

Families Empowered Children & Young Person's Guide



This is a guide for Children & Young People and their families who receive help and support from the team at

FAMILIES EMPOWERED

We hope you find it helpful!

Hello!

We are 'Families Empowered', a small team of people who would love to help you and your families after your adoption, especially at times when you may be finding things hard!

Help for you... and your family

We know that growing up in any family can be difficult at times and that children & young people who are growing up in an adopted family or growing up with a guardian or foster carer may be hard at times and you may have strong feelings, thoughts or questions about things that are especially hard to manage and may leave you feeling very angry or sad.

You may not always know what made you feel so strongly, but you know that it is affecting the things you do. Sometimes these feelings can affect your parents, guardians or carers too and they may find it hard to understand how you feel and how to help you. We want to help when things become difficult for you and your family.

Why do I feel like this?

All people can have strong feelings from time to time and it is nothing to be afraid of. Being part of an adoptive, guardianship or foster family can make children, young people and adults confused at times, so talking to someone may help. Young people of any age can find it hard to tell their family that they are missing people or that they are feeling worried, sad or angry.... or even that they are feeling 'nothing' at all and can't feel happy or sad, even if they have been with their family for a long time.

Your feelings are completely understandable and sometimes it may be good to talk to your mum or dad, guardian or carer about it. However, sometimes you may want to talk to another adult to help you make sense of things, especially a therapist who knows about adoption and children's feelings. We can help you understand how you are feeling and why you may be feeling upset.

How do we help?

Everyone in our team who works with children & young people have been especially trained to help them and their families with difficult feelings - they are usually called therapists or therapeutic practitioners. Families Empowered will talk with other trusted people working with your family to find the best way to help you and find the right person to help you understand your feelings. When the right person is found to work with you, they may come to meet you and your family at your home. Sometimes we also meet you at another place, such as your school. We sometimes use games, drawings or other things when you spend time with the person helping you. We will also help your parents, guardians or carers understand your feelings.

When your support ends

Following the completion of your therapeutic support, we will ask you to complete a feedback form so that you have the opportunity of telling us about your experience with us. We welcome all feedback as we want to learn more about what we do well and what we could do better.

Meet the team



Hello, my name is Debbie and I am the 'Director', so it is my job to make sure that you and your family have the right support. I love working with children and their parents. You may work with me if you have therapeutic support



Hello, my name is Liz! I may get to know you if your family have therapeutic support from us..

Hello, my name is Anne! I may get to know you if your family have some therapeutic support from us..



Hello, my name is Lucy I may get to know you if your family have therapeutic support from us..



Hello, my name is Anna! I may get to know you if your family have some therapeutic support from us..



Hello, my name is Jo! I may get to know you if your family have some therapeutic support from us....



Hello, my name is Sonya! I may get to know you if your family have therapeutic support from us..



Families Empowered Children's Guide to Complaints

Families Empowered wants you to feel safe and happy when you are working with us. If something has happened that you are not happy about at any time, you have a right to complain about it.

What does a 'complaint' mean?

A concern or complaint is when you are worried or unhappy with someone or something that has happened to you when you are working with us. Making a complaint means telling someone and describing what happened to you that you didn't like. If you are not happy with the way we are working with you, we want you to tell us about it so please do not worry about doing this.

When should I say something?

If you have a worry or are unhappy with the way you have been treated by Families Empowered, you should talk to someone you really trust, such as a parent, carer or teacher. If you or your trusted adult think you need to tell us about your concerns, or make a complaint, you may want someone to support you with it.

How do I make a complaint

After talking to a trusted adult, you can decide if you need to make a complaint. To do this it will help if you plan what you want to say. Either you or your trusted adult should write down

1. What you didn't like
2. When it happened
3. How it made you feel
4. What you would like to happen now

Next, you or someone you trust can talk to someone at Families Empowered by calling us, filling in the form at the end of this leaflet, writing to us or emailing us.

Who should I contact?

We hope that you and your trusted adult will be able to talk to the person working with you about why you are unhappy, but if you feel you cannot do this you should contact one of the people below, who will know what to do next to support you:

Name and Role:	Deborah Sharratt, Director
Phone number	07917 440683
Address:	Unit 1C, The Gattinets, Hadleigh Road, East Bergholt, Essex, CO7 6QT
Email:	deborah@familieempowered.co.uk

What happens after I send the complaint?

When Families Empowered get a complaint from a child or adult, they will follow the same process, which is written out below:

- Stage 1 - Informal Complaint
All complaints will go through 'Stage 1' first. Your complaint will be looked at carefully by your therapist or if this is not possible then Wendy or Deborah will look at it. They will get in touch with you within 3 days to talk to you or someone you trust if you prefer. We will work hard to see what we can do to put things right so you can feel safe and happy with us. This might mean having a meeting to agree how we do this. If we all agree on how to put things right, we will write to you with what we agreed.
- Stage 2 - Formal complaint
If Stage 1 did not put things right and you are still unhappy, we will go to 'Stage 2'. This means another manager will look at what happened in more detail and complete a report. This can take up to 28 days. The report will be written and it will include anything that needs to happen. You will get a copy of the report.
- Stage 3 - Independent Investigation
If you are still not happy, you can ask for your complaint to be looked at by someone different - called an Independent Investigator. We will tell you who your Independent Investigator is. He or she will listen to everyone involved and write a report to help reach an agreement on what should happen to make things right. This can take up to 28 days. You will get a copy of the report.

Who will talk to me

At Stage 1, the person you tell your concern to, your therapist or one of the managers will talk to you. Who you talk to will depend on who the complaint is about and will take your views into account. If your complaint moves to Stage 2, a different person who is also a manager will talk to you. At Stage 3 the Independent Investigator will want to talk to you. You can have a trusted adult with you whenever you speak to anyone. Sometimes a trusted adult will speak on your behalf.

Serious complaints

If your complaint is really serious, someone from the local authority or the police might want to talk to you, for example, if you have been physically hurt by anyone at Families Empowered. If something has happened to you that you feel is serious, it will be very important to tell a responsible adult that you trust. They will ask you what has happened and if they think your safety is at risk, they might tell the local authority. If this happens, the local authority will take over the investigation of the complaint.

Every adult has a duty to keep children & young people safe. Families Empowered has a Safeguarding Lead, who deals with all concerns where a child may have been physically or emotionally harmed. Our Safeguarding Lead is:

Name and Role: Deborah Sharratt
Phone number: 07917 440683
Address: Unit 1C, The Gattinets, Hadleigh Road, East Bergholt, Essex, CO7 6QT
Email: Deborah@familiesempowered.co.uk

What else can I do?

If you have a social worker, you should contact them to support you. You can also ask your trusted adult to get an Advocate for you or to contact the Children's Rights Officer.

What can I do if I am still worried?

If you are still worried or unhappy after going through the Complaints Procedure, you should be supported by your trusted adult to contact The Citizens Advice Bureau, or Ofsted.

Citizens Advice Bureau

You can find your nearest one online at:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/contact-us/search-for-your-local-citizens-advice/>

Ofsted

To complain or raise a concern about a provider, get in touch with Ofsted at:

Ofsted

Piccadilly Gate

Store Street

Manchester

M1 2WD

Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted have produced a helpful guidance leaflet about this which can be found online at:

<https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/32141/1/Sharing%20concerns%20and%20information%20with%20Ofsted%20about%20children%E2%80%99s%20social%20care%20services%20-%20GOV.UK.pdf>

Useful contacts

The Children's Commissioner

The Children's Commissioner promotes and protects the rights of children, especially the most vulnerable, and supports them to make sure their views and interests are heard.

Address: Children's Commissioner for England
Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BT

Telephone: 020 7783 8330

Website: <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/>

Childline

Childline is a service provided by NSPCC and is a way for any child to access support. Childline give help and advice about a wide range of issues. You can talk to a counsellor online.

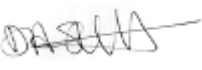
Telephone: 0800 1111 (this is free)

You can also send Childline an email or post on the message boards.

Website: <https://childline.org.uk/>

Making sure this Guide is up to date

We look at this document regularly to make sure it stays up to date. This policy started on 10th August 2020. We look at this document at least every year.

Signed 

Date 10th August 2020

Version	Review Date	Reviewer	Reason for Revision
2	31/3/2022	WE	Update to separate create guide for older children and add Ofsted registration
3	13/6/22	WE	Change of registered address
4	6/1/23	WE`	Update photos
5	12/4/24	WE	Update staff

Families Empowered Complaints Form for Children

About you:

Your name	
Your address with postcode	
Your phone number if you have one	
Your email address if you have one	
Your trusted adult's name and telephone number	
Any additional needs you have that may need to be considered	
Tell us who you want us to talk to about this and how? <i>Eg please call me; email my parent</i>	

What happened?

Please tell us as much as you can and if possible please give us dates and times. Who else was involved?

What do you want to happen?

Please tell us what you would like to happen to put things right

Signed by

Your signature	
Your name	
Date	
Adults' signature	
Adult's name	
Date	

Please send your completed form to The Director or Registered Manager at 29 Free Rodwell House, School Lane, Mistley Essex CO11 1HW or you can email it to info@familiesempowered.co.uk.

We will tell you when we have received your complaint in the way that you asked us to.

