

Daily Logs

Foster Caregivers are expected to keep a brief, day-to-day log record for each child in your care. Your daily observations at home and in the community are important contributions to a child/youth's life.

Every day, set aside a few minutes to record the day's events, adding to the log while the information is fresh in your mind. Once you have formed a daily habit, 5 to 10 minutes per child, per day, is all you need to spend on recording.

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Why keep a Daily Log?

- Maintains a history for the child.
- Helps to observe patterns of behaviour and identify problems.
- To record successes and milestones.
- Affords the chance to learn from mistakes and review what has/hasn't worked.
- Provides information if an allegation is made.

What do I include in my Daily Log?

- Child/youth's activities and achievements.
- Any changes or concerns in behaviour or mood – including details of actual behaviour observed and what happened before and after.
- Dates and times the youth is away from your home with friends, birth family, etc.
- Specific incidents, events, or changes in circumstances.
- Disagreements or complaints and how you dealt with them.
- Accidents or injuries (even if slight) to the child.
- Dates of meetings, attendance, and outcomes.
- Any medical/dental, counselling appointments, etc. and treatments/decisions.
- Contacts with school, community agencies, the birth family, etc.
- Details of relief care: when, who provided care, what they did etc. Ask the relief caregiver to give you with a written record of the child's stay.
- Reportable incidents such as damage, theft, or police involvement.

A caregiver should be able to find something to write about every day, however, if a young person lives with you long term, you may want to make a notation at the beginning of the book that says, *"If nothing is recorded on a certain day, it means that nothing of significance happened that day"*.

Do I tell my child/youth that I'm keeping a Daily Log about them?

Children and youth in care have a right to know that you are keeping a log and what you write about them. Some young people may ask to participate in the recording and initial each entry. They should know that the records are confidential and will not be shared with others.

Later, when children are older, they may access their files through the Freedom of Information Act.

Are there any tips for keeping a Daily Log?

- Use plain language and keep it short and simple. Avoid using jargon or slang.
- Stick to the facts. Thoughts about emotions, reasons for behaviour, etc. must be clearly identified as your opinion.
- Include the time and place the incident/behaviour occurred.
- Remember to separate the child/youth's behaviour from their character. Behaviour is not a reflection of who they are as a person.
- Be positive! Always include observations of the child doing well.
- Ensure that your notes are written in a non-judgmental manner. If the child/youth read your observations, what would they think?
- Don't forget to sign and date each record.

Do I need to follow a specific format?

Sometimes the child's social worker will ask you to use a specific format, but generally the choice is yours. Ask your Foster Parent Coordinator for sample formats.

How do I store my Daily Log?

Your Daily Log and any other personal records are confidential and must *always* be stored in a safe and secure *locked* location. If you keep electronic records, your log must be password protected or encrypted. Make sure your records are either backed up to the cloud or to an external hard drive.