Goals and Objectives of Mediation

The goal of peer mediation is to help a school become a more healthy, positive, and safe learning environment by empowering students to manage conflict, transform relationships and enhance school climate. Program objectives can include: reducing the rates of office referrals, suspensions and expulsions; creating a stronger sense of community by bridging differences; and instilling valuable, lifelong skills that prepare students to become productive citizens.

Specifically, peer mediation:

- Empowers students with the skills and strategies for dealing with conflict;
- Develops communication and decision-making tools that influence choices in the future and increase leadership potential;
- Helps students gain perspective and understanding of themselves, others and their issues;
- Improves school climate by building relationships;
- Reduces the alienation, disenfranchisement and powerlessness that many students feel;
- Builds a strong sense of cooperation within the school community in order to address disputes that interfere with learning.
What is Peer Mediation?

Mediation is a way of helping people in conflict (the disputants) reach a solution that works for all of them. It is a process that helps them to communicate directly and respectfully, to understand one another and to look for ways to end their dispute. Peer Mediation is problem solving by youth with youth. It is a process by which two or more students involved in a dispute meet in a private, safe and confidential setting to work out problems with the assistance of a trained student mediator.

As a peer mediator, you will encourage disputants to...

...talk to one another...to talk one at a time
...listen to one another...to listen while the other person speaks
...understand one another...to understand about each side of the conflict
...look for solutions...solutions that work for both parties

Resolving Conflict

Conflict occurs in all areas of life and has been resolved over the years in a variety of ways in different societies. Today in North America, one of the methods we use is called mediation. A mediator is a third party, who acts in a neutral manner to resolve conflict between disputants. Mediation uses life skills and learned skills to help disputants through a process to resolve the conflicts they face. The disputants are two or more individuals or groups.

In schools, some conflicts that arise between students, such as gossiping, bullying and mistreatment can be resolved through the mediation process. Students working as peer mediators should be aware that some conflicts cannot be resolved through mediation and need to be dealt with through the mechanisms already in place, such as a teacher, counselor or principal.
Some students many want to go further in the mediation field and make a carer out of it. Being a peer mediator is a good place to start. After high school, there are many training programs, academic courses and an increasing number of opportunities for work in this field.

This program will assist you in gaining some important life skills, guide you through a model of mediation, and give you practice to increase your competency in mediation. As a peer mediator you have been selected to perform a valuable task at Norwood Elementary School. Your trainers will make every effort to help you on your road to achievement.

Congratulations for taking on the task!
ITUNA

Introduction

Talking

Understanding

Negotiation

Agreement
Becoming a Better Mediator

Mediators need specific traits and skills to make them most effective. On a scale from 1 to 5 (1 meaning "I need a lot of work at this" and 5 meaning "I am really good at this"), rate yourself to see which traits and skills you already have and which you need to work on.

1. I am respectful.  
2. I can be trusted to keep things I'm told confidential.  
3. I can be fair to people no matter how they look, dress or speak.  
4. I am patient.  
5. I do not get personally upset about comments about which I do not agree  
6. I can listen without interrupting.  
7. I can listen without judging.  
8. I can listen without taking sides.  
9. I know when to ask questions when I don't understand and need clarification  
10. I read people's body language and tone of voice.  
11. I can communicate clearly.  
12. I accept people doing things their own way even when I disagree.
Conflict Cycle Examples

**Positive**

- Conflicts are settled peacefully
- Resentments don't build up
- Relationships are maintained or improved

(reinforces beliefs)

**Beliefs & Attitudes**

Conflict Occurs

Result

Responses
- Use good communication skills
- Agree to talk about the problem
- Do problem solving

**Negative**

- Conflict is dangerous
- Talking about problems makes them worse

(reinforces beliefs)

**Beliefs & Attitudes**

Conflict Occurs

Result

Responses
- Pretend nothing is wrong
- Just give in
- Use the silent treatment

- Problem worsens or escalates
- Hurt feelings
- Needs go unmet
Steps of Mediation

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Establish needs or ground rules
3. Confidentiality
4. Invitation to begin
5. Disputants tell stories
6. Reframing and restating
7. Ask open-ended questions
8. Summarize
9. Brainstorm options
10. Conclusion
A Fairy Tale Mediation Role Play

Goldilocks and Baby Bear

Goldilocks and Baby Bear have requested mediation because they can no longer figure out how to get along. They have been friends for a long time but recently something happened that changed their relationship.

Mediator: Welcome
Confidentiality
Ground Rules (be honest, no interrupting, no name calling)
Invitation to begin

Baby Bear: I want to begin because she's the one who broke into my house and broke my chair.

Mediator: Goldilocks, how do you feel about Baby Bear beginning?

Goldilocks: I didn't break into his house!

Mediator: You both have important things to say and I assure you that we will get to hear from each of you. Do either of you have strong feelings about who should start?

Baby Bear: Oh, it doesn't really matter as long as I can tell my side of the story.

Goldilocks: Yeah, he can start as long as I can talk next.

Mediator: Okay, so why don't you tell us what is going on for you, Baby Bear?

* Baby Bear feels that he and Goldilocks have been good friends for many years. A couple of weeks ago while Baby Bear and his family were out for a walk, Goldilocks broke into their house and made herself at home. Baby Bear ssets as if this is an awful thing, like she violated his home and that his friend has broken his trust. After all, she ate their food and walked all around the house, even sleeping in their beds! Worst of all, but he does NOT say it at this point, is that she broke his favorite chair that his grandfather made for him! (this is the real source of his mistrust {anger/disappointment}, though this feeling is what lies beneath the facts even Baby Bear is not aware that this is the real problem)

Mediator: So, ...(reframe). (looking at Baby Bear) Is that right? (Turning to Goldilocks), Goldilocks, what would you like us to know about what is going on?
* Goldilocks is crushed that Baby Bear thinks she "broke" into their home. She has been going over there for years and feels like a part of the family, so when she got there and the door was unlocked and no one was home, she just figured they'd be right back and she decided to wait.

Baby Bear: (Interrupting) But you ate our porridge and slept in our beds!!!

Mediator: Please, you have agreed not to interrupt. I will give each of you a chance to respond to what the other has said.

Goldilocks: You're right, I did eat some of your porridge. I was starving and it smelled soooo good.

Mediator: So...reframe (both parts of Goldilocks' experience). Is that right? Baby Bear, can you tell us how this makes you feel?

* Baby Bear says that it is true that Goldilocks has been a friend of the family, for a long time and that she's always been welcome, and if they were home it wouldn't have been odd at all to have her walk right in. He also adds that his mother's porridge does smell and taste terrific. BUT he still feels like she has broken his trust.

Mediator: (reframe) & check with Baby Bear. Goldilocks, is there anything that you would like to add?

* Goldilocks is still upset that he thinks she has broken his trust. Why is he so upset about such stupid stuff? She always walks into their house and often eats with them and they have been friends for a long time.

Mediator: (Reframe and add), It sounds like you are still confused and hurt about how Baby Bear is treating you.

Goldilocks: That's right. I didn't think it was wrong and I would never do it if I thought they wouldn't like it.

Baby Bear: But you should have waited in the kitchen and not gone all over the house.

Mediator: Goldilocks, can you respond to what Baby Bear has said?

Goldilocks: Well, I'm sorry. You're probably right. I should have just waited in the kitchen.

Mediator: So...(reframe). Is there anything else you would like to add?
Goldilocks: No

Mediator: Baby Bear?

Baby Bear: Yeah but….I really thought I could trust her!

Mediator: Can you say a little more about that?

Baby Bear: (Still upset) Yeah, I can. I thought she was a good friend and now I just can’t trust her. I know she always just comes into our house, but this time when we got back she had gone all over the house, eaten our food and then…I find my favorite chair broken; the chair my Grandfather made for me. It breaks my heart because it can never be replaced!

Mediator: So what I am hearing is that this chair was especially important to you and that you are heartbroken that it can never be replaced.

Baby Bear: That’s right! My Grandfather is gone now and that was the one thing he made just for me. How can it ever be replaced?

Goldilocks: Oh, Baby Bear, I am so sorry. I didn’t realize how special that chair was. I thought it was just a left over baby toy or something. I really am sorry.

Mediator: So to be clear, what you’re saying is that when you went into Baby Bear’s house, you did eat some porridge and sleep in his bed but also that you broke his favorite chair. Is that right?

Goldilocks: Yes, I’m really sorry that it happened and I had no idea how special a chair it was. Maybe I could try and fix it for Baby Bear.

Mediator: Baby Bear, is there anything else that you need from this mediation?

Baby Bear: No I believe that Goldilocks broke my favorite chair by accident and she didn’t know how special it was for me. I’m not mad at her anymore.

Mediator: Goldilocks, do you need anything else from this mediation?

Goldilocks: No. I hope Baby Bear and I can be friends again and try to fix his chair together.

Mediator: I want to thank both of you for coming to mediation.
Closed Questions with Open-ended Ways to Reframe them

- Are you sad about that?
  (How do you feel about that?)

- Did you freak out when you heard that?
  (How did you feel when you heard that?)

- Did that upset you?
  (How did that make you feel?)

- Did you want to hit him?
  (How did that make you feel?)

- Does that surprise you?
  (How do you feel hearing that?)

- Are you telling the truth?
  (Can you say more about that?)

- Did that make you mad?
  (How did that make you feel?)

- Were you scared?
  (How did that make you feel?)

- Do you remember that?
  (What do you remember?)

- Are you sure it happened that way?
  (Can you say more about how it happened?)

- Do you believe that?
  (What do you think about that?)
## Active Listening Techniques

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>To do this...</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encouraging:</strong></td>
<td>1. To convey interest 2. To encourage the other person to keep talking</td>
<td>...don’t agree or disagree  ...use neutral words  ...use varying voice intonations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clarifying:</strong></td>
<td>1. To help you clarify what is said 2. To get more information 3. To help the speaker see other points of view</td>
<td>...ask questions  ...restate wrong interpretation to encourage speaker to explain further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summarizing</strong></td>
<td>1. To review progress 2. To pull together important ideas and facts 3. To establish a basis for further discussion</td>
<td>...restate major ideas expressed, including feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Validating</strong></td>
<td>1. To acknowledge the worthiness of the speaker</td>
<td>...acknowledge the value of their feelings  ...show appreciation for their efforts and actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restating</strong></td>
<td>1. To show you are listening and understand what is being said 2. To check your meaning and interpretation</td>
<td>...restate basic ideas and facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflecting</strong></td>
<td>1. To show that you understand how the speaker feels 2. To help the person evaluate his or her own feelings after hearing them expressed by someone else</td>
<td>...reflect the speaker’s basic feelings</td>
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S.O.D.A.S. Conflict Technique

Communication in conflict is about getting what you want or need (interests), not about how you feel (position). Students in conflict should recognize their feelings (anger, sadness, frustration) as a signal to negotiate for what they want or need, rather than an excuse to escalate into violence. Use the S.O.D.A.S. technique for students in crisis.

**Situation:** What Happened? What are all the points of view? What are the facts, not hearsay or gossip? (Use “I” Statements to identify facts).

**Options:** What are the different options, positive and negative, available to you of how to behave or react to your trigger?

**Disadvantages:** For each of your options, what are the disadvantages, or negative consequences, of acting on that behavior or reaction?

**Advantages:** For each of your options, what are the advantages, or positive consequences of acting on that behavior/reaction?

**Solution:** Now that you have examined each of your options, and are aware of any positive or negative, consequences for that behavior/ reaction, choose the best option for getting what you need or want (Hint: The best solutions have little or no negative consequences for you. They also require creativity and compromise).
A Sample Opening Statement

Hello and welcome to mediation. My name is ______________ and I will be your peer mediator today. Thanks for coming what are your names? Mediation is voluntary, you can stop at any time. I am glad you have chosen mediation to resolve your conflict.

The purpose of mediation is for the two of you to talk about the conflict and to listen to each other. We will help you to understand each other better, and to decide how you both want to resolve the conflict.

I am here to listen. I do not take sides or judge. Mediation is confidential. Nothing you say here in mediation will leave this mediation, except if there you or someone else is in danger. Then I will let our coordinator know.

Mediation is a safe place for people to talk. There are three rules that I ask. I ask that you take turns talking and listening. I ask you you to be respectful, no yelling or name calling. I ask you to make an effort to cooperate. Do you all agree? Would you like to add any other rules? Do you have any questions?

Who would like to begin?
Peer Mediation Agreement Form

Date: __________________________

Disputant: ______________________ Mediator: ______________________

Disputant: ______________________ Mediator: ______________________

Type of Conflict:

☐ Fighting
☐ Rumor
☐ Threat
☐ Name-calling
☐ Property
☐ Teasing
☐ Friendship
☐ Pushing
☐ Other: ______________________

We have participated in mediation and have agreed to the following:

I, ______________________, agree to: ______________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

I, ______________________, agree to: ______________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________  ___________________________
(Signature, disputant)                           (Signature, mediator)

_________________________________________  ___________________________
(Signature, disputant)                           (Signature, mediator)