

# Practice Matters

## Chronologies

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### What is a Chronology?

At its basic level a chronology is a list in date order of all the major changes and events in a person's life. A chronology seeks to provide a clear account of all significant events in a child's life to date, drawing upon the knowledge and information held by agencies.

### Why do Chronologies?

Good assessment of children and families has always been concerned with past events and their relevance to a person or families' current situation. Past life events are known to have an impact on people's current behaviour. Chronologies are a good way of recording past events in a way that is easily accessible. They can provide early indications of emerging patterns of concern or progress.

In the recent Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham it was commented that *"it is likely that the absence of structured chronologies contributed to key information being missed when decisions were made"*

A chronology is not an end in itself. It is a tool which professionals should use to assist the process of analysis, assessment and review and can be used to great effect in supervision.

### How to produce a Chronology

All new referrals that come through Starting Point will have had a Chronology episode opened in FWi. The Chronology episode should be reopened once allocated to a worker and all the previous information will be pulled through. The lead professional involved with a child (SW or MAT worker etc.) is responsible for opening this new episode, but once open any professional working with that child can add information.

To create a **New Chronology**: Select **'New Episode'** under the People tab on a child's front screen, and then choose **CAYA Chronology**.

When large chronologies are being completed for sibling groups, the chronology episode should initially be opened on the *eldest* child. Once a period of recording has been completed the information can then be used to pull through to siblings files. Chronologies should be updated every six weeks when the plan is reviewed or when there is a significant event.

For fuller instructions and guidance on Chronologies, including the meaning of significant event, click on this link: [CAYA Chronology Process \(CAYA\)](#).

### Action Required

Only the Fwi Chronology episode must be used. All open cases are required to have an open chronology episode. Court chronologies should use the FWi Chronology as the basis and add additional information as required.