



### Exercise: contact with foster carers after adoption

**Research messages:** children in the care system often experience repeated loss and change that undermines their trust in adults. For children removed from home at a very young age, the foster carers maybe the only family they can remember. For others, these are the first safe adults they have encountered.

Keeping in touch with foster carers after being placed with adoption can help children to settle in their new families. It does not stop children from forming new attachments. Continued contact with familiar people and things and maintaining reassuring routines helps children to feel safe when they must move.

**This exercise is suitable for:** individual learning; discussions in team meetings, training for social workers, contact supervisors, foster carers, kinship carers and adopters.

Read the Mikey Maddox case study

- Who and what is important and familiar to Mikey in his current situation?
- How many of these people and things would Mikey keep in touch with where you work?
- Who is Mikey's primary attachment figure?
- How will he feel if this person is not there?
- By the time Mikey is 14, how likely is it that there will be somebody still in his life who knew him when he was a baby?
- What would the purpose be of contact with foster carers immediately after placement?
- How might the adopters feel about this?
- What support do they need to understand how this could help Mikey?
- How might the foster carers feel about contact?
- What support might they need?
- How could the foster carers support the adopters to help Mikey settle?