

Practice expectations

Life Story Work must be considered and discussed at every:

- Placement Planning Meeting
- Child in Care Review
- Permanency Planning Meeting

The child's Independent Reviewing Officer must have oversight of what life story work has been completed, and how this will be further developed.

Any life story work must be evidenced on the child's file. It can be uploaded and attached to a visit record or case note in eclipse.

Case note >

Visit form >

What is Life Story Work?

"Life story work" is generally considered as the process of helping a child to understand his or her history. Life Story Work is an ongoing process.

- Collecting photos, memories, treasures
- Explaining events and people
- Writing the story down
- Planned/on-going
- With/for children

Why is it important?

Lemm Sissay wrote that "Memories in care are slippery because there is no one to recall them in the years pass. In a few months I would be in a different home with a different set of people who had no idea of the moment...This is how you become invisible."

Life Story Work answers the questions

- Who am I?
- Where do I come from?
- Why did I not grow up with my parents?



Useful resources

There is a wide range of tools and resources to support practitioners to undertake life story work with children. Our [Resource](#) site includes guidance on how to prepare and complete LSW and examples and templates which can be used.

Community Care Inform and Research in Practice also have further resources, which you all have membership too.

When should life story work be completed?

Life Story Work is an ongoing process. It must be undertaken for all children in the care of the LA.

All children in our care should have something tangible and written down in their possession to help them understand their life story.

Ownership of the Life Story Work

The child should always have ownership of their Life Story book, or any other possessions or photographs. It is their history and their life.

The child's social worker should be the guardian of their memories and also keep a copy on the child's file (**attached to visit record or case note**). This is a key responsibility of the practitioner undertaking the work with the child/young person.

How do you do it?

It is usually the role of the child's social worker to undertake life story work with the child.

Different approaches to the work include:

- 1) Visits, maps, images
- 2) Drawing, talking and playing
- 3) Gathering memories, sending cards, remembering special days
- 4) Timelines, memory boxes, family trees
- 5) Baby books
- 6) Life story books or chapters