

ENGELSK

How can the family help?

FAMILIERÅD

Family Group Conference
in cooperation with the
Child Welfare Services

Information brochure
for children and adults



The aim of family group conference is to get the family and network to work out good solutions to problems between a child and his or her family. In collaboration with the child welfare services, the aim is that the family group conference will arrive at a plan that looks after the best interests of the child.

What takes place in family group conference?

- You, on your own, or the child welfare services can take the initiative to call for family group conference. The family and the child welfare services put together questions which the family group conference will discuss and propose solutions for.
- The local authorities assign independent coordinators to help the families prepare for and carry out the conference. The coordinator does not work with the municipal child welfare services on a daily basis and his or her task is to inform and visit the family/relatives, friends and other important persons in the network who the family wants to be involved in the family group conference.

- The family group conference meeting is held. An important principle is that the child's interests shall be in focus. The child is normally in attendance. The meeting, which is divided into three sections, lasts from three to six hours.

1. In the first section all the participants in the family group conference are present, including the coordinator, external experts and the child welfare services. The experts give the necessary information about the child's situation. This information is reviewed with the child and the parents before the meeting.

2. The second section of the meeting is only attended by the family's closest network. Here they discuss and agree on a written plan for improving the child's situation. The coordinator and the child welfare services can be called in during this process.

3. In the third and last section of the meeting the coordinator and the child welfare services return to the meeting and give their opinion on the plan.

- An evaluation of the plan is normally carried out in one or more follow-up meetings.

Do I dare do this?

Perhaps you are afraid that others will get to know about your problems. Many people have tried family group conference and experienced that relatives and friends want the best for the child and parents. In a broad Norwegian survey from 2006, most of the parents recommended that other families try family group conference.

Family group conference is gradually being expanded and is organized in different ways in different municipalities. If you want to know more, contact the child welfare services in your municipality or go to www.bufetat.no/familieraad.

Family group conference in brief:

- Family group conference is a voluntary programme that focuses on the child
- A coordinator helps the family to plan and carry out the family group conference
- The family, relatives and others who are important for the child are invited to the family group conference. Professionals and experts only participate in parts of the meeting
- The child welfare services will review the family's plan and will approve it if the child's best interests are ensured.



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