

## Family Group Conferences in Sweden 2013

### Background

Family Group Conferences came to Sweden in the mid-1990s. Two projects was run by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities, the first between 1995 and 1997 and the second one between 1998 and 2000.

### Present situation

There is no legal mandate for using Family Group Conferences in Sweden, but the values underpinning the method are consistent with legislation.

There has been no national funding for developing Family Group Conferences after 2000 and no state funded national organization that takes responsibility for promoting or supporting FGCs. Instead municipalities using Family Group Conferences have formed an informal network and representatives try to meet on a regular basis to share experiences and discuss quality standards. Predominantly two municipalities take responsibility for promoting and supporting FGCs in Sweden; Höör and Botkyrka.

In Höör Family Group Conferences are used very frequently. In Child Protection FGC is mainstream. The four socialworkers responsible for investigating children at risk have between two and four FGCs a month. Family Group Conferences are also used in other areas of social work, such as for people with disabilities, in care of the elderly and for people in need of economical support.

Somewhere between 5 and 10 out of the total of 290 municipalities in Sweden use Family Group Conferences on an “on and off” basis.

### Coordinators

Most municipalities in Sweden employ coordinators for one assignment a time. The coordinators are mostly lay people and common to all of them are that they are accustomed to working with people, without necessarily having caring professions. Botkyrka have full time employed coordinators.

### Nordic conferences

Every other year delegates from the Nordic countries meet for a conference. This year 200 delegates from Norway, Finland, Sweden and Denmark met in Helsinki.

### Scandinavian support

It is of great importance for us in Sweden that Norway has a strong national support system for Family Group Conferences, both on a state level and in the five regions. Their work is an inspiration for us and helps us in our ambition to develop FGCs in Sweden, to set and maintain quality standards.

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