

National Center on Family Group Decision Making

Summary of information gained through the Virtual Town Hall Meetings

Held January 7-10, 2013

Approximately 60 people from the US and Canada participated in Town Hall discussions for the National Center on FGDM to gather input from the FGDM community about where to focus our efforts in the advancement of Family Group Decision Making. The questions below were asked at each of the Town Halls and the responses below each question are a synthesis of the responses from the four Town Halls.

Questions:

1. What are the trends you are seeing in FGDM, in terms of both advancing the practice and stalling the practice?

Advancing Themes:

Stalling Themes:

- Model fidelity issues
 - Lack of clarity around what “FGDM” is?
 - Principles of FGDM vs. practice steps (e.g. “hopes and dreams”)
 - Lack of funding and resources
 - Staff turnover – hard to sustain work and build champions
 - Agency co-optation/ownership of FGDM process (family is not in driver’s seat as they should be)
 - We are not marketing people – challenged in promoting FGDM (often this role is placed on coordinators)
2. Five years from now, what advancements and/or growth would you like to see in the field of FGDM?

Themes:

- Increased family awareness and ownership of FGDM
- Increased availability of FGDM for any family who wants/needs it (not only CPS or placements)
- Data to support effectiveness of FGDM
- FGDM as how we do business – not an optional intervention and one that works in conjunction with other practice reforms (e.g. Differential Response)

3. What are some of the directions you and your colleagues have considered in advancing FGDM, within child welfare and outside of child welfare?

Themes:

- Constant collaboration with external stakeholders; relationship building
- Education/training on continuum of family meetings to understand purpose of each type
- Standardization of definitions/practice

4. What are families or communities asking for or identifying as their wants/needs regarding FGDM?

Themes:

- Lack of knowledge and/or trust re: asking for meetings within CPS is a barrier
- Expansion of meetings beyond CPS – to adult services, juvenile justice/probation, etc.
- Ongoing communication with extended family network after meetings occur
- [Lack of response to this question across town hall meetings – not sure why]

5. What are some key practice improvement elements that should be incorporated in future webinars, trainings and conferences?

Themes:

- Leadership-specific training (move from them just authorizing it to being part of it and gaining a deeper understanding)
- Need for peer networking opportunities – virtually and/or in-person
- Virtual trainings for communities without resources to bring in trainers
- Categorization of trainings based on focus – theory, policy, practice, etc.
 - i. Also by audience (leadership, stakeholders, etc.)?
 - ii. Also by beginner, intermediate, advanced?

6. Other?