

SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION PRIOR TO MOVING FORWARD WITH AN FGDM*

When a Coordinator is unable to:

- Invest necessary time to adequately prepare participants.
- Gain buy-in to support widening of the circle.
- Engage participants in embracing philosophy.
- Set aside Coordinator bias.
- Gain participant “buy in” on FGDM focus on child.
- Get informed consent of participants.
- Access adequate support for participant to insure their safety (e.g., no one is willing to take role of support person.)
- Create a physically and emotionally safe FGDM meeting environment.
- Maintain control of FGDM process (e.g., FGDM meeting swarmed by the uninvited extended family of foster parents.)

When a Referring Social Worker is unable/unwilling to:

- Articulate and define a clear purpose.
- Refrain from delineating predetermined outcome.
- Be honest about their or the system’s bottom line.
- Present all the salient case information/facts that are relevant to a safety concern.
- Empower family in the FGDM process.

When a parent(s) or other participant(s) is (are) unable/unwilling to:

- Refrain from making active threats.
- Refrain from physical or emotional violence.
- Make an informed consent to participation.
- Be capable of clear thought/reason (unless they have identified a support person to act on their behalf.)
- Attend the FGDM without being under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
- Attend (when multiple key participants are unavailable for a variety of reasons.)

Other situations:

- No well-functioning family able to be identified after an exhaustive search (e.g., extended family members have active and chronic mental health concerns present.)

* Developed in partnership with Michigan FIA, and The Skillman and Grand Rapids Foundations, 2001.