

Coram-Kent post adoption support partnership

About the Service

There are a high number of adoptive families in need of specialist support, who cannot easily obtain access to the specialist services that they need.

To address this Coram has worked in partnership with Kent County Council to create a psychologically-informed post-adoption support service, which has the capacity to provide timely and effective short term clinical interventions in-house. It is an integrated, multi-disciplinary service, bringing together Kent social workers and Coram clinicians, which draws on Coram's long standing experience in adoption and informed by wider research. Funding from the Adoption Support Fund is currently used to offset the staffing costs.

The range of provision includes family work, individual therapy, intensive therapeutic parenting support groups and parenting programmes, as well as Education Provision for Adopted Children assessments and liaison activity. The service is underpinned by a psychodynamic developmental therapeutic model that has informed both the ethos of the team and a shared approach to therapeutic interventions.

The service also offers a full range of workshops on a wide range of topics such as non-verbal communication, social and emotional development, sibling rivalry, adolescence and identity, and social media.

Feedback and Participation

The Coram-Kent Post Adoption Support Team has an active commitment to obtaining feedback from adoptive parents and adopted children and translating this into service improvement and innovation. Feedback is provided through the completion of feedback forms from participants in our parenting programmes, group support, and learning and development workshops as well as through satisfaction questionnaires when service delivery ends. In a sample of over 300 feedback forms on our workshops **nearly all adopters found their session very useful or useful**. Users of the intensive therapeutic parenting support groups all thought that it helped them to understand their child better and most felt better able to interact with their child.

In addition to these systems we also draw upon other mechanisms. For example, the children and young people's participation group, and the Adoption Advisory Board are invited to provide feedback and suggestions to us in relation to practice, policy and innovative ways of delivering services.

A family therapist and a senior social worker have also been working closely with *Coram Adoptables*. As a result, a local children and young people's participation group for children aged 12 to 18 was started in September 2015, facilitated by the family therapist and senior social worker. This group has involved up to 12 young people and the Coram Adoptables manager is promoting the Kent participation model with other local authorities as an "excellent" model based on best practice.