# Neglect Chronology Guidance

A chronology is a tool to help practitioners summarise and understand what is happening in a child’s life. It is a summarised account of events in date order. Neglect is not a single incident and concerns often build up over time. It’s important to record any concerns and observations to help us understand any patterns of behaviour and allow us to see the wider picture.

Where appropriate a chronology should be completed together with other agencies as each agency may be holding a ‘piece of the puzzle’. [Multi-Agency Chronology Guidance](https://safeguarding.calderdale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/MA-Chronology-Guidance.pdf)

A chronology is not an assessment in itself but it can contribute to an assessment or help you understand when additional intervention may be needed. Effective chronologies enable us to see the ways in which an individual child or a family have functioned over time and to examine how families have managed their own circumstances, as well as how professionals have managed the case over time.

Your organisation may already have a template and guidance for completing children’s chronologies but if not, you can use the template to record incidents and concerns.

**To assist merging of the individual chronologies, it is important that the following headings are used:**

* **Agency making the recording:** This is the agency completing this part of the chronology. When the chronology is merged with others, this will show who was involved at this time.
* **Date:** Put in the date of the significant event (e.g. 1/11/14) and note any subsequent or consecutive dates in the Comment
* **Time:** Put in a specific time but leave blank if not significant
* **Source of information:** Where did you obtain the information? (e.g. Health Visitor, Records, Assessment Report etc)
* **Subject; Child/adult, Family member:** Write the name of the person to whom the entry refers. If more than one person, include all names.
* **Significant Event, Action and Outcome (include reference to whether child was seen, with whom or alone):** Summarise the key information relating to the child. Summarise the services offered/provided and decisions reached.
* **Comment:** Add any other information here