

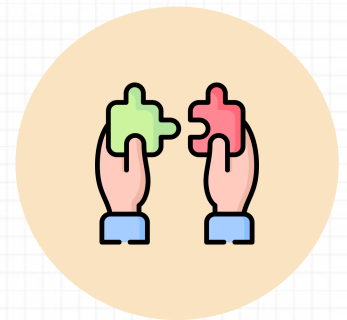
# A Pocket Guide to Group Work

Group Work is a core practice for Family Service Centres (FSCs). It encourages individuals with similar concerns to develop solutions together, as well as to learn from one another. This is an overview of group work. Please refer to the FSC Code of Social Work Practice (FSC-CSWP) Group Work Practice Guide for more in-depth information.

## Pre-Group Phase

### Needs Assessment

- The needs assessment provides the basis for group work.
- Conduct a needs assessment by studying the client database, literature review and by holding direct interviews with potential group members to identify needs that exist.



### Group Work Conceptualisation and Proposal

- During conceptualisation, identify possible causes that contribute to the current situation to target the underlying needs of the group.
- The proposal gives an overview of why, what, when, who, whom and how a group work is conducted.



### Pre-Group Contact

- Facilitators should screen potential members, build rapport and clarify expectations at this juncture.
- When making an assessment of potential members, facilitators should examine six broad aspects:
  - (1) Intrapersonal functioning
  - (2) Interpersonal functioning
  - (3) Caregiver-related stress
  - (4) Risk and safety-related issues
  - (5) Strengths
  - (6) The environmental impact on individuals.



Sources:

Adapted from Ministry of Social and Family Development (2018). FSC Code of Social Work Practice Group Work Practice Guide.  
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## Beginning of the Working Phase

### Clarifying Group Expectations and Goals

- Group goals reflect the needs of individual group members, the group's intended outcomes and how these outcomes can be measured over time.
- Facilitators should encourage members to form goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (SMART).<sup>1</sup>



### Gathering Evaluation

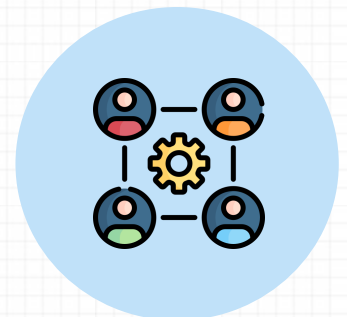
- Evaluation is an on-going process that assesses how group members and the group, as a whole, are progressing towards their individual and group goals. It should include both qualitative and quantitative data.
- Facilitators should note the problems and concerns present and work on the group goals.



## Middle of the Working Phase

### Group Work Ongoing Review

- In the middle phase, group members become more comfortable with each other although some conflict and disagreement may emerge.
- The primary task of facilitators is to help group members accomplish the group and individual goals through the learning activities.
- Minimally two group work reviews should be carried out during the course of group work to ensure that the group work is meeting the needs of group members and the group.



<sup>1</sup>Doran, G. T. (1981). There's a SMART way to write management's goals and objectives." and Miller. Arthur F. & Cunningham, James A" How to avoid costly job mismatches" *Management Review*, 70(11).

## Ending (Termination) of the Working Phase

Inform group members as early as possible when the group work is approaching closure and share with them the reasons for termination. Where relevant, advise members on how their case would be followed up.

### End of Evaluation Report

- The objective of this report is to provide a summary of the group work's achievement. It also serves as a documentation that could guide subsequent group work planning.



## Important Points to Note

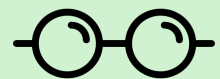
### Ethical Considerations

- FSCs should ensure that organisational strategies support group work practice.
- Ensure that group work facilitators have proper education, training and experience to lead a particular group.
- Provide group work facilitators with adequate supervision on their group work practice.



### Group Work Ongoing Review

- A reflective practice requires facilitators to critically review their own practice and accept the guidance and feedback from their peers and supervisors.
- Supervision on group work practice is critical. Preferably, the group work supervisor should possess a higher level of training and practice experience than the facilitators.
- Clinically focused supervision should address issues of group goals, dynamics, leadership style and facilitation of learning activities.



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