

NATIONAL ADOPTION WEEK KICKS OFF IN JERSEY

National Adoption week 10th – 16th November 2008

As National Adoption Week 2008 kicks off this week (10th – 16th November) Fostering & Adoption Jersey says the need for permanent families for children on the island is as great as ever.

The team is specifically looking for families for sibling groups and school age children and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community. The process for becoming an adoptive parent is rigorous, but there are no absolute or 'blanket bans' on who can or cannot become a carer. Any notion that carers who are over 40 or don't own their own home will be turned down should be discarded, as Jersey needs all sorts of carers for all sorts of children. The important thing is to recruit people who can offer a child or sibling group a loving and supportive family for life. People who can help a child move on from the reasons why they came into care and can help them go on to thrive in a new family. Adoption is different today than in the past as Jersey now has a dedicated team committed to supporting adopted children and their families in the long term and working in a creative and flexible way to ensure stability.

In the first instance Fostering & Adoption Jersey are asking people to simply come forward and find out more about adoption. Team Manager, *Sean Pontin*, says: "In Jersey there is an ongoing need for adopters for sibling groups and older children, who often wait longer than others for a new family. We hope that people across the island will be motivated by National Adoption Week to consider adoption or long term fostering and feel able to contact us to find out more."

Anyone interested in finding out more about adoption can call 01534 445273 or visit www.gov.je for further information.

Notes for editors

For further information about the team's work, about National Adoption Week and about how you may be able to help please contact:

**Sean Pontin – Team Manager - 01534 445271, email: s.pontin@health.gov.je
Recruitment/Duty Officer – 01534 445273, email: familyfinding@health.gov.je**

APPENDIX – Additional information for the media

The 10 steps to Permanence

- 1) **Express an interest.** Call Fostering & Adoption Jersey on 01534 445273, email familyfinding@health.gov.je or visit www.gov.je. We will give you general written information about the fostering and adoption process to help you decide if it is for you.
- 2) **Start the assessment process.** Depending on the sort of fostering or adoption you can offer, you may have to wait for a short time before making a formal application. Once this is done approval should not normally take more than 9 months. You will be invited to a preparation course; allocated a social worker who will carry out your assessment by visiting your home on a number of occasions; undergo police and health checks; and asked to provide details of personal referees. Your social worker will write a report called a Prospective Adopters' Report or Form F based on the information gathered.
- 3) **Go to panel for approval.** Your social worker will present your report to the adoption or permanency panel who will recommend whether you should be approved as a carer. The great majority of people (94%) who come this far are approved.
- 4) **Enquire about a child.** Your agency will usually employ a number of strategies to help find a child who is the most suitable match with you. Jersey also has established reciprocal arrangements links with Guernsey and the Isle of Man.
- 5) **Find a child.** If you, your social worker and the child's social worker think you might be a suitable match, you will be offered more information. You may not be the only family considered, so you need to be prepared for highs and lows.
- 6) **Go to panel for linking.** When everyone is happy the right match has been found, it will go to the adoption or permanency panel of the child's agency for approval.
- 7) **Meet the child.** How long the introduction takes varies a great deal: it is important that the pace is set by the child and it may be that older children need longer to be comfortable enough to move.
- 8) **Take the child home.** The child must live with you for some time before an adoption is made legal – in Jersey this is currently 13 weeks.
- 9) **Make the adoption legal.** An adoption only becomes legal when a court makes an adoption order. The adoption transfers all parental responsibility to the adoptive family and is permanent. The child is now legally part of your family – time for a celebration!
- 10) **Bring up your child.** Adoption is a lifelong commitment. It's not always easy, but support is available. And as many adoptive parents will tell you, it can be one of the most rewarding experiences of your life.

For more information about adoption, go to www.nationaladoptionweek.org.uk or www.gov.je

ADOPTION WEEK 10th - 16th NOVEMBER 2008

**This child has
no permanent
home...**

**Like other children in our
care, she may have
to move on again soon.**

**Jersey needs all sorts of carers
for all sorts of children, to find out
how you can help contact us now.**

01534 445273
email: familyfinding@health.gov.je
www.gov.je

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