

Family Group Conferences in Russia.

In 2013 FGC method is continued to be introduced to specialists that work with families in a hard life situation. The regions of FGC introduction have been extended. Activity on introduction of FGC method in work with families is being carried out in 9 regions; implementation of FGC in 4 regions of Russia are financed with the grant from the Federal Ministry of Economic Development of Russia.

Target groups of the project remain:

1. Specialists from state municipal social institutions and NGOs.
2. Students from social faculties.
3. Families and children in crisis or hard life situation.

Activity is carried out on the following directions:

- Implementation of training seminars.
- Supervision of specialists trained on FGC.
- Training local coordinators on FGC for their independent work in regions, their methodological supervision.
- Introduction of FGC in practical work with families in a hard life situation.
- Summarizing information from the regions – participants of the project on the results on FGC implementation.
- Individual consultation of the specialists trained on FGC .
- Preparation of annual statistical and analytical reports on the project results.
- Introduction of FGC to students from social faculties in 4 regions of Russia.

Totally in 2013 in Russia:

- ◆ Training seminars- 9. Number of participants - 193 persons
- ◆ Supervision seminars – 12. Number of participants – 123 persons
- ◆ Presentation seminars -3. Number of participants -79 persons
- ◆ Practical FGC -23. Number of participants – 33 persons.

In July 2013 in Oryol region for the first time in Russia FGC was carried out in jail with a convicted woman on the issues of adaptation and interaction with a kid after her discharge. Participants of FGC were: a head of the jail, psychologists, a convicted woman and her relatives, specialists from psychological and pedagogical center.

FGC introduction in foster families was activated.

Other FGC were implemented on the following issues:

- ◆ Risk of a child abandonment
- ◆ Problems in interaction between parents and children
- ◆ School problems
- ◆ Violence against children
- ◆ Families in divorce process Семьи в ситуации развода

In April 2013 for the first time in Russia international conference “Family Group Conferences: experience of introduction and perspectives of development” was carried out. 104 persons took

part in the conference including participants from the Netherlands Rob van Pagge, Norway – Vik Svandhild and Sweden Ewa Naslund. Russian specialists could share their experience on FGC introduction and learn the foreign experience as well as to participate in workshops. Experience on FGC implementation in work with families was presented at the conference, new objectives were defined.

The project objectives for 2013-2014:

- ◆ Training local coordinators who could become regional coordinators on FGC.
- ◆ Provision of FGC coordinators with new methodological materials.
- ◆ Distribution of informational materials on FGC in schools, commission on minors issues, kindergartens, etc.
- ◆ Establishment of Russian FGC Network to implement FGC in work with families in different regions of Russia.
- ◆ Strengthening responsibility of FGC training “customers” for establishing conditions for practical implementation of FGC.
- ◆ Primary evaluation of the results of FGC implementation in Russia in cooperation with the Regional Department on Children, Youth and Families Issues of Northern Norway (Bufetat).
- ◆ Active introduction of FGC in work with families.

Practical implementation of FGC in 2013				
№	Region	Number of FGC	Number of children	Number of FGC participants
1.	Murmansk region	4	7	40
2.	Arkhangelsk region	5	9	40
3.	Vologda region	2	2	14
4.	Oryol region	1	1	10
5.	The Republic of Komi	9	12	71
6.	The Republic of Karelia	2	2	12
Total		23	33	187

In June 2013 the project coordinator took part in the All-Russian conference “Programs of restorative solving of conflicts and criminal situations” where she presented FGC project and led a workshop “Experience of FGC implementation in Russia”. At the conference applications for training specialists from Moscow and Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Area were received.

Specialists from Novosibirsk NGO “Novosibirsk Center for Mediation and Minor Criminals” implement FGC in practice in work with families. 5 practical FGC have been carried out there.

Plans for 2013-2014:

- On the 13-14 of November 2013 the All-Russian conference “Experience on effective cooperation between NGOs and authorities in development of social services for families and children” will be carried out. One workshop at the conference will be about FGC as independent social service in the process of supervision families in a hard life situation.
- Grant application to the All-Russian Public Fund “National Charity Fund” on FGC implementation in Russia in the year 2014 was submitted.
- Agreement with the Regional Department on Children, Youth and Families Issues of Northern Norway (Bufetat) on implementation of FGC method in North-West of Russia in 2013-2014 was concluded.

Challenges of the project.

There is still the issue of the project financing. The state is ready to cooperate, to train specialists but only one region (Agency of Social Development of the Komi Republic) included FGC as the obligatory method in work of state social institutions. Committee on Education of Murmansk region started to use FGC within the frames of foster families supervision. But as it was earlier the work of FGC coordinators (in Russia they are named independent facilitators) are not paid; it remains a volunteer work or is implemented within the frames of a specialist’s main activity.