THE THIRD STAGE OF THE FGC: THE DELICATE BALANCING ACT OF PLAN FINALIZATION

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GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER
OUR PLAN FOR THIS WORKSHOP

• What is FGC?
• What is the third stage of the FGC?
• The balancing act of the third stage of FGC:
  – Coordinator Role
  – Family Group Role
  – Child Welfare Role
  – FGC Group Role
  – Plan Finalization
• Let’s practice!
• Closing
The Origins of the FGC in New Zealand*

• Disproportionality
• Over-representation
• Alienation
• Creaking systems

*With thanks to Mike Doolan
Changing pathways in child welfare*

* With thanks to Mike Doolan
THE FGC MODEL

1. Information sharing
2. Private Time
3. Agreeing Plans

Referral
Independent Coordinator
Preparation
1. Information sharing
2. Private Time
3. Agreeing Plans
Monitoring
Review
THIRD STAGE OF THE FGC: WHAT IS IT?

• When does it happen in the FGC process?
• What is the goal to be accomplished?
• Who is in the room during this stage?
• What preparation does the group need for this stage to be successful?
• What will create the conditions for consensus?
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT: COORDINATOR ROLE
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT: COORDINATOR ROLE

• Facilitate discussion between family group and child welfare staff
  – Does the family group and the child welfare staff group trust the coordinator to lead this part of the meeting?
  – Continuum of active facilitation needed
  – Fatigue factor
  – Is the family group in consensus about their solution reached?
  – Protect family group’s leadership during Plan negotiation
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT: COORDINATOR ROLE
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT: FAMILY GROUP ROLE
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT: FAMILY GROUP ROLE

- Private deliberations are complete
- Invite the child welfare team back into the room
- Present the family group’s solution to the child welfare staffs
- Is the family group in consensus about their solution?
- Participate in a dialogue with the child welfare team to negotiate the Plan
POSSIBLE FGDM PLAN FORMATS
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT:
CHILD WELFARE TEAM’S ROLE

My role is ___
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT: CHILD WELFARE TEAM’S ROLE

• Managing the temptation to insert self as the expert while negotiating the Plan
  – Managing the power differential between child welfare staff and the family group

• How to recognize the family group’s work?
A DELICATE BALANCING ACT:
CHILD WELFARE TEAM’S ROLE

• Listen to the family group’s solution to the difficulties they are facing
• Does the solution presented address the reasons for the agency being involved in the family’s life?
• Does the solution contain enough detail?
• Participate in dialogue with the family group to negotiate the Plan.
• Is the Plan ‘safe enough’?
ROLE OF EVERYONE IN THE GROUP
ROLE OF EVERYONE IN THE GROUP

• Next Steps
• Monitoring the Plan
• Implementing the Plan
• What to do when Plan not working the way everyone hoped?
• Review FGC?
PLAN FINALIZATION

• After the dialogue together is complete, the child welfare staff present at the meeting accept the Plan on behalf of the agency, provided the Plan is ‘safe enough’.

• Child welfare staff agree to work together with the family group to implement the Plan.

• How to tell the child about the FGC Plan, if the child does not already know?

• Closing
LET’S PRACTICE!
SCENARIO I

After private family time, the family group has not come to consensus about who the long-term kin caregiver for the child will be and presents two possibilities during the third stage of the meeting. During discussion, it becomes clear that the child’s mother is supporting one caregiver option and the rest of the family group is supporting the other caregiver option. The family group is unwilling to discuss further privately, saying that they will not be able to come to consensus.

• Ideas about how the child welfare team can manage this situation?
• Ideas about how the coordinator can manage this situation?
• What is needed to create the conditions for consensus?
The family group has presented their solution created during private family time to the child welfare staff team. The child welfare worker begins making suggestions about how to improve and change the solution presented by the family group. It becomes clear to the coordinator that the child welfare worker has a different solution in mind than the one the family group has presented.

- Ideas about how the family group can manage this situation?
- Ideas about how the child welfare team can manage this situation?
- Ideas about how the coordinator can manage this situation?
SCENARIO III

• After the family group has presented their solution to the challenges facing their family, the child welfare team does not see any solutions to the concerns that they had asked the group to address. The family group experienced a lot of conflict between family members during the first and second stages of the meeting. They asked the coordinator to help them manage their conflict with each other during private family time. The coordinator tried to help them find a way to work together and to focus on the task of addressing the agency’s concerns when invited into private family time.

• Ideas about how the family group can manage this situation?
• Ideas about how the child welfare team can manage this situation?
• Ideas about how the coordinator can manage this situation?
CLOSING

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY
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