

## **Disability Resource Hub Disclaimer**

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# Learning log

Learning logs can replace regular progress/session/case/shift notes to make sure that the information that is recorded focuses specifically on what people are learning about what parts of an activity worked well, and what parts did not work well. Regular notes tend to either include too much detail about events and not enough about what worked and didn't work for the person, or they are far too general – eg. “Tom had a good day.” Or “No issues to report.” Learning logs provide space to record the same vital information such as dates, times, what was happening and who was there, but encourage people to record only what they learned or particularly noticed.

If the person is able and interested, learning logs should always be filled out by or with the person.

Learning logs can ensure people don't get stuck doing the same old things all the time, and help people to see what parts of an activity the person really likes, which can then lead to trying new things. It also means that someone can have a chance at trying things out a few times rather than having one bad experience with an activity and then never having a chance to try it again. For example, Sanchez became upset when he went to the movies. Rather than deciding that Sanchez doesn't like movies, his staff recorded what worked (he laughed at all the parts of the movie involving slapstick comedy), and what didn't work (when the young people sitting nearby were throwing popcorn, sad parts of the movie). Next time, staff planned ahead to think of times of the day or week when it may be less likely that a lot of young people may be at the movies, and also thought together about the sort of movies they thought Sanchez would like best.

Even very good notes become a waste of time if they are simply filed away without anyone ever looking at them or reflecting on them.

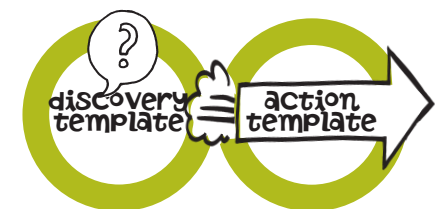
Learning logs work best if people to go through them every few weeks to look for themes about what they've learned about what's important to the person and how best to support them, and to then record this on the recorded learning sheet.

When there's no time or resources to develop a full Person Centred Plan, learning logs and information on the recorded learning sheet allow us to develop detailed information that can be 'grown' into plans over time.

If people are struggling to understand what is important to the person or how to best support them, learning logs can be used to help people to pay attention to what the person is 'saying' with words and behaviour through the activities they are doing from day to day. Learning logs should help to confirm any 'best guesses' made on behalf of the person.

This information was developed by Helen Sanderson Associates (Australia) in 2011, for Ageing Disability and Home Care, Department of Human Services NSW, as a resource to support the Lifestyle Planning Practice Guide and Tools. Most of these tools are Person Centred Thinking tools, and were either developed by The Learning Community for Person Centred Practices, or Helen Sanderson Associates. They are used here with permission. We would like to thank the residents, family members and staff for their time and support in developing examples.

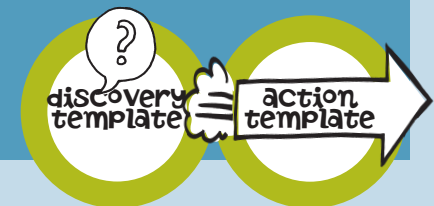
These instructions are not intended as a substitute for training. If you are using these tools for the first time and have not attended a Person Centred Thinking course, please seek support from a colleague or manager who has attended training.

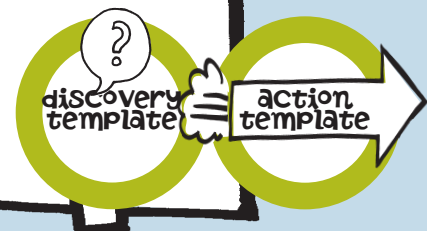
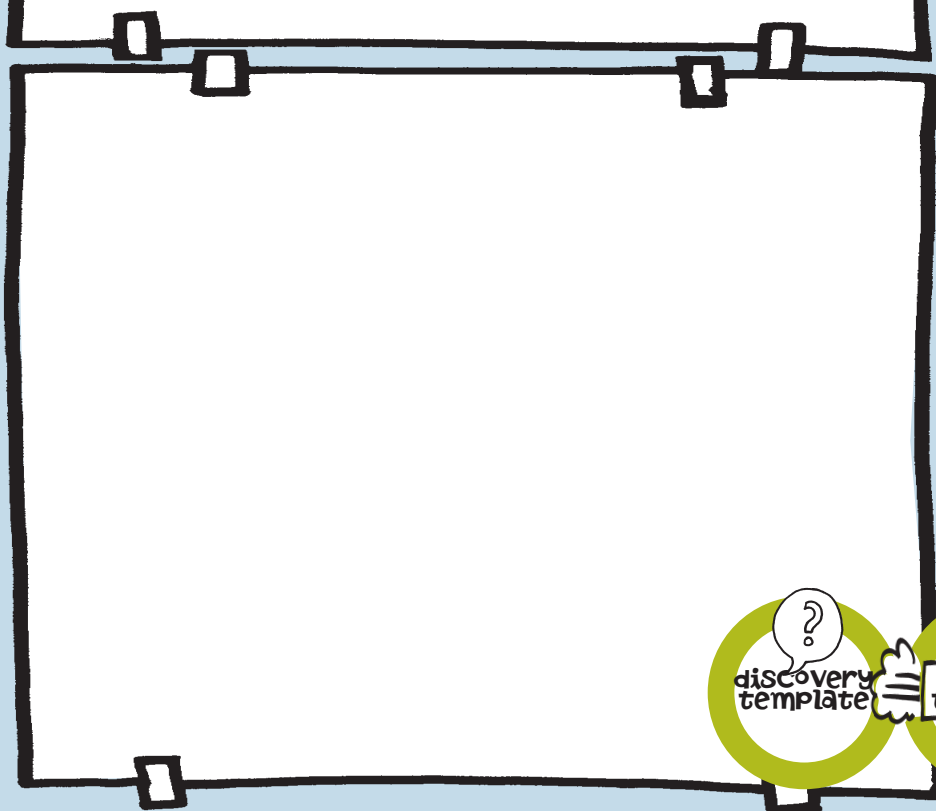
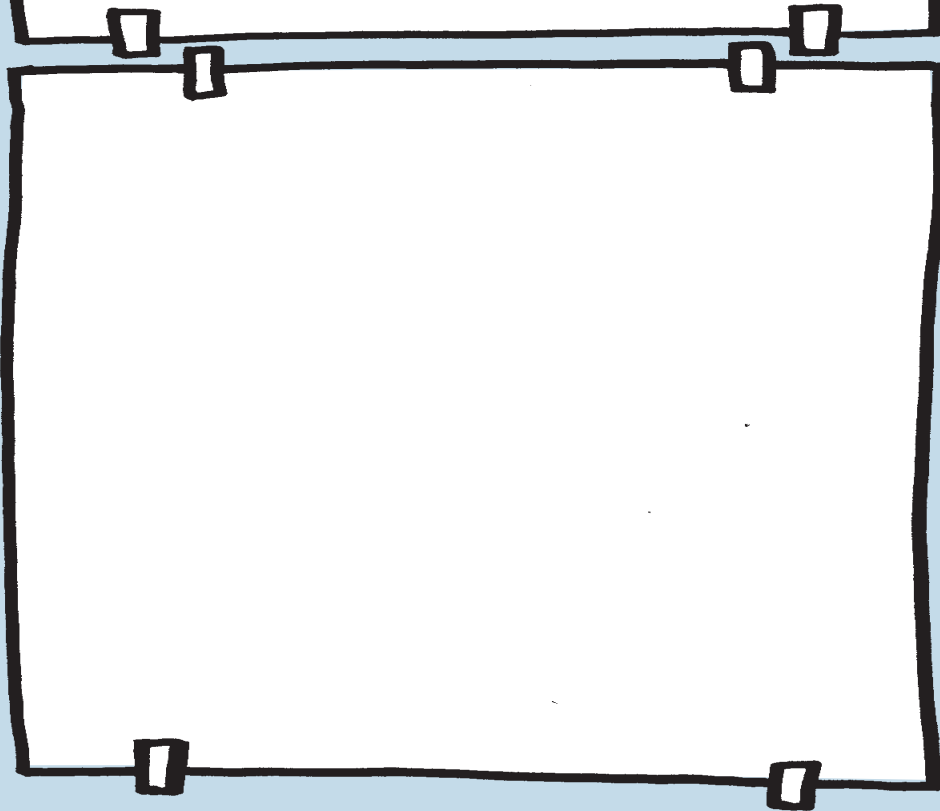
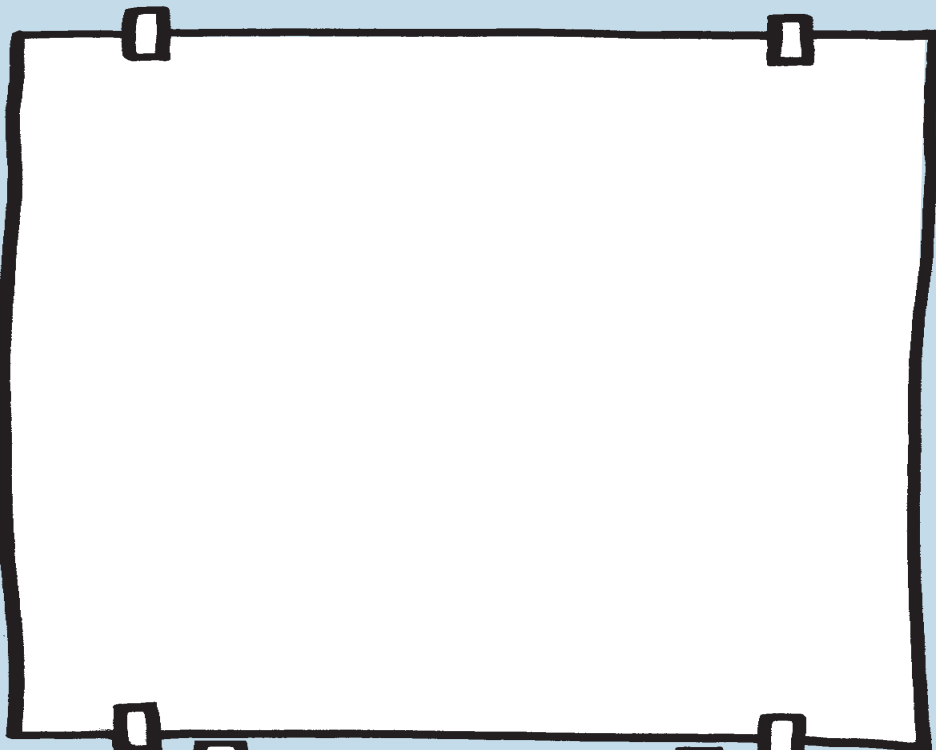
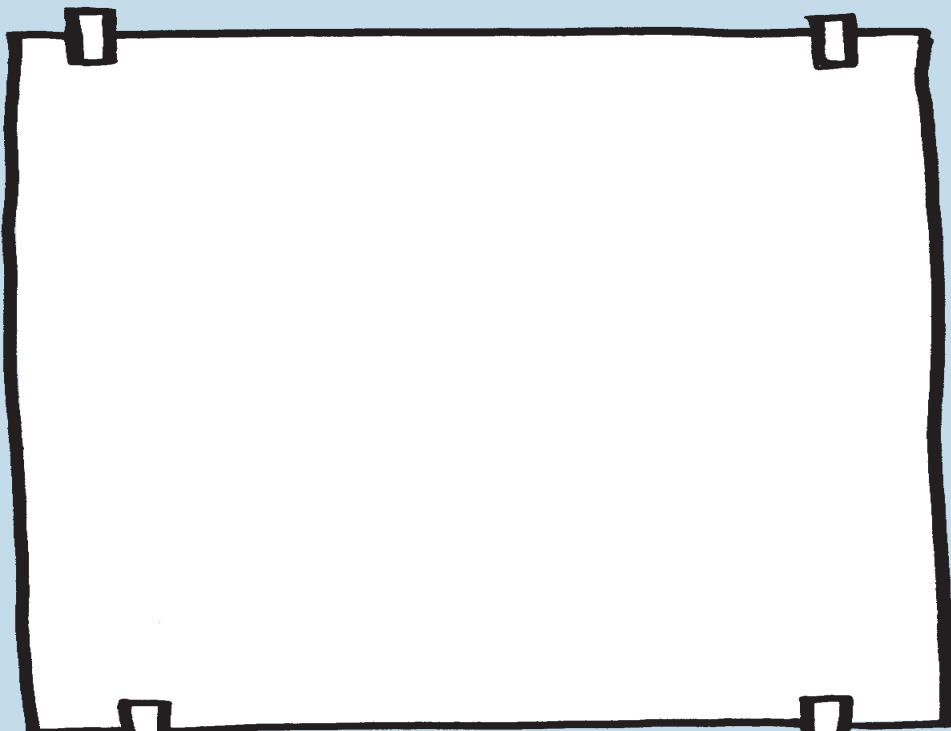


Date	Activity: (What, where, when, how long?)	Who was there: (Staff, others, etc)	What worked well about the activity? What should continue? what did you learn?	What didn't Work? what must be different? What did you learn?

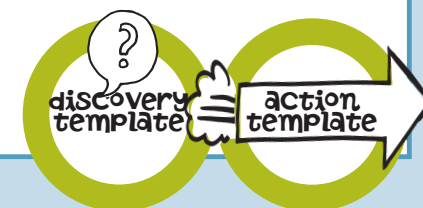
# tips

- 1 Don't write everything that happened, just what worked well and what didn't work for the person, and what you learned or tips for next time.
- 2 Look for the little details that give you more information about what the person did or didn't like about the activity/situation.
- 3 Capture new things you've learned that will help others support the person better
- 4 Make sure that what you write could be understood by someone who was not there.
- 5 Figure out whether there is an existing process that learning logs could replace – no one likes extra paper work!





Date	Activity: (What, where, when, how long?)	Who was there: (Staff, others, etc)	What worked well about the activity? What should continue? what did you learn?	What didn't Work? what must be different? What did you learn?
6/01/09	Mitchell's trip to the Bellarine railway (old steam engine)	Mitchell & support worker Josh	<p>Mitchell was so excited when I told him we were going on the train and showed him a picture of it. When we got there he started bouncing, squealing and flapping his arms.</p> <p>He seemed really content and calm while where were on the train in our own compartment looking out the window with a small smile on his face.</p>	<p>Waiting for the train to open its doors after it arrived at the station, he paced around looking around, then found the conductors mug and smashed it on the ground.</p> <p>A few noisy kids were in the carriage with him - he attempted to hit at one of them who came too close.</p>
8/01/09	Mitchell at respite house 11 - 3pm lunch, bubbles, DVD's	Mitchell plus support staff Jo and Kerrie. Other people were Bec, John & Cody also staying there	Mitchell loved watching the bubbles being blown by Jo while he was outside in the hammock. Everyone else was inside.	After lunch, Bec was examining a scratch on her stomach. Mitchell looked at her for a minute then rushed up to her with and tried to grab her. Kerrie (support staff) and Bec quickly moved to another room but Mitchell still wanted to go after Bec.



## Important to Mitchell

Trains – looking at them, going for rides on them, especially old steam trains  
Blowing bubbles  
Not having to wait to do things he really enjoys  
Knowing what's happening for the day, and in what order  
Not being away from Dad too long  
Having his own space  
Seeing Bec  
Expressing his attraction to Bec

## Important for Mitchell

Not hitting people/trying to hit them  
Not to smash crockery  
Understand safe/appropriate ways of expressing his attraction to Bec

## What do people need to know and do to support Mitchell?

Mitchell struggles to wait for things he really enjoys doing (eg. going on the train, going home from respite). When he's having to wait he'll often try to find something to break. Be prepared for this & try to look ahead. Try bringing some things to look at like train books to keep him busy while he waits, or try to time your arrival so that you can get on the train as quickly as possible.  
Be aware of what you leave lying around. When Mitchell gets upset, he'll often look for anything he can to break! Particularly don't leave crockery sitting around. Always have clear Compics available for Mitchell to read from and try to use them to help him understand what's happening when.

## Things to Figure Out

Does Mitchell break things a lot at home as well? How does his family support him with this?  
What are the best ways to communicate with Mitchell, especially to communicate things like time to go, when the next thing is happening etc?  
Would showing Mitchell some Compic symbols for finished help him understand and prepare for the end of activities he likes like going on the train?  
What does Mitchell know about expressing his sexuality?

