

Family Group Decision Making

Fidelity Elements

Family Group Inclusion

- **More family** than providers (paid professionals) are at the meeting.
- The family group **includes family, friends, and like-family others** (e.g., people who “feel” like family, like old friends, good neighbors).
- **Different sides of the family** are invited to the meeting (e.g., both the father’s and mother’s sides of the family).

Productive Decision Making

- The family group is **prepared** for the family group conference (e.g., they get enough information on what happens at the conference)
- Family group **understands the reason** for holding the conference.
- The family group conference is held in a **way that feels right** for the family (e.g., the right food, the right time of day)
- The family group conference is held in a **place that feels right** for the family.
- The family group is **supported and protected** (e.g., support people included if needed)
- Service providers (paid professionals) are **prepared** for the family group conference (e.g., they get enough information on what happens at the conference)
- The family group has **private family time** to make a plan.
- The plan **includes ways the family group will help**.
- The plan **includes steps to evaluate if the plan is working** and update it if needed.

Professional Supportiveness

- The conference **coordinator/facilitator does not have other jobs** to do with the family besides organizing and coordinating the family group conference.
- The conference **facilitators are respectful** of the family group.
- Service providers (paid professionals) are **clear about their role** in the conference (e.g., child protection, counseling).
- Providers (paid professionals) share knowledge but **do not tell the family how to solve their problems**.
- The plan is **approved without delay**.

Sources: Rautkis, M. E., Huefner, J., & Cahalane, H. (2011). Perceptions of fidelity to family group decision-making principles: Examining the impact of race, gender, and relationship. *Child Welfare* 90(4), 41-59. Jung, N., Bishop-Fitzpatrick, L., Rautkis, M. E., Pennell, J. (2012). Family group decision making: Measuring fidelity to practice principles in public child welfare. *Children and Youth Services Review* 35(2), 287-295.

