

Family Group Decision-making (FGDM) Process / Case study

Family Group Conference

12/1/08

In re M.H. aka M.F. docket no. xxx xxxx Rdjv

**** Note: Juvenile Court docket number removed, names of family group altered**

Chris Dinnan, FGC Coordinator / Facilitator / Recorder

Purpose: To gather family and friends together to communicate openly in order to develop a plan for permanency for Megan.

Family Group:

Megan	
Barbara	, mother (FGDM
Donna	, maternal grandmother
Erwin	, maternal grandfather
Jim	, step-father
John	, step-grandfather
Beverly	, step-grandmother
Jess	, friend of Megan
Renee	, friend of Megan

Opening:

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Read purpose (posted in room).
- Briefly review process (opening, information sharing, private family time, finalizing the plan).
- Read: It has truly been a privilege for me to serve as the coordinator / facilitator of this conference in order that you are all able to meet together this evening. This process is strengths-based and family-focused. While this family group conference is not only about Megan, it is primarily about Megan. I would thus ask that you remain focused on Megan and what is in her best interest. The content of this meeting will undoubtedly include talk of the past, but I would also encourage you all to focus on the future, particularly on what the next 12 – 18 months will bring for Megan and how you can support her during that time. It is important that you all participate actively and feel free to speak your mind. It is even more important, however, that you all actively listen to each other. In fact, please just listen to the four non-family group members until they have all had an opportunity to speak and then we will open it up to any questions you might have. Let's try to keep this first part of the conference to no more than 30 minutes.

Information sharing:

Jayne Davidson, DCF Social Worker
Lynn Gutches, Guardian ad Litem
Nancy Ivey, RHS Home-School Coordinator
Shelly Faris, DCF Youth Development Program

Summary / Agreement / Understanding:

The opening and information sharing phases of the FGC lasted approximately 40 minutes in total. The private family time phase lasted approximately 1.5 hours. The final phase, during which DCF Social Worker Jayne Davidson and I rejoined the family group to finalize their plan, lasted about 10 minutes. In total, the FGC lasted 2.5 hours.

The family decided that the permanency plan should be for independent living. The assumption is that Megan will live with Jess and Renee. Megan, Jess and Renee have an apartment in mind on Royce Street. Jess and Renee currently live elsewhere. They hope to move in by December 15. While the process to move from foster care to independent living normally takes longer, Jayne Davidson will work with Shelley Faris, who has already been working with Megan for a couple of weeks, to try to facilitate / expedite this transition. Jim and Barbara would like to see this apartment prior to the move. Megan will follow the contract that is developed with the Youth Development Program.