



Information for service providers

Talk about the possibility of involving the Family Solutions Service with the family, and with the child if appropriate. We can visit families directly to explain what we can offer if this is wanted.

If the family agrees, make a request for service, and we will contact you to discuss. You will need to help identify the issues and strengths, to set an agenda for the family to focus on. Families need to know why they are meeting and what they are being asked to address.

As a service provider you may be asked to share relevant information with the family (at a FGC), explain any concerns and outline any resources you can offer. The family will be encouraged to ask questions. You may not need to attend the other types of meetings.

If you are needed at the FGC and have made the request on behalf of the children please allow enough time to participate fully. You can discuss with the Family Solutions worker what your role will need to be. Our work is in partnership with you and with the family.



Family Solutions Service

Contacting the Family Solutions Service

The Family Solutions Service works with families across Devon and requests for services or enquiries can be sent to our mailbox:

familysolutionservice@devon.gov.uk

We would welcome any enquiries. Please feel free to make contact to discuss the scheme to find out what we can offer.

Family Solutions Worker/Independent Co-ordinator details:

<http://devon.cc/fss>

Please contact us for more information.



An opportunity for families to be supported to find their own solutions.



Family Solutions Service

What does the Family Solutions Service offer?

The Family Solutions Service (including Family Group Conferences) are able to offer families a choice of different types of meetings aimed at making positive changes for children.

We can do this by offering families one or more of the following:

A 'Restorative Conversation' –

- A meeting between 2-4 people/parties.
- Used to address issues of unresolved conflict that has led to fractured relationships
- A facilitated meeting to help resolve these issues of conflict
- Aimed at improving relationships, promoting better understanding between the parties and moving forward.
- The meeting could last 60-90 minutes, with individual preparation completed beforehand

A 'Mediated Meeting' –

- Helping two people/parties come to an understanding about an issue that is impacting on the children.
- Promote listening and enable each party to be heard.
- Facilitated by two co-ordinators
- Both parties have an opportunity to work towards an agreement
- Preparations may be longer to get people to a position where they are willing to work together
- This meeting should last approximately 45 minutes but can last longer depending on the issues arising.

A Family Group Conference – A meeting for the family and friends network to meet together to make and agree plans about what should happen for children in the family. The term 'family' includes extended family and significant friends.

FGC Project Accreditation

This service has met the requirements of the National Accreditation Framework



- A Family Based Decision Making model
- Family are the primary decision makers
- Includes wider network of family and friends
- Held in neutral venue and informal set up
- Always includes private family time
- Children's views are included in the process
- Advocates can be provided
- Family have the opportunity to review plans
- Most take 2-3 hours on the day with significant preparation before the meeting

Why might families work with the Family Solutions Service?

The reason for a family's involvement will depend on what plans are needed. Plans will need to be made for children and this is the family's opportunity to be involved in making them or positively contributing to the changes that are needed. If families choose not to make the plan then others from outside of the family, such as a teacher, a social worker or the court may need to make them

How do the meetings work?

The meeting is set up by an Independent Person who is not involved with the family in any way. The meeting is held in a neutral place at a time agreed by everyone. The Family Solutions Worker will explain the process, discuss any involvement of other agencies and answer any questions about how the meeting might work best for the family.



Our workers are trained to set up meetings with families whatever the issue. At the meeting the family are the decision-makers and will be encouraged to communicate to find their own solutions

If the children are involved (at a Family Group Conference) Advocates can be provided to ensure that children/ young people's views will be heard as part of the meeting. All participants will be encouraged to actively and positively contribute to the meeting.

Can I choose?

All the services we offer are 'opt in' and families can 'opt out' at any stage if they wish. Planning might still need to happen and this will carry on. It is the family's choice - and if they decide at any stage that they do not want to continue with any of the meetings, the process stops.

The focus of the meeting will always be the child's needs.

Who might come to the meeting?

This will be decided by the family and the Family Solutions Worker. The Restorative and Mediated meetings would more usually be between adults. The Family Group Conference would include the wider network and the children's views and encourage their attendance wherever possible.

Who do I speak to about getting involved with the Family Solutions Service?

Families can speak to someone who works with them such as teachers, health workers, an early help worker or a social worker. Meetings can be held for any child where plans are needed and changes need to be made. Contact our team to see if this is the right option for taking the child's planning forward.

We can offer to visit families to discuss what we can offer before the family decide if they want to proceed