



## **Impact Report: Adoption Support Services 2025**



## Executive Summary

In 2024-2025, CCS Adoption delivered a range of specialist post-adoption support services to 159 families. This report brings together the evaluations of three of those activities: **Family Events, Tots, and the HorseWorld Discovery Programme**. There were evaluations from 28 families that evidence that CCS Adoption have delivered a strong and measurable impact for adopted children, young people and their parents. Evidence shows:

- **91–100%** of parents reported improved attachment, confidence, or connection after taking part in CCS services.
- Children demonstrated stronger emotional regulation, greater confidence, and increased willingness to try new activities.
- Families reported reductions in isolation, strengthened peer networks, and access to trauma-informed support.
- Parents gained greater confidence, therapeutic skills, and emotional resilience.

This report focuses on four CCS Adoption outcomes: nurturing secure bonds as children move in with their new family; helping adoptees understand who they are and where they come from; creating spaces where families connect through shared experiences; and empowering parents with the confidence and therapeutic tools needed to support their children throughout their lives.

# Adopted children are supported to build attachments and relationships with their new families



Children entering adoption mostly have histories of instability, loss, and trauma, meaning that secure attachment does not automatically develop when they move in with their new family. It takes time, therapeutic support, and safe, consistent relational experiences for trust to grow. Strong attachments help children feel safe, regulate emotions, and develop the foundations for lifelong wellbeing.

Parents also need support to understand trauma-based behaviours, respond therapeutically, and build confidence in their parenting approach.

## Attachment Growth

**91%** of Family Events parents agreed that the sessions helped them build attachment with their child(ren).

**100%** of Tots' parents agreed the group helped develop attachment, **44%** rated attachment at 10/10 by programme end.

Family Events: attachment scores increased from a wide range to **45%** rating attachment at 10/10 by the end, with further improvements across top scores (8–9).

“[He’s]...more willing to stop and listen to me... more physically affectionate and relaxed.”

“My children now seek me for comfort when sad or hurt.”

“Violent behaviour has reduced, and our relationship has much improved.”

-Adoptive Parents



# Children understand their life story, identity, and the impact of ACEs

Adopted children need help to make sense of who they are, why they were adopted, and how their early experiences have shaped them. Without support, they may personalise blame, internalise shame, struggle with identity, and experience emotional or behavioural difficulties. Because life story work is an ongoing process—not a single conversation—children need consistent emotional safety, connection, and opportunities to talk about adoption in a normal, supported way. Activities that build trust, self-expression, and self-esteem provide the foundations for healthy life story exploration and trauma processing.



## Safe Exploration of Identity and Self-Worth

“CCS events and friendships help our son understand his life story... he knows other children are in a similar position.”  
— Parents at Family Event

A school pastoral manager noted clear improvements in the child’s resilience and self-regulation, linking this progress to the emotionally supportive activities and the boost they gave to her self-worth

## Developing Trust and Processing Adoption Experiences

“She feels confident to show us all her emotions... cautious with new people but opens up gradually.” -Tots Parent

“Being with other adopted children was helpful... we discussed being adopted and his diagnoses on the journeys home.” -Adoptive Parent

# Developing Peer Networks and Strengthening Shared Adoption Identity



Many adoptive families experience isolation because adoption-related behaviours are not always understood by peers or schools, children can feel “different” or unsure about their story, and parents often need support from others who truly understand trauma and therapeutic parenting.

Peer support helps reduce this isolation, normalises experiences, and builds long-term networks that support resilience. For children, meeting others with a shared identity fosters belonging and reduces shame.

## Children Building Friendships

**72%** agreed or strongly agreed that their children interacted with other adopted children and started to build friendships at family events.

**67%** of Tots parents say their children built positive relationships with other adoptees.

“My children feel more comfortable making friends at CCS events... they now have a consistent friendship network.”

“We have made good friends at Tots... the children love to see each other and we meet outside sessions.”

“Confidence and meeting new friends.”

”

## Parents Building Networks

Parents also built valuable support networks through CCS activities, finding the connection and shared understanding offer reassurance and support from others on a similar adoption journey.

# Parents are skilled and confident in parenting their adoptive child(ren)



Adoptive parenting is inherently complex. Children with ACEs may show trauma-based behaviours, sensory needs, or dysregulation that require consistent, connected and therapeutic responses. Without support, parents can feel isolated or “not good enough,” stress can rise, conflict can increase, and family stability may be affected. Building parental confidence and therapeutic skill is therefore essential for supporting a child as they move in with their new family and for promoting long-term wellbeing.

## Increased Parenting Confidence

**44%** strongly agreed, and **33%** agreed that Tots increased their confidence in meeting their child’s needs.

**45%** of parents attending Family Events reported an increased likelihood of choosing similar therapeutic activities for their children.

## Parental Skill Development

Parents highlighted learning:

“As a parent, I feel more confident supporting my children with therapeutic boundaries.”

“A safe non-judgemental space — exactly what my daughters needed.” (Tots)

“Seeing others’ adoption journeys helped me accept that not all days will be perfect.”



## Conclusion

Across all activities, the evidence clearly demonstrates CCS Adoption's substantial and holistic impact on adopted children, young people, and their families. Children showed notable increases in confidence and self-esteem, with **64%** of Family Event parents reporting greater confidence in trying new activities, and HorseWorld participants demonstrating academic, social, and emotional benefits connected to improved resilience and self-regulation. Families consistently praised the warmth, patience, and expertise of CCS staff, emphasising how trusting relationships helped children feel emotionally safe and supported parents in using therapeutic approaches with confidence.

Across the activity evaluations, a strong pattern emerges: CCS services consistently reduce isolation, build peer support networks, and foster a powerful sense of shared identity among adoptees and their families. Parents described forming meaningful connections with others who truly understood the challenges of adoption, helping them feel less alone and more resilient. These themes — confidence, connection, trust, identity, therapeutic support, and community — appear repeatedly across all reports, underscoring the breadth and depth of CCS's impact.

Importantly, improvements in attachment, emotional regulation, confidence, parenting capacity, and peer connection all contribute to a family's ability to support a child as they move in with their new family and continue to settle and thrive. Together, these protective factors strengthen families' long-term well-being and stability. Through therapeutic environments, skilled staff, strong peer networks, and identity-supportive activities, CCS equips families with the emotional, relational, and practical tools needed throughout their adoption journey. Evidence from all three evaluations shows that CCS Adoption is safeguarding children's futures, strengthening family relationships, enhancing children's resilience, and helping adoptees develop a secure sense of identity and long-lasting connection.



The Park Centre, Daventry Road, Bristol, BS4 1DQ

**0117 935 005**

**[info@ccsadoption.org](mailto:info@ccsadoption.org)**

**[www.ccsadoption.org](http://www.ccsadoption.org)**

Registered Charity no. 286814