



What happens at the family group meeting?

At the family group meeting, the convenor will introduce everyone who is attending and tell them what will happen in the meeting. The Child Safety Officer will talk about the reasons why the department has organised the meeting.

The convenor will invite other people at the meeting to talk and may also discuss information from people who are unable to attend the meeting. Your family may then want to meet alone to discuss the information that has been shared.

You will then participate in the development of your child's case plan. During this time you will discuss:

- the strengths and needs of your child
- the strengths and needs of your family
- who will help you to meet these needs
- how the needs will be met
- when the needs will be addressed.

What happens after the meeting?

A Team Leader will look at the case plan within seven days of the family group meeting. A copy of the case plan will be sent to you and any other people involved in developing it.

The Child Safety Officer will work with you and your child to assist you in doing the things written down in the case plan. The case plan will be reviewed within six months.

What happens if you disagree with the case plan?

The convenor and the Child Safety Officer will work in cooperation with you to develop a case plan. If this cannot be done at the family group meeting, the department will then have to prepare a case plan for your child. You will be given a copy of the case plan.

Family group meetings

Information for families





What is a family group meeting?

A family group meeting is a meeting held by the Department of Child Safety. The purpose of the meeting is to bring together the most important people in your child's life, in order to help you and the department develop a case plan for your child.

A case plan is a written agreement about your child's protection and care needs, and how these needs can be met. It is important that you come to the family group meeting so that you can participate in making decisions about your child.

The family group meeting is organised by a convenor who will prepare and run the meeting. The convenor may be a departmental officer or a person independent of the department, but will not be your child's Child Safety Officer.

A family group meeting is held when the department believes that your child is in need of protection under the *Child Protection Act 1999*.

How do you prepare?

Before the meeting you will be contacted by a Child Safety Officer or the family group meeting convenor. They will talk to you about any child protection concerns the department has about your child. You should also discuss any other difficulties your family may be facing. This may help the Child Safety Officer understand, before you get to the meeting, what is happening for you and your family. This information can then be used to help develop the case plan.

The family group meeting convenor will contact you to organise a time and place for the meeting. They will also help you prepare for the meeting.



The convenor will tell everyone who is invited to the family group meeting:

- what will be discussed
- why the meeting is being held
- the time and place for the meeting
- the importance of information discussed at the family group meeting being kept confidential.

Who will be at the family group meeting?

The convenor will talk to you about who will be coming to the family group meeting. You should make sure you bring people to the meeting who can support you and help you make decisions about caring for your child.

People (other than you) who may attend the family group meeting are:

- your child, if they are old enough to participate and it is appropriate
- other family members or people who have a significant relationship with your child
- your legal representative or support person
- a legal representative of your child
- if your child is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, a member of a Recognised Entity or member of your child's local community
- the Child Safety Officer or Team Leader
- staff from service agencies who may assist and support you and your child.