



My Experience as a Solo Male Adopter

I am writing this five months into becoming a Dad – something I had always hoped for, but for quite some time thought may never happen. I have wanted to be a Dad for as long as I can remember, even more so since my nephew was born in 2017, but for a long time didn't feel that I could. I knew adoption was the right journey for me, but for many years found reasons not to start the process yet. One of the main reasons was that I was not in a relationship. For quite some time I thought I needed to wait until I had met someone before I could offer a child a loving and nurturing home. I couldn't have been more wrong.

Once I finally realised this, I started my journey of becoming a Dad through adoption. Whilst very excited to start the journey, I was also still pretty nervous about being a solo adopter. Would there be any other solo adopters on the training? Would I be the odd one out? Would this process be much longer because a couple would always be favoured over me? The truth is, I had nothing to worry about at all. Yes, I was the only solo adopter at the training, but it really wasn't a big deal. The training was actually a great opportunity to meet other adopters, regardless of whether in a couple or not, and I have kept in touch with some of them since. Recently we met up again at one of the ACE coffee and chat events – but this time with our children, which was lovely!

The adoption process, for everyone, can feel a little intense at times. Understandably, it has to be a very in-depth assessment about every part of your life to make sure you are matched with a child that you can best support and help flourish. But this is not unique to being a solo male adopter, this is the same for everyone; whereas couples would lean on each other through the process, I lent on my incredible support network of family and friends.

So, my Son has now been with me for five months – which has absolutely flown by. Becoming a Dad has been everything I had hoped for and more. Being a solo parent does of course come with added pressures, such as not having a second pair of hands, or another parent to tag team with when you're feeling tired or just need 2 minutes to brush your teeth... but again, this is where your own support network comes in. My son loves nothing more than to spend some time with his Grandparents or Uncle while I just take a minute.

It actually turns out there are also some real perks of being a solo male adopter too! I have been able to take the equivalent of maternity leave all to myself and am getting to spend a significant amount of time just focusing on my son and building a strong relationship with him – something I potentially would have needed to share if in a couple. I get to enjoy all of the snuggles and don't have to share them, unless I want to. I don't have to worry about whether my parenting style matches someone else; which I suppose means that I am always right...

Becoming a solo Dad through adoption was one of the best things I have ever done. My message to anyone currently unsure about starting the process is – definitely do not rule yourself out just because you are male and single.