

Start your adoption story

A guide for adoption agencies

FIRST 4 ADOPTION

Introduction

First4Adoption has been working with Kindred to develop a suite of marketing resources that will enable unified recruitment messaging throughout the country. The materials are the first steps in making **First4Adoption** a national, recognisable 'brand' for adoption, with local delivery. Agencies will be able to use the materials whenever they actively recruit. Following the success of piloting the materials in the North East and East of England, the resources have now been further developed and made available for all adoption agencies in England to use in National Adoption Week and beyond.

This brief guide contains information on how you can use the resources and take advantage of the 'noise' created during National Adoption Week and beyond.



What are the results from piloting the materials?

The marketing materials generated a significant increase in web visits and enquiries to **First4Adoption**, resulting in a 135% increase in web visits compared to the same two weeks in the previous year and an increase of 20% compared to the previous week in September. The number of phone enquiries from potential adopters also increased by 34%. This clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of the materials and messaging in motivating interest from potential adopters and encouraging them to act on that interest.

We tested materials featuring quotes from real adopters and more generic statements to see which resonated better with potential adopters. Statements on the materials proved more effective than quotes, (referrals to **F4A** from the statement route increased 100%, vs. 20% from the quotes route) presumably because potential adopters found it easier to project themselves into more 'anonymous' ads.

On social media, the posts featuring statements performed better - a total of 466 interactions, vs. 204 for the quotes. The most popular post was the **dressing up box** generating 203 interactions (likes, comments, shares).

The materials were well-received by agencies, with most agencies in pilot areas using the social media materials in particular, and many using the printed posters. Some agencies commented that they would have liked materials sooner, wanted more opportunity to tailor materials and requested regional accents on the radio ads, all of which we have tried to address for this roll out. We also had several comments on how useful the materials were that referred to sibling groups.



What resources are available to my agency?

- **A3 posters** These posters are high resolution and can be printed on a standard office printer or by a professional printing company in either A3 or A4 size, simply by selecting the preferred size in printer settings. The posters can be placed anywhere where potential adopters might see them, from offices to libraries and community centres. There are a limited number of posters being printed, available on a first come first served basis. To request some of these, please contact becky.sales@kindredagency.com
- **Press advertisements** The resources contain eight different half page press ads. These signpost to **First4Adoption** but editable versions are also available, allowing agencies to personalise the ads with their own logo, phone number and web address. There are eight master versions of these ads and for a limited time, Kindred will make adaptations free of charge to agencies which have booked space in media titles. Kindred will require at least two working days' notice for all press adaptations. To enquire about making these changes, please contact emma.parrish@kindredagency.com
- **Social media posts** We encourage you to use these posts on your social media channels to encourage interaction and sharing on social media. Please also retweet and post tweets from partner agencies. The main hashtag that will be used to join in the conversations and increase the 'noise' on twitter will be '#nationaladoptionweek'. However, if a shorter hashtag is required due to character restraints '#NAW14' can also be added into the tweet. In addition, you could also add hashtag #adoption and #siblings where necessary. A social media calendar (hyperlink) has been produced to accompany these which detail a suggested timeline for the posts.
- **Social media posts** We have developed landscape versions of the [social media images](#) to be used for 'pay per click' advertising on Facebook.
- **Digital advertisements** There is an assortment of digital display ads available in a number of sizes for agencies to use. You may wish to use these ads on your own website and encourage partners to include them on their websites, even if you're not spending money on digital advertisements. If you are buying advertising space during National Adoption Week (or beyond), these advertisements can be used free of charge. They direct to First4Adoption, which will refer potential adopters – when they're ready – to agencies in their local area. The outlet you're advertising with will tell you what size ads you need. Download the zipped file in the right size, which will contain everything you need.
- **Radio advertisements** There are four 30-second radio advertisements that are designed to appeal to single adopters and those with a propensity to adopt sibling groups. The master versions of all four ads signpost to **First4Adoption**. However, agencies will have the option to record their own endings for these advertisements to regionally tailor them to their organisation, should they wish to
- **Stock images** A range of [stock images](#) have been shot to capture real aspects of family life. These are free of charge for all agencies to use on their own websites and social media channels.

What is the benefit of using these marketing materials?

These materials have been proven to increase enquiries from potential adopters. They are free to use for National Adoption Week and beyond, and should be used to complement and boost your own marketing efforts.

If your agency doesn't have the time, budget or capability to adapt these materials to feature your branding, the **First4Adoption** branded materials will ensure that initial enquiries are handled by **First4Adoption** and passed on to you when they're ready to take the next step.

If you are not actively recruiting adopters at the moment, these materials provide the obvious vehicle to keep the adoption message alive in the minds of potential adopters in your area without the need to direct initial enquiries to your front door. This way you keep recruiting adopters for the future but do not encounter issues with capacity as **First4Adoption** will handle these enquiries.



- **Use the social media resources on your channels** We encourage you to use the social media picture posts on your social media channels during National Adoption Week to help increase and capitalise on the 'noise' around adoption at this time. We have produced a posting [schedule](#) to help us all coordinate our efforts.
- **Make sure the people in your organisation are aware of the materials** The media materials may result in more enquiries from potential adopters and people in your organisation may be asked questions about the campaign. Therefore, we would ask you to inform all agency staff about the new resources. You may wish to put the posters up in your offices or put information on your staff intranet or in a newsletter. You could even hold a briefing session to share the resources with staff. To obtain copy for staff intranets and newsletters, contact emma.parrish@kindredagency.com
- **Distribute the posters** We hope that you will print copies of the posters and place them in areas in the community where they might be seen by potential adopters, such as cafes, community centres and libraries. These posters can be printed on an office printer, or they can be downloaded in a format that can be supplied to a professional printer. Kindred has a small allocation of printed posters which can be mailed out to you free of charge. To request copies, contact becky.sales@kindredagency.com
- **Provide us with information to contribute to our evaluation** During the pilot we gathered data to enable us to measure how effective the resources are in driving interest from potential adopters. It would be useful to evaluate the activity during National Adoption Week to gain further insights into the activity generated from the materials. We would like to capture any data and insights into the enquiries you have received during the launch of the materials, and will be circulating a short questionnaire to gather feedback in the weeks following National Adoption Week.

How can I access the resources?

The resources are available to download on the **First4Adoption** website at www.First4Adoption.org.uk/professionals/marketing. When clicking on the resources page, you will be asked to give your email address. This is so we can inform you when new materials are added to the site and update you on developments with regards to adopter recruitment. All resources are free of charge and you are encouraged to use them.

Who is the target audience for the resources?

The resources aim to recruit adopters for a wide variety of children in need of a loving home. The development of our materials came from a desire to encourage potential adopters to consider adoption more generally, as well as considering adopting harder to place children.

There is a range of materials available if you are looking to recruit adopters for the following children:

Singular children • Sibling groups • Older children • Children with disabilities • BME children

The 2013 report commissioned by the Department for Education, Understanding attitudes, motivations and barriers to adoption and fostering, found that people with the following characteristics have the highest propensity to adopt:

- **Involved in altruistic activities** i.e. have done voluntary work, are active in their local community or are currently working for a not-for-profit organisation
- **Have previous experience of fostering or adoption** i.e. have adopted a child or know someone who has, were adopted as a child, have a brother/sister/relative/friend that was adopted, are currently a foster carer or were formerly a foster carer
- **Actively practising a religion**
- **Working in higher managerial, intermediate managerial or skilled manual work**

The media resources have therefore been designed to resonate with these people in particular; however, we have been careful not to alienate other groups of people who may consider adoption.



Why do these resources tell people to go to the First4Adoption website?

First4Adoption is the national adoption information service. Potential adopters who visit the website or call the information line will be signposted to a number of adoption agencies - both local authority and voluntary adoption agencies - in their local area, based on their postcode.

Directing people to **First4Adoption** through the resources will therefore generate enquiries for agencies in England. It will help us track how effective the materials are as any increases in the volume of calls and website visits can be measured by **First4Adoption**. **First4Adoption** will respond to any general enquiries to save you having to deal with them and will only signpost people onto your agency if they are ready to start their adoption journey. If you are not recruiting please let **First4Adoption** know as soon as possible.

First4Adoption website



Can I edit these resources?

Many of the resources can be edited to direct potential adopters to your agency. There are editable PDF versions of the posters available, which will allow you to add in your agency's phone number, web address and logo. Instructions are available [here](#)

Press adverts can also be amended to include this information. While the press adverts on the site are master copies which signpost to **First4Adoption**, if you've booked inserts in local press, Kindred will be able to amend these for you to add in your agency's details and resize the advert. Let us know at least 48 hours in advance where the advert will be placed, along with the size, your contact information and logo, and we'll do the rest. All details can be sent to emma.parrish@kindredagency.com.

There are two types of radio adverts available; full 30 second versions which signpost to **First4Adoption**, and shorter, edited versions which have no call to action. If you're planning a radio campaign, a call to action to visit your agency's website can be recorded and added to the end of these shorter versions. This provides the opportunity for you to add in a local accent.

It's important to note that when recording a radio ad, a written script must be submitted to the radio advertising regulatory board RACC www.racc.co.uk to approve ahead of recording. It's free to do, but can take up to 48 hours to acquire a login, submit a script and get the go-ahead. No radio stations will play out your advert without the approval document from the RACC. Copies of our RACC approval for adverts can be obtained from becky.sales@kindredagency.com

Example of where to change details



How have these resources been developed?

The resources are based on research and insight into what works when recruiting potential adopters. This research includes analysis of reports into this area and initial testing of the materials with people from the target audience and adoption professionals. Insights include the following:

- The first phase in a person's adoption journey is the initial inspiration or trigger that prompts them to consider adopting a child. The resources are intended to 'nudge' people towards consideration – they purposely don't go into detail about the adoption process or give too much information about what adoption involves. We want people to visit the **First4Adoption** website or call the information line to explore this for themselves.
- Humour can help to capture the attention of potential adopters. Although we do not want to trivialise adoption, we have tried to strike a subtly humorous and positive tone in order to make the resources stand out.
- Potential adopters respond well to other people's stories and experiences. That is why we have reflected real adoption stories in the resources.
- Motivations for adopting can be grouped into two broad categories: internal and external. Internal motivations are founded upon the perceived benefit of adoption for the individual adopter, for example "I want more children" or "I want to be a parent". External motivations are based upon the perceived benefits of adoption for the child or society as a whole and are often altruistic in nature, for example "I want to take a child out of the care system" or "lots of children in the world need a home". The majority of people who are interested in adoption or who have adopted cite a combination of these motivators and it is important that marketing reflects this. That is why the resources are based on the proposition that adoption can create or complete a family – this plays to both internal and external motivations.
- Picturing children and families in marketing resources can be divisive; this was made apparent from piloting the materials which highlighted the popularity of the dressing up box image which had no people present. Often, potential adopters want to imagine themselves in a family situation, rather than having this 'created' for them. Therefore, we have a mix of materials – some that include people and some that don't.

If you have any enquiries about the materials please contact:

If you have any enquiries, please contact:

Paul Sutton, First4Adoption paul@First4Adoption.org.uk or 020 7841 0514

Emma Parrish, Kindred emma.parrish@kindredagency.com or 020 7010 0818

Becky Sales, Kindred becky.sales@kindredagency.com or 020 7010 0849