

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES SERVICES**

**2. UNDERSTANDING THE CHILD’S LIVED EXPERIENCE**

**PURPOSE**

* There will be chronologies on all case files pertaining to children, young people and their families.
* We will evidence our understanding of the impact of the child’s history and experience within assessments, supervision records and decision making processes.
* We will analyse the impact of key issues (for example domestic abuse, parental mental health, substance misuse) on the child or young person, to inform planning, interventions and support.
* We will ensure we hear **and act** on the voice of the child/young person, using direct work tools (for example “In my shoes”, “3 Islands”, “3 Houses”, “My Family”).

**MECHANICS**

**Practice Expectations**

* Where a child is too young to give a meaningful view verbally, we will ensure that we engage them in effective communication in ways they can understand and we will consider observations of their non verbal interactions and what that might indicate.
* We will reflect our commitment to capturing the voice of children and young people with special needs and disabilities through Total Communication and creating the opportunities through non-verbal cues to really understand what their lived experience is.
* We will make use of the range of direct work resources (Communicates and PSW resources on Biz).
* We will be reliable, punctual and respectful to children, young people and their families. We won’t make promises we can’t keep. We will be honest and respect their wishes and feelings at the forefront of everything we do.
* We will see children and young people individually/alone. Where this is not appropriate or possible we will record the reasons, and consider who else may be best placed to gain the child or young person’s views.
* We will ensure that children and young people have access to advocacy where appropriate or are supported to give their views by another trusted adult.
* New workers and managers will ensure they read all the chronology and history and understand the impact of the child’s lived experience.
* We will undertake life story work with all children with a plan for permanence outside of the family. (Permanence = Long term care for Looked After Children and Adopted Children.)
* In our auditing work, we will explore whether a real sense of who the child or young person is comes through the recording, and how well the allocated workers can demonstrate that they know and understand the child or young person. We need to feel the “heartbeat” in our work.
* We will be aspirational for our children and young people and want as much for them as the

best parents do, for their own children.

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