

## How do I get in touch with you?

If you are interested you can call us on the numbers below to find out more about the service and how we work.

There is a cost to local authorities to use the Sharing Stories service, but no cost to you. If you are interested in working with us you can talk to your social worker and ask them to refer you or call us directly and we can talk to your local authority.



### Sharing Stories contact details:



0117 955 8826



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# Sharing Stories



Information for people thinking  
about relinquishing a child

## **Introducing Sharing Stories**

Sharing Stories is a life story service. We recognise how valuable information about a person's original family and the circumstances of their birth is for children who are adopted or raised by someone other than their birth parents.

Birth families are offered the opportunity to share information about themselves and their family without any pressure to become more involved than they wish. The service can provide the opportunity to have a single conversation or a series of supported sessions that produce life story information for your child. Some families want to meet the adopters, others don't.

## **What information do Sharing Stories want?**

Every situation is different so the information that you share can take many forms. It might be a story about the characters in your family, a picture or details of family traits, strengths and interests. It might be what music you listen to or your favourite food. Sharing Stories will help you think about what you might be able to share for your child and to decide how much information about yourself feels right to share.

## **Why do you need it?**

Experience and research tell us that even anonymised information will be of great value to your child as they come to make sense of their life story, now and in the future. It is important for children to hear their story from your point of view, as well as from the views of professionals.

## **Where does the information go?**

Sharing Stories workers are not part of the local authority and are not involved in the court processes. You will agree with the worker what information you want to share with your child and the family they are living with. This will be kept safe until the court process is concluded, or

you can agree to certain information being shared before this. The service will also create a life story book for your child with their adopters. This will be shared with social services to be kept on your child's file. Sharing Stories also works with your child's adopters to encourage them to share information in an age appropriate and supportive way.

If whilst sharing information we were concerned that someone was in danger of being hurt then we would need to pass this information on.

## **Why do we ask you to work with Sharing Stories now?**

We know we are asking a lot by asking you to start this work when you are still coming to terms with this very difficult decision. We do this because experience tells us that the earlier we start, the better the information for your child(ren). Other parents in your situation tell us that they feel as though they have done their best for their child and, after the legal process is finalised, they can start to move on.

*“Even though I just wanted to put my head in the sand and pretend none of this had happened I found that working with Sharing Stories helped me to feel as though I had done my best for my child, even though I had decided not to raise her myself. I would recommend this process to other parents in our situation, even though it feels hard at the beginning. It was emotional but Sharing Stories were very supportive and they helped us to put together a photo album that, in the end, I am really proud of.” (Parent of a baby voluntarily placed for adoption)*