



School of Social Science, Education and Social Work
Queens University Belfast
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Participant Information Sheet

Title of study: Birth parents' experiences of contact with children adopted in the last 10 years: making and living out arrangements

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. It is entirely your choice whether or not to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study aims to capture and understand how post-adoption contact plans are made and birth parents experience their formulation and out-workings. The legal, policy and practice framework around post-adoption contact will be considered in light of the research findings from this study and what is already known from the existing research.

Why have I been chosen?

As a legal representative in Northern Ireland you are being asked if you would consider participating in the research. Legal representatives with experience in freeing proceedings or cases involving post-adoption contact are being asked to participate in order to share their experience and knowledge of the formulation of post-adoption contact plans and any experiences they have of them returning to Court. Separate interviews with birth parents will also be taking place.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and you will be asked to sign a consent form. If you

want to take a break or stop the interview you can. If you decide you no longer want your interview to be part of the research you need to tell me this within two weeks of your interview; after that it will have been incorporated into the analysis and will not be possible to remove. You do not have to give a reason for withdrawing.

If you know me, you are still asked to consider taking part but should not feel any personal or professional obligation to participate, there is none! If you do participate and know me, please bear in mind during the interview that this is for research purposes and do not feel obliged to discuss anything or answer any question in a way that you might in a personal capacity.

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form and to arrange a time convenient to you to meet with the researcher for an interview. The interview can be at your place of work or another convenient location. The interview will be tape recorded and will last around an hour (subject to the discussion that unfolds).

Your interview will be confidential (unless you disclose something which suggests a risk of harm to yourself or others in which case statutory agencies may need to be informed – for more information see the enclosed disclosure protocol for the research). You will be given a cipher by the researcher and any identifiable features will be removed from your interview transcript. If you would like to know your cipher to recognise yourself in the research I will tell you it. Your data will be kept in accordance with a data protection protocol a copy of which you can request. If you choose to claim CPD accreditation you will likely advise your professional body that you took part in the research through claiming accreditation.

The interviews will be analysed to identify any patterns, themes or issues emerging and the findings will be used for the researcher's PhD thesis and possibly other articles, talks or conference presentations. Please advise the researcher if you wish to receive a summary of the research findings.

What are the possible risks/disadvantages and benefits of taking part?

Solicitors can claim 1 general study CPD point for participation. CPD accreditation has been sought for barrister's participation in the research. This will be an opportunity to reflect on your knowledge and experience and to provide an insight into an area in which research is lacking. This research will require you give some of your time.

What about my professional obligations in terms of confidentiality?

You should familiarise yourself with your professional duties relating to any confidential information entrusted to you by a client. You should familiarise yourself with the applicable code of conduct of your profession, your duties in relation to confidentiality, legal professional privilege and under data protection legislation. The study will ask about your experiences generally and your own opinions, you are not asked to give specific examples and you should not provide any information which would be identifiable. If you have any queries about participating and your professional obligations, please seek advice.

What if something goes wrong?

If you have any concerns about any aspects of the study, you can contact the Chief Investigator {insert}. Should you remain unhappy and wish to make a formal complaint, you can contact the Research Governance Team at Queen's University Belfast (Telephone: 028 9097 2529; Email: researchgovernance@qub.ac.uk).

Who is organising and funding the research?

The research is undertaken for a PhD qualification and is sponsored by the Department for Economy.

This study has been reviewed by the Office for Research Ethics Committees Northern Ireland (ORECNI).

Your data

Your name and contact details will be confidential and this information will be used as needed to contact you about the research study. Certain individuals from the University may look at your details to check the accuracy of the research. Transcription services may be used in order to transfer the raw audio recordings into text. If such a service is used, it will be arranged using a Data Processing Agreement, between the transcription service and Queen's University Belfast. This will ensure that the transfer, processing and storage of your personal data will be completed in a confidential and secure manner, with requirements for GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018 included in the agreement.

Queen's University will be the sponsor and will act as the data controller. This means we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. We will keep identifiable information about you for 5 years after the study has finished. If you consent to it, you may be contacted about other research projects. If you would like further information about the data protection in this project ask the researcher and you will be provided with a copy of the data protection protocol or see the privacy notice at www.qub.ac.uk/privacynotice.

You can stop the interview at any point. If you no longer wish to be part of the research you can contact me within 2 weeks of your interview to indicate your wish to withdraw. After that time your data will have been incorporated (anonymously) and it will not be possible to withdraw.

Contact for Further Information

Phone: 07775 087 097

(please note this phone will go out of service in October 2019)

Email: shansen01@qub.ac.uk

Thank you for your interest in this study and for taking the time to read through this information sheet.

Questions to reflect on prior to the interview:

What issues, in your experience are taken into account in post-adoption contact plans?

In your experience, how and when are post adoption contact plans reached?

What are your expectations for contact after Court proceedings end?

What do you think about post-adoption contact in Northern Ireland?

What services, if any, in your opinion do birth parents need before, during and after freeing proceedings?