

Oxfordshire's children's guide for under 5s

# What is Adoption?

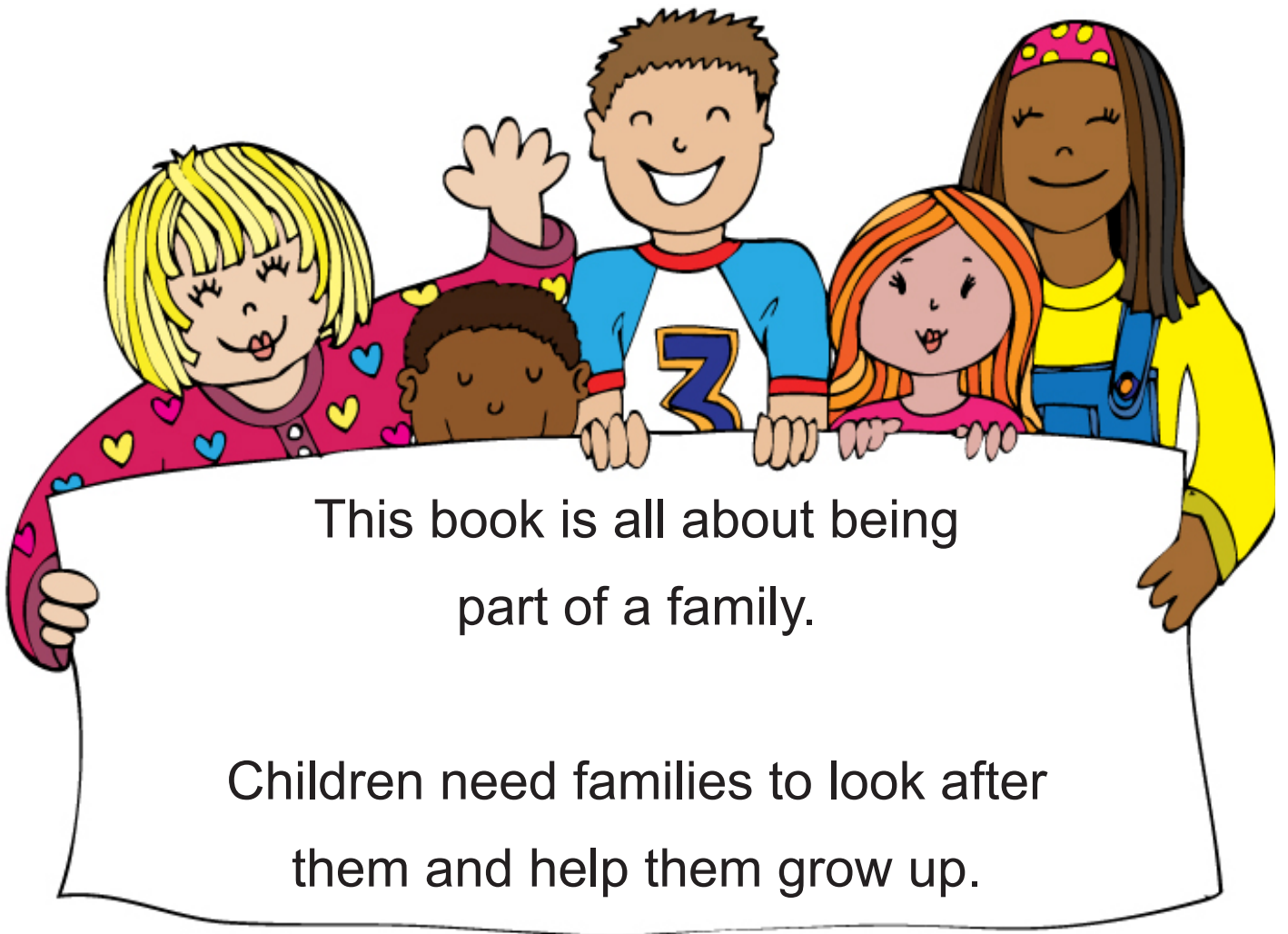


Written by  
Lindsey Parkinson and Jackie Morgan

Are you sitting with a grown up  
that you like and know?

OK, then let's have a look at this book...

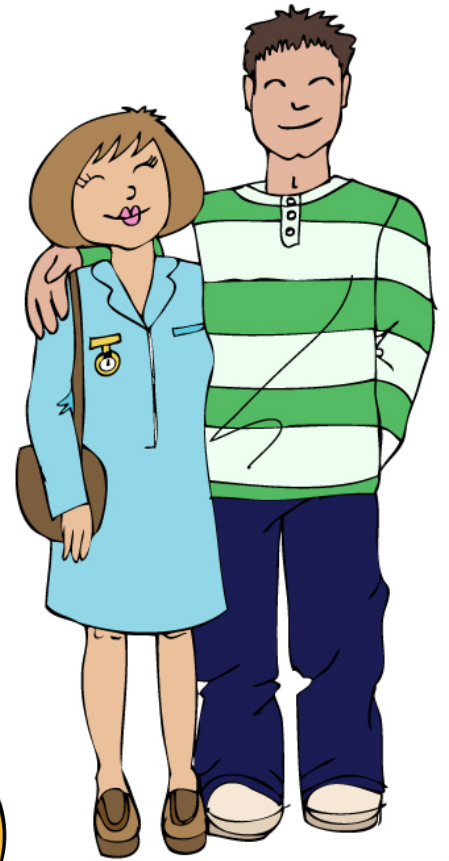




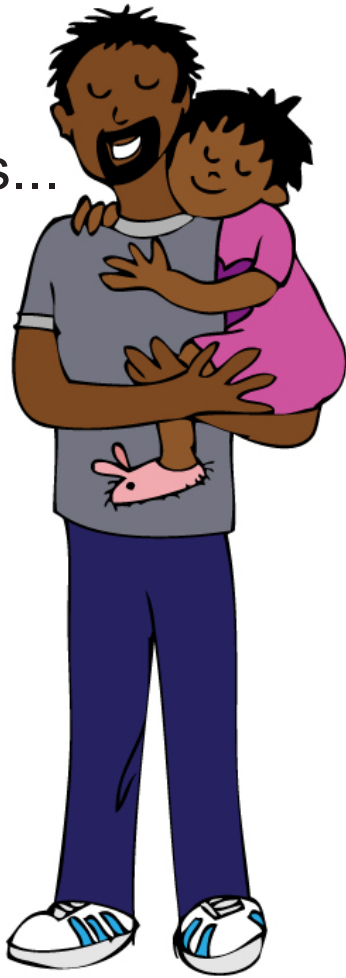
This book is all about being  
part of a family.

Children need families to look after  
them and help them grow up.

Families might look like this...



or this...



or this...



or this...



or this!

All children have a birth family.



They have a birth mother



and a birth father.

Not all children live with their birth family.

Some live with an adoptive family  
who have been chosen for them specially.



This is because some birth families don't  
keep their children safe and happy and healthy.

A Wise Judge makes **BIG** decisions for children who can't live with their birth family.



The Judge decides if they should have an adoptive family chosen for them.



A social worker helps to choose the right family.





Children meet their adoptive family and get to know them before moving to live with them.



Children live with their adoptive family until they are grown up.



How long will I have to wait for an adoptive family?

You should not have to wait for long but it does take a little while to find exactly the right family.



Will I have to change my religion or eat different food when I am adopted?

All the good and important things about your race, culture and religion will still happen when you are adopted. This includes the things you eat and wear and the things you celebrate.



## Will I be able to keep in touch with my birth family?

If it has been agreed that you will, then letters from them will be sent to you by Oxfordshire's Letterbox Service.



## What if I have a disability?

Oxfordshire will make sure that all the needs you have as a result of your disability will be met in your adoptive family.



### What if I don't want to be adopted?

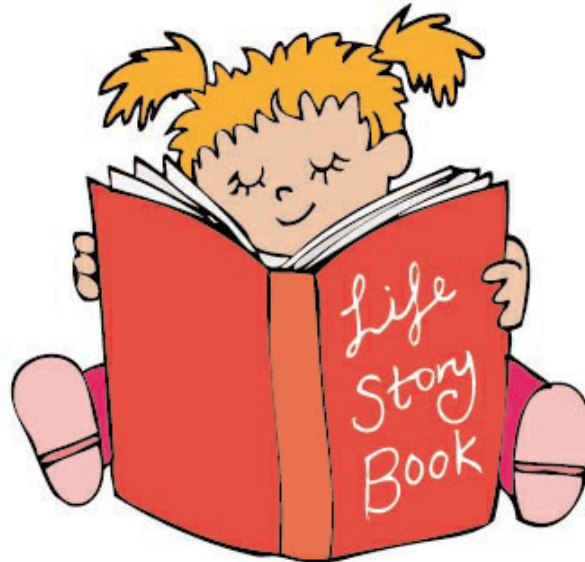
You should talk to your social worker or Children's Guardian and they will listen to you and explain how you feel to the Wise Judge. The Judge may not make the decision you want but the decision will be based on what is best for you.



### Who will help me if I am unhappy?

If at any time you are worried you can talk to your social worker or someone you know and trust. If you want to complain about something, then ask your social worker for a copy of the leaflet called 'Want to Talk?'

## How will I find out about my birth family?



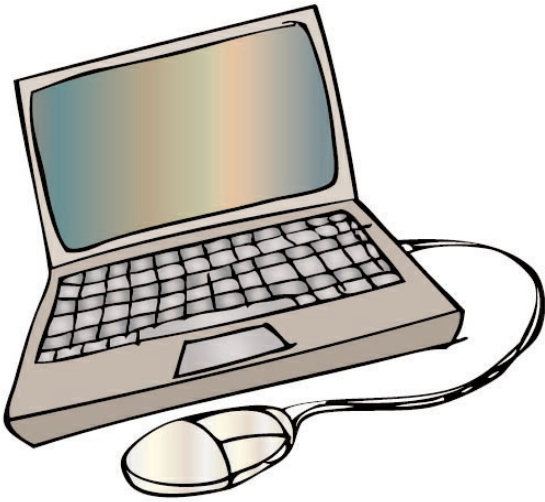
A lifestory book will be written with you or for you by your social worker. This book will tell you all about your birth family and your life before you were adopted.



Also, your social worker will write a letter to you telling you all they know about your birth family and why you were adopted.

This will be given to your adoptive family for safe keeping until you are old enough to understand it.

If you would like more information about adoption  
you can look at these websites:



[www.talkadoption.org.uk](http://www.talkadoption.org.uk)

[www.cafcass.gov.uk](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk)

[www.childrenrights.org](http://www.childrenrights.org)

or you might like to read these books:



Nutmeg Gets Adopted  
by Judith Foxam

Chester and Daisy Move On  
by Angela Lidster

Dennis Duckling  
by Barbar Orritt

Belonging Doesn't Mean  
Forgetting published by  
BAAF

You could contact your Reviewing Officer, the person who comes to your reviews and who is in charge of making your adoption plan. Ask your social worker for the address and telephone number.



You can also contact Ofsted or the Children's Rights Director. They spend a lot of time checking that children are well cared for.

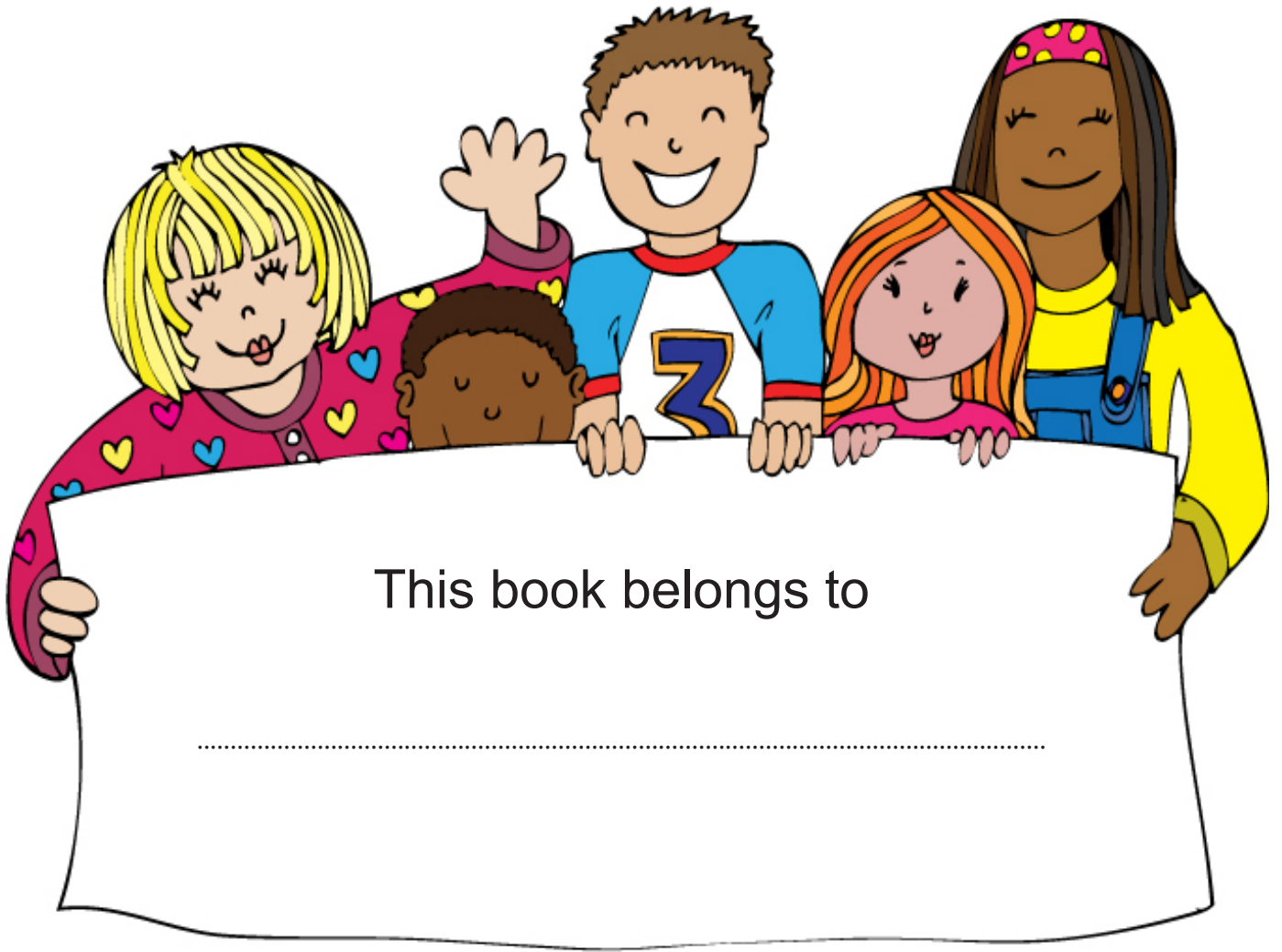
They listen and talk to children and young people and then tell the Government and Inspectors of Local Authorities what children think about the way they are looked after. Or you could contact VIVA who are trained adults who support young people in care.

Roger Morgan  
Office of the Children's Rights Director  
Ofsted, 125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE  
0800 528 0731

Volunteer Independent  
Visiting and Advocacy  
(VIVA)  
The Old Place Yard  
Bicester  
Oxon  
OX26 6AU  
01869 252200

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