Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM)

Describes a voluntary process that enables a family network to come together and make a family-led plan in response to concerns about a child's safety and wellbeing. In Hertfordshire we use Family Network Meetings (FNMs) and Family Group Conferences (FGCs) to include the child's wider family and support network. The flow chart below helps identify which is the most appropriate way forward depending on the child and family's needs and circumstances. This document should be used alongside the PGN.

Family Network Meeting

Family Group Conference

Who?

• All children and families accessing Children's Services Support.

Who?

- The children are at the centre of the FGC.
- All children and families who are accessing Children's Services support, where there are complex needs and family dynamics, that require multiple meetings and independent facilitation.
- All individuals who have consented.

When?

- At every stage of support in Children's Services.
- At the earliest opportunity.

When?

- A Family Network Meeting recognises the need for an FGC.
- Children are subject to a Child In Need or a Child Protection Plan.
- We are considering Pre-Proceedings / Public Law Outline. (Mandatory offer)
- We are issuing or in care proceedings.
- We are reunifiying a child back to their family.
- We are ending Children's Services involvement with the family.

Presenting Needs

- Risk of family breakdown.
- Physical/mental health decline of a parent.
- To ensure greater inclusion of nonresident carers/parents.
- Prevent escalation of need.
- A wider network needing to be engaged to support the family at this time.

Presenting Needs

- The wider network needs to be involved in developing the wellbeing and safey plan.
- Child is suffering or at risk of significant harm.
- Family is at risk of breakdown.
- Concerns about children remaining at home.
- A child's placement is at risk of breaking down.
- Alternative carers need to be found.

Leading Professional

- Lead Family Help Practitioners.
- •Social Workers.
- Anyone working with families and children.

Leading Professional

- •Is run by an Independent Family Group Conference Coordinator.
- •An FGC requires the attendance of a lead professional from either Family Help or the Multi-Agency Child Protection Team.

Recording Processes Family Group Network form on EHM/LCS.

Recording Processes

• Family Plan is saved on child's LCS record.

Processes

- Determined by the family and network.
- Not all families will want/need reviews.
- A review of how the meeting progressed could determine that an FGC is required due to complex family dynamics.

Reviews

•All families are offered FGC reviews. This is determined by the need and wishes of the child and their support network.

Reviews