



FAMILY RIGHTS GROUP
Keeping children safe in their families



Lifelong Links in lockdown



Family Group Conference (FGC)

This is a process led by family members to plan and make decisions for and with a child. It is often used to address child welfare concerns. Also known as FGDM (family group decision making) in Scotland.

Lifelong Links

Lifelong Links is for children in care, working with them, to help identify and find relatives or other supportive adults, in order to build a lasting support network for the child or young person.

During lockdown Lucy met her gran for the very first time – remotely via Microsoft Teams. She was nervous at first but soon found plenty to talk about, asking lots of questions about her gran’s favourite colours, flowers, holidays, her family and other grandchildren. Lucy was delighted with the encounter, although she did note her gran “*did not look like I expected!*”

Lesley, a Lifelong Links coordinator, started helping connect Lucy with her family before the pandemic. Now 14, she has been living with her foster carer for four years. Lesley contacted family members on Lucy’s behalf, explaining Lifelong Links, and passing on a photograph of Lucy and a private note for each person. In turn, relatives recorded a talking photo album of photographs and

messages for Lucy. Even as the pandemic hit in March, Lesley felt it was crucial to continue Lucy’s efforts to reconnect with her family, through virtual meetings.

The day after meeting her gran, Lucy met her half-sister and aunts over Teams. They chatted about themselves and their families, and Lucy felt confident about asking lots of questions: “*Which one of you is the favourite? Who’s the noisiest? Who got into trouble the most? How many cousins do I have?*”

Lucy’s social worker commented “*I wasn’t initially sure about introducing Lucy to her family virtually, but now on reflection I felt this was a good halfway step. It was beneficial for Lucy to*

Continued on page 2

continued from the front page..

carry on her journey through the pandemic, in a safe way and in the comfort of her own surroundings, with the support of her carer and Lesley until they as a family could meet face to face. Lesley kept me very up-to-date on the progress and checked for agreements at every stage."

Lucy asked her aunts about their relationship with her dad (their brother) and they were able to be open and honest about their feelings for him. Lucy's aunt said "It was really good getting to see Lucy even if it was only on the screen. We can't wait till we get to see her in the flesh, it's good on a screen but in person is a day we can't wait to come."

Lesley also compiled a family tree for Lucy, visiting the Scotland's People Centre and the National Records of Scotland. Her tenacity paid off when she discovered two paternal grandparents were still alive, contrary to what Lucy had been led to believe. Lesley then showed Lucy her genogram with 80 family members going back two generations, over 60 of them still alive. Lucy said "I can't believe they are all my family, wow" and was intrigued to know what their professions were.

In late July as restrictions eased Lucy was able to meet her family face to face for lunch and a walk. Gran and both aunts had compiled a photo album of all Lucy's paternal family. Included was their only photo of Lucy taken the last time they had been allowed to see her when she was a few months old. When her coordinator and foster carer felt Lucy was comfortable, she was left with her family to chat privately. For the next hour all they could hear was laughter.

Lucy and her family will meet again once restrictions are further lifted and plan what part they can play in her life. In the meantime they will keep in contact virtually.

"A lovely process driven always at the child's pace. My job as a foster carer is to promote and support children dealing with their family situations and I feel this might help them when they reach that age when they all want to know about their roots."

Lucy's foster carer

Dates for the diary

FGC & Lifelong Links Network meetings

9th December

12pm - 2pm

Legal update

Jessica Johnston Legal Adviser,
Family Rights Group

FGC managers' meetings

16th December 2020

1pm - 2.30pm

FGC coordinator training (4 days)

Dates for 2021 coming soon - go to
www.frg.org.uk for details.

Cost: £450

Lifelong Links practice learning sets

12th December 2020

10th February 2021

1pm - 3pm

Lifelong Links managers' meetings

18th December 2020

1pm-2.30pm

All of the above courses & meetings will take place via Zoom. To book your place please contact Jordene Sewell (jsewell@frg.org.uk)

Lifelong Links training goes online!

After lockdown was announced, it slowly began to sink in that life was not going to return to “normal” anytime soon. So the Lifelong Links and Family Group Conference team at Family Rights Group got busy. How to take the two day Lifelong Links training and turn it virtual? Lots of thought was required, new resources developed and many, many, many(!) new technologies tested! The previous two day in person Lifelong Links coordinator training course is now three days and online training - there are less buns but more pets in attendance! Six Lifelong Links training courses have since been completed with a further two planned until the end of the year. Feedback has been positive and the team have appreciated how the attendees have embraced the new technology.

The team have also been working on developing the three day family group conference coordinator training into a online course. The first training course will take place at the end of November 2020 and was fully booked. It now consists of four days split into two, two day blocks. For more information or to book onto upcoming courses contact **Jordene Sewell** (jsewell@frg.org.uk).



Participants were asked to give three words that summed up Lifelong Links and the training.



FRG's Andrew Rist's artistic summary of August's virtual Lifelong Links training.

Creating & adapting ways of working with families during the pandemic

North East Lincolnshire (NELC) Family Group Conference team



Like most teams, the NELC Family Group Conference Team found the pandemic turned almost everything we used to do on its head. Not only did we need to adapt quickly but we needed to be flexible enough to take on additional redeployment roles too.

Over the past few months the team have continued to support families finding new and creative ways to enable conferences to proceed, but also to connect with our families, offer a personal touch, something which our team prides itself in doing. In an era of social distancing, connection and building relationships are more important than ever.

We have gone from shock and shutdown to yelling “You are on mute!” on Microsoft Teams to completing full family group conferences with more than 10 family members involved. Powerful stuff!

The team have talked families through technology as part of the preparation for the conference, and have included the personal touch of dropping off “wellbeing treats” prior to a conference on our families’ doorsteps. Bags with just a few treats, biscuits, Haribo and KitKat, making it personal as the coordinator waves from the gate and the family get to see them in “real life”.



Family feedback

“It was hard at first but once we got going it went really well, I felt I got everything across that I needed to” (Mum)

“it was all coordinated really well and doing it online was easy once we'd had a practice” (Dad)

“Was happy to do it this way, much better than our family group meeting not going ahead’ (family member)

“I felt empowered being able to use the technology, It was great!” (family member)

social worker feedback

"I would just like to give some feedback about an FGC that has taken place this morning. The FGC was problematic initially, but Dawn never gave up and came up with solutions to enable the family to have the FGC. The child actually attended and spoke about how he feels, This is the longest that the child has ever engaged in any conversation. The process was so helpful and filled in many gaps in my ongoing assessment for the family. I was able to see more how the family interact and how they respond. The family were able to come up with a realistic plan. Overall, the experience was really helpful and Dawn was amazing how she empowered the family to take charge of their own plan. Thank you for the FGC experience"

FGC coordinator feedback

"The FGC service delivered small brown bags to the family home adhering to government guidelines. The bags contained biscuits and some treats for the young people. This is a personal touch with families feeling valued and respected, also an opportunity to physically introduce ourselves."

"The FGC service shares the screen when the family are discussing their family plan. This allows an accurate account of what has been said by the family. The family then do not have to wait to receive the plan typed up."

Accreditation of FGC services

Family Rights Group, with local authorities from the FGC and Lifelong Links network, developed a standards framework for accrediting FGC services in 2011.

So far 33 services have been accredited or are in the process of becoming accredited. If you are an accredited FGC service, it might be time to seek reaccreditation as accreditation status lasts for three years.

The process for the reaccreditation of services is the same as for the initial accreditation of the service but the service should address any practice points raised in the feedback report during their initial accreditation.

To apply for your FGC service to be accredited or reaccredited, or if you have any questions about the process please visit

frg.org.uk/involving-families/family-group-conferences/fgc-standards-and-accreditation

or email Jordene:
jsewell@frg.org.uk



Family Valued Leeds: Innovative approaches to tackling domestic abuse

Family Valued Leeds was a whole-systems change programme, supported by Department for Education Social Care Innovation funding. Running from March 2015 to December 2016, the programme built on existing restorative work to embed, on a much greater scale, restorative practices, behaviours and ways of being across the whole city.

Within these restorative approaches, Leeds implemented a significant expansion of its Family Group Conference service, including offering FGCs to families where domestic abuse was present. This was part of new approaches to domestic violence within children's services and across the city through the cross-council Domestic Violence and Abuse Breakthrough Project, which was established to address high incidences of domestic abuse.

Family Valued established a new FGC service for families experiencing domestic abuse, staffed by co-ordinators with additional training in working with domestic abuse victims and perpetrators. This approach was informed by a recognition that traditional social work approaches of working with women to keep their children safe from abuse can place unreasonable burdens on victims, without holding perpetrators to account or working with them to change their abusive behaviour.

The external evaluation of the Family Valued programme noted that there is little UK research

evidence on the use of FGCs with this cohort of families, as the practice is not widespread in this country; in part due to arguments from women's groups and victim advocates that mediation between perpetrators and victims is not safe. However, an FGC has a broader focus than mediation between a couple, as it involves the wider family networks. The focus is less on the relationship between perpetrator and victim, but rather on how the wider network can support the victim and develop family plans to keep the children safe.

The Family Valued external evaluation interviewed a number of practitioners and stakeholders about the approach to working with domestic abuse cases through FGC, and found broad support. A number of safety strategies are employed to facilitate these FGCs, including the use of separate meeting rooms for perpetrators and victims, and practitioners note that perpetrator involvement in an FGC can make them take responsibility for, rather than minimising, their actions. Equally, many victims can feel shame about their situation and become isolated from their families – often due to the controlling actions of the perpetrator – and an FGC can be a supportive, safe place for them to talk about their abuse and help them to understand they are not to blame.

In addition to the restorative offer of FGCs for families experiencing domestic abuse, Leeds has taken an innovative, restorative approach



to the commissioning of services to address domestic abuse. This involves collaborative discussions between commissioners and providers to shape the service specification, and an explicit requirement that the services will be provided in a restorative way. Restorative Practice Awareness Raising training was made available to commissioned services staff, with an expectation that they would operate within the restorative ethos that Leeds had established – and embedded – through the wider Family Valued programme.

Leeds has worked with academics such as Professor Gale Burford and specialist Sharon Inglis to further develop our practice around domestic abuse. In looking at how we can work more restoratively, we have started to move away from the traditional dynamics of social work in domestic abuse cases, where separation was the only option and social workers carried out surveillance of vulnerable women on behalf of the state to ensure that separation was maintained.

Such social work relies heavily on women policing the behaviour of their abusers, for example through written agreements, which Leeds considers to be un-restorative and unjust – doing things to victims instead of working with them to establish what they want and how that can be achieved safely.

This approach in Leeds seeks, in a number of different ways, to refocus on engaging with male perpetrators to hold them accountable for their behaviour, and to acknowledge that the traditional approach of placing all of the responsibility for the safety of children on the mother goes against the values of social justice, human rights and collective responsibility. We hope that the change we have started in Leeds may have a wider impact on the sector as a whole, changing the dynamics of responding to domestic violence and abuse.

*written by: Gail Faulkner,
Head of Service; Capacity and Change
and Sophie Barker,
Leeds City Council*

FGC & Lifelong Links Network: Family Group Conferences and child protection practice

At our most recent Family Group Conference and Lifelong Links Network meeting we focused on the relationship between family group conferences and child protection.

Tendai Murowe, Head of Quality Assurance and Practice at Hertfordshire County Council, presented information about some of the significant developments in this area in her authority.

In 2014 Hertfordshire introduced the family safeguarding model which aims to bring together expertise from adult social care and children's social care in order to have a more collaborative approach to addressing safeguarding issues in families.

Subsequently the authority has built on this approach with the introduction of strengthening families child protection conferences in 2018.

'This programme focuses on meeting the needs of both children and the adults around them. By working with multidisciplinary teams, which include adult specialist workers, families can access tailored support to address their needs and the risks posed to children. The programme also uses motivational interviewing, a counselling approach aimed at empowering parents to make sustainable changes that will benefit children.'

Hertfordshire has combined this approach alongside family group conferences in order to enable wider family participation. To achieve this when child protection concerns are raised, and where possible within the timeframe of child protection procedures, a family group conference is convened enabling the family network to produce a plan to address the concerns which is then presented to the child protection conference. The aim is for the child protection conference to build on and endorse the family led plan for the child.

To support this system change other measures have also been introduced in Hertfordshire. These include:

- Family Group Conference coordinators are trained in motivational interviewing to improve the participation of parents and children in conferences, and to facilitate change.
- Social workers are encouraged to identify family and professional networks earlier in their assessment and to use genograms and eco-maps more extensively to gather this information.
- The wider family and the young person/child having more focussed preparation prior to the child protection conference (whether or not they have the opportunity to come together in an FGC). The objective being that they have a plan to present to, and enabled to participate in the child protection conference.
- That the child protection chair prior to the child protection conference is able to check with the family that they have had opportunity to formulate a plan, to advise on how to present the plan and to consider with the family the kinds of support they think they will need to implement the plan.

The focus of the child protection conference is then to:

- Identify the family and children's needs, including the need for help and protection.
- Consider what the challenges to change are for the parents and the network.

- Identify what help and support is being provided already.
- Identify how the family, and extended family are planning to be able to meet the children/family's needs
- Identify how the professional network will support them with this.

Tendai outlined the reasons for these changes. In feedback to the authority many families reported negative experiences through their participation in child protection procedures describing them as 'intimidating and hostile'. Resulting plans are often professionally led and don't adequately draw on the resources within families.

'Our new model embraces the friends and family participation to a new level for child protection conferences by giving the family an opportunity to lead the way in formulating a plan to create change that professionals can add to. This model brings about a cultural shift by asking those who support families to take a larger responsibility in creating change.'

Through the introduction of these changes Herts hoped to enable more children who are subject to child protection plans to remain at home; to reduce the number of children who are subject to child protection plans and for this to be for a shorter duration; and for plans to reflect a more collaborative process involving wider family alongside services.

Fundamentally the key objective is to build resilience within families, to build on the expertise within families so that the support networks are able to endure after the child protection plan has ended.

Tendai reported that so far:

- The number of child protection plans have reduced by about a third, from 630 in August 2018 to 420 in June 2020
- That children are subject to child protection plans for shorter periods. Child protection plans have reduced in length with 102 plans reported as lasting over 12 months duration in August 2018 reducing to 46 in June 2020
- An increased number of initial child protection conferences have resulted in child in need plans.
- The FGC service has been freed up to do more innovative pieces of work including support for placement stability, Lifelong Links, and supporting early intervention with families.

Some of the challenges have been:

- Managing to enable family participation when the timescales have not allowed for this
- Where parents have not identified a support network or have not wanted the wider family network involved at this stage.
- Where paternal and maternal differences have not been seen as conducive to positive outcomes or where legal constraints such as bail conditions have prevented this.

Advice for care-experienced young parents and parents-to-be

Become and Family Rights Group are helping young parents and parents-to-be, who are care-experienced and involved with children's services, to get the advice and support they need.



- **Coaching and/or tailored 1:1 support sessions.**
- **Group work and community building.**
- **Casework/advice on your rights and entitlements.**
- **Practical and emotional advice and support.**

BECOME.

THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE
AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS

Mon-Fri (10am-5pm)

Young people and professionals can call 0800 023 2033 or email advice@becomecharity.org.uk



FAMILY RIGHTS GROUP
Keeping children safe in their families

Mon-Fri (9.30am-3pm)

Young people and professionals can call 0808 801 0366.

Postgraduate certificate in family group conferences



September 2019 saw the launch of the PGCert in FGCs which is run by the University of Salford in partnership with Family Rights Group. The programme is an online course and has attracted students from all over the UK and enquiries from further afield. The course has two entry points in September and February, and we had eight students join us over the course of the year. Five of these students have already gone on to graduate and the rest will hopefully be graduating by November 2020. These students have commented positively on the course.

“

The postgraduate certificate has given me confidence in my job role and promoting FGCs as a unique way of working with families.

The FGC course has supported me in my practical work as I am now able to critically reflect on my practice.

I have enjoyed this course and I can see how this has impacted positively on my career.

I have implemented the FGC standards and strength-based approaches learnt in this to aid my professional development.

”

We have just recently started the second year of the course with 16 new students joining us for the September intake. Their learning will immerse them in FGC theory and research and they will have the opportunity to reflect on their practice using anonymised case studies to consider the impact their work has had on families, how their practice has evolved and how they might improve their practice further.

If you'd like to consider joining us or would like further information please contact Deanna for an informal chat and further details: D.edwards@salford.ac.uk

Lifelong Links: what is the impact?

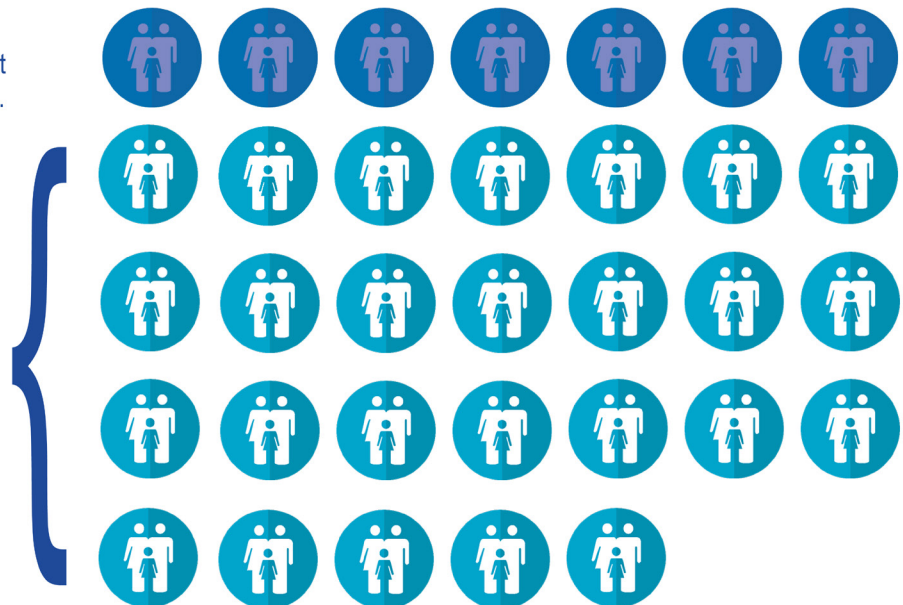
Every three months, FRG collates and analyses information returned from local authorities practicing Lifelong Links to give an updated national picture of the work that is happening. Here are some of the key points:

- Nearly 1000 children & young people in England & Scotland have or are benefiting from Lifelong Links.
- Lifelong Links plans have been made at 264 Lifelong Links family group conferences bringing children and their family and friends together, both in person and virtually. In addition a further 113 children now had a Lifelong Links plan.
- We have trained over 200 coordinators in the practice of Lifelong Links.
- 85% of children had their Lifelong Links personal objectives met (e.g. “I want to have support for when I leave care”)

INCREASE IN FAMILY & FRIENDS CONNECTIONS

7 Average number of connections a child has at the start of Lifelong Links.

26 Average number of connections a child has after.



In November 2020, the Department for Education published an overview of the evaluation of the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme in England 2016 to 2020. It cites Lifelong Links as providing “a range of benefits to bolstering people’s support networks.” The report includes the following quote from a young person who benefited from Lifelong Links

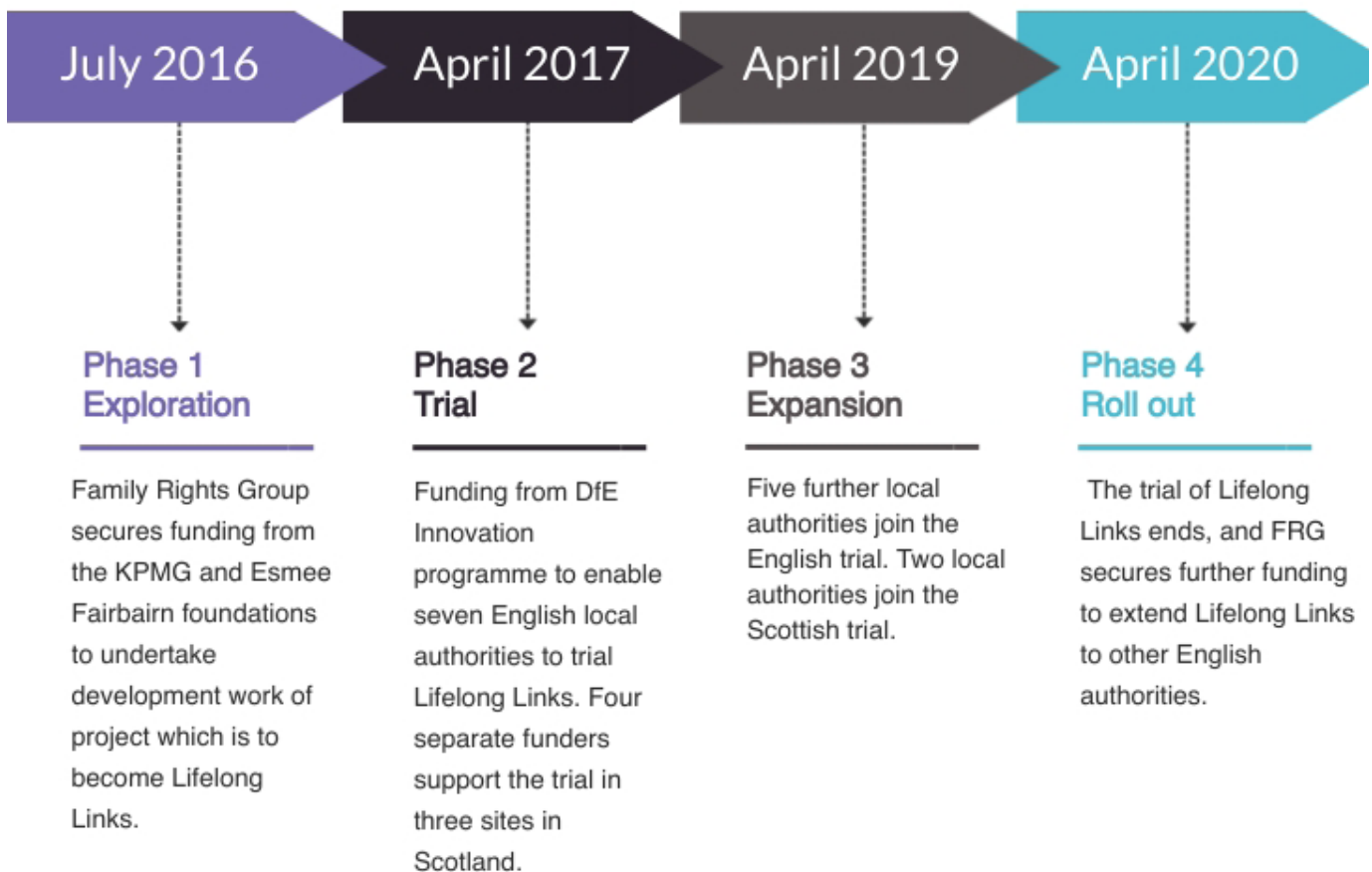
“It’s made me a happier person. It’s made me stronger because I now realise that there are going to be family members out there that I have no clue about and that I’m never going to be able to see, but it’s made me realise that even if I can’t see this family, doesn’t mean there’s no one there. They’re still there; they’re still a part of me.”

The main evaluation by the Rees Centre, University of Oxford, of the English trial of Lifelong Links, including a cost benefit analysis, is due to be published before Christmas 2020.

“My life has changed for the good since Lifelong Links have been involved. The worker helped me develop my family tree and guided me the right way to get in contact with family I haven’t seen in 14 years. I am now frequently talking to my family and spending some quality time with them.”

Comment from young person

Lifelong Links: beyond the trial



April 2020 onwards

From April 2020 Lifelong Links has been funded in England by the Department for Education's Innovation programme, KPMG Foundation, The Dulverton Trust and The Rayne Foundation. The funding from the DfE Innovation programme includes a champions fund which is administered by Family Rights Group. It provides for:

- A no cost offer to local authorities to submit their family group conference service for accreditation in 2020/21.
- A no cost offer to authorities to submit their Lifelong Links service for accreditation.
- Match funding: where monies committed by a local authority for Lifelong Links work with children and young people will be matched by Family Rights Group to enable more children to benefit from Lifelong Links.
- A bespoke Lifelong Links consultancy from FRG.
- Participating in practice learning sets for Lifelong Links coordinators.
- Lifelong Links training for family group conference coordinators.

If you are interested in introducing and sustaining Lifelong Links in your local authority for children in care then, please contact Meg Fassam-Wright (mfassam-wright@frg.org.uk) and we'll get back to you.

You can also follow FRG on Twitter [@FamilyRightsGP](https://twitter.com/FamilyRightsGP) or search for #LifelongLinks

Lifelong Links: trailblazers

The funding the DfE and charitable foundations is enabling us to support councils to implement Lifelong Links with children in care who face particularly complex circumstances. This includes children who have returned to care as a result of an adoption breakdown, and to use the approach with care leavers including young parents who have themselves been in the care system. This support includes a trailblazer fund, with the authorities collaborating with key stakeholders including young people affected and FRG to create expert practice guidance and other resources.

Hertfordshire County Council, has been involved with Lifelong Links from the outset. 150 children in the country benefited from Lifelong Links during the three years trial. They are now further developing their Lifelong Links service and have a new offer of support for young parents who are in care or are care experienced.

Ben Carr, Lifelong Links and Family group Conference manager at Hertfordshire, said the following:

"We know pregnancy and parenting can be hard and we want to support young parents who are in care or care leavers, to build relationships with their family network and other significant people that are important to them to maximise their support network. There are three parts to Hertfordshire's offer:

- Offer Lifelong Links which aims to find people who can support the young person and their child(ren), from family members to former foster parents & teachers.
- Co-produce a peer support group where young parents can build new relationships and support each other.
- Look to develop a volunteer scheme where volunteers can provide practical or emotional support."

Doncaster Children's Trust will draw upon their experience to help produce additional Lifelong Links practice guidance when working with children who have experienced adoption breakdown or wish to have contact with family members who have been adopted. They will also create a film exploring the Lifelong Links experience of young people and their networks.



The best thing about Lifelong Links is that I see my family now more than I used to."
(Young person)

"This was the first time I had seen my grandmother in 5 years – Grandma hugged me for the entire meeting." (Young Person)



Support for Young Parents

Being a parent is hard. Do you need support?

We now offer a support package for young parents who are in care or care leavers. You can get support in 3 ways:

1. Lifelong Links

Lifelong Links aims to find people who can support you and your children. These may include family members, friends, former foster carers or teachers.

How does it work?

A Lifelong Links Coordinator will:

- ✓ Learn about the people important to you
- ✓ See if they can find these people
- ✓ Arrange a meeting for these people to come together to work out how they can support you

How can they support me?

There are lots of ways they could support you:

Cooking

Messages & calls

Advice

Childcare

Shopping

Housework

2. Support group

You can join the group to:

- Meet other young parents
- Support each other
- Access information about support services e.g. benefit advice or childcare

3. Volunteers

You will have the opportunity to help us develop our volunteer support offer. These volunteers will:

- ✓ provide practical or emotional support
- ✓ support you to maintain your lifelong links

If you want to find out more, contact your Personal Advisor or Social Worker or call the Family Group Conference Service on 01992 588346

Flyer produced by Hertfordshire County council to promote their new Lifelong Links offer for care leavers in Hertfordshire

Parliamentary Taskforce on Kinship Care

The Parliamentary Taskforce on Kinship Care published its report entitled “First Thought, not Afterthought” at a virtual launch in September 2020. The event was hosted by author and former politician Rt Hon Alan Johnson. Speakers and presenters encompassed kinship carers, young people, Sal Tariq (Director of Children and Families, Leeds City Council) and politicians including Vicky Ford MP (Children’s Minister) and Kate Green MP, the Shadow Secretary of for Education

The report sets out a vision to enable more children, who cannot live with their parents, to be raised by family members and friends, and to improve the support available to such households to help enable the children to thrive.

The Taskforce was established originally by Anna Turley, then an MP, and Family Rights Group. It is now chaired by Catherine McKinnell MP. The report draws upon a series of conversations with kinship carers, young people and professionals across England and Wales, as well as analysis from research, surveys, freedom of information requests to local authorities and written and oral submissions.

The report recommends that government should consider introducing new legal duties on local authorities to ensure that potential placements with kinship carers are explored early and that all families are offered the opportunity to have a family group conference before a child enters the care system, unless there is an emergency.

The report notes that a mapping exercise by Family Rights Group in England in 2019 found that 78% of local authorities ran or commissioned a family group conference service, only marginally higher than in 2017 (75%).¹³⁹ However, some of these services operate only on a small scale.

The report also promotes adapting and extending the Lifelong Links model of building support networks (for children in care) to children in kinship care.

Read more about the report’s findings, vision and recommendations for Government and local authorities here: www.frg.org.uk or watch the full report launch at <https://fb.watch/1xbKfOjyHC/>



Caring for my young relatives has allowed me to provide them with the love and security they needed following their mother's death. To see them feel welcomed and safe in our home has been the best feeling.

”

MAXINE - KINSHIP CARER



News from the network

Working in partnership

As part of our Lifelong Links work in Scotland we are delighted that the National Records of Scotland have given unprecedented support to Falkirk Council during the pandemic. They have allocated a researcher who has been undertaking family searches for the Falkirk Lifelong Links team - helping produce family trees and a family history for young people in care.

Recognition Matters

In 2019, a group of six women came together in Scotland to create the Recognition Matters project. They had a shared perspective on child welfare and protection, but had arrived at this perspective in different ways. They wanted to bring together their knowledge to strengthen practice and improve the experiences of families. The team made a short film that told Azaria's story, in her own words, Azaria has lived experience of family group conferences. This film can be accessed here: <https://bit.ly/34kcRpc>. More information on the Recognition Matters project can be found here: <https://bit.ly/37zvdEx>



Welcome Meg and Dawn!!



Hello, my name is Meg Fassam-Wright and I have recently joined FRG as the Family Group Conference and Lifelong Links Programme Director UK. I have a background in social work practice, policy and research, and I have worked in various roles in local authorities, universities, and large and small charities in the UK, Belgium and the United States. Co-production with children and families, often working in partnership with other organisations, has been a recurring feature of my work. I am very excited to be joining FRG at this time and taking forward the FGC and Lifelong Links work. Please contact me if you have any questions or would like to explore working with us (Mfassam-wright@frg.org.uk).



Hi, my name is Dawn Walsh and I have recently joined the FGC & Lifelong Links team at Family Rights Group as practice adviser. I'm a qualified social worker and first came across family group conferencing in the mid-nineties. In 2002, I jumped at the chance of co-founding the Kent Family Group Conference service which I managed until 2019. Lifelong Links seemed like a natural progression and Kent FGC became part of the first wave of local authorities to join the trial in 2017. I have worked alongside Family Rights Group for many years and I'm delighted to be part of the team.