

## Inquiry into Local Adoption

Dear Secretary,

My name is [redacted] and I am the adopted daughter of [redacted]. I am 18 years old. Previous to my adoption in February of this year, I was their foster daughter and had been for 7 years. I was admitted into the foster care system in 2011 with my two siblings, and while their placements changed, I made the decision to “stay put” in the [redacted] family as I saw that my needs would be maintained by their stable and structured lifestyle, far from how things had been in my home environment.

I first believed foster care to be a harsh place due to my birth-mum saying that being in foster care is horrible and scary. Anyway, I arrived into the [redacted] family as a shy, self-conscious, traumatised and hurt little girl, with no knowledge on what will happen to me and my siblings. What was initially supposed to be a week in my new home turned into months and years, and through my placement I started to thrive. By the end of 2011, I voiced my request to be adopted, as I loved the family I had been placed in.

Since 2011 I have sent several letters directed to the CYPS authorities regarding my request to be adopted into the [redacted] family, but nothing seemed to be happening. My frustration over the years in wanting a promising outcome for my future was because it took forever.

I was a preteen, and then a teenager, who knew what she wanted but the system obviously ignored my request for my adoption to happen sooner, or else it wouldn't have taken so long. Children in the foster care system who are capable in voicing their rights for an adoption, and wish to remain as a permanent member in their “forever home,” should not feel ignored and saddened like I did because we all come from birth-families that treated us poorly. The slow action of organisations who have legal responsibility for the outcome of our lives, can hurt us.

So, if I was to go back in time and visit that little girl who just arrived at [redacted] house, I would hug her and say “Everything will be alright. Just hold on for the long ride.”

Kind regards,

30<sup>th</sup> April 2018