

# Support for EP Carers

(This may vary depending on your area so please check with your assessing social worker)

## While you are still in assessment (stage 2) but have decided you want to offer EP:

- **Social work support** through your adoption SW.
- **EP Support Network:** Peer support from other EP Carers – you can have your email and telephone number (and a brief description of where you are in the process) added to the EP Support Network List which is a confidential list of EP Carers who are happy to contact and be contacted by other EP carers in the region. The list is coordinated and updated by Lindy Wootton at CCS Adoption ([lindy.wootton@ccsadoption.org](mailto:lindy.wootton@ccsadoption.org)). Please contact Lindy directly if you wish to be part of the network.
- **Buddy link** to other EP carers through your social worker.

## Post Approval at Panel but prior to placement:

- **All of the above** and ...
- **Support Through Early Permanence (STEP) groups.** CCS runs bi-monthly EP Carer support groups which are facilitated by an experienced EP Carer. The groups are currently held on Mondays at The Centre/CCS Offices in Bristol with a session from 1 – 3 for those who currently have a child in placement and need to bring them, and an evening session from 6 – 8 for those who do not need to bring the child but still want to access a support group. Please see below for more information about the group.
- **EP Support group** currently held in Gloucester (talk to your SW for more details)
- **Secure Facebook STEP Group.** See below for further details and information on how to join, or contact Lindy Wootton for further information.

## During and Post Placement:

- **All of the above** and ...
- Also note that the STEP group **may be able to operate an EP peer support outreach visit** to carers who have a child in an EP placement but cannot manage to attend the group. Please contact your social worker or Lindy Wootton for further information if this is something you feel you would benefit from.

## If the court grants a Placement Order:

- All of the above and the adopters can now access all the adoption support offered by their Adoption Agency and the relevant local authority.

## If the child returns to birth family:

- All of the above plus **Enhanced Social Work Support**
- Up to 6 sessions of counselling/therapy to help the EP family process the loss.

## Further Information about STEP

# Support Through Early Permanence (STEP)

The **Support Group for Early Permanence Carers** is open to all approved EP carers across the partnership local authorities and agencies. **Please contact Lindy to book a place ([lindy.wootton@CCSadoption.org](mailto:lindy.wootton@CCSadoption.org))**

*Laura, one of our early permanence (EP) carers will facilitate this bi-monthly support group. Laura has been part of this group since it was initially set up, and feels that it has provided invaluable support. It is a chance to meet with other EP carers, whether they have completed the process, are just starting out (as long as they have panel approval), or are in the middle of the rollercoaster that comes with early permanence. Talking to other EP carers who understand, and sharing worries, concerns, frustrations, or just listening to other journeys in a confidential setting can provide vital support for those undertaking this journey. The group is a peer support group and will not include social workers. Hopefully you will feel able to talk about how you are feeling, gain the support you need and will leave feeling encouraged about the vital and unique role that EP can play in a child's life, as well as revitalised in the challenging task you have undertaken.*

*The groups are 'open' meaning that you can attend regularly or just at times of particular need. Children in placement are welcome to attend the afternoon session with their carer if this meets both their and your needs.*

*The STEP group is aware that if you are an EP carer with a child in placement it may be difficult to get to meetings. The group would therefore like to pilot an outreach service, where if requested through Lindy Wootton (at CCS Adoption) it may be possible to offer a home visit from one of the EP carers to offer support. If you are finding things tough and feel that a one-to-one home visit might work for you please contact Lindy to discuss this further.*



*Regular bi-monthly groups*



*Afternoon group  
And*

*Evening group  
Bristol Venue*



[Lindy.wootton@ccsadoption.org](mailto:Lindy.wootton@ccsadoption.org)



0117 935 0005



*No charge*



*Light refreshments provided*

# Support Through Early Permanence (STEP) Facebook Group

The FB STEP group is a new on-line community for approved Early Permanence (EP) carers in the South West Adoption Consortium (SWAC) area and their friends and family. This EP support resource is supported by CCS Adoption and is offered in addition to the physical STEP groups that it already holds at its offices and the EP Network Support List it disseminates and updates. We know that being an EP carer brings with it a unique set of rewards and challenges and so the aim of the group is to give EP carers opportunities to connect with each other, ask questions, share experiences and support each other through the many ups and downs.

## How to join the closed EP Facebook Support Through Early Permanence (STEP) Group

To join the FB STEP group you need to have been approved (or recommended) at panel for EP and to have a Facebook profile. You can use your current Facebook profile or set up another that you use to just access the group. It is up to you. Remember that the group is closed and secret, no one can find it by searching for it on Facebook and the only way to be on it is to receive an invite from one of the moderators (see instructions below). Anyone applying to join will be verified as an EP carer by the CCS EP Project Manager, Lindy Wootton before an invite is sent out to them. You can therefore be sure that the site is safe and confidential.

If you wish to join please follow the steps below:

### STEP 1

Send a FB friend request to one of the moderators:

- Kate Rainflower
- Christine Moonflower
- Katy Starflower

Each of the moderators has a picture of a teddy bear as their profile picture to help you recognise them and you can search for them on Facebook.

### STEP 2

Follow up this friend request with a private message to them stating:

- Your wish to join the Facebook STEP group
- Your full name

- Which Adoption Agency you are with

With these facts we will be able to verify you as an EP carer and send you an invite to join the group.

### **STEP 3**

When you have received the invite to join the FB STEP group you will receive a Welcome Post which will ask you to read the Rules and Guidelines for the group. Please read these and then private message the moderator you receive the invite from to confirm you have done this and agree to abide by them.

If you have any questions about joining the group please contact Lindy Wootton [lindy.wootton@ccsadoption.org](mailto:lindy.wootton@ccsadoption.org) Tel. 0117 935 0005 who will try to help.