

# Unique Features of FGDM

(As implemented in Pennsylvania)

- **Emphasis is on the strengths**
- **Strengths are the foundation to solve concerns**
- **Communicating occurs using the language of concerns**
- **Addresses problems in a different way that minimizes arguing and fighting**
- **Family, as the primary decision-maker:**
  - has power and accountability;
  - are the only ones present during decision-making; and
  - with the use of Private Family Time, helps ensure that the plan comes from the family.
- **Involves an extensive family gathering**
  - The family:
    - defines who family is;
    - decides who attends;
    - reaches out to all that care;
    - identifies positive supportive resources; and
    - chooses the site at which to hold the meeting.
  - Not an agency meeting
- **FGDM is transformational because:**
  - it is not a program;
  - it requires a change in thinking and behavior, especially in agency staff;
  - it challenges dominant practice;
  - it requires building partnerships; and
  - it is a practice/way of thinking.
- **FGDM is a process**
  - FGDM is an extensive process that involves vast preparation.
  - The process begins when the referral source offers FGDM to the family.
  - “Would you like to do things differently?”

