

end2endin10 - Adam's Story

Wow! Where do I start? The first few years for my twin sister Sarah and myself were very messy! We were abandoned by our birth mother and have had no contact or information regarding a birth father. There must have been one! During our first six years of life we spent various times with a total of fifteen different foster carers, most of whom I have very little memory of. There was however one fantastic family - Mick and Mandy - who had children of their own and they made life fun and took us on our first holiday abroad.

They prepared us for the hope of a future 'forever mum and dad'. During this time there were regular visits from social workers and occasional contact with our birth mother. We both remember well that our last placement was extremely difficult with rigid discipline. Then there came the possibility of life with a family. One of the worst things that happened during this period was for Sarah and I to be split for a period of six months. That should never happen to twins. Finally the day came when following visits from Families for Children and one particular social worker called David we were going to be introduced to our new family. The day arrived. The car drew up and both of us had our faces almost glued to the window where we were living. What do we call them? What do we say? Would they like us? Well, we were about to find out.

What we did not know was that Paul and Sandra had already met us as Families for Children had organised a visit for them to see us whilst we were at a holiday school. They therefore knew something about us. We of course had had photographs of them given to us over a period of a few weeks so that we did know a little bit about them but meeting them was something different! Well there we were. It seemed quite easy to say Dad and Mum and soon it seemed that it might really happen. A Forever Mum and Dad!! Over the next few weeks there were the normal visits which were extremely difficult and both of us remember vividly the tears when we could not be taken back immediately to start this new life. Then finally the day arrived and we were taken to North Devon to what would be our new and very first real home. It was almost unreal and what a chapter in our life story.

On the whole I settled well but at the time was physically very frail and under nourished. Slowly we came to understand what a real family was like. Of course we had to have rules



and we worked some of these out with Mum and Dad. Of course there was some anger about those first few years and after a period of time both Sarah and I decided that we wanted to have no further contact with our birth mother as the visits that we were having made us so upset and angry.

Finally we were going to Court to get our new birth certificates and our new names and finally be a real part of a real family. When the judge told me that I could now be called Charles Adam Jewels he asked me what I was going to do next. By then I was nine and quickly responded "I think we will go to the pub to celebrate!" Going down the steps from the Court I can remember saying to Dad, "no more social workers, fantastic". So life continued in Braunton. We can both remember some difficult times when we were teased about being adopted but Mum and Dad have always told us that we are special because we have been chosen and this was emphasised by Families for Children. We went with Mum and Dad one day to a Families for Children dinner with their Patron, Michael Caines MBE. He was brilliant to us and I think that our being there showed everybody what adoption is all about.

So life has progressed and at school I was very involved with sport and music - playing saxophone in a jazz band and playing cricket, squash and rugby for the school. I am now at university in Swansea studying criminology and the criminal justice system. Obviously this has been a time to make new friends and have new experiences.

I have recently taken up road cycling and was asked to join a group of 10 to cycle 1000 miles in 10 days in 2010. Dad has always been very involved in fundraising and here was my chance to do some as well. I will be cycling with a great set of guys from North Devon and we will cycle down the coast from John O Groats to Lands End.

There are three charities involved, The Hospice in North Devon, Children's Hospice South West and Families for Children. Of course we want to raise a lot of money but I know also that it will be a fantastic challenge and hope that as many people as possible will be able to support us. Please look at www.end2endin10.com and contact my Dad if you would like to sponsor me. Thanks for your support. Adam

To sponsor Adam, or for business sponsorship opportunities, please contact Adam's father Paul Jewels on 07970921062.

There will also be a limited number of places to join a group of cyclists who will cover the last 100km of the route and take part in the celebrations at Land's End. To join this elite group once again please contact Paul - only £30 per cyclist.



My sister Sarah and Dad Paul presenting Michael with his 'Top Chef' shirt