

## Use our Manifesto for Adoption with your future MP – Wales

It's less than a month to go until the General Election on 4<sup>th</sup> July, which means that local candidates will be busy campaigning in our community and canvassing on our doorsteps.

This is a rare opportunity for everyone with a personal connection to adoption to speak directly with future MPs and local politicians, put adoption on their agenda and highlight what needs to change. It is a time when working together to send a clear message can cut through.

In this blog post we're sharing our recommendations for the next government on adoption support, which we have developed in collaboration with voluntary adoption agencies across the UK. We know that this is a subject which affects all our adoptive families and, with further government investment, could have a profound impact on the lives of children and parents alike.

We hope this information will be useful for any interactions you have in the run up to the election, and we'd love to hear about any successes you have. You can read our full Manifesto for Adoption [here](#).

### **We are calling on the new government to provide timely support, prioritise early intervention & support children's identity needs**

The latest [Adoption Barometer](#) found that more than a third of adoptive families in Wales are facing severe challenges. The lack of a dedicated adoption support fund in Wales – in contrast to England – has resulted in a situation where three quarters of adopters feel like it is a continual struggle to get the support their child needs.

High quality and enduring adoption support can be transformational for children, and is essential to ensuring children's permanence and stability in their adoptive families. The next government must therefore introduce measures which can provide more children with the right support at the right time, including within education settings and at key transition moments.

#### **Specifically, we want:**

- A commitment that every child placed for adoption has an assessed multidisciplinary support plan with a duty to deliver it. This plan should look holistically at a child's needs and link in closely with schools and education providers.
- A commitment to increase mental health support and provision for adopted teens given the evidence that this can be a key period in their development and placement stability and expert support is crucial to ensuring a positive transition into adulthood.
- Mandating training for teachers on how to support care experienced children and take a trauma-informed approach in the classroom.
- Funding for Local Authorities to work with VAAs to better support contact, including providing more evidence-based support for birth family members.
- Funding for Local Authorities to invest in digital tools, including those developed by VAAs, to modernise and improve letterbox contact and life story work. This will not only make contact for the modern age and provide greater flexibility to families, but it will

also help more children with developing a clearer sense of identity through higher-quality life story work.

More UK-wide recommendations can be found in our [Manifesto for Adoption](#) online which relate to 5 key areas: recognising the value of adoption; reducing delay for all children, particularly those who wait the longest; supporting adopted children's identity needs; timely support which prioritises early intervention and developing more trauma-informed schools; and acknowledging the lifelong impact of trauma.

Lastly, our membership body CVAA is always keen to hear from adoptive parents and adoptees who want to be involved in campaigning or work influencing government adoption policy. If this is of interest, please get in touch with Alice Talbot from CVAA who can share further information on how to do this: [alice.talbot@cvaa.org.uk](mailto:alice.talbot@cvaa.org.uk).