Contents

1	**Introduction**	**1**
2	**Placing siblings together**	**3**
3	**The context**	**6**
	Legislation and statutory guidance	6
	Ethnicity issues	8
	Avoiding delay	9
	New "adoption scorecards"	11
	The Adoption Register and the inter-agency fee	12
	Adoption support	14
4	**Research on large sibling groups: a brief overview**	**16**
	Key findings from other research on siblings	16
5	**Our research: aims, sample and method**	**19**
	Aims	19
	The sample	19
	Methodology	20
6	**The characteristics of the siblings and their adopters**	**21**
	The children	21
	The adopters	22
	Practice implications	23
7	**Keeping siblings together**	**24**
	Decision-making	24
	Overcoming the barriers	25
	A shortage of adopters for large sibling groups	25
	Practice implications	26

8 Recruiting adopters for large sibling groups 28
Recruitment methods 28
What makes a difference? 30
Practice implications 30

9 Sibling group adopters' motivations and choice of agency 32
How adoption practice affected adopters' decisions 32
Wanting to keep siblings together 33
A better chance of adopting a baby or not waiting so long to adopt 34
Practice implications 34
Sibling group adopters' reasons for choosing their adoption agency 35
Practice implications 36

10 Assessment 37
Assessing children 37
Assessing adopters 37
Practice implications 41

11 Preparation for adopting sibling groups 43
Preparation for adopters 43
Preparing children for adoption 44
Reuniting siblings who have been separated 44
Multi-agency preparation 45
Practice implications 45

12 Matching and providing information 47
Children's photographs 47
Learning about the children 47
Providing all the necessary information 48
Practice implications 49

13 Introductions and placement 51
Accommodation and transport 51
Preparing children to meet their new parents 52
Practice implications 53
Transition and placement 54
Which works best: placing siblings at the same time or consecutively? 55
Accepting the adopters 55
Practice implications 56

14 Providing support to sibling group adopters **57**
Financial support and adoption allowances 58
The need for practical and emotional support 58
Practice implications 64

15 The well-being of the children and their adopters **66**
Practice implications 67

16 Contact with siblings living elsewhere **68**
The need for information about siblings 68
Practice implications 69

17 Adopters' perspectives on how it was working out **70**
Some of the difficulties 71
How were the adopters coping? 72
Keeping the sibling group together: right or wrong? 73
A national adoption scheme or gateway 73
Practice implications 74

18 Conclusions **75**

References **77**