

RISK ASSESSMENT

Dos and don'ts for Adoption champions

Do...

- Do talk to your family and let them know that you thinking about being an adoption champion because talking about your experience might have consequences for them too.
- Do remember that by identifying yourself as an adopter, you are automatically identifying one or all of your children as adopted. They need to be comfortable and prepared for that.
- Do be careful not to give out more information about yourself than you need to. People want to hear your story and how you felt about your experiences, they do not need to know your full name and address or your telephone number.
- Do work out a form of words that will help you to '*not answer*' a question you would rather leave unanswered.
- Do remember that if you are an adopter talking about your experience of adopting children who are still young, be very careful not to compromise your children's privacy or safety in any way by talking about your child's experiences before or after you adopted them. *For example: "My child was abused by his birth family and that is why he needed to be adopted."*
- Do look around the space you are using to talk to people about your adoption experience. Is there any information or photographs that might be better kept from view?
- Do make sure that you *know* every body you invite to any event held in your house.
- Do think about where you display any posters and who might see them, particularly if you are inviting people to your home.
- Do remember that letters written to newspapers can be put on websites too and seen by a much wider audience.
- Do follow the advice in the media pack if you become one of our media volunteers.

Don't...

- Don't post pictures of yourself or your children online and don't tag the photos with names.
- Don't identify the school or college that your child attends
- Don't use your children's names on blogs or social networking sites
- Don't identify the location of your children by including details of your address on letters to editors or on social networking websites
- Don't show photos of your children, particularly if they are under 18, when you are talking about your adoption experience
- Don't identify the adoption agency that placed your child. *For example: "My child was placed by the London Borough of Croydon."*
- Don't say anything disparaging or critical about your child's birth family.