



What did we learn? How are we using it?

Collaboration

What are the barriers to collaborating with professionals?
What are the barriers to collaborating with families?



Are they able to be overcome?

Here is what staff are saying about what they learned. "I think the training was good, especially the second day. What I enjoyed most was the role play. It allowed me to put myself in the consumer's shoes and I gained a sense of how they might feel and think."

Several years ago with funding from the Michigan Department of Human Services, Black Family Development, Inc. implemented the Family Group Decision Making model program. On March 17th and March 18th 2011, BFDI with assistance from the International Institute of Restorative Practices trainers, revisited the Family Group Decision Making,

(FGDM) model.

Benefits of FGDM

- Foster communication and collaboration between young people and their families and professionals
- Empower families and friends – the people who know and care most about each other – to devise and carry out plans
- Bring together formal and informal support to achieve the best possible outcomes
- Respond to behavior problems that are manifestations of larger home issues

International Institute for Restorative Practices

With a fresh perspective on FGDM, BFDI continues to incorporate the approaches to service provided through restorative practices and its ancillary program, Family Group Decision Making (FGDM).



"What I enjoyed most was the role play."

Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) is a collaborative approach to service planning and decision making. Training participants were asked to identify barriers to collaboration not only with families, but with staff and other professionals. In addition, staff were asked: Are these collaborative barriers able to be overcome?

Staff discussed the barriers and brain stormed effective ways to bring barriers down. One effective way is to consider the three principles of a fair "restorative practices" process: **1) Engagement**—involving individuals in decisions that affect them by listening to their views and genuinely taking their opinions into account. **2) Explanation**—explaining the reasoning behind a decision to everyone who has been involved or who is affected by it. **3) Expectation**—clarity - making sure that everyone clearly understands a decision and what is expected of them in the future.



During the training, Alice G. Thompson, BFDI Chief Executive Officer always challenged the participants to be engaged in the training, asking questions, and most important, engaged in discussions of how the training can be implemented with the families and youth that BFDI serves. Here is a staff response to the question, How will I use what I learned?
"I will use the concept during community/partnership and or block club meetings to ensure that everyone is included in the process as much as possible regarding community development. I will also be sensitive and remember that each community has its own culture, just as each family has its own dynamics."

Please e-mail msmith@blackfamilydevelopment.org with your responses to What I learned from the training, and How am I using it.