

A child's guide to adoption





This is me

Hi, I am a little girl that was born in India, and I now live in England since 2022.

Before that, I lived in India in an orphanage for the first few years of my life.

Orphanage

What is an orphanage?

It is a home for children who do not have parents or whose parents cannot look after them.

Mother Teresa is well known for all of the help she has given to those in need. She opened many orphanages all over India to look after children who had nowhere to live and had no families.





Changes

There were so many changes that I experienced when moving from India to England.

Some of the important changes were:

- The weather in India was hot and there was lots of sun but here it is cold and there is also snow, rain, thunder and lightning. It is so exciting to be able to experience these different climates.
- Learning a new language. When I arrived in England, I did not speak English at all. My new family helped me learn English and I now attend school. I love reading and being able to speak to everyone.
- A new bedroom. In the orphanage I did not have a bedroom or my own things because we all had to share, but here I have a beautiful bedroom, that is all mine. I have my own clothes and lots of toys to play with.
- Lots of food. At the orphanage we received one meal a day but here I get lots of food. I enjoy eating different foods and pasta is my favorite food. It is amazing to try different foods from all over the world.

I am happy to now be living with my new family, and I love going to school where I have made lots of new friends.



India

India is a very large country and it has 28 states, which are:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Andhra Pradesh | 15. Manipur |
| 2. Arunachal Pradesh | 16. Mizoram |
| 3. Assam | 17. Nagaland |
| 4. Bihar | 18. Odisha |
| 5. Chhattisgarh | 19. Punjab |
| 6. Goa | 20. Rajasthan |
| 7. Gujarat | 21. Sikkim |
| 8. Haryana | 22. West Bengal |
| 9. Himachal Pradesh | 23. Tamil Nadu |
| 10. Jharkhand | 24. Telangana |
| 11. Karnataka | 25. Tripura |
| 12. Kerala | 26. Uttar Pradesh |
| 13. Madhya Pradesh | 27. Meghalaya |
| 14. Maharashtra | 28. Uttarakhand |

The capital is Delhi.

Which state are you from?



Talking about adoption

If you are reading this booklet, or having it read to you, it is because you will be growing up as an adopted person. This booklet will help you understand some of things that might happen after you have gone to live with your new family and after you have been adopted. It also tells you who can help you if you need support with any of these things.

What is adoption?

Adoption means joining and growing up with a new family that will love and take care of you when you cannot live with the family you were born into.

Why was I adopted?

If you were adopted when you were very young, there might have been things you didn't understand or even know about. There are many reasons why children cannot stay with the family they were born into. It could be because your parents were not able to keep you safe. Some birth families might understand that they can't look after their child properly and agree that it would be better for their child not to live with them and so they ask that you are adopted by another family who can meet all your needs.

If you ask your adoptive parents, they may be able to help you find out more about your story.

Your adoptive parents, or you, could contact a member of the adoption support team to talk about this.

Adoption means you grow up in a new family where you are safe, loved and cared for.

What happened before I was adopted?

Some children have a life story book. This is a book about your life before you were adopted. If you don't have one of these books, ask your parents and they can help you to make one.

You, or your adoptive parents, could talk to an adoption social worker about this and the information that might go into your life story book.



What happens when you are being adopted?

You live in a new home with your family. If there are other children in your adoptive family, they will become your brothers and sisters. Their grandparents will become your grandparents. Their aunts and uncles will become your aunts and uncles.

What are adopters like?

Families come in all shapes and sizes. There may be just one parent or there may be two. Some have birth children too. They may go out to work, or they may stay at home with you.

What do I tell people at school?

Some people want to tell everyone they meet that they're adopted. Some other people don't want to tell anyone at all. You can choose who you tell about your adoption and when you do it. If you do not know who you want to tell, or what you might say, then talk to your adoptive parents. You can all sit down as a family and decide. If you all need help deciding, you can talk to your adoption social worker.

How many other children are adopted?

Lots of children are adopted every year. About 5,000 children are adopted every year in England and Wales. Some of these are babies, some are older, some are adopted with their brothers and sisters, some are adopted from different countries, and some are adopted by people they know – like relatives and friends of the family.

You're not alone - lots of famous people have been adopted!

Shaun Wright-Phillips - a professional footballer

Rhona Cameron - a comedian and TV presenter

Nelson Mandela - South Africa's first black President.

Moses - a leader in the Bible

Simone Biles – The Olympic Gymnastics champion

And Superman was adopted too!

Who decided that I should be adopted?

CARA is a special organisation in India that helps children who need new families. Their job is to make sure every child is safe and that adoption is done properly. CARA's main job is to protect children and make sure their adoption is safe, fair and follows the rules.

CARA checks that children are ready and allowed to be adopted. They make sure all the important paperwork is correct and that adoption will be the right thing for the child. CARA also works with adoption teams in other countries, like the UK, to help match children with families who can love and care for them.

Once the right family has been found for a child the Judge listens to all of the evidence and makes an Adoption Order if they believe that this is the right plan for that child.



Helping you and your family

As you are growing up in your family there may be times when you have strong feelings about things. Often when we have strong feelings, like hurt or anger or excitement, we don't know where they come from and they can affect the things we do.

Sometimes these feelings can affect your parents as well. When you are not sure how you feel, it can be hard for your parents to understand what is happening or know how best to help you.

The adoption team can meet with you and your family to learn more about your life and what you are experiencing. They will talk with you and your parents to understand your feelings and work out together what might help. Their role is to support you to make sense of your emotions, and to help your parents understand them too, so that you can all find ways to move forward together.

Who is an adoption social worker?

An adoption social worker helps children and families. Adoption social workers and other people who work with adopted people can understand what you are feeling because they have worked with adoptive families like yours for a long.

Who are A4U?

The team at A4U work hard to find new families for children like you who cannot be safely cared for by their birth families. We talk to people who want to adopt and find out all about them. We make sure they know what adoption means and that they are able to keep children safe until they grow up and welcome them into their family.

Once a child goes to live with their new family, their adoption social worker will visit to give them to make sure they are happy and doing well. They will give the family advice and try to help with any challenges.

What happens if I have a problem or complaint?

A4U tries very hard to do a good job for you and your family. There are lots of people who check that we are doing what we are supposed to such as CARA and Ofsted.

If, at any time you are unhappy about something or have a problem, there are a number of people you can talk to first.

- Your parents
- Your family's adoption social worker
- Advocate
- Someone you trust

If you are still unhappy after talking to someone you trust and decide that you want to make a complaint, you can ask them to help you with this.

They will ask the team at A4U to look into your complaint. A4U will do all they can to help sort out the problem, and if they can't then they will find someone who can.

They can write to us at:

A4U,
Unit 2, Quartz Point,
Stonebridge Road,
Solihull
B46 3JL
Email: info@adoptionis4u.com

If you are still unhappy, **tell people**. They will let us know how you feel and he/she will get someone who does not work for A4U to look into your complaint.

Other people who can help

The list of organisations below are separate from the people making decision about you. This means they don't work for A4U and can help you share your thoughts and feelings. If you feel like no one is listening to you, they will make sure your voice is heard.

National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Telephone: 0808 808 1001

Website: www.nyas.net

The NYAS advocacy service gives children and young people information about their rights. They can help you make complaints if you are not happy and they can also help you to have a voice and be heard when decisions are made about you.

Office of the Children's Commissioner

Telephone: 0800 528 0731

Email: advice.team@childrenscommissioner.gsi.gov.uk

Address: The Office of the Children's Commissioner

Sanctuary Buildings
20 Great Smith Street
London SW1P 3BT

Website: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

The Children's Commissioner's role is to protect the rights of all children in England, and to make sure that children and young people have a say and are listened to when adults are making big decisions about things that affect them.

ChildLine

Freephone: 0800 1111

Website: www.childline.co.uk

ChildLine counsellors are trained staff and volunteers who all have experience of listening and talking to children and young people about their worries or problems.

A useful website about adoption and your rights: www.cafcass.gov.uk

If you want to get in touch with the team at Adoption is 4 U CIC, we can be contacted at:

They can write to us at:

A4U,
Unit 2, Quartz Point,
Stonebridge Road,
Solihull
B46 3JL
Email: info@adoptionis4u.com

Telephone: 07740122731

If you want to contact the people who check that we are doing things properly, they are called **OFSTED**. They can be contacted via the below:

Email: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
Telephone: 0300 123 1231

Books about adoption

Stories to share with your child

For very young children

ADOFF Arnold

All the Colours of Race

ARGENT Heidi

Josh & Jaz Have Three Mums

This book for young children aged five to eight helps to explain the diversity and difference of family groups and encourages an understanding and appreciation of same-sex parents.

BAGNALL Susan

The Teazles' Baby Bunny

This children's book for adopters tells the story of the Teazle rabbits and their adoption of a baby bunny. The simple tale and clear, colourful pictures provide a gentle introduction to broaching the subject of adoption and will help any adopted child to recognise how special they are and how much they are wanted.

BROWN Margaret

The Runaway Bunny

When a baby bunny tests his mother's love, he finds that she is steadfast.

CHAPMAN Mary Beth &
CHAPMAN Steven Curtis

You Were Always in My Heart: A Shaoey and Dot Adoption Story

This story is told from the point of view of a little ladybug named Dot, who travels with and promises to stay with a little one until they find their forever family.

CUMMINGS Mary

The Three Names of Me

Describes how a young girl adopted from China thinks about her history and the three names that she has, namely from her birthparents, the orphanage and then her adoptive family.

EDWARDS Becky

The Most Precious Present in the World

Taking the form of a dialogue between a little girl and her and her adoptive mother, the book explores questions that might preoccupy an adopted child.

FOXON Judith

Nutmeg Gets Adopted

GLIORI Delbi

No Matter What

GREEN Jen

Dealing with Racism

GRIFFITHS Joe &
PILGRIM Tony

Picnic in the Park

HERIOT James

The Christmas Day Kitten

One of the famous vet tales about animals finding new homes.

KATZ Karen

The Colors of Us

Children understanding that friends are friends despite colour and race.

KITZE C

I Don't Have Your Eyes

Touches on differences of all kinds but how being a family matters.

MCKAY L

Journey Home

Story of a 10 year old biracial adoptee from Vietnam's search for birth parents.

MEREDITH Susan

Why Are People Different

Child friendly scientific approach to why people across the world are different.

PITCHER David

Where is Poppy's Panda?

Poppy's panda has always been with her – but now he is lost! As Poppy searches high and low for her favourite toy she remembers all the times her panda has been with her. Will she ever find him again? This beautifully illustrated book explores transition, loss and change and the importance of maintaining continuity in a child's life.

ROSOVE Lori

Rosie's Family: An Adoption Story

Tells the story of a beagle who was adopted by a family of schnauzers.

SEENEY Jill

Morris and the Bundle of Worries

SIMON Norma

Why Am I Different

Child focused book on race and developing self-identity.

SUNDERLAND Margot

The Frog Who Longed for the Moon to Smile

SUNDERLAND Margot

A Pea Called Mildred

SUNDERLAND Margot

Willy and the Wobbly House

TARPLEY Natasha

I Love My Hair

THOMAS Pat

The Skin I'm In

Looks at bullying and racism.

WALVOORD Linda

Adoption is for Always

Tells the story of a child who at first reacts to her adoption with anger and insecurity. Her parents help her to accept her feelings and celebrate their love for her by discussing her adoption day.

For toddlers

BOND Michael

Paddington Stories

Gentle introduction to abandonment and finding family.

WADDELL Martin &
FIRTH Barbara

Little Bear Series

Good for comforting when things get scary.

WADDELL Martin

Owl Babies

Most children like the comfort of this book which tells them that mothers always come back to take care of their children.

RICHMOND Marianne

I Wished for You: An Adoption Story

This story follows the conversation between a baby bear and his mama bear as they cuddle up and she answers all of his questions about being adopted.

For Pre-school

BELL Michelle

Elfa and the Box of Memories

Elfa the elephant was in a bad mood. It was a hot day, and she was carrying a box on her back. It was really heavy and felt very uncomfortable. Elfa carried it on her back everywhere she went. She never took it off because she was scared of losing it. But even though it was a beautiful, shiny box, none of the other animals ever seemed to notice or ask what was inside... They didn't know that in it Elfa kept her most precious things - her memories.

KASZA Keiko

A Mother for Choco

Choco looks in vain for a mother who looks like him but finds he fits perfectly with a mum who simply loves him.

KELLER Holly

Horace

About transracial adoption and search for roots.

KOTECHA Trushali

I Am Here Now But Where Was I Before

This is a children's book about India and orphanages including information about where India is, the National Anthem, monuments, festivals and lifestyle changes. The book is based on Siya's Journey and some of the changes she has gone through.

MCCUTHCEON John

Happy Adoption Day

Book of how a transracial adoptive family celebrate adoption day.

PARR Todd

We Belong Together: A Book About Adoption & Families

Book explores the ways that people come together to make families.

Young children 4- 8

BERGREN Lisa

God Found Us You

As a little fox gets ready for bed, his mother tells him the story of his adoption arrival and how she prayed everyday for him.

CLARK Karen	Sweet Baby Moon: An Adoption Tale This is the story of a child's journey from China, where her birth parents dream of a better life for her, to a home with a new family on the other side of the world.
COLE Joanna	How I Was Adopted Factual and funny. Emphasises the child's security in being adopted.
CURTIS Jamie Lee	Tell Me About the Night I Was Born Speaks to the universal childhood desire to know more about the excitement, awe, love, and sleeplessness that a new baby brings to a family.
ELDRIDGE Sherrie	Forever Fingerprints Shows a young adoptees connection to her birthmother.
GRACE Lin	The Red Thread: An Adoption Fairy Tale A king and queen feel a pain that worsens every day. They travel in search of an answer to their pain, during which they come across a baby and are told it is destined to be their child.
HENDERSON Patti	A Blessing From Above Every night before bed a kangaroo prays for a baby to love and hold. One day a baby bird falls out of his over-crowded nest and into her lap. She and her new child thank God everyday for their blessings.
HOJER Dan	Heart of Mine: A Story of Adoption Offers young readers a gentle story about adoption as two parents explain how their darling daughter, Tu Thi, came into their lives from a country so very far away.
LEWIS Rose	I Love You Like Crazy Cakes Mother love, single adopter written from a parent point of view.
KATZ Karen	Over the Moon: An Adoption Story Story of finding a family and birth parents mentioned with sensitivity.
KITZE Carrie	We See the Moon A story of connections.
MILLER Kathryn Ann	Did My First Mother Love Me? An adoptive mother reads out to her child a letter from her birth mother.
FRIEDMAN Darlene	Star of the Week A little girl adopted from China tells her adoption story at school.
MCMAHON Patricia	Just Add One Chinese Sister Where there is an older biological sibling, how the children will cope.
MERCHANT Ed	Dad, David, Baba Chris & Me Tells Ben's story about his ordinary life. Ben was adopted by his gay parents Dad David and Baba Chris when he was four years old, and they live happily

together in an ordinary house, on an ordinary street and do ordinary things. When Ben starts junior school, his ordinary life is turned upside down. Some children begin to tease him because he lives with two dads. They try to hurt and upset him by calling him gay. Now Ben is worried that he is not so ordinary anymore and he is anxious about being different. Baba Chris and Ben's school teacher Miss Patel helps Ben to understand that children live in all kinds of families and that what matters most is that children are loved and cared for.

PEACOCK Carol A

Mommy Far, Mommy Near

Book describes a little girl adopted from China attempts, with the help of her adoptive mum, to sort out her feelings for birth and adoptive family.

STEIN Stephanie

Lucy's Feet

A book which helps 5–10-year-olds process the “sames and differences” that they have with their adoptive families.

Books to help you learn about Asian culture

SHAH Sunita



Jai Jai's Series

The Jai Jai's is a series of books created for children to meet Hindu Gods and Goddesses. The books are aimed at pre-school children aged 18 months and above. Each book has been uniquely written and created to capture the simple essence of storytelling for young children. To take children to an unknown world to develop and create their imagination whilst entwining their knowledge of these fantastic beings. The books truly do embed the basics of the God that the book is about into the kids.

SHAH Sunita

Festivals Series

The Jai Jais Festival series is an exciting new series from the Jai Jais to teach children of all diversities about the popular Hindu festivals of Holi and Diwali. They retell the ancient tales in a modern way for children to remember and understand why these festivals are celebrated all over the world.

SHAH Sunita

Legends Series

The Legends Series is the final series growing up the Jai Jais. The epic stories have been modernised from the roots of Hinduism and developed into magical tales with powerful imagery, created in a modern and mystical way to engage older children.

KHEMKA Nitya

Good Night India

Highlights the Himalayan Mountains, Golden Temple, Valley of Flowers National Park, Palace of Winds, Hawa, Mahal, Mehrangarh Fort, Goa, beaches, dolphins, lions in the Gir Forest, tigers in the Sundarbans, Darjeeling tea, blue train, elephants, and more. This charming board book invites young readers on an exciting and educational tour of one of the world's most interesting countries: India.

KHEMKA Nitya

Good Night Delhi

Highlights Janpath Market, Bangla Sahib Gurudwara, Lodi Gardens, Humayun's Tomb, Deer Park, Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Qutub Minar, National Zoo, Old Fort, Baha'i Temple, the National Rail Museum, and more. This educational board book explores all of the sites and iconic landmarks this dynamic city has to offer. Welcome to the capital of India!

KHEMKA Nitya

Good Night Mumbai

Highlights rock-cut caves on Elephanta Island, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalaya museum, Taraporewala Aquarium, Hanging Gardens, Chowpatty Beach, Siddhivinayak Temple, Mount Mary Basilica, and more. From the Taj Mahal Palace Hotel to the bustling Colaba Causeway, this soothing and educational board book invites young readers to explore the lovely city of Mumbai.

KHEMKA Nitya

Good Night Goa

This board book tours little explorers around the magical city of Goa. Children will discover all of their favourite landmarks and attractions, including beaches, carnival floats, white water rafting on the Mandovi river, Panaji's latin quarter, Fort Aguada, Dudhsagar waterfall, Nerul River dolphins, historical Old Goa, Reis Magos Fort, Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Shri Mangueshi temple and more.

KHEMKA Nitya

Good Night Rajasthan

Features Jaipur, Amber Fort, Elephant Festival, Palaces of Shekhawati, potters and dip dyers of Sanganer, Mehrangarh Fort, holy Pushkar Lake, Jaisalmer, Bikaner, Udaipur, Chittorgarh, Thar Desert, and more. This delightful and educational board book tours little explorers around the magical city of Rajasthan. Children will discover all of their favourite landmarks and attractions.

KHEMKA Nitya

Good Night Taj Mahal