



Gwasanaeth
Mabwysiadu
Cenedlaethol

National
Adoption
Service

adoptionuk

ar gyfer pob teulu sy'n mabwysiadu
for every adoptive family

£2.3million boost for adoption support in Wales

Today (June 6), National Adoption Service in Wales (NAS) and Adoption UK Cymru (AUK) announced a £2.3 million Welsh Government investment for adoption support services in Wales.

At an event held at the Senedd attended by key people from the sector, the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan confirmed the funding and also officially launched the new 'Adoption Register Wales'.

The £2.3m investment is to be spent through NAS' five regions across Wales to strengthen adoption support services, enhance staff levels and improve ways of working in key areas of support for adoptive families.

The new register is an essential part of the matching process in many adoptions and will support prompt family finding. No longer just for children who've been waiting the longest, but for **all children** with an adoption plan in Wales, the register gives adopters more say in their family finding.

Suzanne Griffiths, Director of Operations for the National Adoption Service, said: "The new register supports our commitment to the best possible family finding and matching for children and adopters. It is a bilingual service making it more inclusive and also gives adopters supported access to view children's profiles and make decisions, with the support of their Social Worker."

Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services, Julie Morgan said: "As a Government we are investing money to strengthen adoption services in Wales. Working collaboratively with key organisations to use this funding to provide those being adopted and adopters with the right support. As well as ensuring that adoptive families can be found more quickly, this funding will enable the adoption regions to improve further the provision of adoption support services in their area."

Suzanne Griffiths added: "This investment is such a boost to our work to improve the support available to adoptive families across Wales. Improving services, and particularly support services, was one of the biggest challenges facing the National Adoption Service when it was created."

"We have already made many improvements through our local government regional services, but this funding will enable us to ensure there are improved services available consistently to families across Wales as well as providing, in partnership with the third sector, exciting new services such as TESSA and a new children and young people's service".

Part of the investment has also been used to match fund an additional £250,000 from the National Lottery Community Fund, granted to AUK to deliver its Therapeutic Education Support Services in Adoption programme (TESSA).

Ann Bell, Development Manager, AUK Cymru, said: "Adoption UK is delighted to be working with the National Lottery to extend the TESSA programme across United Kingdom. TESSA

gives an adoptive family access to a clinical psychologist and an experienced adopter, giving them coping strategies and an insight into how other parents have worked through challenges to help their family flourish.

“Early intervention is crucial to successful adoptions and TESSA has proved extremely effective in Northern Ireland, with adoptive families saying what a huge difference it has made to them. The additional funding from Welsh Government will significantly increase the scale and reach of TESSA in Wales, making it more widely available to new adoptive families.”

If you are interested in adoption and would like more information, visit adoptionmwales.org.uk

For those currently adopting, you can find out more about the support for you and your child at adoptionuk.org

-ENDS-

FOR IMAGES:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/u5gfs0ncnpw3b0n/AABAKjgkIEYtd4UiD0rYcdPa?dl=0>

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES:

- Phil Hodgson MBE Chair of the NAS Advisory Group regarding the new register and plans for Welsh Government's investment
- Councillor Geraint Hopkins Chair of the NAS Governance Board regarding the new register and plans for Welsh Government's investment – Welsh language
- Ann Bell, Adoption UK Cymru regarding the investment from Big Lottery Fund
- Ans Aspden, adopted adult – Welsh speaker - regarding the support services she has accessed through AUK Cymru
- Julie Morgan AM (TBC – dependent on timings) regarding commitments to family finding in Wales

Notes to Editors

About the Adoption Register for Wales

- The Adoption Register for Wales (ARW) is a fully bilingual, online family finding service. Using Link Maker, a quick and easy to use secure system, the register aims to make more suitable and stable matches for families and reduce the wait time for children with an adoption plan across Wales.
- It has also been designed to give adopters more say in their family finding.
- Fully funded by Welsh Government and delivered by the National Adoption Service in Wales, the purpose of the register is to minimise the delay in finding adoptive families for children waiting.

About Therapeutic Education Support Services in Adoption (TESSA)

- A new and innovative support service for newly formed adoptive families, available across Wales.
- TESSA gives an adoptive family access at an early stage in their journey to a clinical psychologist and an experienced adopter. This enables the family to explore the impacts of early trauma, giving them coping strategies and an insight into how other parents have worked through challenges and gone on to help their family flourish.
- TESSA will supplement rather than replace statutory provision; it will be accessible through the NAS adoption regions and linked to support service planning.

About Children's and Young People's Service (CYPS)

- CYPS replaces Talk Adoption since being taken over by Adoption UK Cymru earlier this year.
- The Children and Young People Service will continue small, local groups across Carmarthen, Swansea and Cardiff initially to provide a safe space where they can take part in a range of group activities such as circus skills; cooking; theatre games. The activities are designed to build life-skills, confidence and self-esteem but most of all to have FUN! It also encourages them to build friendships and gain ongoing support.
- The service will be officially named by the children and young people involved in the coming months.
- Additional staff are being put in place across Wales so that over time the service is available to more children and young people as well as improving advice and information
- Supporting children and young people to have the space to grow and develop in a safe and supportive environment is essential. In turn this enables them to feel confident and express their views to parents, teachers and other professionals
- CYPS aims to help them to understand how they are feeling and develop the language to express themselves and understand themselves more

About National Adoption Service for Wales

Launched in November 2014, the National Adoption Service for Wales (NAS) is the Wales wide collaborative for the provision of adoption services in Wales. It has brought together local authority adoption services into a three-tier structure that includes partnerships at all levels with the Welsh voluntary adoption agencies, health and education services as well as others.

Locally, each local authority continues to provide services to all looked after children whilst identifying and working with those children for whom a plan for adoption is appropriate. Regionally, local authorities work together within five regional collaboratives to provide a range of adoption services. The services provided differ in each collaborative, but all provide the adoption agency functions for children, recruit and assess adopters, offer counselling to birth parents and advice to adopted adults. Some currently directly provide adoption support services whereas in other this remains with the local authorities. Each regional collaborative has links with the voluntary adoption agencies, health and education.

Nationally, the Director of Operations and a small central team, hosted by the City of Cardiff Council on behalf of all 22 local authorities, provides national direction, development and co-ordination. Since September 2015 the central team has managed the Wales Adoption Register for the Welsh Government.

The voluntary adoption agencies in Wales collaborate as the *Strategic Voluntary Adoption Partnership*; this is made up of St David's Children's Society [including the Association for Adoption and Fostering in Wales (AFA Cymru)], Adoption UK, After Adoption and Barnardo's Cymru.