

Coram Adoption: Film Transcript

Concurrent Planning: Conversations with carers

Concurrent Planning puts the needs of vulnerable babies in care at the heart of planning for their long term future.

A baby or child under the age of two is placed with foster carers who are willing to adopt them later if adoption is decided to be the best option.

These carers are approved both as foster carers and adopters.

This protects babies from being moved between multiple carers in early life, whether they return to their birth family or remain with their adopters.

- Mark: I think the good thing about concurrent planning is going in the mindset that you're a foster carer.
- Mark: It's quite different to an adoption process that doesn't involve concurrency and I guess that's what you have to weigh up right from the offset.
- Mark: I think going in and saying 'I'm going to look after this child, on your behalf, while the local authorities, the courts and everyone else decides what's the right future for the child'.
- Bill: If you want to go in with the certainty you're going to end up with an adopted child, then I would say don't do concurrent planning.
- Heather: It's about 'what is the best solution for this child' and it may or may not be you.
- Veronique: We were approved kind of mid-January.
- Bill: We were told we may have to wait months.
- Mark: You find out on the Monday – it's a possibility you're picking up a child on Thursday.
- Mark: And then it was definitely going ahead – the next day.
- Heather: And we were asked to be at the hospital by 3 o'clock, ready to take her home.
- Bill: And we were very prepared, and we came back and we didn't know what to do.

- Heather: You have contact and that's all about the birth parents, having, building up a relationship with their child in safe circumstances.
- Jane: I think Coram are very protective, they were very protective of us in the contact sessions, making sure we weren't in a position to be in the firing line if something was not going the parents way.
- Heather: It is awful when you see people that are desperately upset and you know you're going to be looking after their child.
- Heather: It's not about and them, it's not a judgement 'who is a better parent?'. It's whether the birth parents are good enough.
- Mark: It is an emotional journey and I think you do go through a rollercoaster from being happy to sometimes being angry.
- Veronique: I have absolutely no regret what-so-ever having gone through this process; I'd do it all over again.
- Heather: I think it's an amazing process, it's not easy but you can do it.
- Mark: The outcomes and the benefits are massive and those aren't benefits that you can get from any other process.
- Bill: If you're prepared for the uncertainty, if you're prepared to be part of the whole process with the child then concurrent planning is fantastic.

With thanks to Veronique & Mark, Bill & Jane, Heather & Mark.