

## Country Report - FGC in Israel

**FGC is operating in Israel since 2000 in the era of Juvenile Delinquency**, according to the News Zealand model. The program is led by the youth probation service in the Ministry of Welfare and in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, the Police, the Prosecution and Public Defender.

**In 2011 a legislative amendment FGC for Minors suspected of committing an offense** as an alternative process or a complementary process to the criminal procedure.

The FGC are led by independent coordinators originally under the auspices of an NGO, and since 2008 the NGO is called Kedem which won the Ministry of Welfare's tender.

**Till today there have been approximately 4000 FGC processes**, with 61% of them were completed with an agreed program.

**In 2016 research was published which found that:** (1) The participants in the FGC - the offenders, their parents, the victims and their supporters were very satisfied from their participation in the FGC with an average score of 9.2 from 10. (2) The offenders understood their actions and took responsibility; their connections with their families become stronger and there was an improvement in their studies and work. (3) The victims reported they fear less from the offender after the FGC. (4) The recidivism 3 years after the FGC was low, less than 20%.

**Child protection FGC is a Partnership** between the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Immigration and Integration, JDC Israel Ashalim (NGO) and Mosaica (NGO) operating as a **pilot project in 5 municipalities since 2018**.

The pilot purpose is to explore the possibility to offer FGC in the future to families with children at risk across Israel, as an alternative to Planning, Intervention and Assessment committees (PIA committees) and to procedures in court. The pilot also intends to see if and which cultural adjustments are needed to coordinate beneficial FGC processes with different communities: with immigrants (from Russia, Ethiopia and France), veteran Israelis and Ultra-Orthodox community. Until now, **97 families were referred to the program**: 64% completed FGC conferences. 19% are still in the preparation process and only 16% dropped out during the process. 54% of the families are new immigrants, 54% are single parent families and 44% of the families have children with special needs.

The program trained around 30 coordinators, and will start a third training on November 2020, an online training due to the covid19, reality and restrictions. The coordinators are independent and operate as freelancers within Mosaica, the NGO which won the tender to run the pilot. The training includes 45 hours of initial training, which is also a selective training. Followed by a practicum – coordinating an FGC with an experienced coordinator and with close professional supervision. The coordinators meet once a month for advanced training and peer consultation.

**The "Nevat greenhouse of Context-Informed Research and Training for Children in Need" at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem is conducting the pilot's evaluation** through qualitative and quantitative research. The data collected shows that: (1) 87% of the parents were very satisfied with the FGC. Most of the families, supporters and social workers say that they can see an improvement in the children's safety and welfare during the FGC preparation. (2) 90% of the families felt that their voice was heard and 77% felt that they influenced the decision making. (3) 78% of the families thought the supporters were very helpful and greatly contributed to the family program designing. (4) referring to the children participation, 37% of the parents felt their children's participation was high, 27% that was average and 30% described a low participation of the children. 62% of the children were under the age of 12. (5) 80% of the families reported a higher level of trust with the social worker after the FGC.