

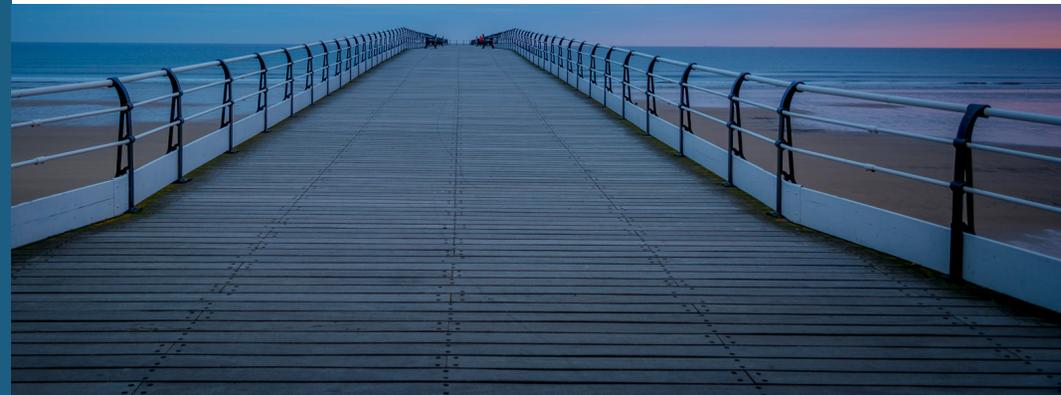


## A Guide to Early Permanence for birth family

### Welcome to Adoption Tees Valley

This information leaflet is to tell you about the service we offer to very young children and their parents. If you are reading this it will probably mean that there are plans for Court proceedings where decisions will be made about your child's future. It may be that some decisions have already been taken and there is now a plan for an early permanence placement. An early permanence placement is a foster placement with a family that has been approved as foster carers and as adopters.

Our aim is to reduce the number of moves and changes children have while living away from their parent(s) so that the child has the best possible care while his or her long-term future is decided. Temporary foster care is not always good for young children especially if they have to move again while waiting for decisions to be made. This is bound to make children more difficult to care for in the future, whether they return to their parents, or the Court decision is for them to live with a relative or to be placed for adoption.





Early Permanence placements offer young children something different. The Court will be deciding if it is possible for your child to return to live with you. The next choice is for the child to be cared for by another relative. While these two possibilities are being explored, the service offers your child a placement with a family who are approved both as foster carers and as potential adopters. These families are committed to children being reunited with their parents if this is possible. However, if the Court decides that the child cannot return home to you or live with another member of your family, these carers are ready to offer the child the security of adoption and your child will not have to face another move.

### **What could happen to my child?**

The Court will decide whether your child can return to you or to another member of your family on the basis of evidence from you and from reports and evidence from social workers, the Children's Guardian, and any other professionals who have been asked to do an assessment or give an opinion.

If the Court decides that your child cannot return to you or to a member of your extended family, then it is very likely that the Court will decide that adoption is the best plan for your child's future. If the Court decides that adoption is the best plan for your child, then the carers who have been looking after your child would go on to become the adopters.

That way, your child would have the security of adoption without an upsetting move to a new family and home. You would already know about these carers and we hope you would feel confident that they would give your child the love and security he or she needs. We hope that you would also feel that the carers respect and understand you and will be able to tell the child about you and your love for him or her.

You may find it helpful to discuss this leaflet with your solicitor and your child's social worker.

If you feel like you would benefit from additional support, please speak to your social worker or contact us.



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