

Evidence-Based and Strength-Centered Family Engagement Approaches: Family Teaming, Group Conferencing & Decision Making For Sustainable Outcomes

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Family Teaming/Conferencing: Purpose

To engage the individual, family and community to join and develop the least intrusive and least restrictive plan to address areas of concern

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Philosophy

"Families in distress need the assistance of a trusted circle of family and friends. The family team conference approach uses a trained facilitator to bring friends and family members together to brainstorm on how to improve the safety of the family unit".

Source: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/App/publications/abstract.aspx?ID=195313>

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Teaming Leads to Positive OUTCOMES

Child & Permanency Outcomes

Reduced removals & Faster

Reunification: Families are more likely to keep children safely at home or reunite faster when involved in decisions.

Stable Placements: Increased placement stability and shorter out-of-home stays.

Less Trauma: Reduces trauma from separation by ensuring family voices are heard.

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Teaming Leads to Positive OUTCOMES

Family & Engagement Outcomes

Empowered Families: Families feel heard, included, and satisfied with the decision-making process, shifting power dynamics.

Increased Compliance: Engaged families are more likely to follow court orders and attend services.

Stronger Functioning: Focus on strengths builds family capacity and problem-solving skills.

Better Relationships: Fosters trust, respect, and empathy between families and caseworkers.

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Teaming Leads
to Positive
OUTCOMES

Service & System Outcomes

Relevant Plans: Develop culturally appropriate plans that leverage family and community strengths.

Informed Caseworkers: Workers feel more informed, potentially reducing bias.

Effective Resource Use: Resources are used more effectively to meet unique family needs.

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Key
Components

Collaboration: Creates shared goals and plans.

Family Voice: Ensures decisions reflect the family's reality.

Natural Supports: Connects families with community resources and informal support networks

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Family Teaming:
A Parents Point of View

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtX_dDyZdNA

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What Would We understand After Attending a Full Workshop

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe the Family Group, Conferencing, Teaming and Decision-Making process;
- Review core **FIDELITY** components of evidenced based teaming;
- Understand how the **process empowers** individuals, families and communities to work towards positive change;
- Identify concepts, **values and beliefs** that are involved to drive the process;
- Understand how they **apply** in the **case management** and care coordination process;
- Understand the **roles and activities of all** the individuals involved in the process;
- Review the **core steps necessary to implement** or integrate these approaches at their agency

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What Would We Understand After Advanced Level Part 2 Workshop

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Understand the **roles and activities of all** the individuals involved in the process;
- Review the **knowledge and skills** needed to **coordinate** a family teaming
- Review the **knowledge and skills** needed to facilitate a family teaming
- Review and practice skills needed during the family teaming planning process
- Review key steps to implementation

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Section 1

Describe the Family Group,
Conferencing, Teaming and
Decision-Making process

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A Shift in Practice

One survey identified more than 50 different names for practices that involve families in decision making <http://www.aafp.org/pressroom/2009/09/09familydecisionmaking.pdf>

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)
Family Team Conferences (FTC)
Restorative Justice
Truancy Reduction

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In-person or
Virtual both
have strengths
and challenges

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Self-Reflection

In my experience with my
family/kin/friends

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Has anyone in your immediate and/or extended family ever:

- Had a teenager that was unruly or participating in unsafe activities?
- Frequently consumed alcohol or used drugs?
- Had an adult or aging family member who required assisted living arrangements?
- Had a child with different needs that could be challenging to manage

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Has anyone in your immediate and/or extended family ever:

- Had a relative who has lived in a home with domestic violence?
- Had mental health issues?
- Been incarcerated?
- Had difficulty parenting their child?
- Been impacted by the opioid epidemic?

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Has anyone in your immediate and/or extended family ever:

- Experienced financial difficulties
- Needed support due to the Covid Pandemic
- Needed support due to a physical challenge?

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Are you the one
who gets the
family phone call?

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And When We Get the Call, We....

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Key Components of the Various Models

- Emotional and physical safety are paramount
- It's about me so therefore I am a part of planning
- I have supports that can provide support to me/my family
- Sometimes I need assistance in finding & engaging my supports
- My family and supports know me best
- We can all work together towards a common purpose

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Section 2

Identify concepts, values and beliefs that are involved to drive the process

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Section 3

Understand how the process empowers individuals, families and communities to work towards positive change

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Evidenced Based Outcomes Benefits of Engaging Family to Plan Together

- Families know each other best; we learn information to broaden + improve our assessments
- Family ownership increases investment
- Increased father and paternal extended family involvement

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Benefits of FGDM

Anecdotal information stemming from Pennsylvania and the nation suggests that:

- Family is invested in the plan
- Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) creates better futures for our children by decreasing their involvement in formal systems and decreasing repeat offenses
- FGDM increases family ownership by having family and extended resources take over decision making and bring accountability back to the family
- FGDM presents an opportunity to strengthen families and to have families resolve concerns in a safe environment
- FGDM offers cost neutrality/savings
- FGDM can reduce the amount and length of time a referral source works with a family
- FGDM brings systems together

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Benefits of FGDM, (cont'd)

According to an American Humane Association Child Welfare Policy Briefing, FGDM:

- Results in a high percentage remaining with extended family for children who require out-of-home placement
- Provides for timely decisions and results
- Results in providing child safety
- Can address long-term foster care and enhance relative connections
- Builds greater community, trust, and awareness
- Helps to address disproportionality and disparities in child welfare

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Teaming Continuum: An Ongoing Process of Engaging Family from the Point of Entry Until Discharge

Intake, Assessment, and Crisis Management

- Prevent the need for ongoing services
- Engage and learn from family re: initiating services and service planning
- Identify possible alternative care resources

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Teaming Continuum: An Ongoing Process of Engaging Family from the Point of Entry Until Discharge

- Case Planning Reviews
 - The plan must work for the individual/family
- Prior to Reunification
 - Plan for success and implement a support plan

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Teaming Continuum: An Ongoing Process of Engaging Family from the Point of Entry Until Discharge

Terminating Services and Next Steps

- Permanent connections
- Family and Community supports
- Assure successful termination and recidivism prevention

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Section 4

Understand how teaming values and beliefs impact the case management and care coordination process

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Which Value will Be Hardest for You to “Sell” The Values and Beliefs of FGDM

- Families have strengths and can change
- Strengths resolve concerns
- Strengths are discovered through listening, noticing, and paying attention to people (Graber, L. & Nice, J., 1997)
- Family members should be the primary decision makers for their family
- Empowering people is preferable to controlling them
- Empowering families will lead to families controlling their lives
- Families know family best
- Families are the experts

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The Values and Beliefs of FGDM, (cont'd)

- Children are best raised in families
- Families should be respected
- Mistakes are opportunities for growth and development
- All families have the greatest investment in seeing their children safe and successful
- All families have the ability to come together and solve family concerns
- All families have some resources they can count on to help them in times of need
- Families should choose which relatives, friends, and providers will attend their conference

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Section 5

Understand the roles and
activities of all the individuals
involved in the process

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The Four Stages of Conferencing/Teaming



Referral



Preparation



The Conference



Follow Up

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34[illegible]

It's a Family and Community Event

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[illegible][illegible]

- >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

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[illegible]

Participants

Individual:

- family, kin, friends, colleagues

Referral source

Informal supports

Formal service providers

Coordinator

Facilitator

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The Conference/
Teaming


*Facilitator(s) guides
the Family to develop
a plan to address
agency concerns*

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Follow Up

5-7 days post
FGC

Crucial to
achieve
Outcomes



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Family Teaming	Family Conferencing
The agency and family plan together	Family makes their own plan
Professionals part of most of process	Private Family Time
Can be mandated	Voluntary
Ongoing case planning	Follow-up Meeting facilitate by coordinator

Differences

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Section 6

Review the core steps necessary to implement or integrate these approaches at their agency

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Best Practice Implementation

- Safety (emotional and physical) for everyone
- There is hope for the family
- Family is CORE part of the planning and decision making
- Cultural humility throughout
- Trained neutral coordinators and facilitators
- Adequate preparation for all those involved
- *Voluntary practice
- *Use of a neutral venue

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Key Stake holders

- Consumer: Their identified *family*
- Referral Source: Support from administration and legal system
- Informal Supports: As identified by the family
 - Spiritual
 - Community/Recreational
 - Concrete
- Formal supports
 - Mandated: Child Welfare, Restorative Justice, Education
 - Behavioral Health: Mental and/or Addiction
 - Physical Health

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Comprehensive Planning for Success: Critical Steps

- YOU DO NOT NEED TO REINVENT THE WHEEL
- Administrative support and funding stake holders
- Engagement of key stakeholders
- Research planning
- Preparation of literature
- Securing informal locations
- Information sharing and training
 - Referral Sources
 - Coordinators and facilitators
 - Service Providers
- Plan for success: start slow and deliberate

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Family Team Meeting

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