

the lifebook movement

A lifebook chronicles a child's life and connects them to the rest of their history and family traditions. Lifebooks also help children understand their stay in out-of-home care and provides a record of important events and documents that they will carry with them for a lifetime. Many significant people may come and go throughout the life of a child, and acknowledging these individuals and memories by creating a lifebook helps a child explore and understand their past.

Are lifebooks required?

Lifebooks are part of the DHS foster care contract (Article X: Continuation of Relationship, Section F). Every foster parent agrees to initiate and maintain them for each foster child in their home.

What type of lifebooks are acceptable?

Lifebooks do not have to be elaborate scrapbooks. In fact, there are many ways to create a child's lifebook. Some families collect everything in a box or bin, while other families keep everything in a three-ring binder or have a picture book created.

What if I'm not very creative?

Collecting the information is your main priority. Talk to your case worker about connecting with a volunteer who can help you create a unique lifebook that your child will always cherish.



What should I include in a lifebook?

- Pictures to capture each year of their life
 - Collect at least ten pictures per year. For infants, it's a good idea to collect more. Three pictures per month will help capture all the special baby moments.
 - Remember to include photos from school or daycare, sports, extracurricular activities and photos taken with the family such as holidays and special events.
- School or daycare records, report cards, projects and awards (Report cards are a required element.)
- Information on sports, extracurricular activities or awards
- Cultural and religious information
- Welcome and goodbye letters from foster parents

What's required to include in all lifebooks?

- Medical Information
 - Name and contact information for all health care providers who have provided services to the child while in your home
 - Information for any allergies or critical medication the child may have
- School Information
 - Name and contact information for any school or daycare the child has attended while in your home
 - All report cards for the child while in your home
- Court Information
 - Name and contact information of the judge presiding over the case and the location of the court house
- DHS Information
 - Name and contact information for the child's worker(s) and the address of the primary office the case was held
- Vital Records
 - Birth certificate
 - Social security card
 - Immunization record
 - Medical card/number