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| Engagement, Safeguarding, Quality Assurance |
| Chronology of Significant events: Practice Guidance |
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| Sarah Pike  24.06.2021 |

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|  | **What a chronology of significant events is:**  A chronology of significant events identifies both positive and issues of concern over a period. For example, a positive significant event might be the birth of a child or a marriage. Conversely, a significant event that is cause for concern may be when an allegation has been made that a child has been physically assaulted by a parent/carer.  An effective chronology will be completed in date order, beginning with the oldest date. It should provide a prompt concise, factual, relevant, visual outline of significant events/information. A good chronology will highlight significant changes in a child’s life i.e., family reconstitution or bereavement.  The chronology will summarise the outcomes relating to the significant events and support understanding the impact upon the child. It is effectively, based on a study of recorded information and in social work practice, its overall purpose is to support the analysis of the history of the case.  An effective chronology will note the date and source of the information. It will note the dominant issue of concern and the action/outcome taken in response to the issue. It will also note the potential or actual impact upon the child.  **Purpose of Chronologies** |
|  | Effective, succinct chronologies will provide a date ordered overview of the child’s journey and enhanced understanding of statutory intervention, the effectiveness of this and can inform future decisions/plans for a child. For a child/young person, a chronology can provide a ‘story board’ that enables them to try to understand their particular journey and why/when things happened.  The history provided through a chronology contributes to risk assessments and decision making at all stages of a child’s journey. Therefore, it supports the analysis of the history of a case.  Chronologies also compliment the information garnered through ecomaps, culturagrams, and genograms. They help illustrate a plotted history of family dynamics. For example, when families reconstitute and how interactions in a family may be affected by such changes.  Other functions of a chronology include helping to identify trends that facilitate predictions/analysis. They facilitate identification and understanding of circumstances of chronic/enduring neglect.  **Legal context:**  A chronology of significant events is also a requirement when a child’s circumstances escalate to legal intervention being considered necessary. A chronology forms part of the Court Application process through the social work statement. The official document: Social Work Evidence Templates (SWET) direct the inclusion of a chronology of significant events. Through this, it is expected that the impact of significant events are clearly set out.  **NB:** the chronology of significant events completed for a child’s electronic social care record (Mosaic case file) are not the same as that required for a legal application to Court. When making a legal application it is a requirement that the chronology is made much more succinct than is often found on a child’s file.  For legal proceedings a chronology may list primarily, the significant events over the past two years but the exception to this is that I there are historically significant events that continue to have current relevance, then these should be included. An example of a historically significant event that has current relevance may refer to an extended family member re-connection to the family and whom is known to pose a risk to children and young people.  **Common Audit findings regarding chronologies:**   * Where chronologies are considered ‘good’ they portrayed a child/YPs journey/lived experience very well. * Some chronologies have key information missing i.e. Referral/Police notifications and outcome/response to such. * Significant events did not always indicate the outcome. * Some chronology entries detail unnecessary social work/practitioner tasks and/or processes i.e. letter sent to family to tell them of a change of meeting venue. * Excessive and unfocussed entries detract from identifying and understanding a child’s journey.   **In summary: - Chronologies are essential to:**   * Enhancing prompt analysis/understanding regarding risks. * Inform decision making. * Illustrate pattern’s/trends in family life. * Help identify intergenerational issues. * Support a child/young person to understand their journey through intervention. * Enhance life story work. * Provide concise evidence for legal interventions.; * Inform Assessments, plans and reports.       **RAG** **Rating Significant Events:**  **RAG rating:**   * **RED:** used to indicate periods of High risk * **AMBER:** used to indicate Medium – high risk * **GREEN:** used to indicate low/no risk but where event is still significant to a child (i.e. relocation or school transfer)   When colour coded, the level of risk within the child’s ‘journey’ is easier to identify. |
|  | **When to Start, Update and End a Significant Events Chronology** |
|  | * Every child’s electronic case file record (on Mosaic) should have a chronology. * Every time a case is re-opened, the chronology should be ‘added to’ rather than starting a ‘new’ chronology to ensure there is a continuous thread of information plotting the child’s journey. * Chronologies should be updated when any new significant event occurs immediately when an event is known to the allocated practitioner. * It must be readily available and always up-to date.   **Significant Events – helpful tips**   * **Focus** on events and changes in circumstances that had a positive or negative impact on the child * Only include a CP/LAC visit if something **significant** happened * Don’t clutter up the chronology by copying and pasting case notes or including lists of dates of visits * If events are significant (negative events) they require a **response** – a chronology of incidents with no details of what was done raises questions about the statutory/early help involvement * If there was no action, note why not * Always identify source of information, i.e. Police or school referral. * All open cases should have an **up-to-date** chronology and this should be a priority if one is missing or out of date |
|  | **What to Include in a Chronology – NB: this is not an exhaustive list!**   * Family history, births, marriages, new partner, separations, bereavements, changes in household composition, employment/unemployment & homelessness * Referral history & outcomes * Evidence of engagement or non engagement with agencies * Education, behaviour, exclusions * Domestic abuse incidents, honour based violence * Suspected or evidence of radicalisation and outcome * Significant substance misuse issues * Criminal Justice activity, parents, carer or YP * Statutory events/changes i.e. ICPC/RCPC & outcome * Periods subject to LAC process * Concerns Re suspected specific issues i.e. missing, CSE or Trafficking * History relating to other forms of violence and anti-social behavoiurs including convictions for such * Any concerns Re Vulnerable Adults * CP/s47 enquiries & outcomes * Legal intervention, outcomes and orders * Key management decisions and brief reasons i.e. initiate PLO. * Any other relevant concerns or positive improvements * Sex Offender Registration – known to MAPPA or MARAC * Disability, illness & mental health, including specific interventions i.e. detained via Mental Health legislation. * A&E attendance, hospital admission and/or missed health appointments. * Clinical diagnosis i.e. Autism or life limiting illness and impact on family. * Relocations * School changes * NRM referrals & outcomes. * Changes of allocated worker and case transfer/closure. * Reconstitute families, change of primary carer. |
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|  | Other significant events can be added that are not listed above. |
|  | **NB** there are certain entries that should never be put in a chronology, such as the address or identifying details of adopters, any reference to Legal Planning Meetings. |
|  | The following gives an outline determined by the type of case. These lists are only examples and not exhaustive. |
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