

Family Group Conferencing Practice Standards

- elements of quality practice



1. Meaningfully Engaged Family/Whānau

Family/whānau are meaningfully engaged throughout the family group conference process

- 1.1 Family/whānau are engaged with at the earliest stages of involvement and key members identified.
- 1.2 Family/whānau (maternal and paternal) should be met face to face prior to the family group conference.
- 1.3 Family/whānau are consulted about where and when the conference is held and any protocols they wish to adopt at the conference.
- 1.4 Family/whānau are informed about what they can expect at the conference and assisted to think through what aspects of the conference may be difficult and how they will deal with this.
- 1.5 When family/whānau are unable to attend the conference there is an effective means for presenting their views at the conference.

2. The Right Support People

The right people are identified invited and arrive knowing what to expect at the family group conference

- 2.1 All people who are able to support and contribute to the family group conference, including professionals, iwi and caregivers are identified and included in the process.
- 2.2 Participants arrive with a clear understanding of the family group conference process, their role and how they can best present their information.
- 2.3 Participants representing a service are able to provide details about what the service can offer the mokopuna and their family/whānau, and how and when their service can be accessed.
- 2.4 For those unable to attend the conference there is an effective means for presenting their view/information at the conference.

3. All Information

All relevant information on the needs, strengths and risks of the mokopuna and their family/whānau is gathered and shared in a frank and honest way.

- 3.1 Prior to the conference all relevant assessment and advice is gathered and appropriate assessments initiated.
- 3.2 Comprehensive information about the mokopuna and their family/whānau is presented with respect and in a way that is appropriate to family/whānau taking into account cultural considerations.
- 3.3 Consideration should be given to holding hui a whānau prior to the conference to share assessment information with the mokopuna and family/whānau so there are no surprises at the conference.

4. Mokopuna Voices

Mokopuna take part in every stage of the family group conference process; their involvement is enabled in a way that reflects their culture and needs, their views and opinions are heard and considered as part of the decision making process

- 4.1 Mokopuna are enabled and encouraged to present their information at the conference in a way that is meaningful to them e.g. through pictures and letters.
- 4.2 Mokopuna are assisted to identify people who can support and talk for them if they are unable to do this themselves.
- 4.3 Mokopuna are supported to talk in a language they feel comfortable with and to share how they feel about the decisions being made.
- 4.4 When mokopuna are too young, or are unable to participate, there is an effective means of including their needs in the conference process.
- 4.5 Mokopuna are given information about what will be said in the hui a whānau and family group conference.

5. Engaged Victims

Victims are meaningfully engaged throughout the family group conference process, know their rights and how to actively participate in making decisions, recommendations and plans for mokopuna

- 5.1 Victims are engaged in a way that works best for them to encourage and support their participation and contribution to the conference. Face to face contact is the desired approach to engage victims to prepare them for the conference.
- 5.2 Victims are consulted about where and when the conference is held and these views are taken into account.
- 5.3 Victims are supported to have their say about how the mokopuna will be held accountable and what needs to be done to put things right.
- 5.4 Victims are assisted to consider what aspects of the conference may be difficult and how they will deal with this and what supports can be put in place to assist them with this.
- 5.5 There is an effective means for presenting the views of those victims unable to attend, or who choose not to attend, the conference.

6. Empowered Family/Whānau

Family/whānau arrive at the conference knowing they have the right to actively participate in the making of decisions, recommendations and plans.

- 6.1 Family/whānau are aware of the objectives and principles of Children Young Persons and their Families Act 1989 and the importance of the family/whānau group participating in decisions affecting their mokopuna.
- 6.2 Family /whānau are encouraged and motivated to have started thinking about what they would like to happen for their mokopuna and what they would like to achieve from the conference.
- 6.3 Family/whānau are provided with written information as to the functions of the family group conference so that they can refer back to this as required.
- 6.4 At the conference the family/whānau have the right to family time to consider all information and develop a proposed plan.

7. Effective Facilitation

The conference is facilitated in a way that generates a creative and unique plan for mokopuna

- 7.1 *A safe and interactive environment is established where all participants can contribute, are involved, able to voice their opinions freely and are listened to.*
- 7.2 *Participants are encouraged to consider ways in which mokopuna can be supported and their needs addressed.*
- 7.3 *Where mokopuna are at the conference because of their offending, the participants are encouraged to consider how mokopuna can be held accountable for the offending and how things can be put right for the victim.*
- 7.4 *Everyone leaves the conference with a clear understanding of the plan, their roles and responsibilities and the timeframes for actions to occur.*

8. Active Plans

Plans are supported, actively monitored and regularly reviewed

- 8.1 *Needs, strengths and risks are specifically identified and addressed in the mokopuna plan.*
- 8.2 *Accountability and responsibility for offending is clearly addressed in an achievable way in the plan, and understood by the mokopuna and their family /whānau.*
- 8.3 *Plans are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Reviewable and Time framed in language the mokopuna and family/whānau understand. The plan details what is to happen if things go off track.*
- 8.4 *Outcomes for the mokopuna, identified in the plan, are realised in a timely manner.*