



NEWS RELEASE

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Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Adoption and Fostering Week
www.lgbtadoptfosterweek.org.uk

Survey shows strengths of gay adopters as first-ever LGBT Adoption and Fostering Week launches

Week runs from Monday 20th to Sunday 26th February 2012.
Call 0843 2899457 or see further details below.

Events are being organised across the UK as part of the country's first-ever LGBT Adoption and Fostering Week. It comes as gay adopters and foster carers are being hailed by social workers for their significant strengths in a survey commissioned by New Family Social, the LGBT network coordinating the week.

At a time when adoption figures are at a 10 year low, a new study shows lesbian and gay people often have the right mix of skills and experience to raise children who have been in care, and give them a great new start in life.

72% of social workers surveyed saw the "amount of energy and enthusiasm" LGBT adopters bring to the process as a significant strength. 76% saw "openness to difference, and supporting a child with a sense of difference" as equally important.

For a long time, LGBT people tended to be seen as a "last resort" when placing children. Now adoption and fostering agencies see them as having a key role to play in meeting the urgent need for more new homes for children in care.

The LGBT Adoption and Fostering Week is a recruitment campaign for prospective LGBT adopters and foster carers with 18 events around the UK hosted by local adoption and fostering agencies.

Hugh Thornbery, Strategic Director of Children's Services at Action for Children, says "Over the years, our LGBT foster carers and adopters have helped to transform many children's lives. We welcome more applications from LGBT foster carers and adopters; the main thing is that you are able to give children and young people the care and support they need to be happy and fulfilled."

Andy Leary-May, Director of New Family Social, says: "More and more LGBT people are choosing adoption and fostering as a way to form a family, and we want prospective parents to see just how rewarding it can be, and how much advice and support is on offer from our huge community of families around the UK".

The free events will include talks from local LGBT adoptive and foster parents about their own experiences and give those interested information on how to start the process.

Leary-May adds: "The fact that so many agencies want to recruit from the LGBT community show just how far things have come in the past 5 or 6 years. Social workers are becoming more aware of our strengths, and we are being treated more fairly, and are being matched with children more quickly".

Editors' notes:

- The survey, conducted in conjunction with Cambridge University, asked 130 social workers about the lesbian and gay applicants they have worked with.
- New Family Social is the UK charity working for LGBT adoptive and foster families formed in 2007 and which now boasts over 500 families on their membership. The organisation gives people the opportunity to share stories and support each other. There is also the chance to give adopted or foster children the confidence of knowing there are other families out there like theirs.
- There are 16 regional groups that meet regularly around the UK and an online message forum to share advice and encouragement. As well as encouraging more LGBT adopters and foster carers to come forward, NFS works to ensure they are assessed and matched fairly and effectively.
- Same-sex couples have had the right to apply to adopt jointly since changes in the law came into effect in 2005 (England and Wales) and 2009 (Scotland).

For details of the first ever LGBT Adoption and Fostering Week and event updates, visit: www.lgbtadoptfosterweek.org.uk/

A range of case studies are available from New Family Social's membership. Please e-mail mediacoordinator@newfamilysocial.co.uk or call 0843 2899457

An outline of the key findings of the survey will be available on the following page: <https://www.newfamilysocial.co.uk/resources/research-literature/>

LGBT Adoption and Fostering Week is from 20th to 26th February 2012. For further information, contact New Family Social: www.newfamilysocial.co.uk/contact/

To find out more about New Family Social visit: www.newfamilysocial.co.uk