Dear Parent

**AEM Peer Support Network - sharing knowledge, expertise and lived experience to provide understanding, support and service development**

At AEM we are committed to seeking out and hearing the reality of the lived experience of adoption and adoptive parenting so that we can think about how we can best support families throughout their adoption journey. We also know through conversations with adopters that the support they really value is that which they receive from their peers who have been through or are going through similar experiences.

Adoptive families are the most important resource for their children to achieve the best possible outcomes and at AEM we want to empower all adopters to deliver and sustain positive change for their children.

As a regional organisation AEM want to develop strong relationships and build a connected community of adopters and professionals across the whole Region to influence service provision and delivery of those services for adopted children and their families.

We would like to invite you to be part of a collaborative working party with AEM with the purpose of developing collaborative peer group support across the Region. The aim of the group will be to identify opportunities to share your knowledge and experiences as adopters to support others facing similar challenges as well as with prospective adopters within AEM. This might be through supporting our training (adopters and staff), offering 1:1 or group peer support, attendance at staff team meetings to share knowledge and experience or simply to have your views and opinions heard.

Adopter Voice facilitated focus groups on our behalf and as a result of this we have identified a number of key focus areas that we would like to collaborate on with a group of adopters who have knowledge and experience in each or any of those key areas which are:

* Education
* Complex trauma and the impact (including FASD, Child to Parent Violence, Neurodevelopmental needs, Developmental trauma)
* Parenting adopted teens / young adults
* Cultural Identity in adoption

We are aspiring to develop a cohesive group to meet monthly to encourage new thinking in order to develop innovative and effective support for all families. The group will include professionals from AEM as well as professionals from other relevant agencies alongside yourselves which will enable shared ideas to become a reality.

If you feel able to be part of what we believe will be an exciting collaborative partnership and can be available to join our virtual working lunch on Monday 20th June 11.00am-1.00pm please email [gabrielleberends.marsh@adoptioneastmidlands.nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:gabrielleberends.marsh@adoptioneastmidlands.nottscc.gov.uk) and we will forward a Teams invite.

Please also contact Gabby should you be unable to attend this date but wish to be part of the working party and future meetings

We look forward to hearing from you

Best Wishes

AEM Adoption Support