



## What is Family Group Decision-Making?

- Family Group Decision-Making (FGDM) is a strengths-based approach which is designed to **empower** families to make a **safe plan** when there are concerns about a child or young person (CYP).
- It is a **structured** process that leads to a Family Group Meeting; helping families to **identify** their own strengths and solutions.
- FGDM creates an environment where young people and their family's **voices** are **heard**; it **enables** families **and** their support network to make **safe** and **unique** plans by working **together**.
- The process is led by an **independent** co-ordinator who is not involved in any statutory decision-making or case holding. Their role is to **prepare** the CYP, their family and extended network to come together to make a family plan. The co-ordinator is **available** to the family and the referrer **throughout** the process.
- FGDM is **highly recommended** as an early intervention where **statutory** processes may be required.

- FGDM can run **alongside** statutory processes and can help families to **prepare** a plan in advance of a LAC Review, CPCC and Children's Hearings. It has been proven to even help families **divert** from the Children's Hearing system.
- FGDM is entirely **voluntary**. Referrers must seek a family's **consent** and approval **before** referring to the service.

## Why FGDM?

- **Article 12** of The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 names FGDM as a relevant service which Local Authorities **must** provide to families.
- Scotland's **children and young people** have told us that they feel **special** when their families come together to **listen** to them.
- Families are **experts** on **themselves** and are often the **best** people to **make plans** for their CYP.
- FGDM is blame-**free** and future-**focussed**; it is an opportunity to **repair** fractured family relationships, to **improve** and **grow** a CYP's network of **support**.

## Aims:

**"Where children are safe in their families and feel loved they must stay"**

The Promise, page 6

- FGDM aims to put **CYP** and their families at the **heart** of the **decision-making** process, **listen** to their views, experiences and **hopes**.
- FGDM aims to provide **early** and **effective** support services to **prevent** children and young people unnecessarily entering the formal care **system**.
- FGDM ensures **whole family support**, enabling families to **overcome** the difficulties that get in the way of them keeping their **family together**.

## When to refer?

- When a CYP and their family need a plan for support or a decision which involves practical partnership between family members and professionals.
- Where the CYP may be referred to the reporter.
- Where a family plan is needed in relation to the CYP's safety and protection.
- Where the CYP may be accommodated.