

# The Practice of FGDM vs. Traditional Practice

- “Family meetings” are family gatherings to which agency representatives are invited.
- Families choose whether or not to have a meeting.
- Families are defined broadly – the family identifies as many family members, close friends and other community support people as possible and invites them to attend.
- Multiple agency representatives attend and are often referred to as a “multi-disciplinary team”; agency representatives usually outnumber the family who does not necessarily perceive themselves to be part of the “team”.
- Meeting is held at a community location that the family chooses or agrees to, such as a church or community center.
- The meeting begins with a discussion of family strengths, followed by needs.
- Families engage in private family time during the meeting.
- Family members take on the role of “experts” in determining what’s best to meet their needs; Agency representatives take on the role of “consultants” and share concerns, information, and resources.
- The family members are responsible for creating a plan to address identified needs.
- Family needs are responsible for following through with the plan; agency representatives are available to assist and monitor as needed.
- “Family meetings” are agency hosted meetings to which family members are invited.
- Families are mandated to attend the meeting.
- Families are defined narrowly - only family members directly involved with the care of the children are invited to attend by the agency hosting the meeting.
- Only a few key representatives from local agencies and the CYS Case manager or primary agency case manager attend the meeting; family members outnumber agency representatives.
- Meeting is held in an agency conference room.
- The meeting is problem-focused.
- Agency staff is present for all discussion during the meeting.
- Family members are seen as “clients” or “customers;” Agency representatives are the “experts” who know what’s best and who perform interventions to solve family problems.
- Agency representatives are responsible for creating a plan to solve family problems.
- Agency representatives are responsible for making sure the family members comply with the plan.