

# Two Hands

A therapeutic parenting group for adopters –  
setting your family up for success.

Feeling frustrated when reward charts don't work?

Wondering why your child is still having meltdowns when others their age have stopped?

Want to know more about why your child sometimes struggles to listen or hold on to Information?

The idea of using 'two hands' when parenting adopted children is taken from Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, it refers to building understanding, nurture and connection alongside boundaries and routines, to build confidence, trust, attachments and relationships. We aim to give you an adaptable toolkit to support you on your adoption journey using these principles, recognising that you as parents are the experts on your child.

While Two Hands is primarily a training course, it aims to give people the opportunity to share their experiences and learn from other adoptive parents, it often feels more like a facilitated and structured support group. We know how important being with other people who truly understand what it's like to go through the adoption process is.

## FAQ's

**What will we do?** Each week is structured and planned, we start with a review of last week's topic and end with a home practice idea. Each week is facilitated by two staff from the Adoption Support Team, one of which will be the same throughout the course and the other may change around depending on demand or speciality knowledge

We aim to have fun - we do lots of sharing and talking, some practicing of skills, some activities, some group discussion, some power point, some videos, some flipchart, some smaller group practices....and lots of laughing!

**Who is it suitable for?** Adopters of children aged 3-11 years old, who have been with their adoptive families for any length of time.

**What will we talk about?** Adoption, parenting, families and children, all highly personal and potentially sensitive topics. We ask everyone to share only what they are comfortable with, and this is different for everyone....a massive part of the course is hearing other people's experiences, learning from each other and experiencing different perspectives.

**What will I learn?** Different parenting techniques that are based on social learning theory, attachment theories and information about neuroscience and developmental trauma. We ask families to share what works for them and what hasn't worked for them...we've some stories to share, some funny and some sad, and we aim to develop everyone's understanding of why parenting adopted children is different.

**What is the course based on?** The facilitators experienced Together 4 Children adoption support staff who are trained in delivering interventions informed by Theraplay, Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, Non-Violent Resistance, Therapeutic Play and Child Development. The course has been developed in direct response to feedback from our adopters about what training and support they feel they would benefit from.

We use questionnaires and measures to look at the effectiveness of the course and are constantly developing the themes and resources we use to make sure you're getting the most up to date information.

**How much does the course cost?** The course costs £1,000 per person, this is funded by the Adoption Support Fund. If your child has used all of their ASF allocation for other support, you need to discuss this with your families' worker. We work on the premise that funding should not be a barrier to attending the course if you need the support we offer.

**Do both parents have to attend?** It's ideal if a child is being parented by two parents, that they both attend; however we understand that life can be difficult and all those people offering to babysit when you were assessed as adopters have disappeared or have really busy lives themselves, so it's better that one parent comes along than none! It has worked well for other families when one parent attends a course and then the other attends the next scheduled course.

**Do I have to attend all sessions?** Each week builds on the knowledge from the week before, and we ask you to do a little home practice in between sessions, so it can be tricky if you miss any. We don't meet during school holidays. There are 14 sessions, and each session last 2 hours. Sessions are online using Microsoft Teams. People cannot start part way through a course.

**Can I bring a friend or supporter?** Sadly not, an important part of this course is building a network of other adoptive families and sharing experiences, we want this to be safe and confidential space.

**How do I get a place?** You will need an assessment of need in order to attend—there are lots of different training courses around and we want to make sure you go on the right one for you. If you're receiving Adoption Support already talk to your worker, or phone the duty number for your area.

**Staffordshire:** 01889 256325

**Stoke-on-Trent:** 01782 235020

**Shropshire:** 01743 250138

**Telford & Wrekin:** 01743 250138

## What do people who've been on the group say?

I've really enjoyed the course and learnt so much, thank you.

We are finding the course extremely useful and the content invaluable in helping us understand our child. We have a much better understanding of [our child's] behaviour and have seen a lot of improvement.

...the course has been brilliant. When I first signed up I wasn't sure what to expect., its has totally exceeded expectations.

The tutors are very knowledgeable , but also very realistic and have taken the time to ensure that everyone has chance to contribute and feels valued.

It really has given me so much to think about and so much knowledge and insight into some of the issues that our children face.

Thank you . You really have changed so much for us, look forward to learning some more.