



The importance of life story work

Life story work is an absolute must for all our looked after children, especially if you are looking after a child who is going to be adopted or moving placement. As a support carer it is also important to contribute towards this work, to document information whilst the child stays with you at weekends or for a few days during the week.

Photographs, pictures, films and CDs all add to a child's life story, as they need to know where they have been and who with. Providing information of dates and times is really important; especially around contact with their birth families, as their future contact may only be by the 'Letterbox Scheme' so these memories need to be captured at the time and place.

From my experience, children love putting together their own life story into albums, cards and collages and I enjoy spending time together, pointing out where they were and who they were with. They love to put all their birthday cards into books to keep them safe and remember each birthday; with photographs of who was at their parties and who brought which presents. Over the years they may forget this and it is important that we help them to keep some memories safe, remembering not to include any other looked after child in the same photograph or film.

Materials don't have to be expensive, there are local places that stock recycled materials often donated from businesses and organisations. As a result, you can find lots of things that you need for your arts and crafts or other creative projects – including paper, card, foil, plastic, wool, material. Along with looking at websites for lots of ideas under life story work, you and your looked after child can be very creative in providing a book of memories and keepsakes for them.

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