

Who comes to the Family Group Conference?

This will be decided with you and usually includes relatives and close friends.

The person who referred you will attend and relevant service providers will be invited to share information as needed. Advocates can be provided to support children, and sometimes adults through the process. Children are encouraged to attend, or share their views whenever possible.

Who do I speak to about having a Family Group Conference?

You can refer your family by speaking to someone who works with you, such as teachers, health workers, or a social worker. Family Group Conferences can be held for any child where plans are needed and changes need to be made. Contact our team to see if this is the right option for you and your family.

Contact us

Family Group Conference team
phone **01392 388659** or **01392 383120**
email **fgcmailbox@devon.gov.uk**



Information for service providers

Talk about the possibility of a Family Group Conference with the family, and with the child if appropriate. Once the family agrees make a referral and we will contact you to discuss it further. You will need to help identify the issues and strengths to set an agenda for the family to discuss when they meet.

As a service provider you will be asked to share relevant information with the family, and to explain any concerns and outline any resources you can offer. The family will be encouraged to ask questions.

If you are the service provider who has referred the family you will need to stay for the whole meeting. If you have been invited to attend the meeting to share information you can leave after this part of the meeting.

Family Group Conferences

for children and young people



An opportunity for your family to
make and agree plans, and be fully
involved in the planning for your child

What are Family Group Conferences?

Family Group Conferences are an opportunity for your family to meet together to make and agree plans about what should happen for any children in your family.

The reason for the meeting will depend on what plans are needed. If domestic abuse is part of the issue, a Family Group Conference can help you plan how best to protect family members and children. A Family Group Conference will give you a safe and comfortable environment to meet and make plans.

The meeting is set up by an independent co-ordinator who is not involved with your family in any way. It is held in a neutral place at a time agreed by everyone. They will explain the process, discuss the involvement of other agencies and answer any questions you have.

They are trained to set up meetings with families whatever the issue. At the meeting your family are the decision-makers. The term 'family' includes extended family and significant friends in your network

Why have a Family Group Conference?

We believe that families can make good plans for their children if they have the information and support they need.

This is an opt-in process. It is your choice and if you, or your family, decide at any stage that you do not want to continue with the meeting, the process stops.

The independent co-ordinator will help to prepare you and the family group for the meeting. They will also speak to any service providers and prepare them for the meeting.

The focus of the meeting will always be your child's needs.



How do Family Group Conferences work?

1. A service provider, such as a social worker or a teacher, you are working with agrees with you to make a referral for a Family Group Conference.
2. You and your family agrees for relevant information to be shared openly with people involved in the meeting.
3. The independent co-ordinator identifies everyone who will be involved and then visits and prepares them.
4. At the meeting there are three stages:
 - **information giving** – when your family hears the relevant information about the issues and you can ask questions
 - **private planning time** – when your family is left alone to talk and agree your plans
 - **sharing the plan** – after your family has agreed your plan you share it with the independent co-ordinator and the referrer.

After the meeting the co-ordinator will type up your plan and send it to the people involved in the planning, including the service providers. Your plan will be agreed unless it does not keep your child safe.