

National Adoption Week: Children's Minister encourages more people to consider adopting children

To mark the start of National Adoption Week (15th – 21st October), the Minister for Children, Huw Irranca-Davies has paid tribute to the many adoptive parents across Wales who have made new families with some of the most vulnerable children in the country, and who are supporting them to fulfill their potential in loving homes.

In Wales:

- More than 300 children found new families in 2017/18 and for one third, this was as part of a sibling group
- 212 adopters were approved in 2017/18.

However we need more people to come forward in Wales. Currently:

- There were 314 children waiting to be adopted at the end of June 2018
- 63 children whose details are on the Wales Adoption Register have been waiting more than 12 months for a permanent home.

Minister for Children, Older People and Social Care, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“To mark National Adoption Week, I want to pay tribute to families right across Wales who have adopted a child or a group of children, and all those professionals who support them through the journey. Their dedication and commitment is helping give some of our most vulnerable children a new start.

“I also want to encourage anyone who has thought about adopting to contact their local adoption agency or the National Adoption Service for advice about the process. By adopting a child, you're going to help make a real, transformative difference to their life. As a father myself, there's nothing more rewarding than seeing a child flourish and develop.

“In Wales, we've made significant progress in supporting people to adopt children. But we know there's much more we need to do to provide the right level of support. I'm committed to ensuring we do what we can to put that support in place.”

The Welsh Government, through its Knowledge Transfer Partnership Scheme is helping St David's Children's Society (a partner in the National Adoption Service) to deliver an innovative package of support – known as 'Adopting Together' – which is being launched today. The first scheme of its kind, it offers tailored support to adopters through assessment, enhanced training and

therapeutic interventions, pre and post placement with a new family.

In addition, the Welsh Government has commissioned further work with Cardiff University that builds on the Adoption Cohort Study. This is a unique study of almost 400 children adopted from care which evidences a level of detail about early adversity, family relationship quality, child psychological health. This next phase will directly engage with a cohort of families to explore their experiences of informal and formal sources of adoption support in Wales, including child psychological well-being and children's experiences at school (including additional learning needs).