

*Where Are You on the
Family Engagement Journey?
Chart a Course for Success*

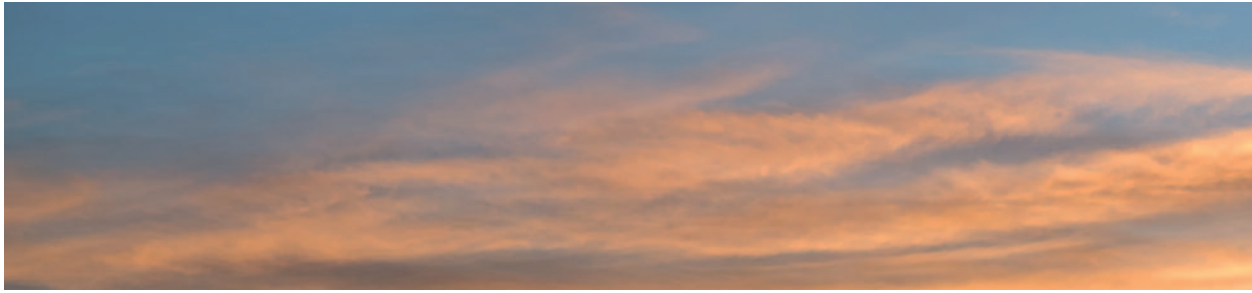
**2012 Conference on
Family Group Decision Making and Other
Family Engagement Approaches**

Registration Brochure

June 20-24, 2012
Disney Yacht & Beach Club Resort
Orlando, Florida



Family Group Decision Making
a program of American Humane Association™



Dear Friend:

Welcome to the 2012 American Humane Association Conference on Family Group Decision Making and Other Family Engagement Approaches at the beautiful Disney Yacht & Beach Club Resort in sunny Florida! Indeed, we are thrilled you can join us for the next few days as we gather to learn about the state of the family in 2012 and how it is impacting some of our most precious treasures, our children. Over the course of the conference, you will hear from renowned experts who journeyed from around the world to be here, including American Humane Association's own internationally-recognized staff.

Since 1877 American Humane Association has been working diligently, tirelessly, and tenaciously to protect and to improve the well-being of children and animals.

But in 2012, American Humane Association is striving to take a look at the common thread that binds communities – compassion. For it is through the power of this seemingly simple concept that we as a society can push for protections where ground has been lost. Our compassion for children, compassion for animals, and compassion for each other is an American value that can unite us in such challenging times as these. And as it has been for more than 135 years, American Humane Association stands not only ready to assist, but to lead.

Earlier this year we unveiled our Transformative Agenda for 2012 and beyond, where we presented a call to action to protect millions more of the most vulnerable. We invite you to learn more about our new program planks, designed to effect change nationally, by going to www.americanhumane.org.

Thank you again for attending this year's conference. I salute all of you for being a part of the remarkable progress being made in the field of Family Group Decision Making. And when you get a chance, I hope you enjoy your stay at fabulous Walt Disney World!

With warm regards,

Robin R. Ganzert, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
American Humane Association

What's New This Year...

Online Registration ONLY:

This year we will be offering registration only in an online format. This will require payment in advance. If you have any difficulties with the registration system, please contact Lisa Merkel-Holguin at lisa@americanhumane.org.

Speed Sharing Sessions:

It's loud, fast-paced, and lots of fun. Speed sharing takes place in a large room with presenters at various tables. For 20 minutes presenters share their ideas and answer questions from the small group gathered around the table. These sessions are meant to share a succinct idea, strategy, learning tool, etc. Presenters conduct the presentation two to three times with participants rotating from table to table to take part in whatever session they choose. There are no power points or videos involved.

Post-Conference Roundtable on *Family Engagement at the Intersection of Child Protection and Domestic Violence*:

This roundtable will be held on Sunday and facilitated by Dr. Gale Burford, University of Vermont School of Social Work, and Dr. Joan Pennell, North Carolina State University Center for Family and Community Engagement. In this roundtable participants will engage in an exchange of views and a discussion of the important issues related to helping the family, as widely defined. come to the table and remain involved. It is open to all conference participants free of charge but we do ask people to pre-register since some advance materials will be sent out to participants to help facilitate the discussion.



What Remains the Same This Year...

Diverse Learning Opportunities to Meet Everyone's Needs

Conference participants will enjoy a variety of ways to explore community partnership building, the intersection between practice and values, organizational and systems change, research and evaluation, and learning across systems—all in relation to FGDM and other family engagement approaches in child welfare, mental health, education and juvenile justice systems.

Opportunities include:

- Pre-conference full-day skills institutes and intensive seminars
- Plenary speakers
- Formal workshops
- Discussion groups
- Half-day seminars
- Networking with leading experts from around the world

Who Should Attend

The conference program has a plethora of workshops for administrators, supervisors, practitioners, judges, legal professionals, policymakers, researchers/evaluators, advocates, and family members. Presentations will be organized to follow one of the following tracks and have varying levels, as determined by the presenters:

Track 1: At the Helm: What You Can Do To Make Headway in Inclement Times

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail Into the Sunset

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies to Avoid a Shipwreck

Track 4: Responding to FLARES: Using Family and Youth Engagement Strategies for Youth to Create Lifelong Connections

Track 5: Watch Out for the Tidal and Rogue Waves: Legal, Policy, and Advocacy Efforts That Institute a Sea Change

You will be able to select any of the 50 workshops and discussion groups upon your arrival at the conference. The only sessions that require pre-registration are the pre-conference institutes and seminars on Wednesday, June 20 and the Roundtable on Sunday, June 24.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) Offered

This conference has been approved for a maximum of 18 CEUs by the Washington Chapter, National Association of Social Workers (NASW) for licensed social workers, licensed marriage and family therapists, and licensed mental health counselors. The provider number is 1975-228. The number of CEUs obtained is based on the number of seminars attended. Each eligible participant will be awarded only one certificate reflecting the total number of continuing education credits acquired. Continuing education certificates are available for \$30. To sign up in advance, please check the appropriate box on the registration form and add the correct amount to your total payment. Payment in advance will ensure that complete instructions and sign-in sheets are included in your registration packet.

General Information

Registration

In 2012, registration will be done on-line only. This method requires payment by credit card at the time you register. You can register at <http://bit.ly/yLGY9l> through June 12. Please be sure to register for each event you plan to attend. For example, if you were planning to attend the Skills Institute and the Conference, you will need to register separately for each. After June 12 you will need to register on-site once you arrive at the conference at the registration desk.

Registration Rates:

Early Registration (before May 1)	\$395
Advanced Registration (May 1 – June 12)	\$445
On-Site Registration (after June 12)	\$485
One-Day Registration (Good for Thursday, Friday, or Saturday only)	\$185
Skills Institutes	\$110
Sunday Roundtable	FREE
Continuing Education Units	\$30

The conference registration fee covers conference materials, all sessions, breakfast on Thursday, and lunch on Friday. The registration fee for the Skills Institutes includes lunch.

Cancellations

Any request for a refund must be received *in writing* no later than June 13, 2012. A service fee of \$100 will be charged for all cancellations received by June 13, 2012. Cancellations after June 13 and before June 18, 2012, will be charged one-half the conference registration fee. Cancellation notifications received after June 18, 2012, are not eligible for refunds. You may substitute your registration with another person's without a charge. Please send cancellations or substitutions to fgdm@americanhumane.org.

Exhibiting Opportunities

Want your information and products to reach some of the most forward thinking professionals in the child welfare field? Come and exhibit at the 2012 Conference on FGDM and Other Family Engagement Approaches. Drawing over 500 professionals annually this international conference this is your opportunity to showcase your information to administrators, supervisors, practitioners, judicial professionals, researchers, and academics.

Exhibit space will be in the foyer outside the ballroom and meeting rooms, a space where attendees will mingle between each session. Cost to exhibit is \$750 and includes a table, two chairs, and a conference registration. Additionally, your name will be listed in the conference program and you may place materials in the conference registration packets.

If you are not attending but would still like to have a presence at the conference you may choose to place material in the conference registration packets given to each attendee for a \$250 fee.

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Lisa Merkel-Holguin at lisa@americanhumane.org or by calling 303-669-2600.

Conference Site and Accommodations

We are delighted to hold this year's conference at Disney's Yacht & Beach Club Resort, a lakeside Disney Deluxe Resort featuring lush landscaping and the formal grace of a grand New England yacht club. Behind the Resort lies Stormalong Bay and Crescent Lake. Stormalong Bay spans

three acres, with water slides emerging from the life-size replica of a wrecked ship, lagoons, a slow river to float along in inner tubes and a sand-bottom pool. The hotel is within walking distance to Epcot®, a short boat ride to Disney's Hollywood Studios™, and adjacent to Disney's BoardWalk entertainment district on Crescent Lake.

American Humane Association has negotiated a conference room rate of \$175 per night for a single or double room. Additional persons (18 years or older) will at \$25 per person per night to the room rate. This rate includes:

- Complimentary transportation and luggage transfer to and from the Orlando airport to the hotel (a savings of approximately \$80)
- Complimentary internet access in your guest room
- Free self parking
- Unlimited use of the fitness club
- Coffeemakers and refrigerators in each room
- Rooms have either two queen beds or a single king bed
- Extra Magic Hours: Available only to guests of selected Disney Resort Hotels, this is a rare opportunity to enjoy extra hours at the park.

This room rate is good from June 16 through June 25 for those who would like to tag some extra time to their trip before or after the conference.

To obtain the special conference rate, please make your reservations by Thursday, May 17 by calling 407-939-4686 during normal business hours. ***We encourage you to make your room reservation early. If our room block sells out before the cutoff date, the hotel is not obligated to sell extra rooms at the discounted rate.***

Conference Tickets for the Theme Parks

For those attending the conference and staying at the conference hotel, specially priced theme park tickets are available. Take advantage of the after 4:00 p.m. one-park admittance ticket for a discounted price of \$52. In June the parks stay open later allowing you to enjoy one of the parks after the conference activities have ended for the day. The normal one day ticket price in June is \$90 for one park. You can purchase these conference tickets only at <http://www.mydisneymeetings.com/ama2012>. They are not available from on-site ticket booths.

If you are planning to visit the park's several times you may want to consider purchasing a multi-day ticket. You can find information about Disney World, including park tickets at <http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/>.

Travel to Orlando

The Disney Yacht & Beach Club is located 22 miles from the Orlando International Airport. The Orlando airport is served by all major airlines, including many international carriers. If you are staying at the conference hotel Disney's Magical Express, a complimentary shuttle and baggage delivery service, will take you directly from the airport to the hotel. You can make reservations for the Magical Express at <http://www.mydisneymeetings.com/ama2012>.

Weather and Attire

Temperatures in Orlando in June are warm, with daytime highs around 90° and evening lows around 72° with higher humidity. We encourage you to dress comfortably, but remember to bring a light wrap for the air-conditioned meeting rooms and pack your sunscreen and swimsuits!

Pre-Conference Events

Wednesday, June 20

Skills Institutes and Intensive Seminars

Focus on Follow-Up

Anita Horner, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

Why is follow-up vital to the successful implementation of the plan? What does follow-up really entail? How does a follow-up conference differ from an initial conference? How can effective follow-up occur while continuing to support a family-driven process? This skills institute will address these questions and other follow-up related topics, through didactic presentation, group activities and discussion, where participants will explore how to inform and enhance individual and system-wide practice. This institute will focus on defining and more thoroughly understanding the function and vital role of the follow-up component of the FGC/FGDM process, and how it directly impacts the successful implementation of the plan after an FGC is held. Through group activities and discussion, participants will consider how to inform and educate family groups, coordinators, service providers, communities and organizational systems about how to support and implement effective follow-up efforts, while maintaining a family-driven process that is reflective of FGC values and philosophy.

Level: Intermediate

Family Decision Making to Plan for Safety in Domestic Violence

Sharon Inglis, Circles Training and Consultancy, Winchester, UK

So what happens when domestic violence is a major factor within the family? Is it safe to hold Family Group Conferences? Should perpetrators be invited? Would women be victimized in such a meeting? Is it appropriate for children to attend? What evidence is there that this decision making model can be safe?

This workshop is aimed at staff with knowledge of FGC, and with an interest in how domestic violence affects women and children. Using a range of methods, including direct input, case study, video, role play, coaching and reflection of practice, participants will consider how to:

- Work in partnership with survivors, families and service providers to ensure that safety is paramount before, during and after the FGC;
- Deal with resistance or reluctance from participants;
- Ensure that children remain at the center of the process, whatever their age and development
- Assist in the creation of an environment that is safe and respectful to all attendees; and
- Focus on the values and principles that underpin this decision-making model.

Level: Intermediate

Through the Looking Glass: A Window into Understanding the Significance of Racial Identity and Culture in Family Engagement

Michelle Howard, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

This skills institute is intended to guide participants in increasing their awareness and knowledge of issues related to identity and culture; the weight of stereotypes and unexamined bias on family engagement, services, treatment and decisions in child welfare. Racial identity and culture are the embodiments of who we are and how we live our lives. It encapsulates a shared history and a set of common experiences forming a way of looking at the world. Attention to these factors will increase the practitioners understanding of their own perspectives and biases, as well as those of the families with whom they work. This interactive skills institute will help participants develop skills that will enhance their ability to engage culturally different groups based on the lens in which the family views and interacts with the world around them. This information is intended to expand knowledge rather than prescribe a particular behavior or strategy in working with a particular group, although some groups will be discussed to help apply the information and skills developed.

Level: Intermediate

Family Finding—How to Promote and Strengthen Family and Youth Voice to Attain Permanence?

Staff, National Institute for Permanent Family Connections, Oakland, CA

Family Finding is a practice strategy that utilizes a number of tools to increase the social worker's knowledge of the size and whereabouts of family members who can contribute to the attainment of permanency while improving child welfare agency adherence to notifications requirements of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. Many jurisdictions are implementing Family Finding to seek a reduction of youth coming into care as well as facilitating return to family in a timely fashion. Family members are engaged and encouraged to participate in a number of ways to help children and youth stay connected to healthy and safe family members and other important connections. This full day intensive seminar will instruct participants on Family Finding practices that will increase the number of family members known to the social worker who can then participate and support the achievement of permanency for children and youth in foster care. Specifically, attendees will learn the following tools and techniques to immediately implement into their daily practice: Connectedness Mapping; Mobility Mapping and Engagement of father and paternal family members; How to run a Blended Perspectives and Decision Making meeting.

Level: Intermediate

Supervisors: Good FGDM Practice Begins with You

Jeanne Ferguson, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

Supervising the work of a solid FGDM program requires diligence and skill. The success of any program is dependent on the people who bring it to life, so the quality of your supervision is critical. In this one-day Institute we will focus on understanding the mechanism of supportive, solution-focused supervision and the skills necessary to lead workers to excellent practice with families. Solution Focused Casework provides a skill set that creates parallel solution-seeking processes for workers/families, and supervisors/workers. Utilizing these techniques and using a coaching model that supports effective and efficient practice, participants will have an opportunity to learn new skills, then have significant practice time to hone them during this full-day session. Handouts, a PowerPoint presentation and supported practice opportunities will set the stage for sharing information and strategies that lead to programmatic, family, and worker success in FGDM practice.

Level: Intermediate



Total Systems Change: Transforming practice, services and organizational culture.

Paul Nixon, Chief Social Worker Child and Youth Family, Wellington, New Zealand

This one day workshop will explore how leaders and managers (including leading practitioners) can change and shape child welfare organizations to deliver services and practice that are empowering and collaborative with children, families, and communities.

The workshop will include theory, research and practice in the following areas:

- Developing a shared vision for empowering and collaborative services
- Leading and managing change in organizational culture
- Promoting best practice
- Progressive strategy and performance management
- Developing a reflective and learning culture
- Keeping a strong child centered outcome focus
- Staff and community involvement and consultation
- Collaborative evaluation and research

The workshop will be a mixture of presentations, interactive group exercises and discussions.

Level: Advanced

Wednesday, June 20, 2012

Tentative Program

4:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Introductory Session on Multiple Family Engagement Approaches

Lisa Merkel-Holguin, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

This presentation will outline the principles and philosophies embodied within FGDM and the processes to coordinate family meetings. The primary family involvement models used in the United States will be described and compared. Individuals with little exposure to or knowledge of FGDM or other family engagement approaches are encouraged to attend.

Thursday, June 21, 2012

Tentative Program

8:30 – 9:00 a.m.

Welcome

9:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Opening Keynote Address

“Only Connect...Transforming Life Chances — How Serious Are We?”

Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services, Leeds, UK

Mr. Richardson's career in public service began over 20 years ago working with young offenders. Since then he has held a wide variety of roles across a number of social care and local government settings. He has also held a range of key leadership roles including Director of Social Services and Director of Social and Housing Services before moving to Hull to become its first Director of Children's Services. Here he led the work on Hull becoming the world's first Restorative City. Nigel has been invited to advise on national policy and practice development in England and Wales on a number of occasions and he spent 18 months working with Lord Laming on a major public inquiry – the “Victoria Climbié Inquiry.” In his current leadership role he has set out his ambition for Leeds to become a child friendly city using restorative approaches to make a positive difference to the lives of over 180,000 children and young people.



10:15 – 11:45 a.m.

Workshops and Discussion Groups

Introductory Session on Multiple Family Engagement Approaches

Lisa Merkel-Holguin, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

This presentation will outline the principles and philosophies embodied within FGDM and the processes to coordinate family meetings. The primary family involvement models used in the United States will be described and compared. Individuals with little exposure to or knowledge of FGDM or other family engagement approaches are encouraged to attend.

Level: Foundational

Family Time Coaching: A Tool for Engaging Parents in Having Safe, Quality Time with Their Children

Susan Reed, Tara Longley, Michelle Dorcely, and Nancy Bloomfield, Easter Seals of Vermont, Saint Johnsbury and White River Junction, VT

In this workshop you will learn how Easter Seals of Vermont has transformed its visit supervision program to engage parents in meeting their children's needs in a safe fun way. Family Time Coaching is focused on creating good, life-long memories and empowering parents to feel successful in parenting their children. This model helps parents to recognize and identify their children's needs, and utilizes many "coaching" strategies to help parents learn new skills and build from their strengths. Within this workshop all of the components of Family Time Coaching as well as the "coaching" strategies will be presented. This workshop will also discuss outcome data for Family Time Coaching from five of the 12 social services districts within Vermont over a two-year period.

Level: Foundational

Model: Family Time Coaching

Track 1: At the Helm: What You Can Do to Make Headway in Inclement Times

Charting the Right Course - We Believe, Do You?

Deb DeLuca-Forzley and Jim Drendel, Larimer County DHS, Fort Collins, CO

Come, listen and participate in this presentation as we discuss how we are using research conducted by Colorado State University and our State and Federal outcomes to refine our practice and sustain family engagement through the use of facilitated family meetings. Larimer County uses a wide spectrum of family meetings to assure family's voices, culture, and values are represented in the child welfare and juvenile justice system and we are analyzing these different types of family meetings and the outcomes. We will share this comparative analysis with you. In addition, as a county participating in Differential Response and now being part of the Federal grant evaluating family engagement strategies we are furthering the evaluation of our practice. We will share with you the different family engagement strategies and the outcomes related to these as we continue to navigate our course in service to children, youth, and families of Larimer County.

Level: Advanced

Model: Multiple

Track 1: At the Helm: What You Can Do to Make Headway in Inclement Times

How to Ensure Your FGDM is Culturally Responsive

Donna L. Parrish and Michelle Howard, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

The overrepresentation of children of color in the child welfare system is a significant and widespread concern, and many jurisdictions are searching for solutions to remedy this problem. The use of FGDM provides positive benefits and improved outcomes for the children and families who participate. During this session, presenters will provide knowledge, information, strategies and tools for using FGDM as a viable strategy to improve outcomes for families and children, particularly children of color.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail Into the Sunset

Family Team Conferencing: A Strength-Based Approach to Conflict Resolution

Malveria Carter and Maryetta Clarkson, Devereux Kids, Bushnell, FL; and Genet Stewart, Kids Central, Inc., Ocala, FL

Kids Central, Inc. is a not-for-profit lead agency selected by the State of Florida to coordinate child protection services in the Fifth Judicial Circuit and Devereux Kids, a primary prevention and diversion program of Devereux, Florida, have collaborated to reduce conflict in families through the use of the best practice model of Family Team Conferences. This model is combined with a framework of specific solution-focused engagement tools that draw on the family's past success in solving problems, determine circumstances when the family is currently able to solve problems and develop the family's vision for a preferred future. Devereux's Family Team Conference facilitators partner with referral staff contracted by Kids Central to help families struggling with conflict. Conflict could include domestic violence situations, child visitation between maternal and paternal sides of the family, foster/adoptive parents versus biological parents, and family members at odds with child welfare staff.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Family Team Conferencing

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

FGC for Families Caring for Elders

Jeanne Ferguson, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

Families facing the debilitating consequences of illness, injury or advancing age also face a disruption of the patterns of decision making that has kept their family going for decades. Adult children are thrust into caretaker roles with elderly parents, adding to the complex roles they experience as children, parents, and grandparents with many people depending on them for care. FGDM provides a valuable structure and support process for use with families approaching end-of-life issues with the eldest generation. In this workshop we'll outline how the FGC process that is so effective with families of children in need is equally applicable to families with elders in need. Based on experiences in two Wisconsin communities, one urban, one rural, we'll provide a FGDM template for serving the families of the disabled or elderly by Agencies serving multiple populations from infants to centenarians

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail Into the Sunset

Implementing Family Teaming for Success in Child Welfare: Strategies for Organizational Change the Support, Integrate, and Standardize Social Work Practice

Ben Kerman, The Annie E. Casey Foundation; Judy Lee, Consultant; and Eliot Brenner, Casey Family Services, New Haven, CT

The integration of family teaming into organizations poses numerous challenges. Standardization of new practice models touches many aspects of an organization including clients and families served, as well as the practice, repertoire, agency culture, policies, administration routines, and the underlying philosophies that guide everyday decisions. How to lead successful organizational change of a new social work practice will be the topic of this discussion group, with specific focus on the implementation of teaming models in human services agencies. Relevant frames from human services management and implementation science will be presented to stimulate exchange and organize participant contributions. Discussion moderators, representing a combination of evaluation, administration and field operations, will share their experience of integrating a teaming model into one agency. Drawing on formal evaluation results and informal reflective practice throughout the agency, moderators will reflect on lessons learned and seek additional insights and strategies for successful organizational change from attendees.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Permanency-Focused Teaming

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

Family Finding – We Can't Do It Alone

Eva Domalski, Currin Haines, and Joshua Berra, Dauphin County Children and Youth, Harrisburg, PA

This presentation will focus on the journey that Dauphin County Children and Youth has been on in regards to implementing and utilizing Family Finding as a strategy to engage families and their supports. In 2008-2009 Dauphin County participated in a series of Family Finding trainings presented by Kevin Campbell. Since then, the Agency has struggled to find a way to implement Family Finding that is both lasting and meaningful – targeting more than just a few cases at a time. Since the spring of 2011, this Agency has undergone not only a philosophical shift – to one that is more team focused and family centered. But has begun to utilize its community allies and state-funded resources to better the practice and services provided to its families. Taking a model and transforming it into an everyday practice is not easy, this is our transformation story.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Family Finding, FGC

Track 4: Using Family and Youth Engagement Strategies for Youth to Create Lifelong Connections

11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. *Lunch*

1:00 – 2:00 p.m. *Speed Sharing Sessions*

2:15 – 3:45 p.m.

Workshops and Discussion Groups

Beyond the White Board: Use of Self in Facilitation

Christina Pratt and Alyssa Berge, Arapahoe County DHS, Aurora, CO

Facilitators, what is the most important tool you can use in creating effective family engagement meetings? The answer is YOU! This workshop was created specifically to provide you the opportunity to identify and hone your individual facilitation skills. These facilitators have observed through their own experience how use of self can impact the flow and success of family meetings. This session will help you discover how you use your brain and body as your best tool. This training is unique in that it moves beyond the mechanics of family engagement meetings and facilitator role to the art form of facilitation. Come with us as we create self inventories to identify the skills we are already using and then play with new ideas generated by the group!

Level: Intermediate

Model: LINKS

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

“It’s Like Trying to Nail Jello to a Wall!” The Complexities of the 3rd Stage of the FGC

Sharon Inglis, Circles Training and Consultancy, Winchester, UK

In training it sounds so easy: “the family group will present their plan to the referring worker,” but rarely is the third stage of the FGC so straightforward. It is however, a critical part of the process and the implementation of the plan can succeed or fail depending on how it is managed. This group discussion will give participants an opportunity to examine the balance between respecting family leadership and decision making whilst acknowledging that the plan will need to fit into bureaucratic procedures. Participants will be encouraged to consider the roles of the coordinator, the family, and the referring worker; explore the challenges and barriers to good outcomes; and share good practice.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

I Get the Theory but What Does It Mean? Theoretical Models of Power and Empowerment in Family Group Decision Making

Paul Nixon, Chief Social Worker Child and Youth Family, Wellington, New Zealand

This session will aim to link theory and practice on the theme of empowerment. Critically analyzing different theories of personal, professional, organizational and political power, and then applying them to the policy and practice of FGDM, the workshop will seek to generate some ideas for the future development of this approach. The session will be a combination of presentations and interactive group discussions.

Level: Advanced

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

We Learned From Each Other: Lessons From Social Workers & Families Who Have Participated in Vermont's Family Safety Planning and Family Group Conferences

Sarah Ward and Rebecca Alterman, University of Vermont, CWTP, Burlington, VT

This workshop will utilize video footage of interviews with social workers and family members reflecting on the family meetings in Vermont to understand some of the major changes in the system, the decrease in custody cases and the increase in family meetings. We will explore how to use both the data and anecdotes to focus the next steps of training and implementation.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC and Family Safety Planning

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

Family Group Decision Making with Lakota Families in Two Tribal Communities: Evaluation Tools and Initial Findings

Lyscha Marcynyszyn, Casey Family Programs, Seattle, WA; and Pete Small Bear, Sicangu Child and Family Services, Mission, SD

This presentation describes an adapted Family Group Decision Making practice model for Native American communities, the FGDM family engagement process, and FGDM evaluation tools as one example for other native communities. Challenges and successes associated with the implementation and evaluation of these meetings are described in the context of key historical and cultural factors such as intergenerational grief and trauma as well as past misuse of data in native communities. Early findings will be discussed.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

Building Lifelong Connections for Youth Aging Out of the Child Welfare System

Jennifer Gearhart, South Bay Mental Health Center; and Christine Meyer, Massachusetts Department of Children and Families, Brockton, MA

This discussion group will focus on the State of Massachusetts' implementation of two family centered strategies, Family Group Conferencing and Family Finding. The Family Group Conferencing/Family Finding coordinators were involved with training conducted by Kevin Campbell. This training centers around the Department's focus on the older youth, who reside in foster care and their need to have lifelong connections. Many of these youth will "age out" of the Department's care and custody and have no adult(s) to help them negotiate the world. It is now the charge of the FGC/FF coordinators to help these children develop a safety network as they reconnect with relations from their past. When coordinators begin this very delicate process, many times it is the community-based clinicians that are some of the support people involved with these youth. These clinicians are an integral part of the support these children need to achieve this network of lifelong connections. South Bay has been actively training community partners in the practice of Family Group Conferencing in partnership with the Department of Children and Families and knows the benefits for families they work with. The group will discuss actual case examples of family finding and family group conferencing.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC and Family Finding

Track 4: Using Family and Youth Engagement Strategies for Youth to Create Lifelong Connections

Going to Scale: Implementing a Family Connections FGDM Demonstration Project Within a Circuit-Wide Diversion Process

Joanne Billingsley, Kids Central Inc., Ocala, FL; Ann Doyle, Devereux Florida, Tampa, Fla.; and Jean Elder, JK Elder & Associates, Inc., Ann Arbor, MI

In October 2011, Kids Central, Inc., the community based agency serving Florida's 5th Judicial circuit, was awarded one of seven Family Connections' FGDM 36 months demonstration project grants from the Department of Health and Human Services Children's Bureau. The intent of the project is to increase Kids Central's capacity to effectively utilize the FGDM process that has been in place within its system of care since 2005 and to demonstrate its impact on child safety, permanency and well-being and cost benefit. The project focuses on families diverted from formal child protection services and includes providing the opportunity for all of these families to have a Family Team Conference along with follow-up diversion services as part of their individualized plan. The theory of change and subsequent project activities increase internal capacity to sustain the practice, fidelity to the model, and the use of the Protective Factor Framework as a tool to increase parental capacity to safely care for their children. The presentation will include implementation strategies, lessons learned to date and a discussion of evaluation design and preliminary results related to intended outcomes.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Family Team Conferencing

Track 5: Legal, Policy and Advocacy Efforts

There's No Place Like Home — Using FGDM with Families Receiving In-Home Services in 3 Jurisdictions

Heather Allan and Lisa Merkel-Holguin, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

This workshop will provide participants with an overview of No Place Like Home, a project funded by a Family Connections grant from the Children's Bureau. No Place Like Home is collaboration between American Humane Association, Casey Family Programs, and three project sites with over two decades of collective experience delivering FGDM to families in the child welfare system: Larimer County DHS (Colorado), Texas DFPS and South Dakota DSS. The goal of this project is to test the effectiveness of FGDM in safely preventing children from entering or re-entering foster care when they are receiving in-home services. This workshop will discuss the No Place Like Home evaluation design and instrumentation, including core research questions and issues of model fidelity in the context of the current FGDM research landscape. Participants will have an opportunity to share their experience using FGDM with families receiving in-home services and discuss any model modifications that were undertaken to work with that population. Participants will walk away with a greater understanding of the No Place Like Home project, the FGDM knowledge base, and how FGDM has been used with in-home service populations within child protective services.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 5: Legal, Policy and Advocacy Efforts

Friday, June 22, 2012

9 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. *Three-Hour Workshops*

Engaging the Disengaged: Bringing Disconnected Dads Back Into the Picture

Michelle Howard, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

This workshop will provide participants with knowledge to support a practice shift toward engaging nonresident fathers in child welfare cases involving their children. In an effort to facilitate such a practice shift, participants will come to recognize their own biases and presumptions about men and fathers; understand the benefits and strategies useful to overcoming the barriers to engaging non-resident fathers; and in developing collaborative partnerships with non-resident fathers, better comprehend the cultural needs of men. Participants will learn engagement strategies designed to encourage partnerships with fathers to promote positive outcomes of safety, permanency, and well-being for children. This is an interactive workshop that will encourage participants to reflect on their values, their practices and opportunities for improvement.

Level: Foundational

Model: N/A

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

FGDM with Diverse Communities

Melanie Sage, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND; and Jenni Powers, Newman University, Colorado Springs, CO

FGDM may not meet the needs of all community members and engaging community partners may be difficult if the approach does not fit the community's cultural practices. The strength of a family plan may be compromised by isolating community partners. In this session, the presenters will offer strategies utilized in North Dakota for engaging the various stakeholders in the Native American communities across the state, and discuss FGDM practice considerations- from opening a meeting to choosing a meal-when working with diverse cultures. Culturally-diverse strategies for FGDM will be discussed, from traditional Hawaiian family group practices to meeting considerations for intergenerational caregivers. This session will focus on evaluating one's FGDM practice for cultural competence. During the session we will strategize together about ways to improve relationships and partnerships with culturally diverse community groups. Specific techniques and resources will be shared, such as how to include partner agencies as trainers and informants, and co-authoring newsletter articles or press releases with community partners who serve specific communities of color. Feedback from participants about their own agency's practices will be recorded and provided to participants.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Building Safety Plans in Family Meetings

Suzanne Lohrbach, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

It has been common practice among child welfare agencies to address concerns about child safety through the use of placements, often outside of the child's family, as a response to the need to first "sort" incoming information. The difficulties arise in the limited capacity to sort that information in a timely enough fashion through a child's developmental lens and in the unfolding recognition that the separation itself may cause emotional harm. This institute will focus on meeting preparation and facilitation geared toward the development of safety plans when working with child and youth safety needs. It will outline the factors to consider in crafting solid safety plans and ways to use available resources within family systems and formal child welfare systems. There will be opportunities to practice!

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

New York State Family Engagement Implementation Process

Cathy Kinder and Barbara Jaklitsch, Research Foundation/Center for the Development of Human Services, Buffalo, NY

In a process that parallels family engagement (partnership based assessment, planning, information sharing, coaching, implementation) New York has developed a course of action for practice change by tapping already existing resources. Family engagement specialists work with state child welfare staff to train and implement family meetings, coaching family visits, locating and engaging fathers, and child center family focused practice in local districts and private agencies. This approach to achieving family engagement outcomes is proving to be effective in a state regulated, locally administered environment. Initially, state staff engages county administrators in identifying family engagement goals related to the CFSR/PIP. There are meetings with administrators and key community partners about the training and implementation process (which includes training content delivered via a blog website) ensuring support at the top level. Trainees are identified, introduced to the training topic and blogging expectations, followed by coaching and an implementation progression.

Level: Intermediate

Model: N/A

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

Next Steps Meetings; Engaging Families at the Time of Removal

Stephanie Barnett and Mitch Anderson, Hennepin County Human Services, Minneapolis, MN

FGDM facilitators can engage families in a respectful manner even at times of extreme stress and confusion, which is often the case when family members attend emergency protective care hearings following the removal of children. Gain knowledge of how to work with families as they enter the child protection system and experience the removal of their children from their care. We will discuss how to honor the feelings, concerns and hopes of family members while developing the next steps of the case.

Level: Advanced

Model: FGDM/FGC

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

The Court as the Lead Ship and Anchor for FGDM Practice

Judge Charles Pratt and Kathleen Rusher, Allen Superior Court, Family Relations Division, Fort Wayne, IN

Allen Superior Court, Family Relations Division uses FGDM in its purest form (including private family) after the six month review in a dependency case when the permanency plan is for reunification and little or no progress has been made in returning the child to the home. The Court has used a variety of family engagement practices for more than 10 years at different stages of the dependency hearing process. It has used facilitation, sometimes called mediation, prior to the initial/disposition hearing in dependency cases to address the allegations, develop the treatment plan (parent participation plan) and to address placement and visitation issues within 30 days of the onset of the case. FGDM is also used 3-6 months into a case that is involved in the Mental Health Specialty Track to insure that permanency is expedited for the children involved and to ensure the protection and rights of the family to have a voice in the permanency planning for their child.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 5: Legal, Policy and Advocacy Efforts

If Culture Eats Best Practice for Breakfast, How Do You Change Culture for Successful FGDM Implementation?

David Crampton, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH

In previous American Humane Association conferences, Mark Sieben, formerly of the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development coined the phrase, "Culture eats best practice for breakfast." Implementing practice is more than securing sufficient resources and policy changes. This workshop will cover how to measure and change culture.

Level: Advanced

Model: FGDM

Track 5: Legal, Policy and Advocacy Efforts

12:15 – 1:15 p.m. *Lunch (provided)*



1:15 – 2:15 p.m. **Keynote Addresses**

“Coming Full Circle - Developing FGC Practice with Knowledge from New Zealand and Around the World”

Paul Nixon, Chief Social Worker Child Youth and Family, New Zealand

Paul Nixon is Chief Social Worker for Child, Youth, and Family in the Ministry of Social Development in New Zealand. Paul is originally from the UK and has worked for more than 20 years in Child Welfare and protection, always in a statutory setting. Paul always been interested and inspired by practice and innovations from New Zealand, particularly Family Group Conferences, Restorative Justice, and Whanau/Kinship Care. Previously Paul was Head of Social Work services in North Yorkshire, England. Paul has written a number of books on Social Work and numerous articles and chapters. He has provided training and consultancy on Social Work around the world. Paul and his family, Nici, Carys, Haydn, and Rhianna and their dog, Murphy live in Wellington where he says the family enjoys being in New Zealand.



2:30 – 4:00 p.m. **Workshops**

Implementing Family Group Decision Making in Small Town Rural America

Lisa Fleming and LuAnn Van Hunnik, Child Protection Services, Rapid City, SD

Implementing FGDM in small town rural American presents many unique challenges. This session will describe grass roots efforts to implement FGDM processes, adapt them to work in small Child Protection offices in rural America, and garner support for expansion. We will discuss a variety of questions a small venue may have. How can you begin a new program without additional staff or funding? Can a continuum of meeting types best meet your needs? How can one small office impact practice statewide? Included in this discussion are challenges with locating kin and getting them to the table in remote service areas with minimal services, working with transient populations, working with extreme poverty, and multiple Indian Tribes within a service area.

Level: Foundational

Model: FGDM

Track 1: At the Helm: What You Can Do to Make Headway in Inclement Times

Relationships and Results: How Schools and Families are Coming Together to Achieve Success

Joanne Faulkner and Estelle MacDonald, Hull Centre for Restorative Practice, Hull, UK

Working with families is a unique, innovative project, currently significant positive outcomes for hard to reach children and families in Hull, UK. The project has successfully aligned key children's services partners and schools, working to provide positive experiences for the families within schools in Hull. Those that use fair process they have produced impressive results that have been advantageous to the lives of their schools and families lives. In the workshop they will share how they engaged the more hard to reach families, together with how schools are taking on

responsibility for problem solving with families. In addition, outcomes from current case studies will be shared. This workshop will examine the development and use of the family learning signature (FLS), an innovative way to work with families to engage them with their children's learning, a critical action to help raise achievement and attainment and improve well-being. There will be an opportunity to learn about the practices happening within Hull and see how FLS has enhanced children and families' lives. Results have shown it has empowered families to make meaningful decisions, positively impacting change in their lives. This session will show how Hull then extended its interventions through schools and invested in training selected staff in FGDM to support their work. This has had not only a positive impact on families, but on staff understanding the strengths of families and believing that families can and will make changes or make good plans for themselves.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM/Restorative Principles

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Shared Vision – A Compass in the Storm

Richard Vukmanic, Joshua Berra, Sharon Gibbons, and Eva Domalski, Dauphin County Children and Youth, Harrisburg, PA

This presentation will discuss the events, processes, and reactions that led to the transformation of in-home services at Dauphin County Social Services for Children and Youth in Harrisburg. As recently as the summer of 2010, most in-home services were provided by a single worker, in a distinct unit, with a mother and her children. As a result of the philosophical shift, based on the fundamental principles of Family Group Conferencing, services are now provided by a cohesive team, consisting of family, community members, and service providers, using a shared vision to guide the path of service. While this is an ever-evolving process, remarkable changes have been noted in the interactions between supervisors, workers and families. Additionally, out-of-home placements have significantly decreased while family involvement in case planning has dramatically increased.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

We Now Have the Tools, Let's Build That Village

Michael McClure and Holly Innamorato, Washington County Children & Youth, Washington, PA

This workshop will provide a myriad of innovative ideas, strategies, and examples of how workers and supervisors can enhance their practice as well as how an agency can develop their staff to optimize family engagement. Some of these ideas and examples are born from traditional social work, others are not, but all have been successful in connecting the dots to form a true picture of family engagement. We will explore effective supervisory practices, methods to involve the court, strategies to maximize the efforts of staff, and internal mandates and practices to engage youth, paternal kin, and the larger community that bring family engagement to the forefront of child welfare. Grab your hard hats and be prepared to catch the tools we will be throwing at you.

Level: Advanced

Model: Family Finding, FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Supporting Workshop to “Only Connect... Transforming Life Chances”

Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services, Leeds, UK

This workshop will look at the leadership issues raised in the presenter's previous keynote in more detail and go through some of the basic and very practical steps involved in creating an enhanced restorative capacity across partnerships that can help transform life chances and reconnect local communities.

Level: Intermediate

Model: N/A

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

Achieving Permanency for Young People Through FGC

Anita Horner, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

Through the use of FGC, young people play a key role in crafting a plan to achieve permanency and in identifying whom they would like to have in their lives forever, with the overarching goal of achieving the highest level of permanency possible for the youth. This session will examine the definition of permanency for youth; consider the multifaceted, crucial preparation of a youth for active involvement in the diligent search and FGC processes; and discuss how to use an ongoing FGC process until permanency is achieved.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC

Track 4: Using Family and Youth Engagement Strategies for Youth to Create Lifelong Connections

Accreditation of FGC Coordinators — Quality Assurance or Colonization?

Sharon Inglis, Circles Training and Consultancy, Winchester, UK

The debate over the professionalization of the role of the FGC coordinator continues and is now developing further as many projects consider professional qualifications for FGC Coordinators. This workshop will begin with a discussion over the pros and cons of accreditation and then explore the example of the UK's accreditation experience, which began with a partnership between the Family Rights Group (the UK's FGC Network) and the University of Chester. Using group discussion and presentation, the facilitator will also share experiences of her own accreditation journey.

Level: Advanced

Model: FGC

Track 5: Legal, Policy and Advocacy Efforts

Saturday, June 23, 2012



9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Workshops and Discussion Groups

The Proof is NOT Just in the Pudding: Tools for Measuring and Demonstrating the Effectiveness of an FGDM Program

Melanie Sage, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND

Although FGDM programs have operated for over a decade throughout the United States and we believe that they work based on our experiences, few outcome studies exist that offer objective support for this work. This session will report on early stages of research protocol in assessing effectiveness of FGDM at the agency level, including preparing direct service providers for data collection, defining outcome goals that match CFSR's, and collecting data that helps identify whether outcome goals are reached. This presentation will focus on small-scale research designs for use within agencies with limited resources. The presenter is the evaluator of a federal Family Connections Grant project in North Dakota, a partnership between The Village Family Service Center Nonprofit, North Dakota Department of Human Services, and The University of North Dakota, serving Native American children in foster care with a goal of addressing disproportionality and strengthening Native American families. This discussion group presentation is designed to help agencies begin thinking about how to measure their FGDM-related outcomes. The presenter will share the strategies used in our own evaluation work using FGDM with families in North Dakota. Materials will be shared to help stakeholders consider issues such as aligning outcome goals with the CFSR, targeting specific outcomes, training direct service workers for data collection, preparing child welfare staff for FGDM, and designing data collection tools that help inform practice. Strategies shared include the use of screen-casting and web video technology to help train frontline workers. The session will conclude with lessons learned to date in the first year of the North Dakota three-year FGDM/FTDM Family Connections pilot projects.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Ride the Wave with the Family – How We Include Them Even in Rough Waters

Deb DeLuca-Forzley, Larimer County DHS, Fort Collins, Colo.

Come hear how Larimer County is using a variety of family engagement styles to assure children, youth and their families are a part of the decision making process from the beginning and what we have learned on our journey. Not only will you learn about the different model, but you will get to see how the meetings are facilitated and the framework used to guide our practice. We as facilitators have a challenging and exciting role to play. We must know when and how to ask the difficult questions, how to truly use the strengths the family brings to safety plan for children/youth, how to make sure children/youth have a voice and how the family can be connected or keep their connections with the community to help raise children. In an effort to assure families have the ability to sustain safety and permanency for children when agencies are ready to close their case, we will also incorporate a discussion about developing family support plans that are developed with the family before a case can close and how using family meetings can accomplish this. Come sail with us as we move farther away from the “old” practice of child welfare into the ocean of inclusion with families, community, and agency working together to assure safety, well-being and permanency for children and youth.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Multiple

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Toward Comprehensive Child Welfare Design

Suzanne Lohrbach, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

Seven transformative strategies create a dynamic child protective service system with positive results for children and families. This workshop draws from experiences in Minnesota that incorporate a differential response system (family assessment response, an investigative response, and family support response), family involvement strategies, and group decision making. A sustained 12-year effort with outcome results impacting child safety, placement, court use and increased family involvement and family satisfaction will be presented.

Level: Intermediate

Model: N/A

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies to Avoid a Shipwreck

9:00 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Three-Hour Workshops

The Sweet Smell of Success — Can Be Measured in All Shapes and Sizes

April Seeley and Amy Benner, Bradford County Children and Youth, Towanda, PA

Bradford County Children and Youth is a Public Child Welfare Agency that is on the cutting edge of FGDM. It has been a journey with many trials and tribulations where it has struggled with measuring its success. Once it stopped measuring success as perfection, it was able to see even the smallest thing as a success for the family and agency. After fully implementing FGDM it reduced its number of placements and caseloads by half, reduced the number of cases it opened, and had significant cost savings. FGDM is used in every aspect of the agency's daily functioning from intake to finding permanency for its kids. This workshop will focus on exploring those many successes and how these successes propel staff and families to continue moving forward.

Level: Foundational

Model: FGDM

Track 1: At the Helm: What You Can Do to Make Headway in Inclement Times

Families Planning for Safety in Domestic Violence

Sharon Inglis, Circles Training and Consultancy, Winchester, UK

So what happens when domestic violence is a major factor within the family? Is it safe to hold a Family Group Conference? Should perpetrators be invited? Would survivors be re-victimized in such a meeting? Is it appropriate for children to attend? How do we manage our own power in these situations? This workshop is aimed at staff with knowledge of FGC, and with an interest in how domestic violence affects families. We will explore a range of issues related to building safety in a Family Group Conference by tapping into a family's wisdom, its safety networks, and wider community resources.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Measuring Fidelity of Various Family Engagement Approaches: Past, Present and Future

Mary Rauktis, University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, Mechanicsburg, PA; David Crampton, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH; Joan Pennell, University of North Carolina, Center for Family and Community Engagement, Raleigh, NC; Gale Burford, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT; and Lisa Merkel-Holguin, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

This workshop includes several highly experienced FGDM evaluators reviewing the history and importance of measuring model fidelity in FGDM practice and research. Fidelity will be defined and distinguished from satisfaction. Specific fidelity tools will be presented along with a discussion of their use in sites in multiple states. Methods for measuring fidelity, including observations and surveys, will be considered. Additional aspects of fidelity will be considered for evaluating existing FGDM research and for developing research that will contribute to the debate about evidence-based practice and FGDM. Efforts to measure Team Decision making fidelity will also be presented. Through the No Place Like Home Federal project, funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, another FGDM fidelity measure has been constructed and is being implemented in multiple sites across the country. Implications for practice and training will be discussed with workshop participants.

Level: Advanced

Model: FGDM

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies to Avoid a Shipwreck

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. Workshops and Discussion Groups

Is it Coordination or Facilitation? The Family Group Conference Perspective

Anita Horner, American Humane Association, Washington, DC

What is the role of facilitation in the family group conference? What does minimized facilitation look like? Facilitation can be a loaded word for families and service providers who are participating in the family group conferencing process. This session will focus on the concept of facilitation in a family-driven process, and will encourage group discussion regarding the possible ways facilitation can impact and support family group conferences.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGC

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Coaching the FGDM Process: Strategies for Leveling the Playing Field with Families

Katie Bourgault, Rutgers University School of Social Work, New Brunswick, NJ

In this workshop we will review best practices for coaching in social work and how they apply to coaching FGDM facilitators. We will situate this discussion within the context of considering the parallel processes between coaching staff to facilitate and coaching families to own the decision-making process. In addition, we will discuss coaching strategies used in New Jersey that support the development of practice that addresses the power imbalances between agency personnel and families. This workshop would be participatory and include lecture, facilitated dialogue, and small group activity.

Level: Advanced

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising the Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

The Texas Two-Step: An Open Forum on Family Group Decision Making

Ellen Letts and Stacy Lake, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Austin, TX

Come “two step” with us, as we open the dance floor to discuss your concerns, struggles, and solutions related to FGDM implementation, practice, and sustainability. Guided by our experience in Texas with the implementation, continued practice, and lessons learned from the use of three different FGDM models, we invite participants to share their views and experiences from their communities. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions and learn specific tips, techniques and ideas from Texas and each other.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FTM/FGC/Circles of Support

Track 5: Legal, Policy and Advocacy Efforts

12:15 – 1:15 p.m. Lunch

1:15 – 2:45 pm. Workshops and Discussion Groups

Family Finding and the Family Team Conference: A Successful Collaboration

Sonia Lynch-Dillard, Devereux Kids, Bushnell, FL; Patricia Sowder, Children's Home Society, Brooksville, FL; and Sandra Gonzalez Coronado, Children's Home Society, Wildwood, FL

In Florida's Judicial Circuit Five, two major agencies decided to collaborate to combine the efforts of Family Finding and Family Team Conferencing. Children's Home Society (CHS) – a community based case management agency/service provider for the Department of Children and Families in conjunction with Kids Central, Inc. – established a Family Finding Program for use with all of its families. Devereux Kids, a primary prevention and diversion program provided neutral Family Team Conference facilitators who were able to work with CHS and families during the decision making meeting stage of this family finding program. The combined efforts of both organizations in this process have improved successful outcomes for families by reconnecting children to family members. This reconnection provides the children with support, a solid plan to ensure that their unmet needs are met and sometimes permanent placement with family. The Program allows the families of children removed from their home to be an integral part of decision making for the safety, permanency and well being of those children.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FTC-Alabama Model

Track 1: At the Helm: What You Can Do to Make Headway in Inclement Times

Children at the Center? Involving Children and Young People in Family Group Decision Making

Paul Nixon, Chief Social Worker Child and Youth Family, New Zealand

This workshop, using a combination of presentations, interactive exercises and discussions, will explore effective ways in which children and young people can be involved in family group conferences. The workshop will help participants understand key principles and theories underpinning children's involvement, critically appraise issues of power and its effects on children's participation, examine the research evidence on "what works," consider what good practice looks like, and explore how children might be involved in developing and evaluating family group conferences.

Level: Intermediate

Model: FGDM

Track 2: Cruising with Families: How to Sail into the Sunset

Creating a Family Engagement Evidence-Based Practice: Development of the Lifelong Families Foster Care Model

Ben Kerman, The Annie E. Casey Foundation; Judy Lee, Consultant, The Annie E. Casey Foundation; and Eliot Brenner, Casey Family Services, New Haven, CT

Child welfare model program developers face a number of challenges in addressing the shortage of validated and replicable evidence-based practices. Yet the benefits of sound field driven-development, testing and implementation of evidence-based practices are significant. This workshop uses a concrete example to explore how child welfare agencies can use their practical experience and perspective to contribute to emerging evidence-based practice. Presenters will frame the current issues in evidence-based practice and implantation science, reviewing practices in the child welfare field and pertinent research on family engagement strategies. Representing research and field operations within one agency, the presenters will share their experience of developing, implementing and evaluating the Lifelong Families permanency-focused teaming model of foster care.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Permanency-Focused Team Model

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

A City Wide Approach: The Cities of Hull and Leeds Working Together Using FGDM and Restorative Principles as Part of a Unifying Framework

Estelle MacDonald and Joanne Faulkner, Hull Centre for Restorative Practice, Hull, UK

This workshop will explore how two cities, Hull and Leeds, both within the County of Yorkshire, UK, are using a common framework rooted in restorative principles to improve family outcomes. The framework provides an explicit and unifying approach in which the voice and influence of families is at the heart of engagement and decision-making. The values and principles embedded in the FGDM model provide explicit practice rationale to underpin professional behaviors.

Level: Intermediate

Model: Restorative Approaches/FGDM

Track 3: All Aboard: Collaboration and Implementation Strategies

Sunday, June 24, 2012

9 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. *Post-Event Roundtable*

Holding the Course on Family Engagement: A Roundtable on Family Engagement at the Intersection of Child Protection and Domestic Violence

Facilitated by Dr. Gale Burford, University of Vermont School of Social Work, and Dr. Joan Pennell, North Carolina State University Center for Family and Community Engagement.

The rhetoric of "family driven" practice and "family engagement" can lead to tensions between child protection and domestic violence programs. For child protection, family may mean just another kin placement for children; for women's advocates, family may mean further endangering the safety of mothers and their children. In both instances, narrowly defining family limits the potential of FGDM to enhance the capacity of family groups to sustain all their members, child and adult, male and female. Research shows that FGDM is commonly used in the USA to address child protection situations of domestic violence (McCrae & Fusco, 2010; Weigensberg et al., 2009). Thus, it is all the more paramount to help the family group provide an ongoing counter-weight to the force of legal and professional decision-making processes specifying when children should be removed from their families and when mothers should leave their abusers. Creating and maintaining interventions and organizational culture associated with family group practice is challenging enough by itself. With each system involved with the family, be it child welfare, domestic violence, juvenile justice, or mental health, the issue of who will be recognized as family is challenged.

This session will engage participants in an exchange of views and discussion of a number of important safety issues related to helping the family, as widely defined, come to the table and remain involved. A summary sheet of issues and questions pertaining to safe engagement will be sent by e-mail to registered participants before the session to help structure the discussion. Time will be held open for issues from the floor.

Overview of Family Engagement Practice

In the past 10 years, public child welfare agencies and community-based organizations have been implementing numerous family engagement and case decision-making models as a way to provide inclusive and culturally respectful processes when critical safety and permanency decisions are being made about children. As demonstrated in the Child and Family Services Reviews and state Program Improvement Plans, states are implementing various types of family meetings to involve families and children in case planning and improve other performance indicators. International surveys indicate that various family engagement approaches are being implemented in more than 35 states and 22 countries.

These models include front-end, time-sensitive decision-making approaches (e.g., team decision meetings, family team meetings, or emergency family group conferences that occur within 24-72 hours of children coming into care, before placement changes can occur, or to prevent the need for children to enter foster care) and forms of FGDM meetings (e.g., family group conferences and family conferences) that can occur at any decision-making juncture. The latter require sufficient planning and preparation time to assemble the largest support network available of family members, friends and other informal supports; community members; and representatives from the service provider network, to ensure that the most thorough decisions are made. In addition, family team conferences, child permanency mediation, child and family teams, family decision meetings, wraparound services, and family team decision making are some other commonly used family engagement approaches in child welfare and other child- and family-serving systems.

In 2008, American Humane Association's National Center on FGDM released a seminal paper titled "Family Group Decision Making in Child Welfare: Purpose, Values and Processes." The document, developed in partnership with FGDM leaders worldwide, provides a clear definition of FGDM, enabling the accurate classification of family-involvement approaches as being FGDM, for the purposes of funding application, research and evaluation, and training and education. FGDM processes are carefully managed and crafted to ensure fidelity to FGDM values and to ensure that those values drive practice. Five items are critical to supporting exemplary practice in FGDM:

1. An independent (i.e., non-case carrying) coordinator is responsible for convening the family group meeting with agency personnel.
2. The child protection agency personnel recognize the family group as their key decision-making partner, and time and resources are available to convene this group.
3. Family groups have the opportunity to meet on their own, without the statutory authorities and other non-family members present, to work through the information they have been given and to formulate their responses and plans.
4. When agency concerns are adequately addressed, preference is given to a family group's plan over any other possible plan.
5. Referring agencies support family groups by providing the services and resources necessary to implement the agreed-on plans.

Given the increased national interest in the plethora of family engagement approaches, coupled with our belief that those approaches can build on each other to achieve positive outcomes for children and families, and based on our 2008 definition of FGDM, American Humane Association, with the guidance of our National Center on FGDM Advisory Committee, has expanded this annual conference to encompass many approaches for engaging family groups in decision making in child welfare and other systems.

In addition, at our conferences over the past decade, American Humane Association has purposefully sought presentations on family engagement approaches implemented in other

systems, such as education, juvenile justice, domestic violence, mental health and adult services. With this conference and into the future, we will plan for the opportunity to learn across various systems working with children and families. In each of the past five years, more than 500 attendees from the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, New Zealand, Australia, and Europe have gathered to share their ideas and vision about advancing FGDM and other family involvement approaches. They brought with them extraordinary knowledge, enthusiasm and new challenges.

About American Humane Association's National Center on Family Group Decision Making

Since 1995, American Humane Association has been a leader in promoting the integration of FGDM philosophy and processes into systems that work with vulnerable children and families. The research increasingly demonstrates that FGDM is congruent with best social work practice: strengthening families, achieving child and family safety, and increasing permanency for children. FGDM encompasses various practice models that place families at the center of decision-making processes. American Humane Association established its National Center on FGDM in 1999 as a vehicle for promoting and supporting work in this area. The mission of the national center is to build community capacity to implement high-quality, effective FGDM processes that are philosophically congruent with the central values and beliefs of this approach. Together, we are working to create links, share resources, provide training and technical assistance, and broaden knowledge about this way of reorganizing systems to work differently with families. For additional information about our national center or the practice of FGDM, please visit us online at www.americanhumane.org/fgdm, email us at fgdm@americanhumane.org or contact Lisa Merkel-Holguin at lisa@americanhumane.org.



Schedule:

Wednesday, June 20

- 9:00-4:00 Skills Institutes and Intensive Seminars
4:30-6:30 Overview of FGDM and Family Engagement Approaches

Thursday, June 21

- 8:30-9:00 Welcome
9:00-10:00 Opening Keynote Address
10:00-10:15 Break
10:15-11:45 Workshops
11:45-1:00 Lunch
1:00-2:00 Speed Sharing Sessions
2:15-3:45 Workshops

Friday, June 22

- 9:00-12:15 Workshops
12:15-1:15 Lunch
1:15-2:15 General Session-Keynote
2:30-4:00 Workshops

Saturday, June 23

- 9:00-10:30 Workshops
10:30-10:45 Break
10:45-12:15 Workshops
12:15-1:00 Lunch
1:00-1:15 Break
1:15-2:45 Workshops

Sunday, June 24

- 9:00-12:00 Roundtable on Family Engagement at the Intersection of Child Protection and Domestic Violence



Family Group Decision Making
a program of American Humane Association™