



FAMILY RIGHTS GROUP
Keeping children safe in their families

**Lifelong
Links**

Managing the joy

As the day of John's Lifelong Links family group conference drew nearer there was a growing sense of nervous anticipation. Will people let him down? Who will be there? Will they forget to come? Does he really mean anything to them still after so long...?

The preparation for the day was key. The first step I took to prepare John, was to take every detail back to him of how my meeting went with each of his 'link' people and write it all down for him to read later. How they had responded to his note, where they lived, what pets they had, little things they remembered about his time with them and why he was special to them. I took photos of the house and people as well. This helped John begin to build up a picture and make them more tangible instead of just a memory. I also explained how people can get emotional and tears may even come, but they are tears of joy not sadness and are normal. Emotions can be highly charged when happiness resurfaces after many years of grieving and longing. I think a few tools and having honest conversations helped when the big day eventually arrived.

John chose the venue, food, a music playlist and had the option to have an outdoor space at break time. This all helped calm and prepare his emotions. I asked his foster family and social worker to arrive first, then all others staggered their arrival, with people waiting in the foyer till they were invited in. This meant that John could cope with greeting everyone as they

came in without being pulled in two directions or distracted. John hid behind pillars, peeped out the window to see who had arrived and ran around. To see him hide, get himself ready, then run out to hug someone already waiting with open arms and tears flowing, was very moving indeed.

Joy has to be managed and prepared for, like any other overwhelming emotion. I believe the time I spent preparing John for how he might feel really helped him get a handle on all the confusing feelings flooding over him. We had talked in depth about how adults and children all feel a little bit scared, even of happy things, and how powerful feelings make tears pop out of our eyes but they are a sign of great happiness and relief, not anything to worry about. We had talked about his worries and fears that people would let him down and explained they were normal too. I had the privilege of working with a great foster carer who continued these conversations after my sessions too, which really helped.

Once everyone was seated around John, in the seats he had chosen for them, he looked around with a great beam of joy on his face and took a deep breath as he began to take in everyone who had come and realised he really hadn't been forgotten. These people wanted to stay in his life and he wouldn't get lost again.

*written by Jo, Lifelong Links coordinator
Devon County Council*

**All names have been changed to protect identities*



**Quotes from recent
Ofsted inspection
reports about family
group conferences**

"They have... implemented a range of interventions to support families, e.g. family group conferences, multi-systemic therapy and edge of care services. These solutions will take time to embed, but have started to improve outcomes for some looked after children".

Rotherham 2018

"The creative use of Family Meetings across the service at every level, including Early Help services, ensures that children are supported to remain in their families wherever possible".

Central Bedfordshire 2017

News from around the FGC network

Postgraduate certificate in FGCs

Register your interest now!



Late last year we announced that Family Rights Group will be delivering a postgraduate certificate in family group conferencing with the University of Salford. The first intake of students will be in September 2019 and will be launched at the network meeting in March 2019.

For further information contact: Please contact
Deanna Edwards: D.Edwards@salford.ac.uk
or Kate Parkinson: K.P.Parkinson@salford.ac.uk

Upcoming FGC network dates

14th March 2019, Manchester

Ensuring Quality Standards: learning from FGC service accreditation and the launch of the post graduate certificate in family group conferencing (Salford University/FRG)

19th June 2019, Newcastle

*Can we achieve a shared perspective of the potential of FGCs?
Exploring stakeholder perspectives with Dr Mary Mitchell, University of Edinburgh*

18th September, Cambridge

Family Group Conferences and domestic violence - learning from the Leeds experiences

4th December 2019, London

FGCs and the Legal Framework

Scottish Family Group Decision Making Network Event

North Lanarkshire hosted the Scottish Family Group Decision Making Network event on 24th January. (In Scotland family group conferencing is also referred to as family group decision making - FGDM). The event was extremely well attended with representatives from nearly all the projects in Scotland. The day was arranged by the Scottish FGDM Steering Group. Mary MacLeod, who is soon to retire after many years of involvement in FGDM, facilitated the Network event in her capacity as chair of the Steering Group.

Maggie Mellon from Parents Advocacy and Rights (PAR) delivered a presentation on the day. She shared a video of parents telling their own accounts of how it felt to be involved in the child welfare system. In Their Own Words is a very powerful introduction to parent advocacy. The film is available to watch at <https://parparentsadvocacyrights.com/2018/12/12/735/>. Maggie then provided an overview of parent advocacy in Scotland and a brief description of PAR and their links to the Care Review in Scotland. She spoke about how parent advocacy complements Family Group Decision making and comes from the same value base recognising the importance of families.

At lunch time the video presentations from the various FGDM projects across Europe were shown. They were premiered at the FGC

European Network event held in Edinburgh last October and provided an update on FGC work from the individual countries represented. There were definitely some budding camerapeople and directors amongst them! You can view the videos on the knowledge hub at www.khub.net/group/thescottishfamilygroupconferencingnetwork. If you are not already a member you can ask to become one.

In the afternoon there were table top presentations covering a range of topics: group work and FGDM, reflective discussion on adult FGDM, use of advocacy in FGDM and Family Rights Group's very own Stuart Graham facilitated a discussion on legal issues. Margot Thompson shared North East Glasgow's experiences and successes of developing FGDM in her area. The day was concluded with a question and answer session.

Please contact Stuart Graham or Vicky Rourke if you would like any information regarding the presentations and sight of the write ups from the table top discussions.

Upcoming FGC training dates

27th - 29th March 2019
11th - 13th June 2019
10th - 12th September 2019
10th - 12th December 2019

To book go online at
www.frg.org.uk/training

Advice Sheets

Family Rights Group have produced a range of advice sheets on family support, child protection, looked after children, family and friends care, adoption or challenging decisions. They are free and available to access now at:
<http://bit.ly/FRGAdvice>



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New cross-party Parliamentary Taskforce on Kinship Care

A cross-party Parliamentary Taskforce on Kinship Care has been set up by Anna Turley MP, with support from Family Rights Group. The aim of the Taskforce is to raise awareness about, and support for, children in kinship care, and to highlight the importance of this option for children who cannot live with their parents.

A kinship carer is a grandparent, sibling, aunt, uncle, wider relative or friend who is raising a child who can't live with their parents. The Taskforce wants to hear more about their experiences, challenges, and ideas for change. Please let the kinship carers that your authority or organisation supports know about following ways they can make their voice heard.

Kinship Carers can:

1. Write to their local MP

The Taskforce has created a template letter which kinship carers can complete and send to their local MP in order to set out the challenges that they face and encourage their local MP to get involved in the Taskforce. You can download a copy of the letter and find out more [here](#).

2. Attend a regional MP-led kinship carer discussion meeting

A series of regional events open to all kinship carers in England and Wales are being held over the next few months to inform the work of the Taskforce. The meetings are an important opportunity for kinship carers to share their experiences with MPs and ideas for change. Details about when and where the meetings are taking place can be found [here](#).

3. Organise a local support group Taskforce discussion

If you facilitate or are part of a local kinship or special guardian support group, you could arrange a special Taskforce discussion meeting. The Taskforce has developed a [list of questions](#) for local support groups to explore, and the meeting notes will be used as evidence for the Taskforce. Read more [here](#).

4. Complete the kinship care survey drawn up by Family Rights Group

The results will greatly assist FRG's ability to highlight injustices facing kinship carers & children & set out what needs to change. Analysis of the survey will be presented to, & influence the recommendations of the Parliamentary Taskforce on Kinship Care. Take the survey [here](#).



Cathy Ashley, CE, Family Rights Group, Anna Turley MP and kinship carers



Nadhim Zahawi MP, Anna Turley MP, Enza (a kinship carer) and Bradley (her grandson)

You can find out more and keep up to date on the Parliamentary Taskforce on the Family Rights Group website or on Twitter:



@KinshipCarePT



<http://bit.ly/FRGKinship>

Leeds and Southwark giving evidence to the Taskforce:

The Taskforce is also holding a series of evidence sessions. Ofsted, the Local Government Ombudsman, legal practitioners and Cafcass are amongst those invited to provide evidence over the next couple of months. Steve Walker, Director of Children's Services for Leeds City Council and Alasdair Smith, Director of Children's Services gave evidence to the Taskforce last month, in which they set out the challenges that their authorities faced but also their starting point which is to enable children to be supported to live within their families unless it is not consistent with their welfare. Alasdair described a FGC. Steve talked about how FGCs combined with investment in kinship care support systems were at the heart of the Leeds strategy which has successfully reduced the need for some children to come into or remain in care. He spoke about the practical as well as moral imperative of the approach – since 2012/13 external residential and independent fostering agency placement costs had reduced by £7 million. Alasdair discussed the experience in Southwark, where there is increasing investment in FGCs, drawing in part from learning from Leeds.

Surveys of local authorities

The Parliamentary Taskforce is also gathering additional evidence and ideas from local authorities and from organisations working in the child welfare field. A survey has been sent to all Directors of Children's Services in England and a Freedom of Information request to all English and Welsh local authorities. Please encourage your local authority or the ones you work with to have their say and respond to the survey and the Freedom of Information request.

Written evidence - your service or organisation's views welcome

The Taskforce has developed a [written evidence form](#) for organisations working with kinship carers, children and families, including child welfare and family justice organisations, such as FGC services. Individual practitioners who wish to submit your views may also use this form. This is an opportunity for your organisation

or service to share their insight with the Taskforce, including information about practice challenges, effective ways of working and recommendations for change.

Care Crisis Review

Last year Family Rights Group facilitated a sector-led review into the record number of care order applications in England and Wales and the number of looked after children reaching the highest level since 1985. The Review [confirmed](#) the sense of crisis that is now felt by many young people, families and those working within the child welfare and family justice system. Many professionals described the frustration they feel at working in a sector that is overstretched and overwhelmed and in which, too often, children and families do not get the direct help they need early enough to prevent difficulties escalating. There was a sense of unease about how lack of resources, poverty and deprivation are making it harder for families and the system to cope. The Review did, however, find plenty of common agreement about the way forward. There was consensus that relationship building has been, and is, at the heart of good practice. The Review concluded that there is currently a significant untapped resource that exists for some children in and on the edge of care, namely, their wider family and community.

Subsequently Family Rights Group have drawn upon the Review's findings in written evidence submitted to the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee. Cathy Ashley, Chief Executive of Family Rights Group was invited to give oral evidence to the Public Accounts Committee's examination into the rise in demand for children's social care services and also to give oral evidence to the House of Commons Housing, Communities and Local Government inquiry into pressures faced by children's services. Alongside providing a critique of the current system, Cathy highlighted potential solutions including families routinely being offered a FGCs, so that families can be supported to understand professionals' concerns and to draw upon their own strengths and networks to make safe plans for their child, averting the need for some children to enter the care system.

New Special Guardianship Orders outcomes research

Outcomes for special guardianship

A new national study led by Professor Judith Harwin and published by Lancaster University has used Children and Families Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass) national administrative data for the first time to examine outcomes of 21,504 children subject to special guardianship orders between 2010/11 and 2016/17. These orders provide a permanent home to children up to the age of 18, mainly with relatives.

The study, funded by the Nuffield Foundation, found special guardianship gives these children a new start in life while keeping links with their birth families and family network. There were very low rates of breakdown or return to court.

Nationally between 2010/11 and 2016/17 just 5% of all children on special guardianship orders (SGOs) had further care proceedings within five years.

In the case file study of 107 children on SGOs in four local authorities 31% of the children had never lived with their special guardians before the order was made. The permanent placement had never been tested and yet the children fared well and benefited from the placement.

Difficulties faced by special guardians

The study also found that special guardians experienced a rough ride from the courts and local authorities.

Special guardians found their experiences of courts and local authority assessments left them feeling 'isolated, bruised and embattled' unless they had access to legal advice. Often they did not understand the implications of special guardianship.

Many were actually not party to the proceedings or were unsure of their legal status. They felt they had no voice and wanted more support after the order had been made. They struggled with financial and housing problems.

The report identifies the need for better access to justice and a more transparent court process. Professor Harwin added:

"It also calls for a major overhaul of the process of assessing special guardians and significantly more support and investment in this kind of family placement. Special attention needs to be paid to improving the court experience of special guardians whilst ensuring a robust child centred assessment process that addresses their long term needs for permanency".

Accreditation of FGC services

Family Rights Group, with local authorities from the FRG FGC and Lifelong Links network, have developed a standards framework for accrediting FGC services that has been running since 2011.

So far 33 services have been accredited or are in the process of becoming accredited. At the FGC and Lifelong Links network meeting in Manchester on 14th March, FRG will be presenting the findings from accrediting the services so far. We have found:

- Standard 7 was most commonly met. The average score of 95%.
- The lowest average score across services were standard 2 and 5 at 81% and 82% respectively.
- 67% of FGC services were accredited on their first submission.

Reaccrediting your FGC service

If you are an accredited FGC service, it might be time to seek reaccreditation as accreditation status lasts for three years. At the time of the initial accreditation, your service will have received an accreditation report giving detailed feedback. The evidence you provided will have been scored against the standards framework.

The accreditation report will have included feedback setting out:

- **Required actions** - detailing actions that the service has to complete in order for it to meet the standard for accreditation and/or
- **Recommended actions** - setting out actions that the local authority could pursue to improve the service's practice.

Evidence that FGC services will need to provide in order to be reaccredited

The process for the reaccreditation of services is the same as for the initial accreditation of the service i.e. services will have to demonstrate their practice against the seven practice standards. However, services should also address any practice issues raised in the feedback report to services made at the point of their initial accreditation.

To apply for your FGC service to be accredited or reaccredited, or if you have any questions about the process please visit frg.org.uk/involving-families/family-group-conferences/fgc-standards-and-accreditation or email Sophia on Shill@frg.org.uk.

STANDARD 1

The FGC coordinator is independent.

STANDARD 2

The FGC should respect the family's consent to proceed.

STANDARD 3

The FGC should be family led and include 'private time' for the family to make a plan in response to concerns.

STANDARD 4

The central focus should be the child or adult who is the subject of the FGC and they should be offered support in their involvement including an advocate.

STANDARD 5

The FGC service should ensure that the family has all necessary resources, including adequate preparation, relevant information, and a safe and appropriate environment to make its plan.

STANDARD 6

The FGC should respect the family's privacy and right to confidentiality.

STANDARD 7

The FGC should be sensitive to the family's culture including their ethnicity, language and religion.

Accreditation* costs from November 2018 - March 2020

Accreditation lasts for 3 years

SIZE OF PROJECT	ONE OFF FEE	
	NON NETWORK MEMBERS	NETWORK MEMBERS
SMALL (under 40 FGCs a year)	£850	£550
MEDIUM (40-99 FGCs a year)	£1050	£700
LARGE (99 plus FGCs a year)	£1300	£875
RE-SUBMISSION FEE	£300	£250

**The cost will go up in April 2020 following a review with network members*

Lifelong Links updates

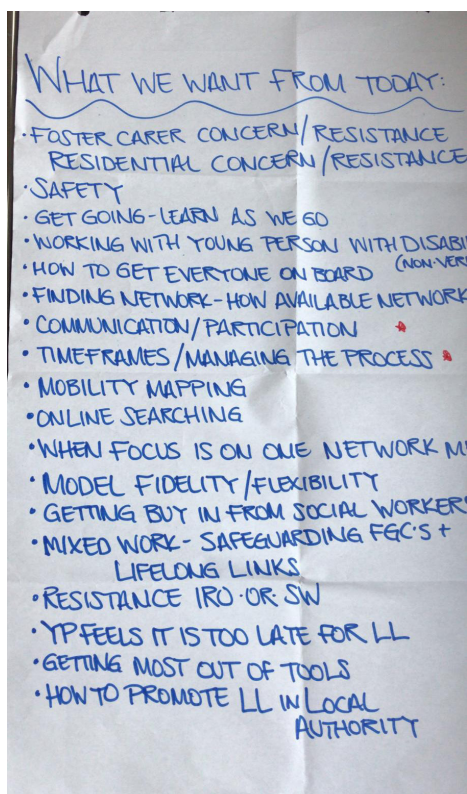


Lifelong Links is for children and young people in care. Lifelong Links aims to find family members and other people who care about them (such as former foster carers, teachers or family friends), in order to build a support network for the child or young person.



Lifelong Links... Regional Practice learning Sets

At the beginning of the year two more Regional Practice Learning sets were held (one in London and one in York). Each meeting followed the same format and approximately 43 Lifelong Links coordinators attended across the two events.



Each meeting began with sharing current challenges (photo to left) and then time was spent working on solutions. We looked more in depth at mobility mapping using specific practice examples which were presented by Dan from Camden and Louise from Coventry.

The day concluded with a practice learning circle and we look forward to hearing updates on how the suggestions from the circles were implemented in practice.

One new idea presented about mobility mapping was Draw My Life (example at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e5QZVaw3-6E>) as another way to think about /approach the work. Overall the feedback was very positive with 95% of the feedback forms stating the day met their expectations.

The next Regional Practice Learning Sets for Lifelong Links trial sites will take place on:

11th June (England, south) location TBC

12th June (Scotland) location TBC

27th June (England, north) location TBC



Lifelong Links

Lifelong links
Take a right long think
It might not sink
In until you hit the brink
Of this rink that's frozen
So break it open
Seize this moment
Realize the importance
The good that it does
Builds foundations for love
Helps rise above
Past use of drink or drugs
It's not about them
It's not about you
It's about finding the ones
That love me too
In a life that's askew
Filled with drink and abuse
I think that we should
Find the family that's good
Not sure what to say
Not sure how to act
I know for a fact
I'll get my family back

Sandi Pentland

Sandi is one of the young people to have benefitted from Lifelong Links in Edinburgh. More of Sandi's work can be found at [Astroknott on Soundcloud](#) and @ [Scottish Astroknott on Facebook](#).

Camden launch their Lifelong Links service!

In November 2018 Camden held their 'soft launch' for the Lifelong Links project, celebrating the successes of the project so far and setting out Camden's plans for how to build on this over the coming months. We held the event at our head office in King's Cross, and had attendees from across the full range of social work teams, managers, foster carers, IROs, and colleagues from three other boroughs across London.

The highlight of the day was William, a young person from Kent who was one of the first to participate in Lifelong Links. He spoke clearly and passionately about the positive difference Lifelong Links had made in helping him to reconnect with his paternal family. Another positive from the day was the attendance of a young person from Southwark who had previously been in care and who spoke about his own experience and how Lifelong Links could have helped him when he was younger –

and following the event is hoping to meet with William to discuss making their own film of their experience.

It was great to be able to share with the attendees the experience of Camden's first Lifelong Links FGC, which had taken place a couple of weeks previously, provide a wider update of the positive connections that have already been made in Camden (see case studies in box), and to answer a wide range of questions about Lifelong Links and how it works. Since the event, confirmed referrals for the project have nearly doubled, and we have a further two FGCs already arranged for March. We hope to build even further on growing the project with partners across London and nationally, and implementing Lifelong Links as part of the Camden Model of Social Work.

Written by:
Tim Fisher, Lifelong Links Lead Camden

Lifelong Links case studies in Camden

- Locating the older half-brother of a young person and arranging their first contact - both family and children's services hadn't previously been able to trace him. Both are now in regular contact.
- Tracing the paternal family of a young person who hadn't seen his father in nearly a decade, and being able to provide him with an extensive family tree. The young person has always wanted to be a chef and never knew his grandfather owned a restaurant!
- Supporting another young person to reconnect with an extensive paternal family who live outside of London - including holding a Lifelong Links FGC.
- Re-establishing contact with a number of professionals for a number of young people - social workers, keyworkers, and teachers.

FGC & Lifelong Links Network... Signs of Safety

Kent County Council have been using Signs of Safety in family group conferences for around five years. We had the opportunity to share this experience at the FGC Network meeting in Cardiff on the 5th December 2018.

The Signs of Safety approach to child protection casework was developed in the 1990s by Andrew Turnell and Steve Edwards in Western Australia. It has been adopted by many local authorities to risk assess families whilst working with them (as opposed to doing to them). It is family centred and solution focused so shares similar values to the FGC approach. Its aim is to ensure all professionals are using the same family friendly language to demystify professional speak by using plain English, along with clear examples of what the issues are e.g. an example of what neglect looks like in this case.

"One of the biggest problems that bedevils child protection work, identified in many child death inquiries, is the Tower of Babel problem, where everyone is speaking a different language" (Munro, 2002, Reder, Duncan and Gray 1993).

It also advocates naming strengths and setting goals. As a tool, Signs of Safety would ideally be done in conjunction with the family network – via a family network meeting. For the last five years in Kent we have been using Signs of Safety in family group conferences and whilst we have found it to be beneficial we also have some concerns.

Ultimately, Signs of Safety Family Network meetings are a good way of working but they are still professionally led meetings, and when held by the social worker the family plan may be influenced by the presence of the worker.

Family Group Conferences are an ideal way of using Signs of Safety – as the extended family will be prepared for the meeting, and all the family may contribute to the Signs of Safety, their worries, their strengths, their goals to keep a child safe. The meeting can then be truly family led.

Written by:

Clare Barton FGC Team Manager for SE Kent
Dawn Walsh FGC County Manager, Kent

Benefits

- Social workers are using family friendly language.
- Ensures the child's voice is central.
- Families understand the issues.
- Families hear the same messages so there is less goal post moving.
- Families can add to the Signs of Safety and scale the issues too - more inclusive approach.
- Referral information comes in a useable form.
- Allocation meetings are quicker – usually just around ensuring the wording is correct and contains examples.
- Referral forms now just ask for the Signs of Safety.

Concerns

- The wording is often, still, professionally led.
- Social workers often write the safety goals – thus defining the plan.
- The children's' views work can be repetitive e.g. how many people do they need asking them what is in their three houses?
- Signs of Safety promotes family meetings – and some local authorities use this in place of an FGC (sometimes in Kent too). This meeting usually excludes most of extended family and are written by professionals – as opposed to being family led.

Lifelong Links: Emma's story

Emma is 15 years old and has a learning disability and a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Her mum had a history of substance misuse and child neglect which, with a disclosure of sexual abuse, resulted in Emma going to live with her dad. Emma does not have any contact with her mum.

After a short period, Emma's dad was unable to meet her needs or manage her behaviour, which at times was violent. Emma moved to live in a secure unit for a number of years and most recently transferred to a one-to-one residential unit. During this time Emma had limited contact with family members or other supportive adults outside of the placement.

Emma told the Lifelong Links coordinator that she wanted to have contact with her wider family. She was particularly interested in regaining contact with her mother, her younger sister and a previous social worker. At the initial planning meeting consideration was given to:

- The management of Emma's behaviour in order to meet her desired outcomes of Lifelong Links.
- Any adaptations to the Lifelong Links process given Emma's learning disability.
- Protection of Emma from the alleged perpetrator of sexual abuse who remained within the family network.
- Effectively planning the process as Emma's maternal and paternal families all lived in different locations out of the local authority.

The Lifelong Links coordinator visited Emma fortnightly to complete key pieces of work with Emma and to generate information. The coordinator worked with Emma to complete:

- A genogram: 45 family members were identified;
- Mobility Mapping: identified significant people from Emma's past (both family and professionals) and was able to locate the previous social worker;
- The Social Connections Tool: explored the quantity and quality of current relationships from Emma's perspective.

There was significant learning from the completion of this work and exploration of the paternal and maternal family networks with Emma. Key learning points included;

- During the completion of the Social Connections Tool, Emma said that her father was the most important person but she did not feel able to ask him for support with important things. Maternal and paternal grandmothers were listed third and fourth most important yet Emma said

"Since Emma has been part of the Lifelong Links work there has been a significant improvement in her behaviours, at home and at school. She has started to form her own identity and stopped saying she wants to be adopted as now she can see her family and the support network around her. Overall the Lifelong Links has been a positive experience for Emma."

Emma's social worker



that she would be able to go to them for everything.

- Emma was very insightful about her relationships with family members and knew a lot of important information that the family thought she did not know.
- Meeting with individual family members identified by Emma enabled the coordinator to identify potential network members who could pose a risk. These included people who were close to Emma's mother and who continue to misuse drugs. It was thought that they could pose a threat of financial abuse of Emma given that she is a vulnerable young person.

"Having contact with my extended family has helped me manage my behaviour as if I do something wrong I now have to explain myself to all my family members and it is too much hassle so I just don't bother with the behaviour."

Emma

It was Emma's birthday a few days before the Lifelong Links FGC. There was a birthday cake and presents and the meeting felt like a family party. Emma was relaxed even with family members she did not know particularly well. A plan was made which included contact with her mother and younger sister. The previous social worker was unable to attend the Lifelong Links FGC but a plan for contact with her was incorporated into the plan at a later date.

Emma was in control of the information shared about her, the nature of the relationships that she would like with individuals and organising the where and when the family group conference should take place. Separate Lifelong Links family group conferences were held for maternal and paternal family as they lived in different parts of the country.

written by a Lifelong Links coordinator in one of the Lifelong Links trial sites

**All names have been changed to protect identities*

The Social Connections Tool

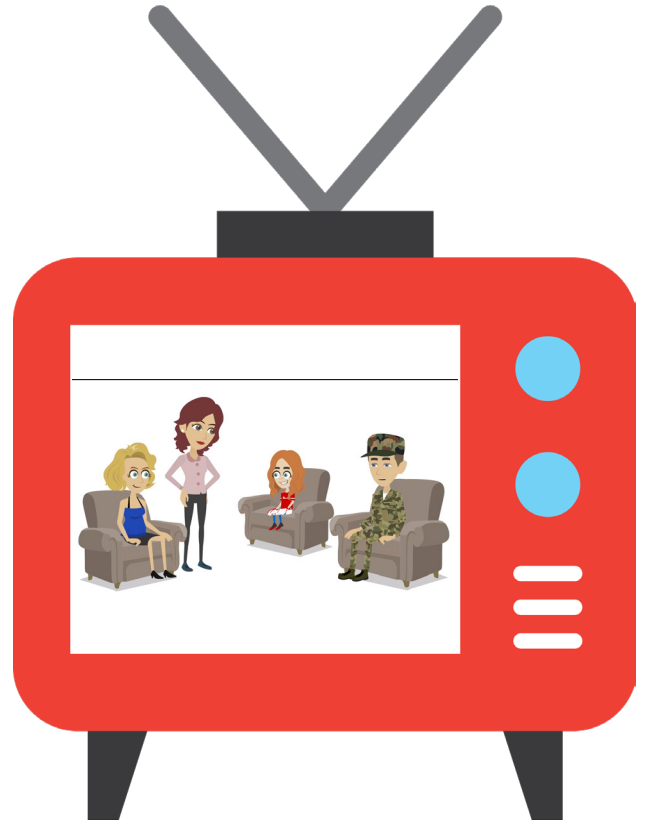
The Social Connections Tool (SCT) is a questionnaire which explores who is important to a child or a young person and/or who they rely on and in what way. The questionnaire has been designed as part of Lifelong Links and forms part of the trial. It has been developed in consultation with young people in care and care leavers, social workers and their managers, family group conference managers and coordinators, and academics. In addition to being used as part of Lifelong Links, the SCT can benefit other children in care to help social workers explore who is important to the child, the extent of the child's support network and in what ways members of the network are helping or may help the child.

Research Corner

Is Someone There for You? Social Support of Youth in Educational Residential Care from Family, Peers and Staff

British Journal of Social Work (2018) 48, 2195–2214; Pinchover S and Attar-Schwartz S.

This study is the first to map the views of young people in residential care settings about the support provided by their family, peers and support workers. The study was conducted in Israel and included a sample of nearly 900 young people. Whilst there are clear demographic differences there is relevance to the current pilot of the Social Connections Tool within the trial of Lifelong Links. Interestingly, a limitation of the Israeli study was the absence of consideration given to potential support figures such as teachers, sports coaches, youth group leaders etc. This is a gap that the Social Connections Tool addresses and many plans from Lifelong Link FGCs have resulted in young people having the support of extended network members including taxi drivers, teachers, social workers and ex-foster carers.



Hertfordshire County Council has created, along with their young people, a short film explaining Lifelong Links. Just click the image above to view it.

“Do you work with young parents whose children are involved with children’s services?”

Family Rights Group’s Young Parents’ Advice website provides easy-to-follow information about the laws and procedures young mothers and fathers may need to know when social workers become involved with their child.

The site includes information and tips for young parents about:

- Getting the support they need for their child
- Working with their child’s social worker
- Preparing for child protection conferences
- What to expect if care proceedings are started.

The Young Parents’ Advice website also has tailored information for young fathers, young parents affected by domestic violence and care leavers.

Visit our
**Young Parents’ Advice
Website**
www.frg.org.uk/ypa

Support & Advice

The Young Parents’ Advice website now includes blogs - a space for young parents who have been involved with Children’s Services to share their real life stories and thoughts.

