

*Getting the most out of your*

# youth justice family group conference

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*Putting things right  
for a better future*



We all want our young people to be safe, strong, and sorted so they can make good choices. Let's face it, young people make mistakes. It's owning up to it and putting things right that will make the difference to their future.

Together we can help our young people be:

**sorted**

by learning from mistakes  
and putting things right

**safe**

by making good choices

**strong**

with a great future ahead.

**Contact Child, Youth  
and Family at**

**0508 FAMILY (0508 326 459)**

**[www.cyf.govt.nz](http://www.cyf.govt.nz)**



# your family – the most important part

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As your young person's family, you can have the biggest influence over their future.

The youth justice family group conference, or FGC, is your process. It's where you, your extended family, whānau, the victim and others come together with your young person to help them put things right.

This is your chance to help them turn their life around and move on without getting a criminal record, so their mistakes don't affect them for the rest of their life.

**Your young person needs your help to:**

: face up to it

: right the wrong

: move on

: be strong



# who will help me?

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## The coordinator

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The youth justice coordinator is your key person. They are there to work with you and help you and your young person get the most out of the meeting. They will talk to you about any family or cultural customs you might want to have as part of the meeting.

You can also talk to them about any worries or questions you have.

## Your family

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Getting as many family members as possible to come to the FGC is the main thing that will help create positive change for your young person.

Your family might be able to help you by talking to your young person, being a good rolemodel, making sure tasks are being carried out, or helping with things like their schooling or sports.

*I hadn't been with my whānau for ages and it was really good to have them back around me again and talking about how they could help me.*

YOUNG PERSON



# putting things right

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## What is a youth justice family group conference?

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The FGC is a meeting where your family and others will talk about making a plan that will help your young person to:

- ⋮ **face up to it** by owning up to what they did wrong and learning from their mistakes
- ⋮ **right the wrong** by finding practical ways to put things right with the victim as much as possible and make up for what they did wrong
- ⋮ **move on** by looking at why they might have offended and finding ways to help them turn their life around. This might include help with life skills, a job, school or activities like team sports
- ⋮ **be strong** by looking at what help you need to fully support your young person and help them be a strong part of your family.

## Who can be there?

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Apart from your young person and your family, the people that will be there are:

- ⋮ the victim and their support people
  - ⋮ the youth justice coordinator, who will run the meeting
  - ⋮ police
  - ⋮ the young person's lawyer, called a youth advocate
  - ⋮ others who can provide important information (such as health and education professionals or a social worker).
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*Putting things right*

# what happens at the conference?

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Each FGC is unique because you and your family will help decide how the meeting will be run. But generally this is what will happen:

## Getting the facts

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Everyone will hear what the police say happened:

- ⋮ if the young person agrees that they did it, we will go on and talk about how you can make things right;
- ⋮ if they disagree the conference will end there and the police or the court will decide what to do next.



## Time to talk

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Everyone talks about:

- ⋮ what the young person did wrong (the offences)
- ⋮ how it made other people feel, like the victim and your family. This is when the victim gets a chance to talk about how the crime affected them and what they think should happen
- ⋮ what the young person can do to make things right.

## The plan

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Your family, young person and you get to talk on your own about making a plan. Together you'll come up with ideas on how to put things right, in a way that is fair to the victim and helps your young person learn from their mistakes.

Then you will bring your ideas back to the meeting and everyone agrees on a plan.

Most conferences take one to two hours, but some may take longer as the plan needs to have a lot of detail to work well.

*The FGC made us look at ourselves as a family and we realised we just needed some help. Our family is full of strengths.*

MOTHER



# getting the most out of the FGC

Sometimes it can be hard to talk about things, but we want you to have your say. Before the FGC you might want to think about:

**Where do I want the FGC to be held?**

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**What special customs would I like to be part of the FGC?**

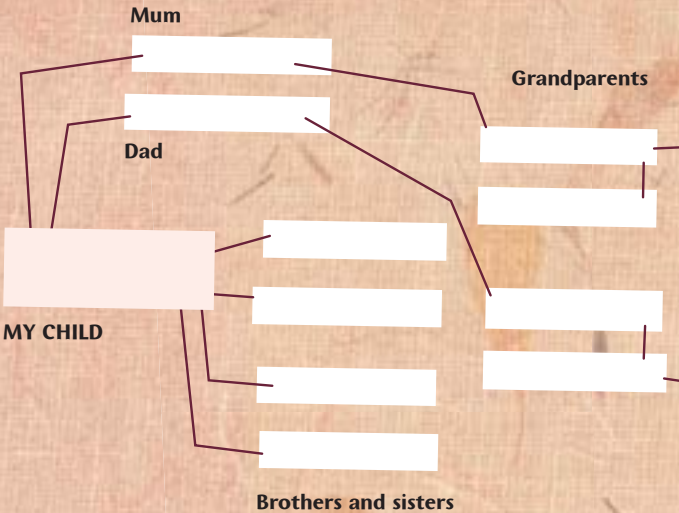
.....

.....

You might have personal things from your culture or family you want to include.

**It might help to fill out this picture:**

Think about who is in your extended family or whānau.





# moving on

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## The plan of action

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The young person needs your help to make this plan work. It's good to think about who in your family could be in charge of making sure everything in the plan is done.

Once the plan has been made it is legally binding and has to be completed.

The plan will be reviewed by Child, Youth and Family to make sure all the tasks are done.

If the plan isn't being carried out as agreed the coordinator will talk to you about getting things on track.

If you have any concerns about the plan please talk to the coordinator.

## A good plan...

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Should be one that helps your young person:

- : **face up to it** and admit what they did wrong
- : **put it right** with the victim and accept consequences
- : **move on** by supporting them to make positive choices from now on
- : **be strong** as part of your family.



# how can we help you?

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We will provide information, answer any questions you may have and support you to help your young person in a number of practical ways. Please talk to us if you have any questions.

## **And remember you can...**

- ⋮ ask for an interpreter if you need one. For example, if you are deaf or English is not your first language.

**Youth justice coordinator:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**



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child, youth  
and family

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