

## Why an Eigen Kracht-conference?

**Every family has problems at some time or another,**

and could often benefit from other people's help during such difficult times. This might be from family or friends. A plan must be made on how to resolve the family's problems. A proper plan, which provides safety and for which the family itself takes responsibility. One way in which such a plan can be produced is the Eigen Kracht-conference. It is not about looking for someone to blame, but about finding a solution for the family's problems.

*'I knew that something was wrong with my niece. We have to do something about this'*

*'At first, I really didn't believe that the co-ordinator was independent'*



## What do you mean, family and friends?

During an Eigen Kracht-conference, a family comes together with the people close to it. Usually these are family members and friends, but they could also be other close acquaintances, such as a neighbour, one of the children's friends, or a distant family member.

While the family and friends are developing the plan, no outsiders are present; not even counsellors. These are only involved at the beginning, when they provide families with information about the problems and what they can do to help. They leave the room before the family starts its discussion, and only return when the plan has been finished.

## Why would I want to be involved?

There's no-one who knows the family better than you do. This means that you can help to find a solution to the problems that exist. It is important that anyone that wants to help is there, so that everyone's ideas can be shared. The Eigen Kracht-conference offers families the chance to make their own decisions. A plan will be presented that has been made not by outsiders, but by the family itself.

If you are there, you can do your bit. Together, you not only know more, you are also stronger.



## Who arranges it?

Usually the counsellor has been concerned, and has contacted 'Eigen Kracht'. The national Eigen Kracht Centre has approached a Family Group Co-ordinator in your area. This independent co-ordinator will contact you. He or she is not counsellor, but someone that just organises the Eigen Kracht-conference. The co-ordinator discusses the situation with you, and the problems for which the family are being called together. You will be asked who you think should be asked to come, and how and where they can be reached. As many as possible of those involved should participate. It is very rare for a co-ordinator to decide that a certain family member may not attend.

The co-ordinator will also ask you which experts you will require information from to be able to make a proper decision. The co-ordinator will contact these experts on your behalf.

When and where the Eigen Kracht-conference will be held depends on what the participants want. In consultation with the family, the co-ordinator will arrange refreshments and any toys that the children might like. The co-ordinator will prepare everyone for the meeting, and discuss what they might need to feel as much at ease as possible. Children – and sometimes other family members too – need someone to offer them special support during the Eigen Kracht-conference, and help them to express their opinions. With the co-ordinator's help, they themselves decide who should do this.

*'Luckily, we were able to solve the problem ourselves'*

*'You feel like you're really being taken seriously'*

*'It's very different to talking with a counsellor there'*



## What happens during a Eigen Kracht-conference?

The co-ordinator welcomes everyone, and makes sure that everything runs as smoothly as possible.

### 1. Welcome and information

The co-ordinator welcomes everyone. If necessary, everyone present is introduced to each other. The counsellors and other experts will explain which problems the family has and what they can do to help. Everyone is given the opportunity to ask questions.

### 2. The family's private meeting

The co-ordinator and the counsellor(s) leave the room. The family and their friends/acquaintances are left together. They can talk to each other as they usually would do. The aim is for them to decide how best to solve the problem. Together you will:

- discuss what the problem is
- make a plan that everyone agrees with
- decide which of you will do what and/or what help you need from others.

The family may take all the time they need for the private meeting. During this time, food and drink are available. The co-ordinator is close by to help whenever the family needs anything.



### 3. The plan

Once the family and friends agree to a plan, it is written down.

The co-ordinator and the counsellor(s) rejoin the family. They are told what the plan entails. The counsellor(s) accept(s) the plan, unless it is against the law or unsafe. The co-ordinator will ask who wishes to be involved when, after a certain period of time has passed, the plan's implementation is evaluated.

The co-ordinator will thank everyone for their co-operation. You will be asked to fill in a form about your experience of the Eigen Kracht-conference.

### And then?

The Eigen-kracht Co-ordinator ensures that everyone present receives a copy of the plan as soon after the conference as possible. The family, and sometimes the counsellors involved, will do their best to ensure the plan's success. Often, after an agreed period of time, contact will be re-established in order to find out how the plan is progressing.

## Who can give me more information?

Please contact the Eigen Kracht-co-ordinator:

Name:

Telephone number:

*'The most important thing is that the children no longer become the victims of all these problems.*

*We'll make sure of that'.*

Getting together to make  
**your own** decisions  
about the help you need

## Eigen Kracht-conference

