

# taking you through the



From 1 May, the adoption support fund will be available to adopters throughout England. It brings more than £19 million extra funding on line to support families. Adoption UK has been at the forefront of fighting for this invaluable support and wants to ensure no one misses out and that access and use of the fund is easy and transparent.

## 1 Approach your local council for an assessment of adoption support needs.

(The local authority (LA) that places the child with you is responsible for assessing your adoption support needs for three years after the adoption. After that, it becomes the responsibility of the LA where you live.)



## 2 LA considers if therapeutic support is needed, the type required and if it is eligible for payments from the fund.

We have put together a guide to help you through the process. The Adoption Support Fund (ASF) has been piloted across ten councils to help pay for essential therapy services for adoptive families as and when they need it. The fund will pay for therapeutic services that are not currently provided for.

These include:

- Training for adoptive parents (e.g. therapeutic parenting courses)
- Further, more complex assessment where required (e.g. CAMHS assessment, multidisciplinary assessment including education and health, cognitive and neuropsychological assessment, other mental health assessment)
- Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy- integrative method of psychotherapy developed for the treatment of children and young people who manifest serious psychological problems associated with complex trauma and serious failure to establish secure patterns of attachment.
- Theraplay- interactive play between child/ young person and parent to strengthen the parent-child attachment. Sessions guided by a therapist.
- Filial therapy- specific type of theraplay, parent usually conducts the session.
- Music therapy
- Art therapy
- Drama therapy
- EMDR- Eye Movement Desensitisation and Reprocessing- psychological treatment method which stimulates the brain to reduce intensity of distressing memories, for example a therapist asking the child to move their eyes from left to right to stimulate blocked information.
- Non-violent resistance- a psychological approach for overcoming destructive, aggressive, controlling and risk-taking behaviour
- Therapy such as those mentioned above, when provided as part of a short break, course or package
- Therapy such as those mentioned above, when commissioned pre-adoption order but delivery extends post-adoption order
- Therapeutic support where the child is under a section 20 order and there is a possibility of the child being reunited with their adoptive parents
- Extensive therapeutic life story work

# Adoption Support Fund

“ Plans and new money are now in place to ensure that all adoptive families get the therapeutic services they need, when they need them. It’s fantastic to have such a fund in England. I hope in time the other nations will too and we’ll continue to press for this. ”

Hugh Thornbery, CEO Adoption UK and  
Chair of the ASF Expert Advisory Group



**3** The adopter and the LA will look at what is available.

**4** LA applies directly to the Adoption Support Fund on behalf of the adopter.

**5** LAs will be able to submit applications for funding before an Adoption Order, so adopters can receive a continuous package of support from the time of placement.

Evidence suggests that the right kind of support, where provided, can be effective and viewed by parents in a positive light. Of those respondents in the 2012 Adoption UK survey who received these services, 63 per cent rated them as either excellent or good. 60 per cent felt that services provided had helped their families.

The Fund is available to all children adopted from care and not just newly adopted children. It will pay for post-order support for children adopted from care in England, or living in England having moved from care in Wales, up to age 18 (25 with an SEN statement). It won't, as with several other elements of adoption support, be applicable to inter-country adoptions or non-agency adoptions and should not be used for advice, training and guidance which should be provided anyway.

See our website, connect with our community or call us to learn more about the services we offer and what support has worked best for other families [www.adoptionuk.org](http://www.adoptionuk.org)

# how families are using the Adoption Support Fund

THE FAMILY of a primary school-aged girl have been able to access specialised assessments and therapy through the ASF. The work, which is ongoing, has already seen positive feedback from her school and have given the parents a better understanding of her needs.



SPECIFIC SUPPORT to help a young girl with her eating disorders and help so she can cope with her anxieties in a more appropriate way.



A FAMILY struggling to cope with their son's difficult behaviour have started to see a difference after six therapy sessions at home and school. The teen, who had an abusive and neglectful beginning to his life, had been on the verge of being excluded from school, had few friends and struggled with his relationship with his mother. A further application for funding for extra support has now been made.

AN ADOPTIVE family were provided with the funding to obtain specific therapy for their teenage son who was suffering with poor self-esteem and was generally withdrawn. The therapy helped the boy to build on his self-confidence and has taken it a step further by attending a group and mixing with his peer group.

A LOCAL authority has been able to provide some assessments and therapy work to help a sibling group of children who each had individual needs. By learning new parenting techniques the mother and father have been involved in reducing the levels of aggression, improving relationships and meeting their numerous needs.