

Family Group Conference
Widening the circle as a
response to serious issues
Eigen Kracht Centrale, NL
May 10, 2017

Mission Eigen Kracht Centrale

- Maximum autonomy of citizens...
- Promoting their strengths with help of family and friends...
- Stimulating organizations, government and movements.



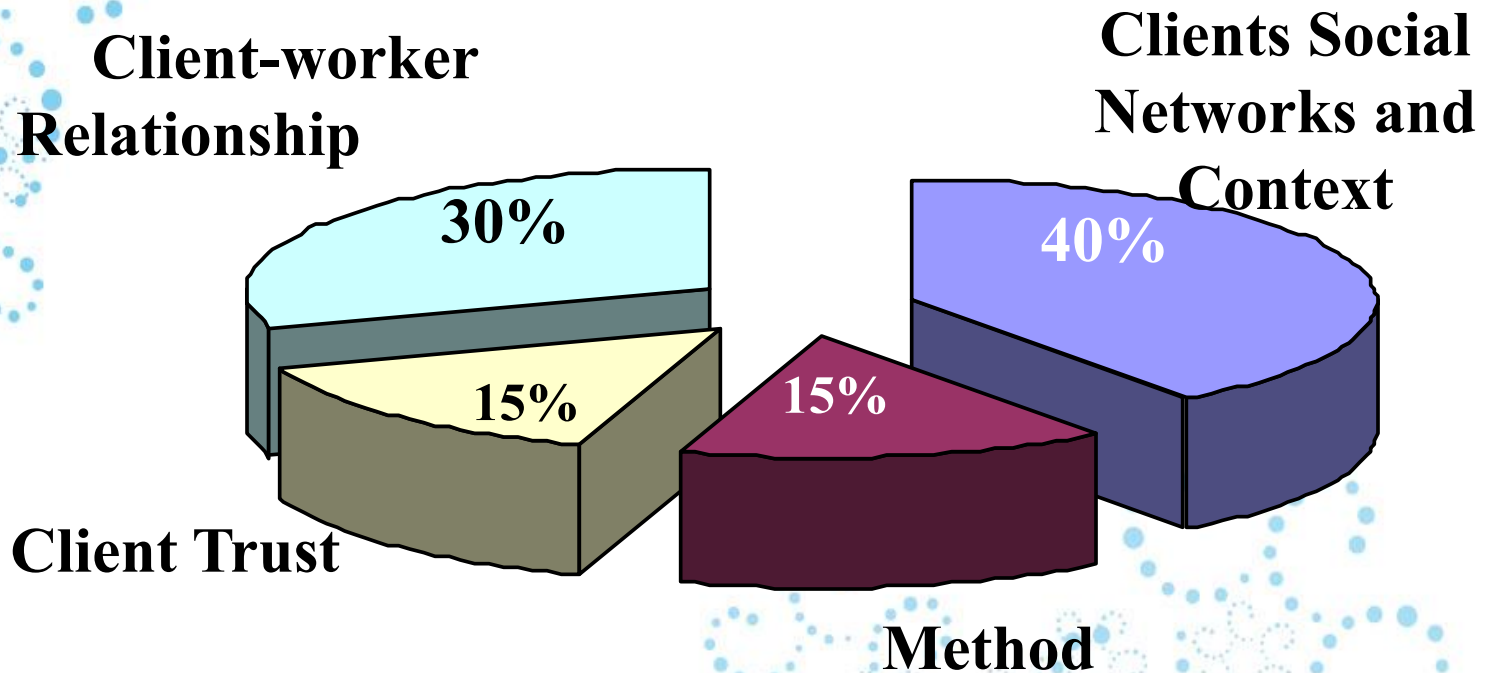
- citizenship

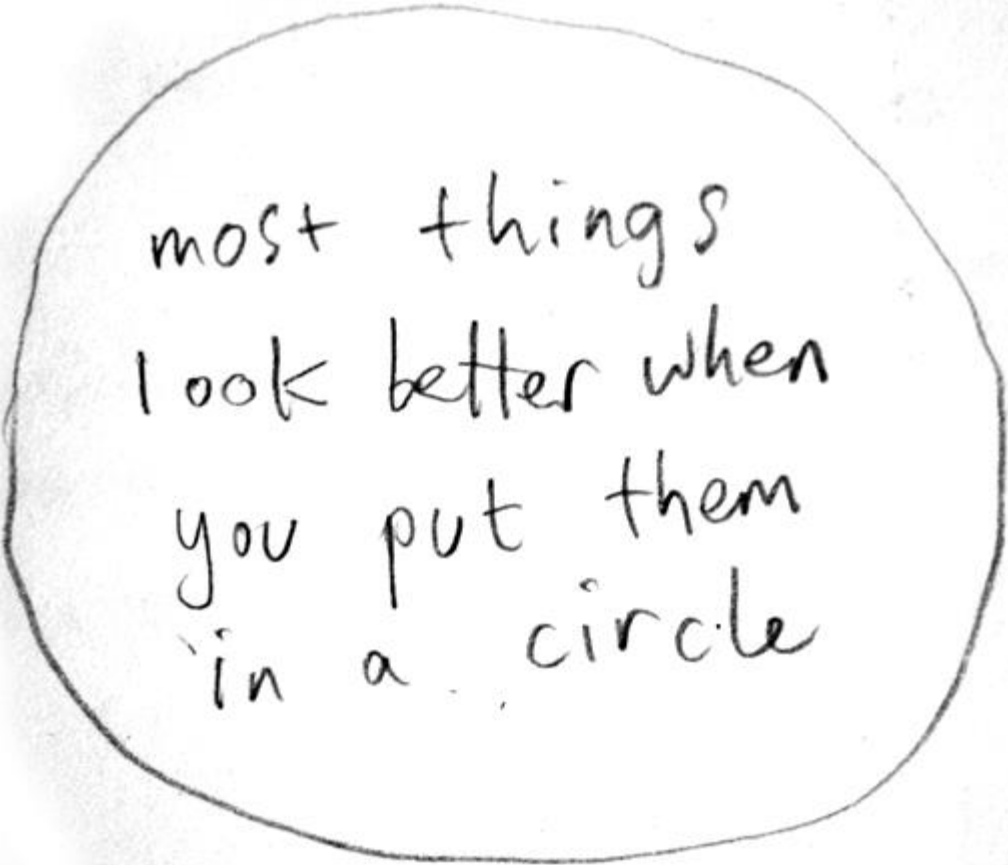
Eigen Kracht Centrale



- **Not for profit, with a vision**
 - Citizens are uniquely able to in their own situation and together with other directly affected, discuss what is going on, aimed at making a plan for a solution.
- **Independent organisation**
 - Implementing FGC in NL since 2000
 - Over 10.000 FGC's
 - Over 60 research studies in NL
 - Two FGC amendments passed in Parliament

SUPPORTING FAMILIES: *WHAT WORKS?* (McKeown, 2000)



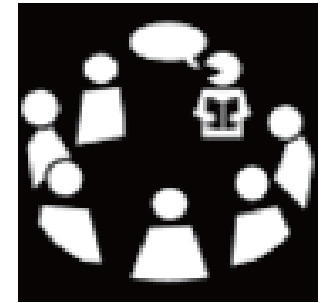


most things
look better when
you put them
in a circle

Inspiration from New Zealand

- Family group is context;
- Especially for decision & resolution;
- Widen the circle;
- Government may set condition(s) for plan;
- Family group in the lead, has private time;
- Professionals accept and support safe plan and deliver services asked for;
- FGC is primary decision making;
- FGC citizens right; legal mandate (CYPFA 1989);
- Responsibility stays with Family Group

Purposes of FGC



- **Decision-making and case planning**
- **Enabling discourse between two sets of legitimate interests**
- **Mitigating power imbalances**
- **Making consensus-based plans**
- **Ensuring that plans are effected**

FGC / EK-c challenges professional processes that...

- ...take over responsibilities that rightly belong with citizens,
- ...exclude wider family group involvement in decision making,
- ...define service eligibility and need without reference to family groups;



Key Concepts

- FGC is a decision construct
- FGC is a values-driven process
- FGC satisfies important democratic ideals



Different kinds of conferences

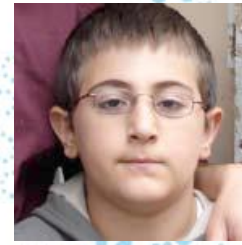
- **Eigen-kracht conferentie (FGC)**
Dealing with problems within a family or living unit
- **Restorative conference**
Dealing with conflicts between parties or at school etc.
- **Community conference**
Dealing with difficult situations in a neighbourhood or organisation by having those involved work together to a solution
- **EK-c for learning questions**
At schools for promoting the individual school careers of pupils

- **The form of conference model that fits best will be chosen**
- **Principles are the same:**
 - **Decision-making process**
 - **Responsability with the citizens**
 - **Widening the circle**
 - **Independent coordinator**

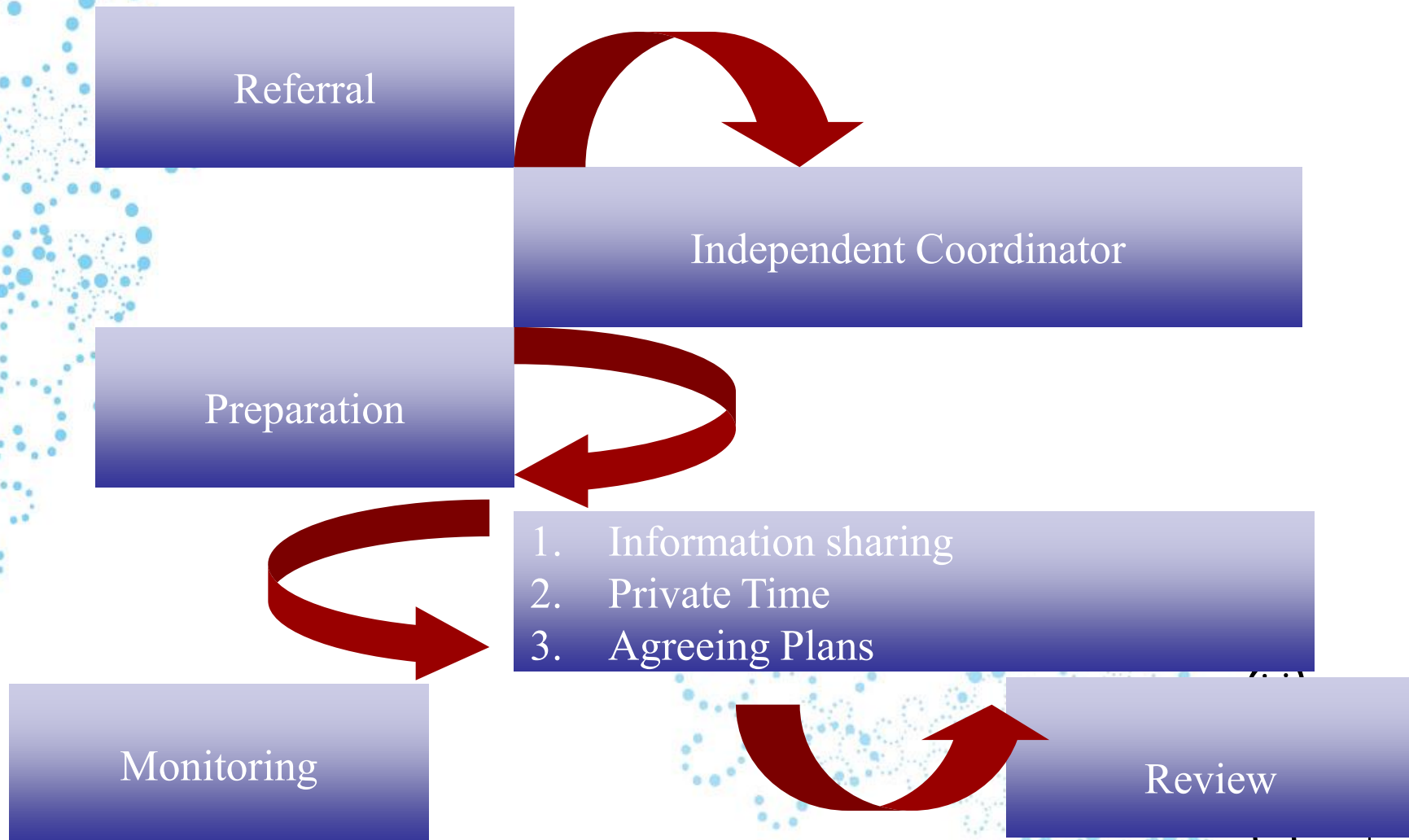


Conferencing:

- Leaving responsibility with citizens or returning it to citizens
- Widening the circle
- Making their restorative plan
- Restoring together
- Including family, social network, 'peergroup', everybody involved
- Directorship/control in the hands of citizens



Family Group Conference



Independence is key

- **Control and direction with citizens**
 - Independent FGC coordinators
 - lay people, 2x3 days training, community coord (83 languages)
 - Independent FGC organisation
 - EKC staff responsible for coaching coordinators
- **Independence meaning:**
 - No interest in the outcome of the plan
 - No influence on the contents of the plan

Community coordinator

- Recruited from families/community
- Different professions
- Different ethnicities (99 languages)
- Cultural respectful to families
- Preparation can start today
- Impact in communities
- Access to different networks for implementation and recruitment

Conferencing is a bridge

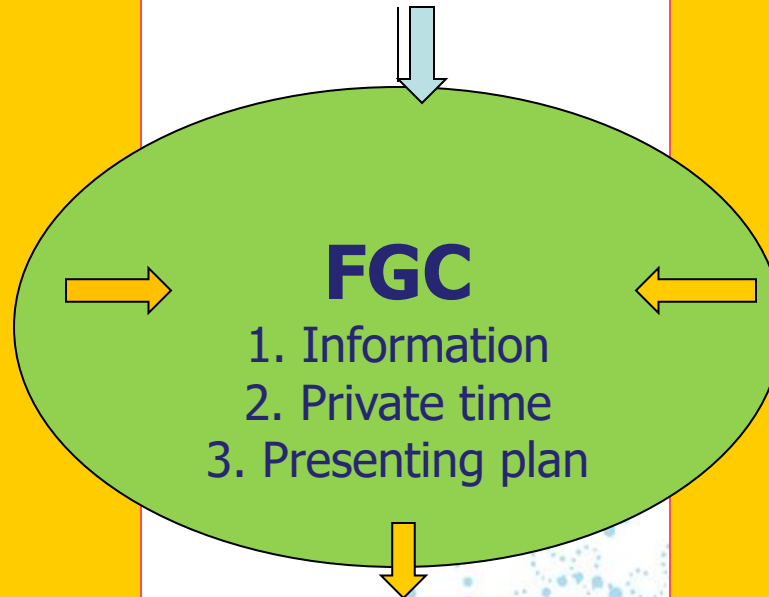
Systemworld

Structured
Bureaucratic
Formal
Procedures
Legal mandate
Mo-Fri , 9 tot 5
Employment

Life world

Unique
Dynamic
Varying levels
Historical knowledge
Informal
Unconditional love
Free discussion

independent coordinator/fellow citizen



A plan of all together by
co-operation and dialogue

NL: Outcomes...trends

- On the average 13 participants
- Plans after conference started:
 - 15 % informal plans
 - 14 % no plan
 - 71 % formal conference plan
- No unsafe agreements
- Satisfaction Conference-Plan-Coordinator:

– Young people	7.7	8.5	8.4
– Families	7.7	7.8	8.0
– Professionals	7.7	7.4	8.0



Discovery of FGC

- It is **not** about problems or conflicts or about people who can or cannot..
- It is all about how the circle can be *widened* and *addressed* with regards to their joint capacity to use their common 'social capital' and as first, come up with a plan.
- It is about a **right** for citizens to make a plan first



FGC is widening the circle

- It is all about activating social capital
- More heads, hands, hearts
- Using the context supports inclusion
- ‘It takes a village to raise a child’



