

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru | National Assembly for Wales

Y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg | Children, Young People and Education Committee

Gwaith dilynol ar Ymchwiliad y Pwyllgor Plant, Pobl Ifanc ac Addysg i Wasanaethau Mabwysiadu yng Nghymru | Follow-up to Children, Young People and Education Committee's Inquiry into Adoption Services in Wales

AS 07

Ymateb gan :

Response from : Adoptive Parent

Overview Question

What are your views in the Welsh Government's progress in respect of the 16 recommendations and the 25 'detailed actions' set out on pages 5-11 of the [Committee's report](#).

Significant progress has been made in terms of setting up the National Adoption Service, assessment and preparation of adopters. However, there continues to be little progress in the area of post adoption support. It continues to be a postcode lottery to access much needed therapeutic intervention and adopters have to spend a lot of time fighting to access the help their children so desperately needed. With the introduction of Adoption support fund and pupils premium in England Adopted children in wales are at a serious disadvantage and many families are struggling with very challenging behaviour and issues linked to the trauma and abuse their children have experienced.

Question 1

What are your views on the recruitment, assessment and preparation of adopter parents?

I feel that progress has been made in these areas and that the advent of the National Adoption Service is a positive factor in this process.

How could this be improved?

Question 2

What is your experience of and view of the matching process and support for the transition?

I adopted the children I was fostering so I have no personal experience of matching.

How could this be improved?

Question 3

Do you think there is sufficient information and support for children and young people including access to quality life-story work?

No. Life story work continues to be patchy and inconsistent. My children's life story work was undertaken by a student Social Worker and I feel it will need to be revisited.

How could this be improved?

All adoptive families need access to the same level of life story work for their children by qualified professionals.

Question 4

What post-adoption support for children, young people and families (including from social services, education, health and mental health services) is available and what more could be done in this area?

Post adoption support is patchy and currently a post code lottery. Many adoptive families are struggling to get the right support for their children. CAMHS support is particularly difficult to access- when we moved from Caerphilly to Cardiff, Cardiff CAMHS would not accept the referral because my children's needs were felt to be 'too long term and complex' and it has been a constant battle ever since to get funding for the therapy my children have so desperately needed. In the Education system there are no specific categories of additional learning needs in which children with attachment difficulties can easily fall into. My son does not meet any specific category of need yet has significant difficulties at school, despite the high level of expertise and exceptional provision provided by his Primary school (they have undertaken training at their own expense and follow all the appropriate strategies and advice by professionals)

How could this be improved?

- The introduction of the Adoption Support Fund as in England so that every family has an equitable chance of accessing the most appropriate therapeutic intervention. THIS IS A MATTER OF URGENCY – the cost of funding the Adoption Support Fund is small compared to the cost of prison and mental health services that will be required throughout our children’s life time if it is not introduced.
- Access to a similar Education fund – applied to according to need like ASF– rather than every adoptive child being given access to an amount of money as in the case of Pupil Premium in England. THIS IS A MATTER OF URGENCY to help adopted children access the school curriculum.
- A named primary and secondary school in each local authority who could develop expertise in attachment/ trauma and abuse with a resource base for those pupils who need access to it.
- NAS and Adoption Social work teams being responsible for funding for post adoption support – as they have the expertise in the effects of trauma, abuse and attachment rather than the children’s Social work teams who have large caseloads and limited time and expertise to help adoptive families.
- A complete overhaul of CAMHS – with staff who have expertise in attachment / trauma and abuse and current treatments such as DDP, NVR and Theraplay.
- More training on attachment trauma and abuse for teachers and health professionals including Speech and Language Therapist, Occupational Therapists and Paediatricians

Question 5

Are there any other issues you wish to draw to the Committee’s attention?

The urgency of need for adequate post adoption support– all adopted families should have equal access to therapeutic intervention on a needs basis. There is an urgent need to end the current postcode lottery.