

Family Led Decision-Making, Redefining the concepts of 'help', 'solutions' and 'expertise'

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Introduction

- Context setting and what is driving this work
- Where are we and what has been achieved so far
- Outcomes – quantitative and qualitative
- Participant voices



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What is driving this area of work?



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What is FLDM and what is our strategy in Leeds?

- Enabling, relational, whole family focus.
- Primacy of FGC.
- Vision and permissions.
- Maximising Family Led Decision Making and Let's Talk workstreams.



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What have we achieved to date?

- A strong and robust FGC service
- FLDM Policy – principles and procedure document
- FGC practice standards and FLDM practice guide
[max_fam_dec_making.pdf \(proceduresonline.com\)](#)
- Community of practice
- Advocacy/buddies
- Family pledge



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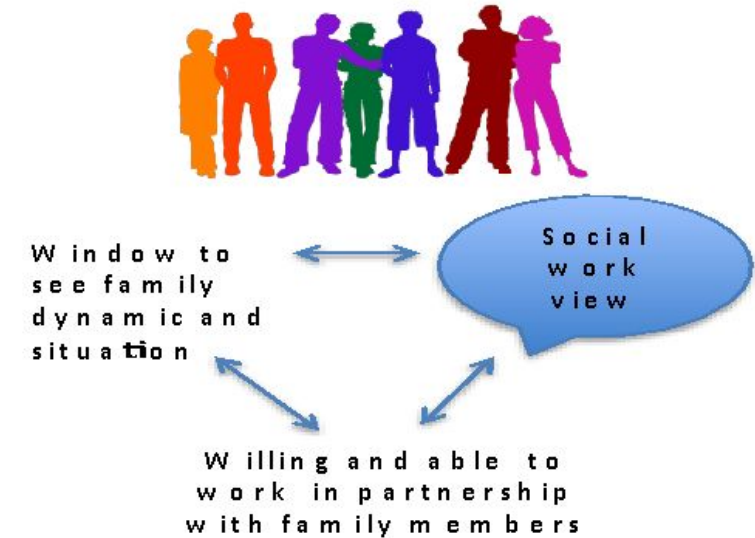


FGC contribution towards outcomes

FAMILY MEMBERS' EXPERIENCES



PROFESSIONALS' EXPERIENCES



Strengths of the process:

- Emotional
- Independent FGC coordinator
- Focused on the child with family involvement
- Involves the child

Personal and Professional Outcomes

Ref: Mary Mitchell
Edinburgh University



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FGC outcomes – for FGCs held from April 2020 to February 2021 – Leeds.

Desired outcome	Number of FGCs	Successful outcome	Unsuccessful outcome	Invalid	Successful %
Avoid child becoming looked after	143	88	13	42	62%
Return to family from care	64	10	54	0	16%
Avoid/de-escalate child protection plan	131	92	39	0	70%
Family supported to help themselves (Avoid/de-escalate statutory intervention)	112	68	44	0	61%
Family supported to tackle or reduce domestic violence	46	29	17	0	63%
Total	496	287	167	42	58%



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Implementation and maintenance of FGC

- Be prepared to go slow – attend to organisational culture and value base
- Clarity of process and procedure
- Start in one priority service area – build momentum
- Hearts and minds
- Measuring outcomes
- Debunking myths



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Family voice – informing the Family Pledge

This is what families told us (Let's Talk) and we are using this to inform the Family Pledge

"A lack of communication – not returning calls creates a lack of trust and transparency"

*"Get the basics right – shake hands; be human, **rapport**; words should be carefully chosen and thoughtful"*

"If you don't understand the situation, you will miss the mark"

"Empathy of the situation, not pity"

"Do what you say you are going to do and be consistent"

"Felt friendless / voiceless in meetings"

"You are dealing with families and feelings...engagement is your best procedure"

"First impressions between a social worker and a parent can be both powerful and shape future relationships"



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Let's Talk – Parent Led Social Work Training

The Plan

What has been achieved to date

Next Steps

'I have learnt more from that session about the way we practice, than I have the whole way through University. '

'You can read or have a lecture about relationships however hearing from people with lived experience is so much more powerful'

'I think we are aware that families have negative experiences but we miss out on understanding what it was that shaped these negative experiences.'

'Hearing their stories has also given me chance to focus and reflect on my own practice, and then improve the way I practice as a social worker. There were many things that were discussed that I wouldn't have previously thought about.'



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Family Group Conference Service and service Developments

Joseph Robb

Service Manager Looked after Resources




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Darlington's FGC journey

- 2010 Family Group Conferencing launched in Darlington. We employed a facilitator from New Zealand to support our learning and launch.
- From 2010 – 2019 Darlington employed 1 FGC Facilitator to support three Social Work teams and a duty team.
- In 2019 Darlington employed an additional FGC Facilitator to support requests.
- Darlington expanded our FGC offer in 2020 in line with adoption of Leeds Family Value approach. We expanded the service to 4 additional FGC facilitators (6 in total) and 1 Advanced Practitioner (Assistant Team Manager)
- Prior to 2020, the service was heavily influenced by Social Workers decision as to if an FGC would be offered, bottom lines were often based on threat of escalation and plans were more often rejected by Social Workers.





Statutory Assessments and FGC offer

Early service development established little means of tracking FGC discussions within Statutory assessments.

Work commenced with systems team to add comments detailing if FGC offered and family response within s.47 and Child and Families Assessment work.





Data analysis

S47 and C+F data evidenced in January 2022, 87 assessments were complete, of these, **51 assessments** documented an FGC was offered and 36, it was not offered.

Data evidenced 30 families comprising 56 children, assessment's proposed a referral will be made. We received 6 requests comprising 6 children.

Established FGC is added to plans rather than discussed with families



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Recent interventions

We have recently trialled placing an FGC facilitator on duty and based alongside our Assessment and Safeguarding Social Workers

Initial benefits evidence improved and increased timeliness of Emergency Network Meeting, consent obtained earlier in the life of the family's difficulty, greater attendance at wider Family Group Conference

Most recently we have changed our approach and now contact families 4 weeks after the Child and Families Assessment commenced.

This allows the Social Worker time to discuss with the family the FGC process and to expect a phone call.



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Supporting Children / Young people back to their family unit



Data evidenced little use of FGC within our Looked After Through Care and Leaving Care team's

We visited team meetings to introduce FGC and discuss the benefits to children and Families.

Requested Team Managers / Advanced Practitioner discuss FGC within supervision

Established monthly meetings with Team Managers to Children

Spoke with "Care Crew"



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FGC and Youth Offending

Established FGC had not been considered for young people sentenced within Youth Offenders Institutes.

Arranged discussions with Weatherby and Durham YOI

Established meetings with Service Managers and Team Manager of Youth Offending Service.

Now established in teams procedures to consider FGC and release from day 1 of sentencing.



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FGC and Child Protection

Up until the end of January, we had 89 children subject to a Child Protection plan, of these children, 40 had received FGC support and had both an FGC and CP plan, 49 children were not referred to the service for support.



Families are now asked to consider a call from the team. Once a plan is agreed, it will be emailed to the child's social worker and also Conference Chair.



FGC outcomes – for FGCs held April 2020 to February 2021 – Darlington.

Desired outcome	Number of FGCs	Successful outcome	Unsuccessful outcome	Invalid	Successful %
Avoid child becoming looked after	43	15	20	8	34.88%
Return to family from care	18	17	0	1	94.44%
Avoid/de-escalate child protection plan	43	37	6	0	86.05%
Family supported to help themselves (Avoid/de-escalate statutory intervention)	44	44	0	0	100.00%
Family supported to tackle or reduce domestic violence	0	0	0	0	0%
Total	148	113	26	9	76.35%



"Now for the real experts"

Welcome to parents and social workers.....



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