



THE MERIDIAN IS IAC'S BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER FOR PROSPECTIVE AND ESTABLISHED ADOPTERS

## 25 YEARS OF IAC

As you will be aware IAC was 25 this year. We are incredibly proud of everything that we have achieved over these years, and we are so pleased that you, your children and families have all become part of the IAC community. Since we began our services, thousands of families have benefited and currently each year around 4000 calls are received by our Advice Lines; 60 new families apply to adopt; 40 children are placed from abroad and 8 from the UK. For the last few years adoption support has become an increasingly important part of our work, and this edition of Meridian is packed full of everything on offer. We encourage you all to make use of these services, particularly our kinship adopters, who often do not think of asking for support. Our fundraising efforts for these services have really paid off and in just three years we have grown our small team to enable more and more families to benefit from support. Just this month our wonderful London Marathon runners have raised £10,000 for us and more is still coming in.

All of these funds will go to funding our support services. We do not expect our IAC families to pay for support but if anyone is willing and able to contribute to our fundraising efforts, we of course welcome that. A one-off donation can be made via our Go Fund Me page [here](#).

Regular giving is also possible and has greater impact. We advise a standing order to be set up for IAC (our bank details are Metro Bank. Sort Code: 23-05-80 Account Number: 23296292). Please use your family name as the reference. A small gift or just £5 or £10 can make a huge difference.

Every penny is appreciated and will go towards delivering support services. Adoption is for life. So is our support.

# NATIONAL ADOPTION *Week*

The start of the autumn season marks the arrival of National Adoption Week, which will be taking place from October 17th to October 23rd. The theme of this year's National Adoption Week is on the importance of relationships and identity for children, and it is one that resonates deeply for our adoptive families and the adopted adults we work with to inform our services. It represents the complexities of the lifelong journey of adoption, particularly around the relationships our children have to their country of origin, their culture, and their earliest relationships.

You might remember that over the summer, our annual IAC conference The Adoption Reconstruction was specifically an opportunity to create conversations about the intersectionality of identity, racism, trauma, and adoption. We had incredibly positive feedback from adopters, adoptees, and professionals in the adoption community about the content, and we are happy to announce that the recordings have been uploaded for you to watch [here](#).

**Please contact [courses@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:courses@icacentre.org.uk) for login details**

This year's theme for National Adoption Week also helps to remind us of the importance of telling and life story work and that through engaging in this ever-evolving process, we can not only help our children better understand themselves and develop their sense of identity, but we can also support stronger adoptive family connections. We understand that life story work is not an easy task, and this newsletter is packed with opportunities to help you along the way, provide you with a sense of community, and a range of support offers.

**As October also marks Black History Month please find a link to resources [here](#).**

# AROUND THE WORLD WITH IAC *Family Day*

Speaking of the theme of relationships and identity, we were delighted to host our in-person Tween Event Super Heroes Unite on September 24th. It was a wonderful day where the children had fun and connected with each other around their adoptions. These opportunities have proved invaluable, and we are looking forward to offering more events for children to come together and celebrate all of who they are. We won't have to wait long, as the next opportunity to support those connections will be our Family Day.

We are very happy to announce that we will be hosting our annual Family Day for the first time since the start of the pandemic. The event, which was unfortunately cancelled over the summer because of extreme heat, will now be taking place on Sunday, November 13th from 12pm – 3pm at Main Hall at Broomfield School, Wilmer Way, Arnos Grove, London N14 7HY, just off the North Circular. It will be a fun afternoon and a chance for your children to connect with others who have been adopted. IAC will be providing the entertainment and beverages, and we ask that you bring your own picnic lunch and a dish representing your child's country of origin to share. There is free parking in the streets nearby on the weekend and public transport is a short walk away. To attend, please register via this [link](#).

**It will be a great day, and we hope to see you there!**

# STORMS IN THE TEACUPS *Parenting Group*



Parenting secondary school aged children (11+) can be a really tricky job and many parents find it frustrating and challenging. Hormonal changes, new schools, new friends, peer influence, bullying, the influence of social media, the pressure to conform all make this time of life hard for teenagers and parents alike. Adoptive parents also have additional concerns as their children process further the meaning of being adopted. We are wanting to offer support to parents but realise that finding time to attend any live event is problematic.

Therefore we are offering a series of informal workshops for parents to share concerns, worries and ideas on Zoom. It will be led by Jan Way MBE, adoptive parent and adoption worker who has direct experience, both personal and professional of negotiating this time of life. Lorna Ramsay, Senior Social Worker, Adoption Support, who is herself a seasoned parent of teenagers, and Katherine Samwell Smith, who has lived experience of being an intercountry adoptee will co-facilitate.

There will be time for discussion but with a focus on:

- The teenage brain and managing behaviour
- Identity Formation
- Friendships and peer influence
- Managing the adoption story and helping your teen to manage the questions and assumptions that come from being an adopted person
- Being different and being bullied
- Social media and the influence on our children

**Dates:** Alternate Saturdays from January 14 to March 2023

**Time:** 10am-12pm

**Location:** Online

**Facilitators:** Jan Way, Katherine Samwell-Smith & Lorna Ramsay

This is a small group programme, and we have space for 10 families to join us.

**If you would like to book please contact Lorna: [lorna.ramsay@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:lorna.ramsay@icacentre.org.uk)**

We are extremely grateful to The Hadley Trust for their generous funding for the provision of this programme.

# TBRI *Therapeutic Parent Training*



TBRI® is an attachment-based, trauma-informed approach that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. TBRI® uses Empowering Principles to address physical needs, Connecting Principles for attachment needs, and Correcting Principles to disarm fear-based behaviours. While the intervention is based on years of attachment, sensory processing, and neuroscience research, the heartbeat of TBRI® is connection.

TBRI® is an excellent resource for adoptive parents, and countless families all over the world have benefitted from implementing TBRI®. Regardless of where you are in your adoptive parenting journey, this approach may help you to support your child to feel safe, to implement a greater secure base for your child to thrive, and help you to create healthy and sustainable shifts within your family. TBRI® is an empowering approach for parents, and we are so pleased to be able to offer it to our IAC families.

We will be offering the TBRI® Caregiver Training at the start of 2023 on the following days from 9.30-4.00 to families who have their child in placement:

**February 24th | March 3rd | March 10th | March 17th**

All training workshops are led by, Jessica Spenceley. Many of you already know Jessica through her role in the IAC Adoption Support Team, but you may not know that Jessica is also a qualified TBRI® Practitioner, one of the first in the UK!

As with all of our adoption support offerings, attending the TBRI® Caregiver Training is free for IAC families. However, limited spaces are available.

**If you would like to book please contact [adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)**

Please note that by signing up, you are committing to attending all four full days of the programme, and we are looking forward to seeing you there!

## VIRTUAL COFFEE MORNINGS FOR INTERCOUNTRY *Waiting Adopters*

For our Intercountry adopters in the process of waiting, our Coffee Mornings may give you an opportunity to connect, share, and feel more supported by people going through a similar experience. Coffee Mornings are hosted by Jessica Spenceley in Adoption Support along with a member of the Post-Approval Team, and together, they will be able to provide support around the questions and uncertainties you may have.

All Coffee Mornings take place from 10am – 11:30am via Zoom, and our next session is scheduled to take place on 29 November.

**If you would like to attend, please RSVP to [adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)**

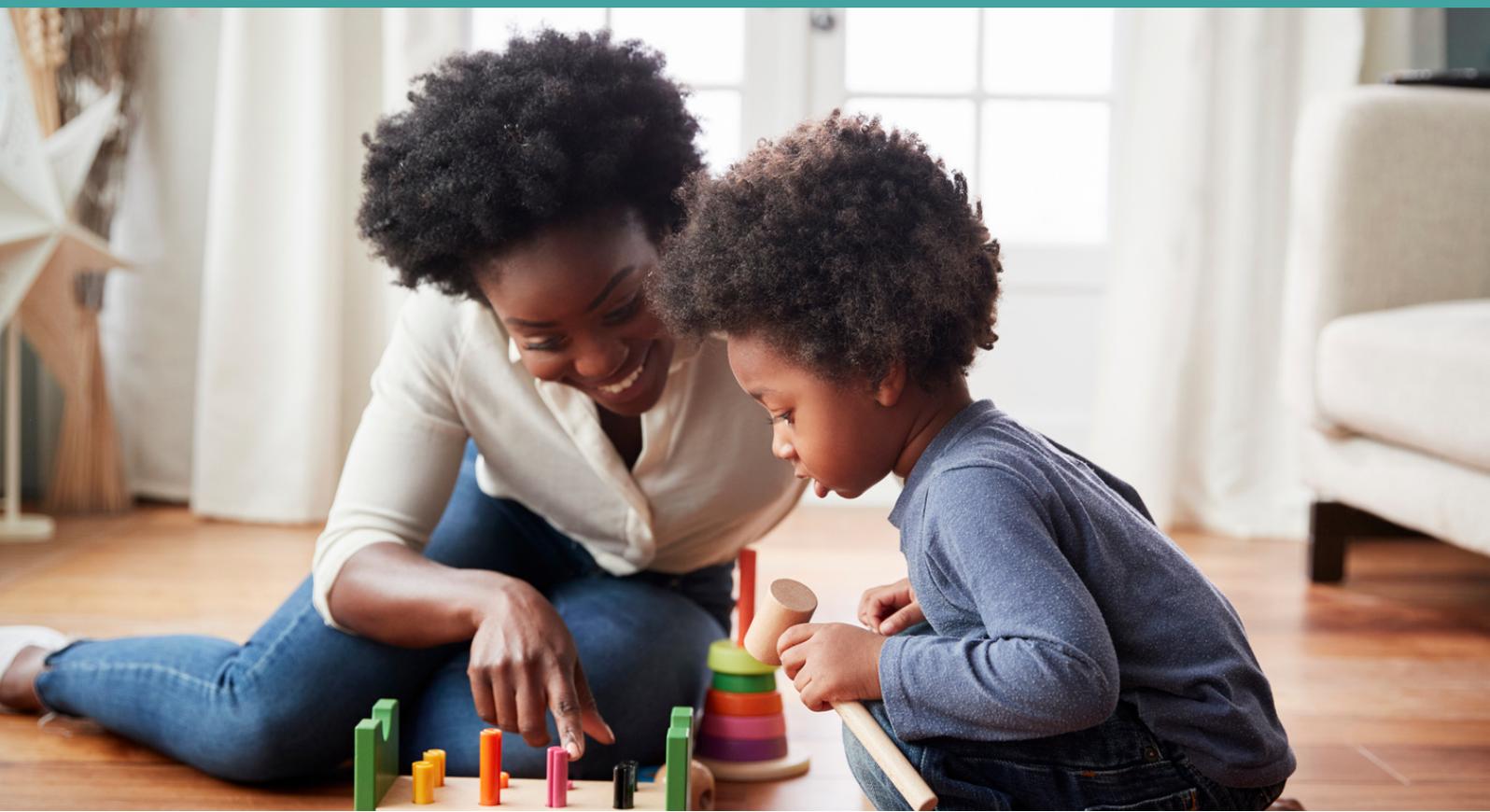
## SINGLE ADOPTER *Group*

The journey of adoption as a single parent is unique, and our Single Adopter Group is a space to support you along your journey wherever you are in the process, whether that be in the phase of waiting for a child to join your family or as a seasoned adoptive parent. The group is a helpful space where you may connect with others who understand your experience, feel supported, and grow as you navigate your adoption journey.

Groups are hosted by Jessica Spenceley, as well as a member of the Post-Approval Team, and together, they will be able to provide support around the questions and uncertainties you may have.

All Single Adopter Group sessions take place from 10am – 11:30am via Zoom, and our next session is scheduled to take place on 06 December.

**If you would like to attend, please RSVP to [adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)**



# AFRICAN ADOPTION *Support Group*

The African Adoption Support Group is a welcoming space for families connected to adoption from Africa. It is led by Jessica Spenceley along with Paula Bennet in the Post-Approval Team, and we encourage all who are interested to attend, particularly our established adopters.

Sessions take place on Saturdays from 12pm – 2pm via Zoom, and our next session is scheduled to take place on 03 December.

**If you would like to attend, please RSVP to [adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)**

# LIFE STORY *Telling Group*

We are delighted to announce our new Life Story Telling Group, which we have designed with our families of identified children in mind.

**Date:** Held Quarterly - Next Date is 4 November  
**Time:** 10am-12pm  
**Location:** Online via Zoom  
**Facilitator:** Lorna Ramsay

In this small group setting, adopters of identified children will have the opportunity to come together to explore the roots of storytelling and how these link to their child's culture of origin. With Lorna as your guide, you'll think together about how to weave these cultural links into your child's own story in a way that helps them to strengthen their sense of identity, understand why they were adopted, and gain a greater sense of belonging in your adoptive family. The group will be a balance of discussion, learning, and applying new skills, and there will be a lot of helpful tips and tools to take away!

**If you would like to book please contact Lorna: [lorna.ramsay@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:lorna.ramsay@icacentre.org.uk)**



# 2022 WORKSHOP *Program*



## Creating Life Story Books

**Date:** Thursday, 03 November

**Time:** 10am-1pm

**Location:** Online via Zoom

**Facilitator:** Jessica Spenceley

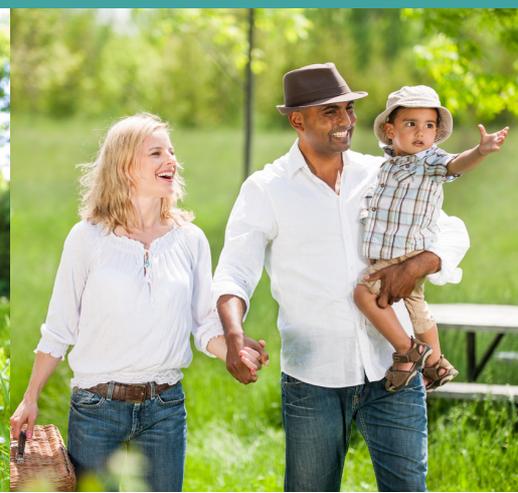
Our lives are a collection of stories, and for adopted children, some of those stories are lost, confusing, and painful. Adopted children often struggle to make sense of what has happened in their lives and why, and as parents, we sometimes struggle to find the right words to explain the most sensitive parts of our child's history. One of the most powerful tools to help children understand concepts and ideas is through the use of stories, and there is no story more powerful than your child's own. Life story books are a helpful tool to support your child's understanding of where they came from, where they are today, and what may be possible in the future. Join us on November 3rd to learn how to create a book that positively affirms who your child is, while giving them language and context around how they came to be adopted.

During the workshop, Jessica will focus upon:

- Making a life story book
- Telling your child's story
- Using a life story book

Whether you are just beginning to think about how to use a life story book with your child or would like tips to enhance a book you have already created, this workshop is for you.

**If you would like to attend, please contact us at [adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)**



# FAMILY & FRIENDS *Workshop*

**Dates:** Tuesday 8 November  
**Time:** 10am-1pm  
**Location:** Online via Zoom  
**Facilitators:** Jessica Spenceley

Having a sense of community and compassionate support are important for all families, but especially for families who come together through adoption. Our Family and Friends Workshop is a space just for your loved ones, and it is designed to provide them with information, guidance, and tips about adoption, coming together as an adoptive family, and how they may helpfully support you along your family's journey.

On the day, your loved ones will learn more about:

- The adoption process
- Why children are available for adoption
- The impact that a difficult start may have upon a child
- Building safe and nurturing relationships
- Talking about adoption
- Supporting the adoptive family in your life

The workshop is a great space for your family and friends, regardless of where you are in the adoption process, but it is especially helpful for families who are waiting, matched, or recently had their child placed with them.

**To find out more information, please reach out to us at [courses@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:courses@icacentre.org.uk)**

# BABY & CHILD FIRST AID *Workshops*

Whether you are expectantly awaiting the arrival of your child or are a seasoned parent, the Baby & Child First Aid Workshop offered through Links Care Education & Training Specialists will help to equip you with additional skills and tools.

On this workshop, you will learn what to do if you find yourself in an emergency with your child, including the skills you need to handle situations like choking, burns, heavy bleeding, and seizures. We encourage you to attend so that you are prepared, should there be an event where you need to put your skills to use.

To find out more about Links Care Education & Training Specialists, please visit their [website](#). If you would like to view their upcoming workshop dates or book a place at one of their sessions, please visit this [link](#).



## Consultation Service

Our Consultation Service provides you with the opportunity to explore a range of issues you may be experiencing, like those around life story work, loss and grief, identity, family relationships, handling emotions, and managing the impact of the pandemic. The service has been thriving, and families have expressed how useful these sessions have been, especially around the area of life story work. Consultation sessions are relaxed, yet informative, and they generally last about an hour. Importantly, they are also free for our families.

**If you would like to gain more information about our consultations or to book a session, please contact us at [adoptionsupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionsupport@icacentre.org.uk)**

## PARENT-TO-PARENT SUPPORT

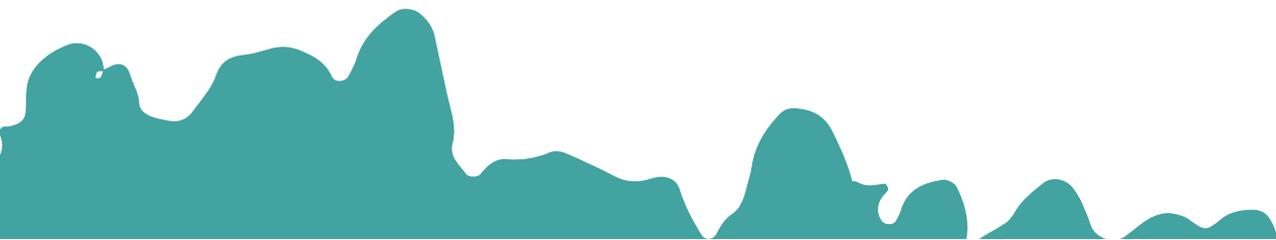
Having a sense of community is so important in the adoption experience, and here are a few resources that you may like to tap into to expand your network, with people who know where you're coming from and understand your perspective.

### ASHA

ASHA is a support group for parents who have adopted from India, and if you would like additional information, please contact Shenaz Drury via email at [shenazdrury@fun.waitrose.com](mailto:shenazdrury@fun.waitrose.com)

### Pakistan Adoption Network UK

The Pakistan Adoption Network UK, also referred to as PAN UK, provides information and support for parents who have adopted, or are in the process of adopting, a child from Pakistan. For further information, please email Jessica, and she'll provide you with the group's current contact details.



## CACH-All

CACH-ALL is a support group for families in the UK who have completed an intercountry adoption or are in the process. No matter where in the world you have adopted from, you and your child will be very welcome at CACH-ALL. They have great resources and events on offer throughout the year, so do check them out [here](#).

In fact, there is a fantastic Adoptee Spotlight event coming up on November 12th that your family might like to attend. They will be hosting TED-style adoptee-focused talks, Q&As, and there will also be adoptee run stalls. If you would like to attend, you can purchase your tickets [here](#).

## GFA

The Guatemalan Families Association is a support group for families living in Britain who have adopted or are in the process of adopting children from Guatemala. Visit their website [here](#).

## We are Family

We are Family is a network of adoptive parents based primarily in London that offers great resources and virtual get-togethers. For more information, please visit their [website](#).

# IAC'S REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY PARTNERS

For our families in the northwest or northeast of England, we encourage you to look into the workshop offers and wider support services from our Regional Adoption Agency partners, who would be happy to hear from you. The three agencies are Adoption Matters, Nugent Adoption, and ARC Adoption North East.

Adoption Matters works in partnership with the Centre for Adoption Support, which is an organisation that offers a comprehensive adoption support service, including interesting and informative workshops. To find out more information, please visit their [website](#).

The workshops on offer through Nugent Adoption may be found [here](#) or through contacting their friendly team via email at [adoption@nugentcare.org](mailto:adoption@nugentcare.org). Similarly, the workshops and support on offer through ARC Adoption North East may be found by accessing their website [here](#) or through contacting their helpful team via email at [info@arcadoptionne.org.uk](mailto:info@arcadoptionne.org.uk)



# EXTERNAL *Support*

## Adoptionplus

Adoptionplus offers a variety of support services to adoptive parents, including therapy and useful training workshops that cover a range of issues. To view the support they have on offer, visit their [website](#).

## Beacon House

Beacon House provides a range of assessments and therapies for children and young people, families, and adults, who are experiencing mental health difficulties, emotional and behavioural problems, and relationship conflict. The holistic team offers a comprehensive service, and they have a special interest in helping to repair the effects of trauma and attachment disruption. Beacon House also has a fantastic selection of online trainings that you can purchase and watch in your own time, with topics like sensory integration and emotional regulation that many families will find to be helpful. To find out more, please visit their [website](#).

## Catch

Children and Trauma Community Hub (formerly The Adopter Hub) is an online platform providing support to adopters, foster carers, special guardians, and the professionals that work with them. CATCH is a wonderful online resource for parents that offers a full programme of webinars, guides, tips, and support. To see how the Adopter Hub might be helpful for your family, visit their website [here](#).

Thanks to generous funding during the pandemic from The National Lottery Community Fund, in the near future, IAC will be launching bespoke online modules via CATCH specifically for intercountry adopters. We are really excited about this development and will publish more news about access to the new modules closer to the launch. CATCH has provided us with a limited number of log-ins, and if you would like to give CATCH a try, please email us at [adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)

## Great Behaviour Breakdown

The Great Behaviour Breakdown (GBB) is a parenting approach that has helped even the most difficult of family situations find stability and healing. This training programme acknowledges the importance of educating parents to enhance their parenting skills in order to better meet their child's needs, and it helps families shift away from anger, blame, and hopelessness into a place of understanding, compassion, and love. GBB focuses on the parent-child relationship and helps parents create environments for their children that are safe and conducive to building strong love-based attachment relationships. To find out about upcoming workshops, click [here](#).



## KINSHIP

Kinship is a wonderful organisation for our families who have come together through kinship care. They have a range of services on offer, including peer support, workshops, and practical advice. To find out more, visit their website [here](#), and to access their free workshops for kinship carers click [here](#).

## PAC-UK

PAC-UK offers a wide range of services to children and families, including comprehensive training workshops and seminars for adoptive parents. To view what is currently on offer, please visit their website [here](#).

## National Association of Therapeutic Parents

The National Association of Therapeutic Parents (NATP) is a helpful space for adoptive parents that provides support, education, and resources as you move along on your parenting journey. To learn more click [here](#).

# THE LONDON *Marathon* 2022

On Sunday 2 October, more than 40,000 participants of all ages, backgrounds and abilities took to the streets of London from Greenwich to The Mall for an amazing day at the 2022 TCS London Marathon. This year "Team IAC" had 6 runners all of whom completed the course safely ranging from 4:56:20 to 7:36:17 hours. So far, they have already raised over £10,000 with donations still coming in. We had IAC volunteers along the route to support them and thankfully, this year, the weather was on our side.

We would like to say a massive thank you to our Team: **Finbarr, Philip, Gabriela, Ryan, Matt & Ethan!**

All funds raised by runners will go directly towards the creation and delivery of essential support services to IAC's children and families.

We have limited places for next year's London Marathon which will take place on Sunday 23 April 2023. If you have been unsuccessful in the ballot or know someone who is looking for a place, please get in touch with [Claire.Palmer@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:Claire.Palmer@icacentre.org.uk) for further details as soon as possible to reserve a place.





## CONCLUSION

We at IAC welcome receiving your stories, thoughts, and words of encouragement, as well as providing you with a space to share them with other adoptive parents in this community forum. If there is something you would like to express in the upcoming edition of Meridian, please email us:

[adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk](mailto:adoptionssupport@icacentre.org.uk)

To keep up with all that IAC is up to, please follow us on social media:

