

Barnardo's Compass Family Group Meeting Service

**Believe in
children**



**Barnardo's
Cymru**

**Information for
professionals
and referrers**



Introduction

Throughout the UK Family Group Meetings (FGM) are offered to families in a wide range of circumstances, where decisions need to be made about children. FGM's can now be offered to families in the Wrexham area providing they and their Social Worker agree that a meeting would be useful.



What is a Family Group Meeting?

A FGM brings family members and professionals together to make good and safe plans for children/young people. It is child/young person centred and a family focussed decision making meeting. The professionals use their expertise to provide information to the family, enabling the family to make a plan that meets the needs of the child/young person. It helps families to resolve their own issues ensuring that families have ownership of the problems and solutions and are committed to making their plans work. FGM's are based on the principles of partnership in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, and Education Acts.

FGM have 3 stages:

- 1. Information Sharing –**
the professionals share their concerns with the family
- 2. Private Family Time –**
the family is left alone to make a plan based on the concerns
- 3. Plan and Agreement –**
the professionals finalise and agree the plan

Our criteria for referral is:

- Children and young people up to 18 years old who live in the Wrexham area
- The child and one family member (who has Parental Responsibility) agree to the FGM
- Referrals can be made via the referral form to the FGM coordinator.



How do I refer?

Talk with the family. Raise the possibility of holding a FGM, its principles of involving the wider family (without discussing who should be invited) and the family's role in decision making. Leaflets are available to help you with this.

Gain their signature to sharing the information on the referral form and prepare them to expect contact from a coordinator who is independent to the family and Children's Services.

Don't be put off if there does not appear to be a large family network. The coordinator will identify and invite all relevant family members.

Complete the referral form and send it to the FGM Service (address overleaf)

Referral forms are available in Children's Services as well as from the FGM Service direct. Please ensure that your full contact details are included.

What happens next?

A coordinator whose role it is to convene the FGM will contact you to discuss the referral. The coordinator is independent of the family and Children's Services. They will then arrange to visit the child and family at home and map out the family network. The coordinator will prepare the family for the FGM and ensure that a supporter or advocate is offered to the child and any vulnerable adults. They will also book a neutral venue and arrange the FGM at a time and place convenient to the family.

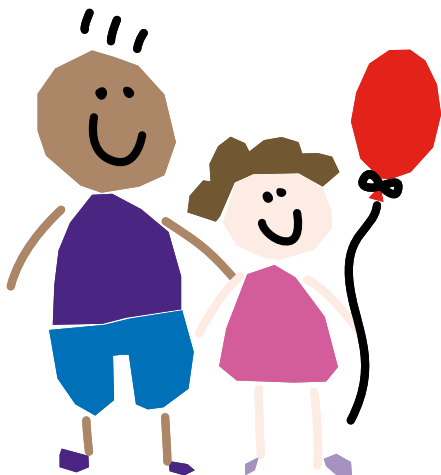
Professionals with key information are asked to attend as part of their normal professional duties. If a FGM is held 'out of hours', the coordinator will negotiate timings and attendance with all involved.

Your role as a professional:

You may be attending the FGM in the role of the referrer, or you may be invited by the referrer, the coordinator or the family to provide information relevant to the FGM.

As a professional your role will be to:

- advocate for a child/young person or adult family member
- provide the coordinator with all the relevant information
- highlight the concerns and formulate the questions that need to be answered in order to keep the child safe
- explain legislation requirements
- highlight resources that will be available
- support the child and family before, during and after the meeting
- provide clear, concise and understandable information that the family can use in Private Family Time
- agree the plan if it addresses the concerns raised
- negotiate with the family how the plan will be monitored and implemented



For additional copies of this leaflet, please contact the Family Group Meeting Service on: 01978 315130

If you would like an informal discussion, or have feedback about our service please do not hesitate to contact the FGM Service:

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