

## One Minute Guide - C&F Significant Life Events

The Child & Family Assessment has an embedded chronology of the family's significant life events. A well produced chronology is the foundation of your Child & Family Assessment and should provide the reader with a clear understanding of the family history and social care intervention.

***Helpful Tip! The chronology should be the first section you complete.***

A well-produced chronology informs the reader of the sequence of significant events in a child's life. The chronology should collate all of the significant events in the child & family's life, how the local authority has responded to any relevant events, involvement with partner agencies/professional network, multi-disciplinary teams, or other experts and professionals to inform the assessment.

The C&F chronology adopts a more analytical style by including an **analysis of the significance of the event**. If you are unable to explain the significance of the event, you may be including extraneous detail.

### ***Best Practice Points***

Please observe the following best practice points when completing your chronology:

- ❖ **Obtain supporting documents** from the police, health and educational professionals to inform your assessment. These sources of evidence should be succinctly summarized and analysed, or cross referenced, not reproduced in full.
- ❖ **It is recommended that you complete and refine your chronology of significant events before attempting any of the sections on analysis! Avoid introducing new significant events (evidence) in other sections of the C&F.**
- ❖ Historic evidence should be summarised and discussed thematically within date ranges unless there is an incident of particular importance;
- ❖ The new style chronology should not be more than 4-5 pages long even for families with long social services histories,
- ❖ A chronology should not repeat the narrative contained in process or case recordings, this evidence should be analysed and presented in a succinct summary;

- ❖ The evidence in the chronology should not be reproduced in the analysis, however, can be cross referenced (referred to) or further analysis provided;
- ❖ For cases of **chronic neglect and emotional harm** you may wish to use a thematic approach to discuss patterns of behaviour observed within date periods may be helpful;
- ❖ Avoid information overload: reflect on what is evidence that goes towards threshold, what is there to add context, and what does not need to be included at all. Sometimes rewording a paragraph can reduce unnecessary information and focus on the evidence.

### *Significant Events*

A '*significant event*' is an incident, event or issue that impacts on the child's welfare and/or safety.

The types of incidents, events, or issues that should be included in a chronology might include:

- ❖ Incidents, such as domestic violence, bullying, physical chastisement, injury, neglect (such as left alone, or unkempt appearance, stealing or hoarding food), police investigations, child protection investigations, substantiated and unsubstantiated referrals/allegations of incidents, incidents that indicate concern about a child's social, emotional or behavioural development, or any other incident where the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer significant harm;
- ❖ Information about the child's health, significant medical assessments (not routine GP appointments) or diagnoses, reports on educational attendance and attainment;
- ❖ Parental history including care history, mental health and psychological, criminal history, substance misuse, history of relapse, relationship history, or other history relevant to the safety and wellbeing of the child;
- ❖ Stress factors, such as unemployment, bereavement, imprisonment, accidents, illness, death of a significant person, relationships, isolation;
- ❖ Change in circumstances or relationships, such as moving home or schools; change of carer, social worker, teacher, or other supportive person or professional; immigration; change in makeup of the home or family network;
- ❖ Support and services offered to children and family, including the scope of the work, their engagement, and the outcome;
- ❖ Assessment information, including significant medical assessment/diagnosis, expert assessment;

- ❖ Social services history, including reason for referral, dates of intervention, outcomes of intervention, dates and category of Child Protection Plans, patterns of behaviour such as poor engagement over periods of time, significant announced or unannounced home visits;
- ❖ Anything else that provides a picture of the child's lived experience!

### *Supporting Documents*

Professional partners will provide updating reports and supporting documents throughout the Child Protection, PLO Pre-proceedings, and Care Proceedings stages, in accordance with the Working Together guidance. When preparing the chronology, significant supporting documents should be summarised to include:

***What are the  
professional  
network saying?***

- ❖ The date of the supporting document, the name and title of the professional and the agency name, the scope of the professionals involvement with the child or family, the evidence of the professional, the opinion and recommendations of the professional (if applicable), the outcome of the professional involvement;

**The Research in Practice Website has videos and other learning resources to support you to complete your chronology - <http://coppguidance.rip.org.uk/court-application/chronologies/>.**

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