



## Exercise: helping adopters understand the potential benefits of direct post adoption contact

**Research message:** Adopters may need support to understand the range of benefits post adoption contact can provide for both themselves, the family and their children.

Contact can help to reassure adopted children that they are loved and not forgotten; it can help them to understand their parents' difficulties and why they were adopted.

Contact can benefit adopters by helping them to understand their children better and enabling them to answer questions about their birth family; it can also reassure adoptive parents about the possibility of birth parents making unplanned contact. Supporting children with contact can help to build closeness in the adopted family, reassuring the child that adoptive parents accept their thoughts, feelings, curiosity about and connection with their birth family.

**This exercise is suitable for:** individual learning; use during assessment and training of adoptive parents and in training for contact supervisors and social workers.

Either **read** the 'Research Summary Leaflet for Adopters' or use the slide presentation on 'Young People's Views'. **Watch the film clip 'Adoptive mother talking about contact'**.

Consider and discuss the following questions:

- *How did this child benefit from direct contact when it began? As he grew up?*
- *What might this contact mean for him when he has his own children?*
- *What were the benefits for his adoptive parents?*
- *For his birth relative?*
- *Were there any risks? How were these addressed?*
- *What do you think made this contact work so well?*