

Life Story Work or Reunification with SWFS

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South West Family Services

Life Story or Reunification is delivered by a life story work trained practitioner and typically takes place across 10 –14 sessions per child, Sessions are usually held fortnightly, although it can be more often if that suits the child. The overall duration can extend over several months. The pace of the work is always led by the child, ensuring sessions progress only when they feel safe, ready, and able to engage. For sibling groups, most sessions are completed individually rather than together, allowing each child the space to explore their own experiences and needs.

Sessions commonly take place in schools or community settings, providing a familiar and accessible environment that supports the child's comfort and emotional safety. Please see overleaf for cost examples.

Reunification helps children safely rebuild a relationship with a separated parent. A trained practitioner uses therapeutic life story work approaches to help the child understand their experiences and reconnect at their own pace. It is often used during court proceedings, especially after long periods of separation or when conflict or domestic abuse has affected the parent–child relationship. The aim is to rebuild trust, communication, and time together in a safe, supported way.

Life story work helps children understand who they are, where they come from, and what has happened in their lives. It supports them to make sense of their past while exploring their present and future in a safe, structured way.

Although traditionally used with adopted children or those living away from their birth families, life story work can benefit any child who needs help understanding significant events. The stories children hold about their experiences shape them throughout their lives, and this work helps them build a clearer, healthier narrative. The aim is for each child to develop, at their own pace and in an age-appropriate way, a better understanding and acceptance of their life history. This supports a stronger sense of identity and emotional wellbeing.

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What's included?

- Core bundle reading and preparation
- Guardian/Social Worker/Other Professionals meetings
- Parent/Significant Person sessions
- Sessions which include preparation, child sessions, resources, and overview to parents/carers/FCA/16.4/SW.
- Conclusion Report

Cost Example: One child across ten sessions (£950) bundle reading (£210) professionals' meetings (£105) parent/carer meetings (£210), Conclusion report (£210) Total £1685.00. Costs exclude VAT charged at the usual 20%. Costs can be applied at LAA rates for those who are funded. Quotes exclude travel which is charged at 0.45p per mile from the head office address in central Exeter and is charged at the legal aid agency rates.

Availability – we have capacity to start sessions within 28 days of this being sent to you.

Phase 1: Invoice upon confirmation/instruction: Core bundle reading, professionals meeting (x 1) and significant person session (x3)

Phase 2: Invoice for 10 sessions with the child and significant person sessions.

Additional sessions are invoiced separately before phase 3 if required.

Phase 3: Conclusion report, professionals meeting and significant person session and anything not included in previous invoicing.

Local Authorities: Usually the work is invoiced in one invoice upon instruction.

Please direct any enquiries on pricing and availability to us at office@southwestfamilyservices.com