



Edward Timpson MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

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To: All Adoption Team Managers

12 November 2014

Dear Adoption Team Manager,

I'm writing to you and all adoption team managers in England to thank you and your teams for the sterling work you do with children and adoptive families. Without you, so many vulnerable children would not have a new family to care for them.

We have, once again, had a hugely successful National Adoption Week that significantly raised the profile of adoption. I attended the National Adoption Week Awards ceremony on Tuesday 4 November and I was touched and impressed by the commitment of the award winners and runners up. I was especially pleased to meet Carole Kloss from Hampshire who won Social Worker of the Year and Rachel Gillot and her team from Devon who won Local Authority of the Year. It's always a pleasure to meet Norman Goodwin from Adoption Matters who won Voluntary Adoption Agency of the Year and it was great to hear from James Williams (and his two adopted sons) who won Adoption Champion of the Year.

A new award was introduced this year – Digital Champion of the Year – and that was won by First4Adoption. That brings me to the core of why I am writing to you.

First4Adoption has been working with Kindred, a marketing agency, to develop and test new recruitment marketing materials and these are all available, free of charge, for any agency to use as and when you wish. Many of you attended regional workshops about the materials and have seen the different versions of the images – some as posters, some as social media adverts and some as online banners. There are also radio adverts that you can use and adapt to refer to your own agency as well as a new image library. There is also a guide on how to use the materials to best effect. The materials are all available in the 'Adoption Professionals' section of the First4Adoption website along with a video of Paul Sutton from First4Adoption explaining the materials

[\(http://www.first4adoption.org.uk/professionals/\)](http://www.first4adoption.org.uk/professionals/).

The key thing about these new materials is that they were tested in the North East and East of England and we know they work. Compared to the week before the testing, First4Adoption saw a 34% increase in calls to its information line and 20% increase in unique visitors to its website. In the first three days of use during National Adoption Week the 'dancing dad' image received 569 likes, shares and comments on social media and, using all of the materials, First4Adoption's Facebook page engaged 5,000 people (likes, shares and comments). We need to put aside our personal preferences and focus on what works. The evidence is clear – these new materials work.

I urge all of you, in every agency across the country, to become familiar with these new recruitment materials and use them the next time you plan to recruit prospective adopters. There are still far too many vulnerable children waiting in care for whom adoption is the plan and we need to make sure we're attracting people capable of providing them with a safe and loving home. These materials will help achieve that.

If you have any questions about the materials or would like some assistance in using or adapting them, please contact Paul Sutton at First4Adoption (paul@First4Adoption.org.uk) who will be happy to help.

Please do use the materials .

Kindest regards,



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