safety and security within the home.
- Self-care and resilience will be paramount during this time. Utilise your support network and do not be afraid to ask for help.

## Additional resources:

**The A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting by Sarah Naish**

**Parenting with Theraplay by Vivien Norris and Helen Rodwell**

# Maintaining relationships beyond the fostering phase

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## Key learning points:

- Maintaining relationships with birth family and foster carers is really important, and strongly encouraged for adopted children.
- This can help them to develop a deeper understanding and acceptance of their adoption.
- For many children, foster carers are the first safe, reliable people they will have known. They are an important part of your child's life story.
- Adoption does not erase the existence of a child's birth family, and the more they know, the less room there is to fill with fantasy.

## Additional resources:

**Birth Family Contact and being open: [LINK](#)**

**Contact after Adoption research (UEA): [LINK](#)**

**Two Good Mums (Podcast): [LINK](#)**

**Managing Contact with Birth Family, Adoption UK: [LINK](#)**

# EHCPs

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## Key learning points:

- An EHCP is for children who need more help and support than their school can reasonably provide. It will set out the support needed for them to reach their potential.
- A child does not require a formal diagnosis for an EHCP to be put into place.
- EHCPs remain in place until a child starts at university and should be reviewed on an annual basis.
- EHCPs are legally binding on the Local Authority, but also on local health services provided by the CCG.
- If you have any concerns, you can speak to the school Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO)

## Additional resources:

<https://www.ipsea.org.uk/>

<https://www.kids.org.uk/sendiaass-home/>

# Other helpful resources

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Adoption UK: [LINK](#)

CATCH UK (subscription needed): [LINK](#)

National Association of Therapeutic Parenting: [LINK](#)

First4Adoption: First Steps: [LINK](#)

ACEs Online Learning: [LINK](#)

NSPCC: What is child abuse?: [LINK](#)

BBC: Tiny Happy People: [LINK](#)

The Anna Freud Centre: [LINK](#)

What is Trauma: Bessel Van Der Kolk: [LINK](#)

Moving to Adoption: The UEA model: [LINK](#)

**Your Adoption Support team!**

# Other helpful resources

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## Books:

A-Z of Therapeutic Parenting: Sarah Naish

## Podcasts:

The Adoption and Fostering Podcast: Al Coates

Adoption, Fostering & Tea: The New Family Social Podcast

Truth Be Told: Adoption Stories. National Adoption Service

Two Good Mums: [LINK](#)