



Medway Family Group  
Conference Service

*"Helping families to support children"*

**A guide for children  
and young people**



Medway Family Group  
Conference Service

77a High Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 4EE

**Telephone: 01634 406903**

Email: [louisemills1@btopenworld.com](mailto:louisemills1@btopenworld.com)

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Medway Mediation

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Everyone has problems at school and at home from time to time. A Family Group Conference can be the start to helping you and your family sort things out.

### ***What is a Family Group Conference?***

Everyone in your family, other relatives and friends who care about you, meet together so they can all talk about what could happen in your future. Then they will make a plan.

### ***Who comes?***

All your family and relatives are invited as well as friends who can support you. Your social worker, sometimes your foster carers, school staff and other people who work with your family will also be able to come. Occasionally someone may be invited along to provide information to you and your family.

### ***Do I go too?***

You will be invited, or you will have the opportunity for your voice to be heard (more about that later!). If you are able to go, you can choose to stay and listen, or to be in a room nearby, for part or all of the meeting. Your brothers and sisters will be invited too. Perhaps you can even invite a friend.

*"If you or someone in your family gets upset in the meeting, then you can leave the room to calm down. When you are ready you can come back again."*

### ***Who sorts the meeting out?***

You will have your own 'independent coordinator'. They are separate from your school staff and your social worker. They will come and talk to you and your family about the meeting and let you know what it could be like for you.

Your family will help decide when and where the meeting is held. It may be held in your school or a place near your home. It isn't usually held in someone's home or a social services building. And you won't have to sit around a big table with everyone staring at you.

### ***What happens at an FGC?***

The coordinator will welcome everyone. Then your social worker, teacher or other professionals there will explain the difficulties you may be having at school or home and they will explain how they can help. Then you and your family will have some time in private to talk it all over and to come up with a plan for your future. There will be some food and drink for people to help themselves to. At the end the plan is written down and agreed by everyone so they know what will happen next.

### ***Have your say!***

It is important that you have your say too. This may be hard for you though, so there are ways you can talk to your coordinator so that you can be helped with this. You can make pictures, a tape of you speaking; a video or you can have an ADVOCATE to help you. This person can be a friend, relative, teacher or your coordinator can arrange for someone who is trained to help you have your say.

### ***What if I really don't want to be there?***

No one can force you to be at the meeting, but it is really important to have your voice heard. Talk to your coordinator about how you can do this.