**Top Tips for children’s social workers

Social Workers for Children Looked After continue their work with birth families too. You need to advocate strongly for Children Looked After to remain in touch with their brothers and sisters.

For Children Looked After who have meeting up arrangements with siblings who are adopted it is sometimes easy for these to slip. Social workers should ensure this continues to happen wherever possible. If not contact your Adoption Support Team.

If adopters are reluctant, it is important to understand why as it may link back to the narrative that existed at the time the child was placed for adoption and/or what the child is going through in their life currently – the time may not be right for them to commence/ reinstate it. Consider alternatives such as letter writing/communicating via email/adopter meeting the siblings to explain if this is possible to achieve.

Make sure that young people you work with know what efforts you have made to support this happening.**

**Other important alternatives that can also be explored (extra letters, photo exchange, video message). It is possible for your young person to still write letters and record messages that can stay on file so their siblings may see in the future they were still thinking of them.

The Adoption Support team work with adopters who are reluctant to continue connection, they work alongside them and understand what some of the barriers may be and encourage them to re-consider.

Sibling relationships are hugely important and the sense of loss for some of our children who are in foster care is profound in many cases. They have not only been removed from parent's care but often feel they have ‘lost’ their brothers and sisters too. Wherever possible try and build links between foster carers and adoptive families so these relationships can continue and grow.**