Important update of family group conference and Lifelong Links news and events.

Family Rights Group is keen to support local authorities during the Coronavirus crisis to work in partnership with families to make workable plans for vulnerable children and adults who are struggling or are at risk. It is more important than ever, when local authority and court resources are so overstretched, that we are able to draw upon the knowledge and capacity of the family and community network, to safeguard and support children and adults.

That is why we are holding a range of new activities to support Lifelong Links and family group conference services over the next year. These include: a new family group conference managers' discussion forum, Lifelong Links managers' discussion forum and virtual family group conference webinars. Please see below for further information.

A guide to delivering family group conferences during the Coronavirus crisis

How to use remote technology to support the involvement of families in decision making about their children during the Coronavirus outbreak

This guide describes how remote technology can be used to allow local authorities to continue to offer family group conferences to families and support children during the Coronavirus outbreak.

The guide is available to download for free from our website.
Following the success of the virtual meetings for family group conference managers held in April, we will be hosting regular practice discussion sessions. These sessions will give service managers the chance to provide updates on current work, share practice with other local authorities and organisations and receive input from staff at Family Rights Group.

In order to offer everyone interested a fair chance to attend, we ask that you only register for one session per month. Duplicate bookings will be cancelled in order to maintain availability for others.

To register
Please register for these sessions via Eventbrite using this link: [https://fgcpracticediscussion.eventbrite.co.uk](https://fgcpracticediscussion.eventbrite.co.uk)

These sessions will take place on Zoom.

**Family group conference managers’ practice discussion**

**Upcoming dates**
- 3rd June: 12pm – 1.30pm
- 19th June: 1pm – 2.30pm
- 1st July: 1pm – 2.30pm
- 15th July: 1pm – 2.30pm
- 29th July: 1pm – 2.30pm
- 12th August: 1pm – 2.30pm
- 26th August: 1pm – 2.30pm

**Lifelong Links managers’ practice discussion**

These sessions will run every four weeks to give Lifelong Links managers an opportunity to provide updates on current work and discuss any challenges with progressing Lifelong Links virtually.

To register
Please confirm your attendance with Andrew Rist. Once you have registered, you will be sent instructions on how to join closer to the date. If you have any queries, please contact Andrew (arist@frg.org.uk).

**Resources**

Family Rights Group have developed a range of resources which are free to use and available now on our website: [www.frg.org.uk](http://www.frg.org.uk). Follow us on twitter (@FamilyRightsGP) to make sure you don’t miss out!

- Advice guide for parents and families with a child in the care system: ‘Ways you can support your child during the Coronavirus outbreak.’
- ‘Top tips for kinship carers to help children maintain relationships’ during the Coronavirus outbreak.
- Podcast: Kinship Carers in Conversation with: Rt Hon Alan Johnson’
  
Our podcast series returns with a special edition. In this episode Jac, a kinship carer, speaks with Alan Johnson, former Labour MP and Family Rights Group’s patron. Alan aged 13 years old was raised by his sister when his mother died. Jac discusses her experience under lockdown.

**Latest blogs and vlogs including:**

- “Everyone needs a hero” by Catherine. Catherine is a special guardian to five year old “E”. Her blog describes how the crisis has been tough and the special guardianship support worker who became her hero.
- “View from a window” by Jac. Fifty-something Jac Moody and her housing officer husband Big D, are Special Guardians to Litt’l’un, aged 7, who has been with them for almost five years and has complex additional needs.
Virtual network meetings

Due to the current restrictions on large gatherings, the scheduled network meetings for June and September will now be held virtually.

Wednesday 17th June from 12pm to 2pm
Tony Munton, director of the RTK and Jane Towey, family group conference Service Manager for Tower Hamlets, speaking about measuring outcomes in family group conferences.

Wednesday 16th September from 12pm to 2pm
Tendai Murowe, Service Manager, Conferencing and Quality Assurance, Hertfordshire County Council.
This network meeting will examine examples of how family group conferences fit alongside child protection practice. In particular we will hear about the innovative work that Hertfordshire have been doing in changing their systems to give a stronger representation to families involved in child protection decision making.

Each meeting will be split into two sections: a presentation from the speakers via Zoom as a webinar with live chat followed by a Q&A.

To register
Each meeting will have 50 places available for network members so to help us manage numbers, please register using Eventbrite: https://fgcandllnetworkmeeting.eventbrite.co.uk

Once you have registered, you will be sent instructions on how to join closer to the date. If you have any queries, please contact Jordene Sewell (jsewell@frg.org.uk).

Becoming a network member
To join the FGC and Lifelong Links network, please complete the registration form on our website here: FGC and Lifelong Links Network registration form

Network membership offers the following benefits:
• 10% discount on all publications and selected training courses;
• access to the online discussion board;
• up to date information about family group conferences;
• a tri-annual newsletter;
• attendance at meetings and free workshops for network members;
• opportunities to network and share ideas with others working with or interested in family group conferences;
• priority booking for events and training run by the network;

More information about registration and membership costs can be found on our website.