**Family-led decision-making – Quick Guide**

*Supporting families to make their own decisions and plans of support*

**What is a family-led decision-making?**

* Our ethical position and approach to working with families across children’s social care.
* It is part of everything we do with families, not a singular process.
* Families are best placed to make decisions about their lives. Our role is support this.
* We believe in helping families come up with their own ideas and solutions.
* We know that when families think up their own ideas (rather than being told what to do by professionals) the plan is more likely to work.

**What does this look like in practice?**

* Family-led decision-making might be facilitated during:
  + **Home visits**
  + **Review meetings (e.g. CIN reviews)**
  + **Family meetings**
  + **Family Group Conferences**
* A space for families to talk (with the support of a Social Worker) about:
  + Worries they may have and solutions to these problems
  + Support they already have and further support they may need
  + A plan and actions for working towards addressing problems

**How do we facilitate family-led decision-making in Wandsworth?**

* We encourage families to bring their own ideas by **asking them different types of questions**.
* We avoid being too prescriptive or authoritarian about plans and decisions (when it’s safe to do so).
* We use **genograms** and **ecomap**s to help families to understand their strengths and identify who else in their network might be able to help them.
* We support families to **contribute to the agenda** when we meet with them – what would they find it most helpful to talk about today?
* We ask for **exceptions to the problem** and explore these exceptions.
* We give families options about what would be **most helpful to them**.
* We draw on systemic ideas and motivational interview techniques. Your practice specialists are available to help you think about using these approaches.

**If you have questions or want support to think about family-led decision making,   
your Practice Specialists can help:**Stephen O’Reilly - [stephen.oreilly@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.oreilly@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) (Family Safeguarding)  
Theresa Ferguson - [theresa.ferguson@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:theresa.ferguson@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) (Brief Intervention)  
Abbey Pennyfather – [abbey.pennyfather@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk](mailto:abbey.pennyfather@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk) (Children Looked After)