

# MESSAGES FROM RESEARCH

Evidence from Cardiff University Wales Adoption Cohort Study provides clear messages to support the creation and implementation of the Adopting Together project in Wales.



## BACKGROUND



Cardiff University is a leading Russell Group University



The Wales Adoption Study group (led by K. Shelton) investigated factors which characterise and underpin early placement success



Data was drawn from 374 case file records and 96 questionnaires to adoptive families at 5 months, 18 months and 36 months.

## ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE



Exposure to ACE was common among children adopted from care, with **63%** being neglected, **54%** being exposed to a parent with mental illness and **52%** being exposed to a parent who abused drugs.



Children placed for adoption aged 4 or older had a higher percentage exposure to all ACEs except for experience of a parent with mental illness.



Over half of the children in the study (**52%**) has been exposed to four or more ACE. Notably higher than the 14% reported by Bellis et al., (2015) from a national survey of Welsh adults.

## EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING



The mental health profiles of the children in the study were significantly worse than the general population.



A relationship was identified between the number of days children spent with their birth parents and in care with increased hyperactivity and emotional problems post-placement, including 36 months later.

## SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS



The psychological, interpersonal and ethical implications associated with the decision, determined by the state, to sustain, disrupt and/or create sibling bonds through adoption cannot be underestimated (Meakings et al., 2017)



Of the 374 children placed for adoption in the study period, 325 (87%) were known to have at least one brother or sister (full or half sibling). **33%** were placed as part of a sibling group. **30%** of children in the questionnaire sample had been placed for adoption as part of a sibling group. **84%** were known to have at least one sibling living elsewhere. Most carried a shared history.

WEBSITE: [HTTP://SITES.CARDIFF.AC.UK/ADOPTIONCOHORT](http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/adoptioncohort)

Publications from the Wales Adoption Study can be found on the website.