

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

Your role as a family member:

- ◆ To share with the family how you see the situation.
- ◆ To share how you feel the situation could best be dealt with.
- ◆ Together with the family to agree on the best plan, a plan which ensures that everyone in the family is safe and cared for.
- ◆ Preparing yourself:
Imagine what the conference might be like
Think about how you might feel
Plan what you want to say and if it helps, write it down
Reflect on how you may affect others and how they might feel
Consider what you want from the conference
- ◆ If you have been invited to be a support person, you will help that family member to express their opinion and to feel safe.

Your role as a service provider:

- ◆ To share with the family, in lay language, your definition of the concerns in the family.
- ◆ To note the strengths in the family.
- ◆ To be clear about any bottom lines you may have.
- ◆ To note any resources which may be useful to the family.

Your role as resource person/speaker:

- ◆ To use clear language to describe how the problem can affect a family and its members.
- ◆ To outline what resources have been used by other families with this type of problem and what might be available to this family.

Your Conference

Date:

Place:

Time:

Coordinator:

Contact The Family Group Conferencing

Project Coordinator

Inshirah Hassabu

600 The East Mall 3rd floor

Toronto, Ontario M9B 4B1

Phone: 416-622-8833 Ext. 255

Fax: 416-622-7068

E-mail: ihassabu@georgehull.on.ca

Partner Agencies

The George Hull Centre for Children and Families

The Etobicoke Children's Centre

Children's Aid Society of Toronto

Catholic Children's Aid Society of Toronto

Native Child & Family Services of Toronto

Yorktown Child & Family Centre

Jewish Family and Child Service

Funders

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services

The Hedge Funds Care

**EVERYONE INVITED TO THE
CONFERENCE IS IMPORTANT!**

January 2006



FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCING PROJECT OF TORONTO

WHAT HAPPENS IN A FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE?

Part 1 - Welcome & Information Giving

- ◆ The Coordinator greets and welcomes all people present.
- ◆ There is an opening that fits with the family's traditions.
- ◆ The Coordinator outlines the purpose of the conference.
- ◆ Each person introduces themselves and shares a hope for the day.
- ◆ Guidelines for a respectful discussion are brainstormed.
- ◆ If needed, a safety plan is outlined.
- ◆ The service providers share information about the family.
- ◆ The family asks the service providers questions.

Part 2 – Family Private Time

- ◆ The family group has time to meet alone to consider new ways of helping the child and the child's family.

Part 3 – Review of Plan

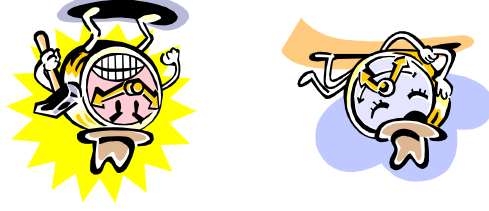
- ◆ The plan is presented to the Coordinator and the family's social worker.
- ◆ The details of implementing the new plan are discussed.
- ◆ A time is set to meet again to review progress.
- ◆ A copy of the plan will be sent to you within 10 days of the meeting.

HOW IS THE CONFERENCE ARRANGED?

- After your social worker has discussed the idea of Family Group Conferencing with you and referred your family to the coordinator, the coordinator will contact you.
- ◆ The coordinator will explain to you what Family Group Conferencing is about.
 - ◆ She will ask you who is in your family and how they can be contacted. She will also check with you whether there are other people who feel like part of the family, and who should be included.
 - ◆ The coordinator will approach these people and will invite them to the conference.
 - ◆ The coordinator will prepare each person for the conference.
 - ◆ The coordinator will also ask you which service providers could attend the meeting.
 - ◆ Child care and refreshments are provided.
- Travel arrangements can be made.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

- ◆ It takes a few weeks to set up the meeting and to make sure everyone is prepared and included.
- ◆ The meeting will go on for as long as necessary until a plan is agreed upon - so set aside the whole day!



WHAT IS A FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCE?

It is a meeting that involves you, your relatives and friends in deciding what plans could be made to help your child and your family.

WHO IS THE FAMILY?

Your relatives, friends and anyone who feels like family to you.



WHY USE FAMILY GROUP CONFERRING?

- ◆ A plan to help your child is made by the larger family.
- ◆ It is a good way of discussing the safety of everyone in the family.
- ◆ You know your children and other family members best.
- ◆ It helps you look at the resources both within the family and outside and how these can best be used to everyone's benefit.
- ◆ You hear what the professionals have to say.
- ◆ You hear the concerns of other family members.