



# Family Group Conferences

Information for Families



Part of the Family Matters Service

## Why have a Family Group Conference?

Because it is a different way to discuss and agree plans around issues or concerns about children or young people that involves the people that know them best - you and their family network.

## Who comes to the Family Group Conference?

The Co-ordinator will plan with you and the young person who to invite to the meeting. This should include as many people as possible from your family. Family friends who are important to the young person may also come along to the meeting. The Co-ordinator will normally talk to everyone who will be attending and assist in travel arrangements on the day of the meeting where this is necessary. This is because it is important that everyone who can help is able to give their contribution to the meeting with peace of mind.

Other people involved with your family, such as a health visitor, Social Worker or teacher, may be invited to assist the meeting. They will only be involved for the first and last parts of the meeting. The private family time in the middle is the most important.

## Where will the Meeting be held?

Efforts are made to hold the meeting at a time and place which is convenient for all the family. The place should be private, local and comfortable. The aim is that the meeting be as relaxed as possible.

## How does it work?

There are three parts to a Family Group Conference (FGC):

### Part 1 – Information Giving

This is where the family will get together with the Co-ordinator and any people involved with your family. They will say what they think about the situation and what direct help they can offer. You can ask for additional information from the workers while they are there. The family will then be left alone to discuss the situation.

## **Part 2 – Private Family Time**

This is for the family to talk in private. Your job is to agree the best plan, decide who needs to do what and work out how you can be sure it is working. The Co-ordinator can join you if you need information, help or ask questions about you want to do.

## **Part 3 – The Plan**

This is where the Co-ordinator and professionals involved will make sure with you that the plan is clear, meets the needs of the child and is agreed by everyone at the meeting. Everyone involved with your child and family will be asked to agree your plan.

As long as the plan is realistic and keeps the children or young people safe, it should be agreed on the day. You may be asked to come up with another plan if it doesn't, but this doesn't happen very often as we will help you with making it safe. Your family will then take responsibility for your plan and work together to make it a success. You may want to agree when and how the plan will be reviewed.


## **What happens next?**

The Co-ordinator will make sure everyone who has attended or been invited receives a written copy of the plan within ten days of the Family Group Conference. For the plan to succeed, everyone needs to put into action all that has been agreed.

## **What if you're unhappy with the Family Group Conference?**

If you are unhappy with the action of anybody in the process you should discuss this with the Co-ordinator or their Line Manager. The Co-ordinator has an independent role and is accountable to Wirral Council Childrens' Services Department. If this issue is still not resolved, you will be supported to access Wirral's formal complaints procedures.

For more information, please contact your Family Group Conference Team Leader, Allana Ghaemi on 0151 666 4947 or via [familygroupconference@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:familygroupconference@wirral.gov.uk)



**The aim of a  
Family Group Conference  
is to give families and  
their children/young people  
a central role in  
decision making.**

**For Further Information  
please contact:**

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