



Childlog

Implementation Guide



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Childlog: Implementation Guide

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1. Background and Purpose

The Childlog has been developed as part of the Journeys Project. The aim of the Childlog is to provide children with access to information about their journey through Barnahus, providing an overview of the Barnahus they visited, what happened in the Barnahus and a space for the child to record their own experiences. It is hoped that children and families will find the Childlog an accessible way of revisiting and remembering their time at the Barnahus while the journey is underway and during the months or years after they attended.

As part of the development of the Childlog, the Journeys Project drew on the principles of the Lundy model of child participation providing 'Space' for children to have the opportunity to express their views as part of a Child Advisory Board, ensuring their 'Voice' was heard by the Bonigi developers and Barnahus experts, providing 'Audience' throughout the project to listen to them and to ensure they could 'Influence' the final Childlog as much as possible.

According to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, children have a right to express views on all matters affecting them and to have them given due weight (Article 12¹) – this is commonly known as child participation. They also have the right to receive information (Article 13²). These rights are central to all services offered in Barnahus and are reflected in the Barnahus Quality Standards. Standard 1.2 says that all children who come to a Barnahus have the right to express their views, to be heard and to receive information.

Through consultations with children from the Child Advisory Board in Ireland and young people at Barnahus in Sweden, the Journeys Project learnt that these rights are not always fulfilled. Children that have been to a Barnahus often lack information about their visit. Some children expressed that they wished they had a record or a diary of the events that took place in Barnahus, who they met and what happened to them. Inspired by this, the Journeys Project created the Childlog tool in the Promise Hub that contains an overview of each child's visit to Barnahus.

Young people feedback on the limitations of the Childlog and said they would have liked the log to be fully edited by the child throughout their journey. They had also hoped for a secure and confidential space where they could fully express their thoughts in a vulnerable way. However, concerns over information sharing in the criminal justice processes means that the Childlog has been developed to be limited to co-creation with the Barnahus professional and with careful processes in place for storing and sharing the completed Childlog.

¹ UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 12 (respect for the views of the child) Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. This right applies at all times, for example during immigration proceedings, housing decisions or the child's day-to-day home life.

² UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 13 (freedom of expression) Every child must be free to express their thoughts and opinions and to access all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

The intention is for the Childlog to be completed by professionals working in the Barnahus, ensuring the child is aware of and can contribute to the content. It can be automatically populated from the Bonigi Promise Hub case management system or manually completed. In both options, information can be adapted, added or deleted manually according to the child's needs. Additionally, the Childlog contains a "My Experience" section to allow the child to share their feelings about their visit with their Barnahus professional. The structured yet flexible format of the Childlog allows children to work with their case worker/child liaison to process their experiences and have a narrative story of their journey to look back, which is key for their emotional well-being.

"... the main goal of the tool is to help kids understand what happened during each visit. If the information is recorded simply and accessibly, it can help them feel more aware and engaged in the support process. This could boost their sense of safety and control."
Barnahus professional

Child safeguarding, privacy and data protection are at the heart of the Childlog. When creating and sharing the Childlog professionals should carefully assess the individual circumstances of each child and make sure there is no risk of harm, re-traumatisation or re-victimisation, or that privacy or personal data can be compromised. This implementation guide provides a roadmap for using the Childlog and considers risks and limitations that may apply.

2. Getting ready to use the Childlog

The Childlog is designed to be a flexible and adaptable tool that you can adjust to suit your Barnahus. Before starting to use the Childlog it will be important to set up your version of Childlog with local information. This section will detail the areas that can be adapted. More information about how to use the Childlog can be found in the Childlog technical manual (see page 6 for more information).

Setting up Childlog sections

The **'My Barnahus'** section contains information about the Barnahus and can be populated with information about your local Barnahus service to create a local Childlog template. Multiple templates can be created in Promise Hub with a range of age-appropriate content and translations as required.

The **'What happened at Barnahus'** section can be adapted so that each section reflects the pathway through your Barnahus. The Childlog tool is provided with the following sections: Crisis support, Initial/explorative interview, Investigative interview and Medical intervention. The purpose of each room needs to remain the same to allow Bonigi to undertake international data comparisons. The images in the Childlog can be updated to reflect the rooms in your Barnahus. Each Barnahus can populate their template with general information about each room, add local links to further information and create multiple templates in a range of age-appropriate language and translations.

The **'My Experience'** section can be co-created with each child as they work through the Childlog with their practitioner. Before you start to use the Childlog in your Barnahus, we recommend that you agree how your Barnahus will use this section. For example, you might agree to co-create content about the child's experience that is entered into Childlog by the Barnahus professional after each session, using language and words that reflect the child's voice. You can upload images of creative work completed by the child that reflects their experiences. Each service should agree on the process to capture and include the child's voice, considering GDPR, information sharing agreements, and legislation about the rights of police/prosecutors to access Barnahus records. Some Barnahus may find that children decide not to use this section and prefer a separate 'feelings' diary or App. Ensure that all Barnahus staff are aware of the agreed processes to co-create the 'My Experience' section.

Childlog procedure

A Childlog procedure should be created to guide the usage, professional responsibilities, co-creation, language, consent/agreement, storage and sharing of the Childlog (including timescales), and be updated every two years.

Agreement to use Childlog

Before using the Childlog it is important to explain to the child and family what the Childlog is for, who will complete the log, where the information is stored, who could request a copy and how they can access the Childlog in future. Some Barnahus will find it is helpful to create a script for professionals to use or a leaflet that explains this information, in child friendly language. Barnahus should seek agreement from the child and family before completing the Childlog, especially for those sections that contain the child's experiences and personal feelings. Some children may prefer to keep a log of their journey through Barnahus in their own paper diary, journal or App.

The language in the Childlog agreement should help them understand their rights about privacy and consent.

Example privacy agreement:

"When you get support from Barnahus, we record information about you on our case management systems. This is to help us coordinate your care and to share information about you within your team, so that you do not have to keep retelling what has happened to you.

*If you would like us to, we can also create a Childlog which is an easy read version of all your visits to the Barnahus. You can contact us and ask for a copy of the Childlog when you leave Barnahus or come back when you are older. We will keep your Childlog until {you are 25 years old/for three years after your last visit to Barnahus}. *delete as applicable*

The Childlog is stored securely and will only be shared if you or your family agree. If the police or prosecutors ask to see some of your Childlog as part of a criminal investigation, we will ask if you agree first. We will ask you if you want to read the Childlog first, and offer you a copy of what we share with the police. We will only share information that is relevant to the criminal investigation and not all your notes. The Police can only ask to see any notes where you talked about what happened to you."

Technical guidance

The Childlog is accompanied by a technical manual provided by Bonigi. The “Promise Hub & Childlog – A guide to get you started” manual includes how to create and edit templates, add in event details, upload information from the Promise Hub Case management system and how to upload images.

The Childlog connects to Bonigi Promise Hub case management system and auto populates the event fields with data entered into the child’s case record. This include factual details about events including who was present, when and where they happened. Barnahus professionals can then continue to edit the Childlog as described below.

For Barnahus which do not use the Promise Hub case management system, the Childlog can be created and populated manually.

3. How to use the Childlog in Barnahus

Who completes the Childlog and when

The Childlog is designed to be completed by the Barnahus professionals working with the child and family. In some Barnahus, the Childlog can be completed by the person who has been assigned to be the case worker/child liaison for that child and family. It is beneficial for one consistent case worker to support a child on their journey through Barnahus and this could be an advocate, a clinical psychologist, a pedagogue or a child protection worker. If the case worker has been present at each visit, then they can complete the Childlog with the child at the end of each visit, by recording a summary of what has happened and asking the child if they have any feedback or experiences they want to include. Alternatively, they can work with the Barnahus team to gather the necessary details and complete the Childlog with the child at the end of their Barnahus journey.

In other Barnahus, the Childlog may be completed by a number of different professionals leading each section of their journey through the Barnahus, such as medical professional, interviewer, psychologist. Each Barnahus professional can be asked to add a summary of the visit to the Childlog, taking care not to include complex language, results or outcomes that that child is not already aware of. In these cases, it is important for the whole team to have been trained in using child friendly language and how to adapt their language to the development and ability of the child. The young people told us during the Journeys project that *“words matter!”*

It is important for the child’s Barnahus professional to be open about what is being recorded and to offer regular opportunities for the child to read their log and to add to their ‘My Experiences’ section. The hope is that children and families will find the Childlog most useful after they have completed their journey through the Barnahus, as a way to look back; as well as a reminder during the journey.

“It lets kids revisit their experiences and organize their thoughts in peace. If we frame this as a journey—something tough happened, safe adults supported you and you worked through it—it could be really helpful for kids.” Barnahus professional

Content of the Childlog

The **‘My Barnahus’** section of the Childlog can be pre-populated in the local template for all children attending the Barnahus, with further adjustment possible if required such as adjustment for level of understanding, temporary changes to the local service offer. The Childlog also has the ability to create templates in different languages. The Childlog currently has English and Swedish templates.

The Barnahus professional that completes the **‘What happened at Barnahus’** Childlog entry should aim to create a short, clear summary of each visit and describe that in child friendly language. The Childlog entry can be created while the child is still at Barnahus, as part of a check-out at the end of their session. The content should be suitable for the child to read at the time of their Barnahus journey or when revisiting their journey as an adult. Professionals should ensure the entry is personalised to the child, but may find it helpful to start with a template that is already populated with information about core events that take place at the Barnahus, such as interview and health checks.

Local Childlog procedures should include guidance on style and language, with sample entries for Barnahus professionals to use as a guide. The information contained in the Childlog must be in line with GDPR requirements and other national legal frameworks and policies. The level of details and information about the child should be determined based on an assessment of the child’s level of understanding and should not put the child at risk or compromise the privacy of the child.

For example:

Interview: You came to Barnahus today and met Stefan the police officer. Stefan asked you questions about what had been happening to you. You told him how [name] has been hurting you and making you do things you did not want to do. Stefan made a video recording of you talking together so that will not have to tell anyone again. The video is kept safely at the Barnahus. You took a break and had cookies half-way through when you were getting tired.

Health room: Today in the health room you met Dr Anna, Freya the psychologist and Orla the advocate. Dr Anna checked out your body and you asked her questions about why your tummy was hurting. Freya asked you about how you were feeling and you talked about trouble sleeping. You remembered the bright lights that Dr Anna used to see your body better. It was not as scary as you thought. Afterwards you played with Orla until mummy had finished talking to Dr Anna and Freya.

Co-creating the 'My Experience' section

The **'My Experience'** section can be co-created with each child as they work through the Childlog with their Barnahus professional. The Barnahus professional should listen to the child to find out how they would like to use the 'My Experience' section, or if they prefer to use a paper diary, journal or App to record their feelings.

If the child would like to use 'My Experience' section, at the end of each Barnahus visit the case worker/child liaison can spend time with the child checking out how they are feeling and offer to co-create some content about the child's experience to go in the Childlog. It will be important to take care to use language and words that reflect the child's voice, and to offer to show the child what has been entered into the log.

Some children may find themselves feeling vulnerable writing the 'My Experience' section of the log, not be able to fully express themselves or not feel safe completing this with a case worker present. In this scenario, Barnahus can suggest the child completes this alone and in their own words, using drawings or music in a paper diary, journal or App designed to capture daily feelings and wellbeing. With the agreement of the child, Barnahus can offer to upload images from a journal or creative work completed by the child that reflects their feelings.

"Sometimes it can be very hard to physically speak something, so by having this Childlog or diary it takes out that issue of trying to say something or having to say the same information over and over again." Young person

When to share the Childlog with the child

The child and family should be offered the opportunity to view the Childlog at any point in their journey or to receive an electronic or printed copy of the Childlog. For example, after key events such as the interview, medical examination or at the end of therapeutic support.

All children should be offered a copy of their Childlog at the end of their time with Barnahus. See "Sharing the Childlog" sections below for guidance on sharing the Childlog with the child and their family.

Professional access rights

Everyone in the Barnahus team that is working directly with the child should be able to view and edit the Childlog. Any Barnahus professional using the Childlog should have completed local Childlog training that includes seeking agreement/consent, using child friendly language, co-creation with children, information sharing and accessing the Childlog.

During the design stage, young people felt it was beneficial that the Childlog enables the whole Barnahus team to be able to easily revisit a child's journey through Barnahus so far and see when they came to Barnahus, what happened, who they met and what was the result. The young people said that this meant the child would not have to *"repeat and re-live their story and feelings to each staff person they meet"*.

4. Storing and sharing the Childlog

Storage of the Childlog

The Childlog is part of the Bonigi Promise Hub. The setup is in line with Microsoft's recommendations and it is stored in a Microsoft Azure cloud-based server in Ireland. Currently, there are daily and monthly backups along with 30-day PITR functionality. Access to the Childlog is limited to the local Barnahus team and the Bonigi technical support team only, with confidentiality agreements in place. All information stored in the Childlog in the Bonigi Promise Hub is non-identifiable, using a unique identifier for each child instead of personal information. Each Barnahus should keep a separate and secure record of unique identifier numbers matched to children's personal data.

Data can be stored for the required length of time agreed by each Barnahus and according to their local data legislation. Following an alert from the Barnahus team, the system can delete the Childlog data after agreed time period following the last update or case closure.

Young people said "The concept is great for countries that don't save information for as long as Ireland does, so it gives the person the time to heal before they access it, which gives them a smaller chance of being retraumatised in comparison if they weren't fully healed and had to access it before it's gone from the system."

Sharing the Childlog immediately after Barnahus journey

The Childlog can be shared at any point in the child's journey, after key events or at the end of therapeutic support. In Barnahus whose legislation requires that records are destroyed soon after their time at Barnahus, children and families should be offered the opportunity to view and receive a copy of their Childlog before it is destroyed.

Children and/or their protective parent/caregiver can ask for a copy of their Childlog, in line with local Barnahus policy and legislation about age of consent. Young people and professionals consulted at the development stage noted the risks of an alleged perpetrator requesting access to the Childlog if they are a family member. Barnahus are advised to apply local legislation about information sharing, drawing on GDPR legislation which prevents sharing of information that is not in the best interests of the child.

Ideally, the Childlog should be shared at a well-planned ending session with the child and their family. Good ending sessions, as part of a trauma informed response, enable the child and family to reflect on their journey together and celebrate how far they have come. Barnahus professionals can enable a family session for the child, their parent/caregiver and siblings (as appropriate) to be supported to read through the narrative together in a safe space. By scaffolding the conversation and creating safety through the use of snacks, music or even a giftbox for the Childlog; professionals can minimise re-traumatisation and ensure that there are no surprises in the Childlog for anyone in the family.

The Childlog can be downloaded from the Promise Hub as a PDF and shared electronically or printed if required. Children should be offered a choice about how to receive their Childlog including in person, posted securely or emailed using encryption or password protection. Young people and professionals consulted at the development stage noted the risks about where to store the Childlog once it leaves Barnahus, and the risks of a sibling reading a copy. This would be minimised if siblings have been part of the ending session and are aware of the Childlog content.

Sharing the Childlog when child returns as an adult

Children that have attended a Barnahus may return as an adult to request access to their case notes and Childlog. For those Barnahus that retain records after the child has turned 18 years of age, an adult has the right to access their own notes and Childlog from childhood. Barnahus professionals should take care when responding to these requests, noting that an adult may be re-traumatised by reliving their experience through the Childlog narrative. Barnahus teams should ensure that adults are aware of the potential for re-traumatisation and create a safe and supported space to review Childlog narrative together, offering onward support sessions as required. Adults should be offered a choice about how to receive their Childlog including in person, posted securely or emailed using encryption or password protection. Barnahus should aim to respond to a request to receive a Childlog within 30 days ideally.

Responding to requests to share the Childlog from third parties

Professionals from police, prosecution or the family court may request copies of Barnahus case management system notes, including the Childlog. Varying legislation applies in each country regarding third party rights to access a child's sensitive information from Barnahus. The Childlog content should be an easy read, child friendly narrative of events and not contain detailed or factual case information; therefore, there is reduced risk that the Childlog will meet the threshold for being relevant for third party requests.

Where access to the Childlog is permitted under local legislation, the greatest risk to the child is the sharing of their personal feelings. For this reason, some children may decide with Barnahus teams at the start of their journey not to include their personal feelings, reflections or drawings in the Childlog; instead keeping a paper diary, journal or App.

5. Communicating with children

Violence can affect every area of a child's development – cognitive, social, emotional, behavioural, physical and sexual. Children may feel shame or guilt about what has happened and can be wary of what other people think. There can be a loss of trust and in some cases fear, anger or hostility. They may also feel powerless over what happens to them and not feel like they have any choices. Whenever Barnahus keep case notes or create a Childlog it is important to be open with children about what is being recorded about them, where that information is being stored and who can see it.

Listening and responding to what children need and want

The Childlog can be offered to all children attending Barnahus, but should only be created with their agreement. Not all children will want to be able to return and read a narrative about their journey at Barnahus. During the development, Barnahus professionals described the importance of keeping “*the right type of information, at the right time, in the right format*” and how this can impact on a child’s healing and wellbeing. For those children that do want a Childlog, the log can be adapted depending of their age, development, and needs at the time of visiting the Barnahus.

“It is crucial for professionals, such as therapists or child advocates to remain actively involved in conversations with children, informing them about what is happening and helping them process their feelings and experiences. The Childlog should be viewed as a complement, rather than a substitute for direct interaction and support from adults.”

Barnahus professional

Ongoing participation and feedback

Each Barnahus should set up a feedback mechanism where children and families can share their thoughts on the Childlog to make sure it stays a supportive tool. During the development phase, young people reported back that the Childlog was not quite what they expected. Each Barnahus can reflect on their local feedback and adapt the Childlog tool and local implementation policy to meet the needs to their children and families.

6. Challenges of implementation

This section details common challenges, issues and risks that have been raised with the Childlog during the developmental phase.

Completing the Childlog

Challenge	Mitigation
Lack of time for professionals to co-create Childlog entries	<p>Use the template function within Childlog to pre-populate core content in range of age-appropriate templates</p> <p>If using the Promise Hub case management system, the in-built functionality will upload factual information from the case record</p> <p>Identify a practitioner after each event/session to check-in with the child before they leave and co-create a brief Childlog entry – ideally the case worker/child liaison who knows the child the best</p>

Challenge	Mitigation
Lack of expertise for professionals to co-create Childlog entries	<p>Where possible, case worker/child liaison should create the Childlog with the child as they know the child the best.</p> <p>Ensure the whole Barnahus team complete the Childlog training that includes seeking agreement/consent, using child friendly language, co-creation with children, information sharing and accessing the Childlog – as well as how to adapt their language to the development and ability of the child.</p>
Duplication of documentation in the case management system	<p>Barnahus professionals will continue to document their detailed notes from each visit to Barnahus in the case management system; such as such as interview, medical, therapy and support sessions, safeguarding and risk management plans.</p> <p>The Childlog entry should be a combination of pre-populated 'event' content from the template or the Hub; and a two-three sentence summary of the visit in the child's words.</p> <p>The content and style of the two records is very different and not a direct duplication.</p>
If a child discloses new or additional safeguarding risks or criminal offence in the 'My experience' section	<p>Barnahus professionals should respond as they usually would in any other session to a new or additional safeguarding risk or criminal offence.</p> <p>Actions should be documented in the case management system, not the Childlog.</p>
Adapting the Childlog to communicate with children with disabilities	<p>Childlog training should include how to adapt language to the development and ability of the child.</p> <p>Barnahus professionals can create a template with easy read content about 'My Barnahus and 'What happened at Barnahus' sections – including the use of symbols and images as required.</p>

Impact on the child

Challenge	Mitigation
<p>Risks of re-traumatisation of child when completing the Childlog</p>	<p>Barnahus professionals should take a trauma informed approach to co-creating the Childlog, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensuring a child has choice over whether a Childlog is created - Offering choice over when and how the log is created - Using language/style appropriate to the developmental stage of the child - Identifying sufficient time and space for the process to be meaningful - Offering the chance to view the Childlog on a regular basis <p>For some children it may not be the right time to complete the Childlog immediately after an interview, medical or therapy session. Barnahus professionals could draft the Childlog content to review at the next session.</p>
<p>Children are unaware that their personal feelings in the 'My Experience' section could be accessed by police or prosecutors</p>	<p>The Childlog policy/procedure should provide advice to Barnahus professionals describing how to seek the agreement/consent of the child and family before completing the 'My Experience' Section.</p> <p>This will ensure that they understand that the Childlog could be requested by police and prosecutors as evidence, if it is relevant to the offence being investigated.</p> <p>For this reason, some children with an open police investigation may prefer to log their feelings and experience in a separate diary, journal or App.</p>
<p>Children are concerned that the Childlog could be requested as evidence during legal and custody disputes</p>	<p>If the Childlog is requested by an alleged or offending parent/caregiver as part of a legal or custody dispute, the Barnahus can rely on legislation that sharing the Childlog would not be "in child's best interest".</p>

Storing and sharing the Childlog

Challenge	Mitigation
Risks of re-traumatisation when sharing the Childlog with a child or adult	<p>Barnahus professionals can minimise the risk of re-traumatisation by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying the exact information the child/adult wants to see – their whole case record or just the Childlog - Offer psycho-education about how trauma can alter someone's memory, or make them completely forget what they experienced during their trauma or first visit to Barnahus - Create a safe space to share the Childlog (ideally in person) and offer support session(s) afterwards if required - Offer choice to the child/adult about how they would like to receive a copy of the Childlog – electronically or paper copy
Varying legislation about notes retention	<p>Barnahus will have varying legislation concerning length of time for notes storage, ranging from a few years to indefinitely.</p> <p>Where Barnahus notes are required to be destroyed during childhood, children and families should be notified three months before the notes planned destruction and offered the opportunity to request a copy of their Childlog.</p>
Varying legislation about access rights to Barnahus notes	<p>Barnahus will have varying legislation concerning police, prosecutors and family courts rights to access children's records as part of a criminal or family court investigation.</p> <p>Where Barnahus notes are requested, the Childlog is likely to form part of the child's 'case note' as it may contain information relevant to the investigation.</p> <p>Barnahus professionals should avoid factual and detailed case information when completing Childlog, keeping to a simple narrative of the journey through Barnahus in child friendly language.</p> <p>Children should be advised in the agreement/consent discussion that there is a possibility of their Childlog being requested as part of a criminal or family court investigation.</p>

Challenge	Mitigation
Risk that the Childlog could be seen by alleged or offending parent/caregivers	Barnahus professionals are advised to confirm the safety of a child's home setting before sharing the Childlog.
Risk that the Childlog could be seen by siblings	<p>If the Childlog has been shared at a well-planned ending session with the child and their siblings, there should be no surprises in the Childlog for anyone in the family. A good ending session for the family can be a celebration of the child's journey through Barnahus and part of the restorative process.</p> <p>The Childlog will not contain any factual or detailed case information that might be unknown to siblings.</p>

Information governance

Challenge	Mitigation
Risk of data breach at Bonigi Promise Hub	<p>The Bonigi Promise Hub is stored on the Microsoft Azure, cloud-based system which is the industry standard.</p> <p>Access to the Childlog will only be by named professionals.</p> <p>The database is encrypted on Bonigi server.</p> <p>AI monitors communications in and out of the system and firewalls.</p> <p>There is multi-factor authentication for all Bonigi team and access rights on data, with no external consultants.</p>
If a child requests their information in the Childlog is deleted	<p>Most statutory organisations have legislation or policies that prevent deletion of information held about children in case records systems.</p> <p>For this reason, it is important to offer the child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Choice about whether to create the Childlog - Opportunity to co-create any content in the 'My Experience' section of the Childlog - Opportunity to check the content in the Childlog after each session

JOURNEYS: SAFE AND INFORMED JOURNEYS THROUGH BARNAHUS

Worldwide children are exposed to a number of crimes. As much as half of all children globally experience violence each year. The Barnahus model offers a multidisciplinary and integrated approach for authorities and services to respond to child victims. There is a need, however, to strengthen individual advocacy to ensure safeguarding of the child's rights and its' access to child-friendly information and participation in the process.

The overall objective of the JOURNEYS project is to contribute to improving access to child-friendly justice, protection and recovery for child victims and their families through the provision of a safe, informed and participatory pathway through Barnahus from initial report to long-term recovery, with a focus on advocacy for the individual child.



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