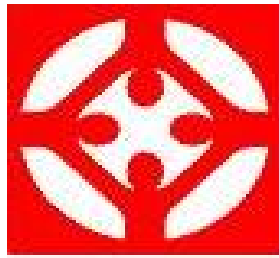


# All Wales Family Group Meeting Network Newsletter

Spring 07

Issue 3



**Family Group Conference Prevents ASBOs.....**In Newport Family Answers, a restorative justice Family Group Conference has completely stopped the complaints to the Police and Community Safety Wardens.

Due to neighbour complaints, four children were at risk of receiving ASBOs, so a two step FGC was arranged. Firstly, to reach agreement around communication and behaviour that would reduce the need for complaints. Secondly, to involve the children, an advocate and other family members. A plan was agreed to improve behaviour and relationships with neighbours.

The children are no longer being considered for an ASBO and the family's relationship with neighbours has improved.

The process highlights the effectiveness of Family Group Conferences and the positive outcomes achievable, not only for the families involved but also the communities they live in.

For more information contact Sarah Gooch at Family Answers, Newport, 01633 215783

**FGC Toolkit Launched In Wales...**Jane Hutt, Minister for Business, Children and Equalities launched the FGC Toolkit at the Welsh Assembly Senate Building on March 22nd 2007, together with Elwyn Owens Co-chair of the FRG.

A warm welcome from David Flanagan, Chair of the AWFGMN was followed by Jane Hutt reminding LAs and other service providers that FGCs should be used in early intervention and preventative work with families. The Toolkit is written for those who work with vulnerable children and their families to support positive family-led decision making. The guide highlights the effectiveness of FGCs in keeping children safely within their family. Thank you to the FRG, the Welsh Assembly Government and the DFES for publishing the Toolkit and to Sean O'Neill, Children in Wales, for organising the launch also to all those who attended, which included family members and representatives from the AWFGMN.



## Tribute to Peter Clarke...

By David Flanagan

I don't knock about with MPs and WAG Ministers and if I do I'm ill at ease and very much on my best behaviour, Peter in his role as the first Children's Commissioner was a very senior person who had the ear of politicians and broadcasters, but he was a normal person, you could talk to him and he listened, you could try ideas out on him and not feel foolish, all fantastic attributes for someone who had to advocate for children at the highest level.

Peter was a great friend to us in the FGC profession and he would come and listen to us and offer support and guidance, I don't know of anybody else who would have made the time or had the patience.....

With his blue suit and earring he was instantly recognizable and I was shocked with the changes in him once he became ill, I was even more gutted when I was told he had died, not only had a powerful advocate gone but someone who smiled when we bumped into each other.

Peter once backed me up when I was a student who let his mouth run away with him at one of those meetings when social workers earn their awful reputations as being out of touch with families, and with the whole room glowering at me and I saw my career going down the toilet. One person agreed with my outburst (rant) and that was Peter. I'd never met him before but he backed me to the hilt (thanks mate, I always meant to say that to you) and he said in social work speak what I'd got my hair off about!

That was Peter, speaking up for those who didn't have much of a voice.....kids....gobby students trying to explain, ..... FGC'ers who need any friend in a high place....  
Sleep well mate, you earned it.



## Evaluating FGMs in Wales

Tros Gynnal commissioned the development of an All Wales Evaluation tool to capture a comprehensive picture of FGMs across Wales. Sally Holland, Abyd Quinn Aziz and Amanda Robinson from Cardiff University

have collected data on two hundred FGMs between 2004 and 2006 which recorded the aims of the FGM and the views of the key participants. The study found that the majority of FGMs addressed a range of family support issues and over a third aimed to protect children. With at least a quarter of children being on the Child Protection Register, FGMs have proved to be not just a family support tool, but an important part of child protection work. Participants (referrers, young people, carers) were asked their views after the FGM and an overwhelming majority said that the meeting had mostly or fully met their aims, with referrers giving the strongest endorsement. Although there was limited data from the six month follow up - there was a decline in CPR registration. With the hope of more follow up data in future years, these results have the potential to map important patterns of intervention. A report was presented at the All Wales Family Group Meeting Network AGM in March where the strengths and weaknesses in the research were discussed. It would appear that more follow up data is required together with a system of collection that each project can incorporate easily, in order for the evaluation to make more impact. For more info contact: [quinnaziza@Cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:quinnaziza@Cardiff.ac.uk)

To join the Network or find out more about the Network and Family Group Meetings in Wales, UK or Europe, Contact: [maureen@cartrefbontnewydd.org](mailto:maureen@cartrefbontnewydd.org) [gwenan@cartrefbontnewydd.org](mailto:gwenan@cartrefbontnewydd.org)

## Young People Have Their Say....

For a while now in Cwlwm we've been aware of the need to include users to help us improve the service we provide. We have been wary of being tokenistic, but now we feel that we have a focused group which is worthwhile and inclusive.

Our young people's group aged 11-18, wanted to change our general information leaflet as they confessed that none of them had read it, the picture was too childish and the inside had too many words. By the third session the group got around to putting down on paper the details of a leaflet that would target young people. It has a picture on the front drawn by a member of the group and the content agreed by everyone. - There was also a very funny conversation about whether or not we should include a Goth in the main picture! Suggestions included much less words and text language where possible, with the extra space created, put in users quotes, and a graffiti wall in the back-



ground. Our next group will be with adult family members where we will look at feedback forms and how information is presented at meetings. Lets hope it is as much fun and as productive as the Young people's group. For more information contact: [maureen@catrefbontnewydd.org](mailto:maureen@catrefbontnewydd.org)

## Family Group Meeting Projects Across Wales

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### Gwynedd/Angelsey/Conwy

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Cwlwm FGM Project, Cartref Bont-  
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cial Services Department, Ceredi-  
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Carmarthenshire: Families For-  
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Neath Port Talbot: Barnardo's,  
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Cardiff: Family Circle, Mike Clark, 32b  
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Vale of Glamorgan: Vale FGM Project,  
Keith Buckler, Docks Office, Barry  
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