

What is your role?

Your role as a family member is to:

- Share with the family how you see the situation.
- Share how you believe the situation could best be dealt with.
- Agree, together with the family, on the best plan: a plan that ensures that everyone in the family is safe and cared for.
- If you have been invited to be someone's support person, help the family member to express their opinion and to feel safe.

How to prepare yourself:

- Imagine what the meeting might be like
- Think about how you might feel
- Plan what you want to say and if it helps, write it down.
- Reflect on how your views/opinions may affect others and how they might feel
- Consider what you want for the meeting.

Your role as a service provider is to:

- Share with the family your definition of the concerns in the family
- Note the strengths in the family
- Be clear about any bottom lines you have
- Note any resources which may be useful to the family

Your role as a speaker is to:

- Use clear language to describe how the problem can affect a family and its members
- Outline what other families with this type of problem have used and what might be available to this family

Frequently asked questions?

Do children participate?

Yes, but they might spend some of the time with a child care provider in another room having their own fun while the adults meet.

Where will the meeting be held?

The coordinator will select a neutral location that will ensure the comfort and safety of all participants.

Your Family FGC	
Date:	_____
Time:	_____
Place:	_____

FGC Coordinator:

Maryann Kobzan-Diakow B.A., B.Ed.

Phone: (905) 937-7731 Ext. 3561

FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRE

82 Hannover Drive, Box 24028

St. Catharines, ON L2R 7P7

*Special thanks to the
Toronto Family Group Conferencing Project
and George R. Hull Centre for permission to
reproduce this brochure and other
program materials.*

Family Group Conferencing (FGC)



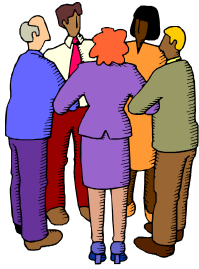
*Providing opportunity and support
so that families can make their own
decisions regarding the safety and
well-being of their children.*

What is Family Group Conferencing? (FGC)

It is a meeting that involves you, your relatives and your friends in deciding what plans could be made to help your child and your family.

Who is in the Family?

Your family is made up of your relatives, friends and anyone who feels like family to you.



Why use Family Group Conferencing?

- It is built on the belief that you know your children and other family members best.
- A plan to help your child is made by the larger family.
- It is a chance to build support for you and your children by looking at resources within the family and in the community.
- It is a good way of discussing the safety of everyone in the family.

How is FGC Arranged?

After receiving a referral for your family the FGC coordinator will contact you. All information is confidential.

- The coordinator will tell you what to expect and will explain to you how FGC works.
- The coordinator will ask you to identify who your family members are and how they can be contacted. You can invite anyone that you feel can support your family and help you to create a strong plan for you and your children.
- The coordinator will approach these people, explain the process to them, and invite them to participate in the FGC conference.
- The coordinator will ask you if there are service providers that should be invited.
- Child care, assistance with transportation, refreshments and a good meal are provided.

How long does it take?

- It usually takes a few weeks to prepare everyone and set up the meeting.
- The meeting continues until a plan has been reached and agreed on, so set aside the whole day.

What happens at Family Group Conferencing?

Phase 1: Welcome and Sharing

- The coordinator greets and welcomes everyone.
- The purpose of the FGC will be outlined and guidelines will be defined and agreed upon in order to ensure a respectful discussion. If needed, a safety plan will be outlined.
- Service providers or speaker share information about family and the family asks questions of the service providers.

Phase 2: Family Private Time

- You, your family and friends will have time to meet alone to consider new ways of helping the child and family.

Phase 3: Plan Presentation

- The plan that you and your family developed is presented to the Children's Aid Society.
- Details of putting the plan in place will be discussed. A time to meet again to review progress may be set.
- A copy of the plan will be sent to you within 10 days of the meeting.