Peaceful Resolutions
For
Oklahoma Students

School-Based Peer Mediation Curriculum and Training
Provided to Oklahoma Schools

A Project of the
Early Settlement Programs administered by the Supreme Court of Oklahoma,
Administrative Office of the Courts,
& the Law-Related Education Program of the Oklahoma Bar Association
PROS

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SECTION 1

Introduction to Peer Mediation

Peer Mediation is a program that teaches strategies to young people that allow them to handle conflicts in a positive and constructive manner. With proper training and application of that training, students learn to use conflict as a positive force that can lessen the detrimental effects of conflict and increase social skills and personal image of self. In fact, over the last twenty years, over 5,000 schools across the nation have established conflict mediation programs. Research distributed by the National Association for Mediation in Education (NAME) indicates that conflict mediation programs help to:

1) Decrease violence and fighting;
2) Reduce name–calling and put downs;
3) Decrease the number of suspensions;
4) Increase self–esteem and self–respect among peer mediators;
5) Enable teachers to deal more effectively with conflicts; and
6) Improve school climate.

The benefits are shared by all. There are benefits for student conflict mediators, the student body at large, families, and society. The benefits will follow students for the rest of their lives.

Benefits of Conflict Mediation Program

– Conflict Mediators gain confidence in their ability to help themselves.
– Conflict Mediators learn to get along better at home and at school.
– Conflict Mediators grades often improve.
– Other students learn how to get along with each other better from conflict mediators.
– Conflict Mediators often become peer leaders in the school in other areas.
– Arguments decrease, so students spend more time learning.
– Students and Teachers are able to work together in a friendlier, relaxed way.
Benefits for Student Body At–Large

- Students become active in the problem–solving process.
- Conflict Mediation leads to a greater commitment to making solutions work.
- Conflict Mediation provides positive role models for solving conflicts.
- Students assume greater responsibility for solving their problems.
- Students recognize that adult intervention is not always necessary.
- Conflict Mediation encourages students to share their feelings and search for positive ways to meet their needs.
- Conflict Mediation prevents the escalation of disciplinary problems.

Benefits for Families

- Problem–solving processes carry over to families. Parents and students have reported that conflicts at home are being resolved more effectively.

Benefits for Society

- Schools that teach students positive ways to resolve conflicts are aiding in the reduction of violence in our society today. Youths who learn to resolve conflicts positively are likely to do the same when they become adults.

Economic Benefits

- Successful projects cost little money.
- Fewer conflicts result in lower economic costs in the way of destroyed school materials, vandalism, etc.
Why Conflict Mediation for Students?

– Students spend much of their daily lives dealing with conflicts.
– Unless peaceably resolved, conflicts escalate.
– Once out of hand, conflicts generate anger, frustration and violence.
– Students need skills to resolve disputes before they become explosive.

Who are Conflict Mediators?

Conflict Mediators are specially chosen and trained students who help other students get along with each other.

What do Conflict Mediators do?

When students are involved in a nonphysical dispute, they are asked whether they would like conflict mediators to help them solve their problem. If the disputants so choose, conflict mediators help them by using a problem-solving process called mediation to clarify the nature of the dispute and to reach a solution satisfactory to both disputants.

What will Conflict Mediators Learn in Training?

– Leadership
– Communication –
  How to express feelings and needs
  How to listen well without taking sides
– Problem solving
– How to improve their school environment
– Responsibility for their actions
SECTION 2

Understanding Conflict

*Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* defines conflict as the “. . . struggle resulting from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands.” Conflict is a natural part of life and especially a natural outcome of living in an interactive society such as ours. Because conflict is a natural part of life and unavoidable, students must be taught coping skills to deal with conflict if they are to become rational, participatory citizens in our complex society.

Often, personal and social growths are natural outgrowths of conflict. When dealing with conflicts in a negative way or when students lack the skills necessary to resolve a conflict, they often lash out, act out, or withdraw internally. But, with proper training and implementation of that training, students can lessen the detrimental effects of conflict and increase the positive outcomes of conflict.

Conflict resulting from disputes comes from many sources. For example, some major areas from which conflict results are: 1) a clash of power, 2) a clash of values or rules, 3) a restriction of freedom, 4) an invasion of belonging, 5) perceived loss of material goods, and 6) unprovoked attack.

“Clash of power” disputes manifest themselves in many ways. Put–downs and name–calling often fall into this category. Young people’s perceptions of themselves often are more fragile than adults. Students often feel that they have “lost face” when others put them down and this is a threat to their own power base. They feel others will look down upon them or feel less positive toward them if they allow these put–down or name–calling incidents to go unchallenged. In addition, some students want to be in control of certain situations. Often, disputes arise when two students, who both want to be in control, simultaneously come into conflict. Some rumor and “he said/she said” conflicts fall into this category. Both students wanting to use the same materials, such as a library computer to use in their schoolwork, also fall into this category.

The hardest disputes to mediate involve “a clash of values or rules.” When dispute discussions seem to center on concepts like honesty, fairness, right and wrong, the dispute is usually over value systems.
For example, if one student fails to keep a promise, lies to another, or divulges a secret, the student who was offended often views this as a value issue. Students tend to internalize these issues and view them as personal attacks on themselves, their beliefs, and their whole sense of self. Often, they hold on to their beliefs with tenacious ferocity, to the point of refusing to listen to any other point of view, thereby taking extremely strong and often difficult positions.

“Restriction of freedom” conflicts occur when choices are taken away from individuals. Students perceive freedom as the right “to do what they want.” When a student prohibits the will of another, conflict often occurs. When one student stops another student from entering a room between classes, the second student feels her/his freedom has been restricted.

“Invasion of belonging” occurs when a student becomes isolated from his or her peer group and friends or feels that someone in the peer group is being attacked. Often young people derive much of their sense of self from their peer group. When they are alienated from their group for any reason, conflict usually occurs, especially with the person they perceive caused the estrangement. Examples of “invasion of belonging” are: rumors, not being invited to a party, not sitting with a friend at lunch, not saying ‘hello’ in an appropriate manner, or verbally or physically attacking another member of a child’s peer group.

“Perceived loss of material goods” occurs when students compete for limited resources such as money, property, time, etc. For example, when a young person playing a game “wastes time” so as to not finish before school, conflict can occur. If one student finds a pencil on the floor and another says it is hers, or if one student borrows a quarter and does not pay it back, conflict can occur. Even one student sitting in the regular seat of another in the classroom can cause conflict.

Finally, conflict can occur when one student feels he/she is a victim of an “unprovoked attack.” This attack could be verbal or physical. Examples of this would be pushing in the hallway or lunch room, name–calling, cutting in line at the water fountain, etc.

Sources of conflicts are not limited to only one category. For example, a rumor may be a “clash of power” dispute and an “invasion of belonging” dispute. When a student stops another from entering a room, it could be perceived as a “clash of power” and/or “restriction of freedom” dispute. When a peer steals some money, a student might perceive it as a “clash of values or rules” dispute and/or an “invasion of belonging” dispute.
Examining Conflict Causes* Activity

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

Activity:

Have students brainstorm the causes of conflicts. Record this list on a chalkboard, overhead, or flip chart. When finished (you may have to cut this off as the list may go on and on), ask how often these occur in their school. Rumor often is the most frequent source of conflict.

Next, brainstorm where conflicts occur. Make sure that students do not limit “where” to only on-campus places. Many if not most conflicts begin off-campus. Ask students where most student conflicts occur. Students will realize that conflicts can occur anywhere. However, they will usually pinpoint some places that frequently invite more conflicts than others.
SECTION 3
Response to Conflict

Response to conflict often occurs in one of four ways:

1. Withdrawal
2. Confrontation
3. Acting out, or,
4. Mediation.

Each of these reactions helps determine whether the conflict will end in a positive or negative way.

Students often use “Withdrawal” as a defense mechanism. They attempt to ignore the problem, deny that there is a problem, and often deny their emotions. This is sometimes a useful technique when dealing with an immediate, volatile situation. Often, however, young people continue to withdraw even after the explosiveness of the situation has passed. When students withdraw, they usually feel that they have “lost” and view the conflict in win–lose terms. Avoidance occurs when students do not deal with the underlying issues as opposed to the superficial issues that have caused the conflict. Continued avoidance often lowers a person’s view of him or herself and often the person may become more and more dominated and intimidated by others.

“Confrontation” is one of the most frequent reactions to conflict. It uses rage, threats, physical assaults, and revenge. It depends on the “might makes right” rule. Fights often occur and the one who gets the better of the fight “wins” and the one who gets beat up “loses.” Confrontation often employs the withholding of favors such as money, material goods, respect, love, and affection. It uses blackmail and manipulation. It almost always defines the situation as “me against you.”

“Acting out” is also a reaction to conflict. Students may act abnormally or in an unacceptable or inappropriate way to get attention. This is often a reaction to “invasion of belonging” disputes.
They may get angry with the teacher, be disrespectful (but usually only in front of peers), act bizarre or foolish in front of the class, make lower grades on an assignment, or be moody. Often, the student does not even realize why he/she is acting this way. There usually is no “winner” in this situation.

The fourth and most positively productive reaction to conflict is through “Mediation.” Mediation solves the specific problem. With withdrawal, confrontation, and acting out, there are nearly always losers.

Students spend much time in the classroom thinking about the conflict instead of spending time on task with their studies. In each of the reactions, a student’s view of self is lowered. In withdrawal and acting out, the problem has probably not been solved and will usually surface again. With confrontation, conflict often escalates, threats continue to occur, and hostilities often emerge again. However, with mediation the root of the problem can be discovered, addressed, and resolved.

Mediation is not a court. Students involved in mediation do not take sides. They are not there to judge guilt or innocence or to decide punishment. They are active listeners and try to provide opportunities for each person to talk and help come to a resolution of the disputants’ conflict.

Mediation is not counseling, but solves a specific problem. For example, if a boyfriend / girlfriend problem occurs where the boy wants to date the girl and the girl does not like him, mediation can deal with problems that have occurred due to the conflict. Mediation will not deal with the rejection and emotions that the boy may be going through. The latter is a situation for counselors.
Response to Conflict* Activity

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

Activity:
Ask students to brainstorm different kinds of responses to conflict. They will list many and often violent reactions to conflict. Draw a continuum line on the board and put confrontation at one end and withdrawal on the other. Ask students what responses would there be between these two extremes. After they have done this, put on the line “mediation” and “acting out.” These will usually encompass other possible responses such as negotiation, compromise, suing (adjudication), binding and non-binding arbitration, fighting, killing, etc. They are: 1) withdrawal, 2) confrontation, 3) acting out, or 4) mediation.

Using the section entitled “Responses to Conflict” discuss the four different ways of responding to conflict and emphasize that mediation is one of the best ways to deal with conflicts, especially in the schools.
Activity:

Point out that the main way kids fall into the confrontation response is by fighting. Ask students to list some of the consequences of fighting for those involved in the fight (list these on the board). Students will respond in numerous ways. Following are some of the answers that are often made and possible discussions and responses to those statements.

- “Somebody might get hurt.” Ask how words can hurt. Ask how they feel when someone hurts their feelings.

- “They get in trouble.” Ask how they could get into trouble – Sent to office? Get suspended? Get grounded? Lose privileges? Go to jail? Get killed?

- “You win” or “You teach the other person a lesson.” Ask what the other person will want to do if you win or you beat them. Typical responses include that they want to get revenge or get even.

Ask students to list some of the consequences of fighting for those not involved in the fight (list these on the board). Ask if other people ever get drawn into conflicts? If yes, ask “who” and “how”. Responses include friends, principals, parents, police, etc. Then ask how these people will respond to the conflict. Answers might include describing a range of catastrophes and punishments.
At this point, spend some time discussing power shifts and empowerment. Ask who has the power to issue punishments. Ask if students lose their power to solve the conflict if they are sent to the principal for fighting, or if police pick them up for fighting. Do others decide their consequences? Some students may insist that fighting is the best way to solve a conflict. Do not judge or condemn this response, but let all students brainstorm two lists:

| Why Fight? | Why not Fight? |

Students are likely to recognize that the negative consequences of fighting far outweigh the choice to fight. Some students may respond to “why fight” by saying they have been taught to stand up for themselves (e.g., “My mother/father tells me not to start fights, but if anyone messes with me, I should stand up and fight back.”) Be sure students brainstorm the short-term and long-term consequences to fighting or not fighting as they affect family and friends. For example, ask, “How might your family feel if you get suspended for fighting? If you got hurt how would your family feel? How would you feel if you seriously hurt someone else?

Use the same technique in examining the consequences of “withdrawal.” Common answers include: “you swallow your hurt and anger,” “you get stressed-out,” “you feel sad or unhappy,” “you lose esteem” and “you keep it inside and sometimes explode on someone else.”

Now write the words “peer mediation” on the board. Ask students how they would feel if they actually were able to solve their own problems without others deciding it for them, and without fighting or withdrawal. Ask which alternative do they think is the best.
SECTION 4

Mediation Process

The Mediation Process consists of the referral process and actual mediation. Each is important to a smooth running of the program and for successful mediation.

Referral Process

The referral process can be extremely flexible, with referral coming from students in conflict, students observing conflict, teachers, administrators and other staff. The ideal situation is to have referrals from all groups. When this is achieved, it will be obvious that all groups have adopted and are supporting the program. If all referrals seem to be originating from teachers, there is a good chance that students have not “bought into” the program. If all referrals come from the students, the same would hold true of the staff. A good balance should be sought between the two with the majority of referrals coming from students who are closer to and more aware of their own conflicts.

Students should be able to obtain a “Mediation Referral Form” from any teacher or staff person. Students should then fill out the form and turn it in to any teacher or staff person. If teachers see a conflict, they can give students the choice of going to the office or going to mediation. Students will nearly always choose mediation. If they choose mediation, the teacher will separate them and fill out the “Mediation Referral Form” (teacher can have students fill out the form). Staff personnel then turn in the “Mediation Referral Form” to the counselor or program coordinator at the first available break.

When the counselor or program coordinator receives the “Mediation Referral Form,” he/she will contact students involved in the conflict and ask them if both agree to mediation. There are many ways to contact students. An office note could be sent to the student in the classroom where the student can mark either a yes or no box on a form.
However, it is much better to talk to the students individually to get a commitment to go to mediation. If all parties agree to mediation, the program coordinator then chooses a mediation team, taking into account ethnicity; gender, etc. *(see section on selecting mediators).* The counselor will then set up a time conducive to the school environment when all participants can attend. This could be before school, after school, lunch period, activity class, or regular class periods. Students are then contacted with the time and place mediation will be held.

All students should be told explicitly that while confidentiality will be strictly observed, there are a few issues that cannot be held in strict confidentiality due to state law or school policy. They include: 1) crimes committed or planning to be committed; 2) illegal drug use; 3) weapons possession; 4) child abuse; or 5) the possibility of student suicide. If any of these issues are brought up in mediation, the information will be passed on to the program coordinator or adult in charge of the particular mediation. Information will then be passed on to the administrator.

**Actual Mediation and Follow Up**

Actual mediation is done with PROS. This is what the PROS have been trained to do. Students have been trained to follow a series of steps to reach probable successful conclusion of the mediation process. An outline of the series of steps follows:

I. **Step One** – Introductions and Groundwork
   A. PROS introduce themselves and have disputants introduce themselves.
   B. All mediation rules are read to the disputants.
   C. Each student is asked if they agree to the mediation rules (if they do not agree, mediation cannot continue). They are:
      1. Respect each other (no name calling or put-downs).
      2. Do not interrupt another talking.
      3. Remain seated.
      4. Work towards a solution (reemphasized in next step).
5. Be as honest as you can.

D. Students are asked if they agree to try in good faith to mediate the conflict at hand (if they do not agree, mediation cannot continue).

E. Student mediators explain to disputants that everything said in mediation must be held in total confidentiality (if they do not agree, mediation ends).

F. Students are told the areas in which confidentiality would be breached and information would be passed on to the program coordinator:

1. Crimes committed or planning to be committed.
2. Illegal drug usage.
3. Weapons possession.
5. The possibility of student suicide.

G. Repeat above steps if agreement has not been reached or students do not understand.

H. Explain the basic steps of mediation:

1. Each person has an opportunity to tell his/her side of the conflict.
2. Make sure everyone understands each side and how each person feels (PROS attempt to help each disputant with reverse empathy – to feel what the other disputant feels).
3. Each person suggests solutions to the conflict.
4. Each person works towards an agreement on solutions.
5. Sign off an agreement form.
6. Follow up.
7. End on a positive note.
II. **Step Two – Telling the Story**

A. Lead PRO decides who speaks first. This is often the most angry person so that s/he does not interrupt the process. Sometimes neither side wants to start and if you cannot agree on who goes first, select a fair way such as flipping a coin to determine who begins.

B. Have one side tell his/her side of the story to the PROS. PROS will use active listening skills and help speaker focus on the problem, not the other person.

C. After first disputant has given his/her side of the story, one of the PROS will summarize it by clarifying and repeating it back to disputant.

D. Have the other side tell his/her side of the story to the PROS. PROS will use active listening skills and will help the speaker focus on the problem, not the other person.

E. After second disputant has given his/her side of the story, one of the PROS will summarize it by clarifying and repeating it back to disputant.

III. **Step Three – Understanding the Problem/ Establishing Reverse Empathy**

A. Identify the facts and feelings of each disputant by discussing with each how they feel (e.g., anger, hurt, embarrassment, etc.).

B. Have disputants change roles and tell PROS how they would feel if they “walked in other other’s shoes”.

C. Summarize the facts and feelings of both sides.
IV. **Step Four** – Search for Solutions

A. Ask both parties to suggest ways they can solve the conflict, using brainstorming techniques.

B. Write down all solutions (in brainstorming there is no evaluation of responses).

C. Sometimes the student mediators can suggest solutions, but this is done unobtrusively and after disputants have had a chance to make suggestions. Student mediators can give disputing parties ideas, but they cannot tell them what to do.

V. **Step Five** – Reaching Agreement

A. Check off solution(s) to which both disputants can agree.

B. Discuss how realistic are the solutions (can each student abide by the solution[s]).

C. Write up the agreement in the disputants’ own words.

D. Have each disputant sign the agreement form.

E. The student mediators will then sign off on the agreement form.

F. Each party receives a copy (usually you can run to the copy machine).

VI. **Step Six** – Departure and Follow Up

A. PROS explain how follow up works (it is best at this point to set up a time to check with each disputant to make sure agreement is going o.k.; if there are problems, offer to do another mediation).
B. The student mediators congratulate both sides for agreeing to mediate and for their hard work. They thank the parties for using mediation to resolve their dispute.

C. End mediation on a positive note! (i.e., a handshake, handshake between disputants, hugs, smiles, etc.)

At the end of mediation, follow-up is needed. This follow-up can be done by the student mediators, by the program coordinator, or a combination of both. A set time for follow-up should be set. The first follow-up should be done after only a few days. If a second follow-up is utilized, it should be done a week later. If necessary, follow-ups might be done every week for the following few weeks.
SECTION 5

Organization & Execution

The Peaceful Resolutions for Oklahoma Students (PROS) Program is an education program specifically designed for Oklahoma students. Its purposes are to:

1) Teach the skills necessary for student mediation;
2) Encourage students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community people to promote conflict mediation.

PROS emphasizes communication skills, builds vocabulary, provides opportunities for creating writing, and fosters the development of citizenship and social skills necessary for each individual to become a rational, participating citizen aware of his/her responsibilities.

Program Objectives

✓ Students will learn to recognize and define conflict and the various ways in which conflicts are resolved.
✓ Students will differentiate between resolution imposed upon the disputants (usually from an authority figure) and resolution achieved through student cooperation.
✓ Students will learn that conflict mediation gives them more control over and greater satisfaction with outcomes of disputes.
✓ Students will learn that mediation is a form of cooperative conflict resolution.
✓ The school will achieve a reduction in the number of conflicts in the school setting (classroom, cafeteria, hallway, outside, etc.).
✓ The schools will reduce the number of suspensions from school for fighting.
✓ Students will learn skills necessary to create a more positive school environment, free from strife and violence.
✓ Students will learn the procedures and rules involved in the mediation process.
✓ Students will learn communication and listening skills that are necessary for successful mediation.
✓ Students will use conflict mediation skills outside the classroom and for the rest of their lives.
Time Frame for Training

- Training for the advisory team will take one (1) day.
- Training of the student mediators will take one (1) day with periodical additional training.

The time requirements given with each activity are guidelines; actual times will vary, depending upon the group.

Advisory & Core Team

The Advisory Team can be composed in many ways. We suggest that the PROS advisory teams, at a minimum, should consist of four (4) or more people including the:

Principal,
Program coordinator (preferably the counselor but could be the in-school suspension director or other administrator if no counselor at school),
and two (2) or more teachers.
In addition, the Advisory Team might include:

Students,
Two (2) or more parents,
Two (2) community resource people,
School nurse,
In-school suspension director or Teacher,
PTA/PTO members and other faculty members.

Responsibilities of the Advisory Team might include planning long-range objectives, organizing training sessions, assisting in record keeping and evaluation, promoting the program, providing for encouragement and rewards (certificates, appreciation parties, etc.) for PROS participants, fund-raising, and other activities that would further the goals of the PROS program. The Core team has additional specific responsibilities, including attending an intensive training of mediators to fully understand and be able to carry out the PROS program.
Mediation Environment

The environment in which mediation occurs is important. It must be conducive for a successful mediation. It should be held in a private room adjoining the principal’s, counselor’s or other staff person’s office so appropriate supervision can take place. However, there needs to be a degree of privacy so that sensitive issues can be discussed. Many young people will discuss conflicts and issues that they are experiencing with other students, but not with adults. Adults should be nearby in case that the student mediators need them.

The mediation room should have a small table with a minimum of four chairs. Materials such as pens, pencils, agreement forms, and paperwork necessary for the mediation process should be preassembled. The best seating arrangement is for the two (2) student mediators to sit next to each other and the two (2) disputants facing each other. Posters of mediation ground rules and exceptions to confidentiality promote understanding of the process.

Faculty Involvement

Faculty involvement and support of the PROS program are integral to its success. Without faculty support, the program will not be as effective as it could be. Teachers already have many responsibilities and are always asked to do more. If they feel that this is just another burden on their shoulders or an intrusion in their already limited class time, they will oppose it. If they view this program as another “passing fad” and expect failure as in other programs they feel were unsuccessful, they will not approach the program with the enthusiasm and cooperation necessary to have great success. If the faculty is supportive, the program gains credibility with other staff, students, parents, and the community. Faculty support may be the program’s most important promotional resource. Good promotion and buy-in are necessary and should be undertaken with the faculty before the training of the student mediators begins.
All faculty members should be involved, at minimum, in an orientation meeting to explain the program. Outside resource people such as lawyers or Early Settlement volunteers, are great resources and may be asked to speak at these meetings. At best, staff development training should be held to teach the other staff members about conflict mediation techniques. Information for faculty should outline any timelines that have been adopted and explain to the faculty's role in the mediation program. Including the faculty in some decision-making helps them to gain ownership of the program. Hand-outs should include a packet of information explaining the program including all program forms, posters, brochures, and articles explaining conflict mediation. The faculty should be encouraged to take an active role in solving any small problems that may occur and be especially urged to contact members of the Core Team if they see problems developing. The PROS program has been designed to reduce conflicts in school that cause students to spend less time on-task. Therefore, the program should be presented to faculty as a way of helping them be better teachers and to have students that will possibly have more attention on-task than on problems they might have with others.

It is important to frequently update staff on the progress of the program and make sure the program has a high profile with teachers. Build support by acknowledging staff support and involvement at staff meetings. Encourage staff referrals, as this shows students that there is faculty support for the program, and make sure all staff is aware of who the student mediators are so they can actively support and encourage them.

**Community Involvement**

Community involvement through organizations, businesses, and individuals can give strong financial, moral, and educational support to this program. The PTA, PTO, local bank, local merchants, Kiwanis, Rotary, Optimists, and other organizations often will want to support or promote mediation programs.
Individuals such as lawyers, judges, police officers, firefighters, social agency workers, and others can be wonderful resource persons who will come to the school and specifically help with hands-on instruction or volunteer work. The Oklahoma Bar Association, the county bar associations and the regional Early Settlement program are great outside resource persons.

Financial support can be used in many ways. Small expenses for running the program, promotional materials and expenses to purchase awards for students can usually be obtained from local organizations. Expenses could be incurred with the purchase of special peer mediation T-shirts, pins, posters for in-school advertisement, printing, food for meetings or reward parties, ads in the local paper promoting the program, newsletters sent to parents, brochures, thank-you notes, etc. These organizations are more likely to give if a staff member meets with the organization in person. In all cases, the organizations are more likely to provide support if an informational letter and brochure describing the program is provided.

**Program Promotion**

Program promotion is very important because it makes students and faculty more aware of conflict mediation.

| It develops ownership of the program and establishes a positive image for the school. |
| It establishes the positive philosophy of conflict resolution. |
| It provides information to the school and to the local community about the program. |
| It communicates the types of conflicts that can be mediated. |
| It encourages students to mediate their conflicts. |
Program promotion should promote what the program is as opposed to what the program is not. Promotion leaders need to have a good understanding of the program, and all promotion should be geared to enhancing program goals.

Mediation promotion, general school philosophies and themes should go hand-in-hand. Promotion should involve students, faculty, parents and community people, including outside resource people.

The most important promotion will be in-school promotion. This promotion will encourage students to use the mediation process to settle conflicts. Promotions could be begun to recruit new student mediators. These might include poster campaigns where contests are held and the best posters get prizes.

This may be an in-class activity where all the kids in the school in teams, in groups or individually, make posters to display in the rooms and hallways. Cartoon posters might be used. Serious and sobering posters could be developed. School-wide themes could be attached. A catchy phrase such as this might be used:

“Got a Problem, Take It to Peer Mediation”

Students should be heavily involved with in-school promotions. They know what motivates other students and know what the “in things” are that would help in a promotion. Often, students from within the PROS group become involved, but it is judicious to bring in students from the general population because this gets them to buy into the program. The student council, school clubs, student newspaper staffs, and other school groups should be encouraged to become involved.

Another important campaign is with the community and school district. Newsletters could be developed and sent out to parents, resource people, and local community groups. News releases need to be sent.
Since programs such as these are often featured on network news broadcasts, shows such as 60 Minutes, 20/20, etc., local television stations love to cover conflict mediation programs. Ads run in local newspapers explaining the program advance the reputation of the school and emphasize the benefits to the community.

**Selecting Mediators**

Mediation teams consist of two (2) member teams, although other configurations can be set up. The Coordinator is responsible for selection, building and coordinating of teams. Teams are chosen for each individual conflict. How a team is put together often depends on the particular conflict involved. The Coordinator must pay close attention to the conflict, the persons involved in the conflict and other factors.

Attention should be given to the make up of the team members’ gender, race, and school status. For example, if the coordinator suspects racial undertones might be involved in the conflict, the team might be composed of the same racial mix. If the conflict is between a boy and a girl, the team should probably consist of a boy and a girl. In addition, attention must be paid when the lead mediator of the team is chosen.

Selection of the student mediators is very important. They should be diverse and represent the school population taking into account ethnic, academic, socio-economic diversity. Student leaders among their peers should be specifically targeted as possible mediators. This includes “recognized leaders” and “unrecognized leaders.” These are not necessarily the teachers’ favorite students. Sometimes students who have had discipline problems or other “at risk” students make excellent mediators and, in addition, learn skills that will reduce their discipline problems. Sometimes schools prefer to have students volunteer to be peer mediators, other times the faculty and administrators nominate students. Typically, it is a combination of the two (2) types of methods. All students selected to be peer mediators must go through the training process.
Students must have certain skills and possess certain attributes.

They must have the ability to be a good listener and have active listening skills. They must be able to repeat and restate ideas with a degree of accuracy as well as clarify statements to ensure understanding by all. They must be respectful and have the ability to remain unbiased. They must be able to understand the mediation process completely. They must be able to be respectful and empathetic in mediation sessions. They must be able to keep all information revealed in mediation sessions completely confidential.

Professionalism and Confidentiality

It is critical for students to understand the importance of professionalism and confidentiality. Discuss the importance of each. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines a professional as one who is “characterized by or conforming to technical or ethical standards of a profession.” Have students brainstorm what this means. Ask what does being a professional mean and what does it not mean. Put two categories on the board or flip chart: “Professional” and “Not Professional.” Have students brainstorm responses to each column. Some common answers when it comes to what is a professional are:

– They have a responsibility to do the very best job possible;
– They must set a tone and a standard for others to follow;
– They must be the leaders in the mediation room as well as leaders in the school;
– They must try their hardest to be a model student when it comes to behavior;
– They should be first to take a conflict to mediation when they have one;
– They are a friend when others need one;
– They always stay neutral;
– They feel good about their job and the positive impact that they have in their school;
– They always show respect;
– They keep all mediation information confidential.

Some common answers when it comes to what is not professionalism are:
– They are perfect;
– They are better than other students in school;
– They can be overbearing, bossy, or dictatorial;
– They can be silly in mediation;
– They are police officers or school patrols;
– They take sides;
– They force their ideas on disputants

Discuss with students what they feel confidentiality means. List on the board or flip chart what answers they give. Typical responses are:

– Not telling others who went to mediation;
– Not discussing with others outside mediation what was said by disputants;
– Not walking up to one of the disputants in the hall or classroom and asking them about their mediation session (different than follow-up);
– Not saying to your friends something like “You should have seen how weird those kids were in mediation this morning!”

Ask students what they think could happen if they did not keep confidential what they hear in mediation sessions. Again, list these on the board or flip chart. Some common answers are:
– They will get mad at the mediator;
– The mediator and the disputant may now have a conflict;
– The disputant could be embarrassed;
– The conflict that the mediator is trying to mediate may get worse;
– It would be unprofessional.

Reemphasize the importance of professionalism and confidentiality.
Student Expectations and Responsibilities *

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

Students need to understand their responsibilities. The trainer might use a brainstorming activity to elicit responses to the following questions:

**Why are you here?**

- What do you expect to accomplish or learn from this training?
  - How will you use what you learn?

Use a chalkboard or flip chart to record responses to these questions. The trainer(s) can share tasks or a student might be used to help record responses. Be aware that recorders might make mistakes or misspell responses, and this may trigger snickers or laughter. The trainer may use this type of situation to diffuse and help resolve a potential source of conflict. The following are common responses to these questions:

**Why are you here?**

- To help students stay out of trouble.
  - To help students solve conflicts without telling them what to do.
  - To help teachers, principals, etc. from having to spend so much time dealing with conflicts.
  - To stop fights before they begin.
  - To help make the school safer and better.
What do you expect to accomplish to learn from this training?

- How to avoid fights.
- How to talk things out.
- How to listen better.
- To learn to be a peer mediator.
- How to get along better.
- How to be a leader and good listener.

How will you use what you learn?

- To help solve conflicts around school
- To help solve conflicts with friends and family.

Mediation Issues

Almost any conflict can be one in which mediation can be used. However, there are some that should be handled directly by administrators and perhaps police officers. For example, any conflicts involving illegal drug usage or the use of firearms or other deadly weapons should be immediately turned over to the administrator. The PROS program can handle most other conflicts. A partial list of mediation issues or conflicts according to students follows:

Conflicts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attitude</th>
<th>Alienation</th>
<th>Arguments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>Back Stabbing</td>
<td>Being unfair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borrowing</td>
<td>Bossiness</td>
<td>Boy/Girlfriend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullying</td>
<td>Cheating</td>
<td>Cliques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences</td>
<td>Differences of Opinion</td>
<td>Discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family feuds</td>
<td>Fear</td>
<td>Feeling left out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fighting</td>
<td>Game rules</td>
<td>Gangs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossip</td>
<td>Harassment</td>
<td>Intrusion of space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lying</td>
<td>Making fun</td>
<td>Miscommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misunderstanding</td>
<td>Name calling</td>
<td>Personal property</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prejudice</td>
<td>Privacy</td>
<td>Putdown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumor</td>
<td>Stealing</td>
<td>Stinginess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking behind one’s back</td>
<td>Tattling</td>
<td>Teasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>Verbal attacks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Where Conflicts Occur

Conflicts can occur anywhere, however, when asked to point out where these conflicts are the most likely to occur, students say:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bathroom</th>
<th>Bus stop</th>
<th>Bus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
<td>Gym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hang outs</td>
<td>Hallway</td>
<td>Holding area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Locker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground</td>
<td>Stadium</td>
<td>Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Faculty and students know that conflict can occur in all areas of interaction between two people and nearly anywhere. It must be shown that mediation can be used to solve any or all of them. Students may feel that some conflicts are not important enough to take to mediation. However, any conflict that distracts a student from his/her schoolwork or view of self is a conflict that could and should be mediated. All students should be encouraged to use mediations in all of these areas.
SECTION 6

Trainer Information

This chapter is designed as a guide to help the core team train and implement the peer mediation program and train student mediators.

Welcome and Overview of Training

Welcome! You are participating in a program that can have a great impact on your school. It is a peer mediation program whose name is PROS – Peaceful Resolutions for Oklahoma Students. This program is designed to reduce conflicts in schools and to teach students alternative methods for solving dissension.

This program will not replace disciplinary policies already institutionalized in the school, but rather is designed to enhance those policies and may reduce the number of times they are used. It will give administrators and teachers more options to try to reduce unwanted and undesirable behavior. It will offer an intermediate intervention that, if successful, will eliminate the need to implement current disciplinary policy. Since it is hoped that the already established discipline policies will have to be invoked less often, they will have more of an impact when used.

Core, Advisory and Student Teams

There will be three teams that make up the mediation program. They consist of the core team, the advisory team, and the student team. The core team is also part of and often leads the advisory team.

The core team consists of a minimum of four (4) people. They are the principal, program coordinator (preferably the counselor, but it could be the in-school suspension director or other administrator if there is no counselor at school) and two (2) teachers. Each has their separate and joint responsibilities.
The responsibility of the principal is to oversee the program. The principal will provide leadership for the program. In addition, the principal should:

(1) Establish school-side activities that will foster an appropriate environment for PROS conflict mediation;
(2) Provide staff development time for teachers to learn about and become involved in the PROS conflict mediation process;
(3) Provide staff meeting time and personal time to gain support of all faculty;
(4) Encourage participatory support of parents and community resource people;
(5) Give moral and other support to members of the mediation team;
(6) Define types of conflicts that peer mediators will handle;
(7) Locate meeting room or area for mediations in which mediations can take place; and
(8) Any other support necessary to ensure success of the PROS conflict mediation program.
The program coordinator will be responsible for the direct coordination and implementation of the PROS program and is usually given the title of “Coordinator.” It will be the Coordinator’s responsibility to:

(1) Oversee the training and selection of peer mediators;
(2) Arrange schedule of peer mediators that ensures the smooth running of the program;
(3) Screen conflict mediation request forms and assign appropriate peer mediators to the mediation session;
(4) Schedule mediations;
(5) Facilitate meetings of the Mediation and Advisory Team as well as the PROS team;
(6) Supervise the peer mediators and their activities;
(7) Coordinate in-school and community publicity as well as provide on-going feedback to school and community;
(8) Provide moral and other support to all members of team;
(9) Coordinate all paperwork, record keeping, and end-of-year program evaluation; and
(10) Follow up on all mediation cases.
The two (2) or more teachers will be responsible to:

(1) Be involved in the training of the student mediators;
(2) Assist program coordinator with scheduling, screen request forms, facilitate mediation and advisory team as well as PROS meetings, completion of paperwork, evaluation, and supervision of PROS; and
(3) Provide moral and other support to all members of team.

The Advisory Team might include students, up to two parents, up to two community resource people, school nurse, in-school suspension director or teacher, PTA or PTO members, and other faculty members. Responsibilities of the Advisory Team might include:

(1) Planning long range objectives;
(2) Organizing training sessions;
(3) Assisting in record keeping and evaluation;
(4) Promoting the program, providing for encouragement rewards (certificates, appreciation parties, etc.) for the student mediators, fund-raising, and other activities which would further the goals of the PROS program.

The Core Team has additional specific responsibilities, including attending an intensive training of mediators to fully understand and be able to implement the PROS program.
Training Outline

I. Introduction and Overview
   A. Get acquainted
   B. Review training outline/training format
   C. Peaceful Resolutions for Oklahoma Students (PROS)

II. Understanding Conflict

III. Response to Conflict
   A. Withdrawal
   B. Confrontation
   C. Acting out
   D. Mediation

IV. Introduction to Peer Mediation
   A. Benefits of mediation
   B. What it has done in Oklahoma schools

V. PROS
   A. Program objectives
   B. Mediation (PROS) process
      1. Referral process
      2. Actual mediation – (Soft Drink Activity – Page 38)
         a. Step One – Introductions and Ground-work
         b. Step Two – Telling the Story
         c. Step Three – Understanding the Problem / Establishing Reverse Empathy
         d. Step Four – Search for Solutions
         e. Step Five – Reaching Agreement
         f. Step Six – Departure and Follow Up
VI. Outside Resource Persons
VII. Creating a Climate and Setting a Tone
VIII. Student Expectations and Responsibilities
IX. Promoting Partnerships and Teamwork
X. Examining Conflict Causes
XI. Response to Conflicts
XII. Consequences of Conflicts
XIII. Identifying Skills Mediators Need
   a. Listening activities
   b. Questioning strategies
   c. “You” and “I” messages
   d. Body language and emotional sensitivity
   e. Recognizing hidden agendas
   f. Finding common ground
   g. Putting it together
XIV. Mediation Process
XV. Practice, Practice, Practice
XVI. Professionalism and Confidentiality
XVII. Setting It Up in the School
   a. Time frames for training
   b. Mediation and advisory team
   c. Mediation environment
   d. Faculty involvement
   e. Community involvement
   f. Program promotion
   g. Selection of mediators
XVIII. Wrap-Up Evaluation
Soft Drink Dispute Demonstration & Discussion

Time:
Allow two (2) hours for demonstration & discussion

Objective:
This demonstration activity allows observers to see the difference between the court and mediation processes as modeled by role players, especially the role of the mediator. Additionally, it demonstrates how most people are generally “positional” in their thinking rather than “interest” based when disputes arise.

Materials Needed:
Soft Drink in a can
(4) Chairs
Small Hand Mirror

Setting up the Demonstration:
Discretely select two (2) students, preferably a male and female, who are comfortable role playing in front of a group and two (2) students or adults, preferably a male and female, who are experienced mediators. The trainer may have to mediate solo to effectively demonstrate the mediation process.

Instruct the two (2) disputing parties that early in the training that the trainer will hold up a soft drink can and say that “before we got started today, I went by the office to check on something and the secretary handed me this soft drink can (hold it up) and said that someone had mistakenly sat it down in the office and forgot to pick it up before leaving. The only thing the secretary knows is that the person who left it was overheard saying they were going to attend the peer mediation training. Does this belong to any of you all?
Instruct the designated role players to both speak up and declare that it belongs to them ~ even to the point of arguing a little. The trainer should call a “time-out” on the arguing between the parties and say “this really puts me in a bad position because there are two (2) of you who say it’s your soft drink ~ and there is only one (1) soft drink.” Ask the group “What should I do ~ there are two (2) people and only one (1) soft drink?” The group generally suggests (a) neither one should get the soft drink (b) you keep the soft drink (c) get two (2) cups and divide the soft drink evenly in the cups. The disputing role players should very vocally object to all of the above suggestions and suggest that it’s their soft drink and they want the whole thing (demonstrates position). Finally, the trainer should ask the group ~ “had this been more than a soft drink dispute and the disputing parties were adults where might they have gone to have a decision made?” Generally someone in the group will say “court”; however, if they don’t have one (1) of the role players suggest “court”. The trainer should announce “Okay let’s just hold court then ~ ask the parties to select an (student) attorney to represent them ~ explain that you will act as the judge and everyone else will be jurors for the trial.” The trainer should excuse him/herself for a few minutes and take the two (2) disputing parties and their respective attorneys to an area outside the hearing distance of the group. Instruct the attorneys to start their respective presentation with “ladies and gentlemen of the jury this is my client (name)…..” Each attorney should spend a couple of minutes speaking to the jurors about why their client should receive the soft drink ~ although the role players may be good actors or actresses ~ this is a “light hearted” demonstration.

For example the attorney might say, “This is Joe, a 6th grader, and today he was coming to school and stopped to get a soft drink at the quick stop and when he got to school he went by the office to buy a pencil and must have set the soft drink down and forgot to pick it up when he left (Don’t say why he wanted the soft drink). Then there is this person (looking toward the other disputing party) Joni, a 5th grade, who probably is not telling the truth ~ we all know how “5th graders” are too busy trying to be cool to remember if they even had a soft drink, also we all know that Joe is an outstanding student and although Joni claims to be ~ who knows?
The other presentation should be demonstrated the same way except that “Joni picked up the soft drink on her way in to school this morning” (Don’t go into any details or why she wanted the soft drink) The attorney presentations for both should be more about boy vs. girl, 5th grader vs. 6th grader, good student vs. bad student (rather than the soft drink in dispute).

After a few minutes of posturing (hamming it up) by the attorneys, the trainer (Judge) should ask the attorneys and parties to face the wall and address the jurors “after hearing each of these attorneys you all are charged with deciding who should receive the soft drink? So (point) should this side win or (point) should this side win. Have the parties and attorneys turn around and announce that although the vote was very close (whether it was or not) ~ Joe or Joni was the winner and Joe or Joni was the loser. The winner should be excited while the loser should mumble they got cheated.

The trainer should ask the group “did we find out a lot of facts about the soft drink?’ Most will say “no” ~ reply back “what did we learn in court?” Generally, the group will say boy vs. girl, 5th grader vs. 6th grader, and so on. Follow up by confirming what the group saw demonstrated was more about things related to making the other person look bad rather than about the soft drink. “How about having a mediation to allow the parties to speak for themselves about the situation as they see it from their respective point of view?” Most everyone will be anxious to see a mediation demonstration.

The trainer should ask the group to excuse the disputing parties and mediator role players for a minute to prepare for the mediation demonstration. Set the chairs up for the demonstration, having the disputing parties face each other with the mediator(s) sitting side-by-side facing the audience. Pass out “mediation script” to everyone being trained so they can follow along. Ask the group to wait until the end of the demonstration to ask questions or make comments.

Explain to the disputing parties that the mediator(s) will use a script throughout the process, and that they should “agree” to follow the rules. Visit briefly with each disputing party about how they should act out their role in mediation.
Example, Joe should speak up when the mediator(s) ask “who wants to share the situation as they see it?” and Joni should agree to let him go first. Joe should recount his trip to the quick stop and to the school office (very brief) and that he thinks the soft drink is his. Joni should recount her story about coming to school and picking up a soft drink and accidentally leaving it in the office before school while buying a notebook (very brief).

Next, the mediator(s) should ask each party “is there anything else you want to add? Joe should act frustrated and say the he had bought the soft drink at the quick stop to quench his thirst after athletics. After Joe finishes Joni should explain that she “actually doesn’t drink soft drinks; however, her 4-H group is collecting cans for spirit shirts and if she collects a hundred cans her shirt will be free. She currently has 99 cans and needs this can to make 100 cans.

After having the disputing parties to reflect on each others position, Ask the parties what suggestions they might have in ways to resolving the dispute. Generally, the parties will suggest that “Joe could drink the soft drink, and then give Joni the can for her collection goal. The mediator(s) should frame what each party agrees to do ~ who, what, when & where ~ in order to write an agreement.

*This is a good point to give the parties a 10 minute break.*

Upon reconvening, have the disputing parties and mediator(s) remain in their role playing seats. The trainer should start the discussion out by asking the group “what were some of the differences between court and mediation?” Of course court was more about boy vs. girl whereas mediation allowed the parties to explain from their point of view what the situation was as they saw it and with the help of the mediator(s) guiding the process move from “position” to “interest”.

The trainer should walk through each of the stages of mediation allowing for discussion from the group.
Stage 1 –
Greetings and Introductions
Explanation of Process and Rules

Stage 2 –
Gather information from disputing parties
*Use mirror to demonstrate how the mediator(s) are like a “mirror” ~ a reflection of the disputing parties ~ framing what is being said and repeating it back for accuracy ~ One example would be to ask the group to complete the following statement “A mirror never ________. ” (Lies) ~ tie together the importance of how the mediator(s) role is similar to being a mirror in order to be a true reflection of what has been said by the disputing parties.

Explain framing (repeating back what the party said) and reframing (removing or rewording back what the party has stated that might be taken as being offensive to the other party)

Stage 3 –
Reverse Empathy
Generating Options

Stage 4 –
Evaluate the Options
Select Agreed upon Options

Stage 5 –
Draft Agreement
Parties Read & Sign Agreement
Thank the parties for participation
Creating a Climate and Setting a Tone*

*Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

Prior to the arrival of students, plan an appropriate arrangement for the room or area where training will occur. The following arrangements have helped in most training sessions:

- Place posters on walls explaining rules of mediation and exceptions to confidentiality;
- Arrange chairs in a circle and be sure to include everyone in the circle;
- Have some tables (preferably round) where students can practice mock mediations, or this may be done in some breakout rooms or areas;
- Have an accessible and visible chalkboard and/or flip chart and sufficient chalk and/or markers;
- Have handouts organized and ready for distribution. You may wish to provide portfolio folders with pockets for students and staff. Have students write their names on individual folders, and encourage them at an appropriate time to personalize their folders (e.g., illustrating positive ways to resolve conflicts, etc.). Have students illustrate or add the PROS logos to their folders. This can be done at a follow-up meeting.

As students arrive for training, make immediate contact and attempt to connect. Greet them in a way they can relate with in body language, facial expressions, gestures, and tone of voice. Trainers should serve as facilitators and nurturers, not bosses. Set a tone by modeling and reflecting the skills mediators need to learn and apply.
An acronym such as **C.A.R.E.** can be a helpful guide, and one to emphasize in the listening skills activities:

**Care**, Concern and Clarification. Demonstrate care and concern for the persons and process. Be ready to read verbal and nonverbal responses, and clarify any necessary message.

**Acknowledge** and Affirm responses and relationships. Acknowledge each individual's comments and concerns. Analyze situations and make appropriate adjustments when necessary.

**Restate**, Revise and Review messages. As often as necessary, restate or paraphrase an individual's response, check for acknowledgment of accuracy of the restatement, and if necessary, make revisions in the summary or restatement and review for accuracy, acknowledgment and affirmation.

**Encourage**, Engage, Empathize, Evaluate and when necessary, Explain. Use appropriate body language, facial expression, gestures and tone of voice to encourage individual participation. Engage everyone in the process and practice. Show empathy by role reversal (i.e., imagine yourself in the other person’s place, and be able to identify how you might respond and feel). Acknowledge feelings. Evaluate situations, suggestions and solutions (i.e., is this working, or will this solution work). Explain or encourage brainstorming responses, to help explain certain actions (i.e., why it is better for the parties in a conflict to reach agreeable solutions instead of mediators solving the conflict for them).

Check yourself – Do you C.A.R.E? The trainer should encourage students to list as many positive adjectives for each key letter. For example, what “C” skills or qualities would a mediator need? Add to this list as students’ suggest.
Promoting Partnerships and Teamwork*

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

The trainer should set an example by trying to learn everyone’s name as soon as possible. The trainer should inform the student that they will be working with different partners in mediation sessions. As reinforcement, have them brainstorm why they need to know one another. The trainer might show an illustration of a typical mediation/conflict management situation (e.g., two conflict managers talking to students with a conflict on the playing field or lunch room, or two mediators sitting at a table with students who are having a conflict).

In order to help students become better acquainted, the trainer and/or support staff can conduct some get acquainted activities:

- For example, have students paired with someone they do not know well and conduct a mini-interview – ask name and seek one or two other items of information to share (e.g., ask each partner to share something special about himself or herself or describe how he or she got his or her name – “My name is Joshua Jones. My family and friends call me Josh or J.J. I like sports, and I am a superstar in basketball.” Jim Halligan of The Community Board Program in San Francisco does a variation of this activity that may better reinforce remembering names. He suggests that the interviewer ask the partner’s name and to tell the interviewer something special about his or her name (e.g., how did you get your name? Do you know how or why you got your name? Etc.).

- Each partner should be prepared to introduce his or her partner, e.g. stand up and say, “This is my partner Josh, he likes sports, and he says he is a star basketball player.”

- The trainer can then do a quick listening reinforcement activity – “Josh is that what you told your partner?” Get an acknowledgment and affirmation, and then ask, “Was your partner a good listener?” This reinforces some of the listening skills you will work on later in the training.
Then Josh would do the same with his partner – introduction, check for affirmation and accuracy, give acknowledgment (e.g., applause). If time permits, allow students to try to name as many students and staff as possible. By the end of training, everyone should be acquainted by name and comfortable with being paired with any other team member.

**Mediator Skills**

The best way to show potential peer mediators the appropriate skills needed to master the mediation process is to allow them to watch a mediation demonstration. Have two members of the Core Team or Advisory Team set up a demonstration so that the future peer mediators can watch. This could utilize students from other schools that have mediation programs or trainers from other mediation programs. If the above is not available, use a videotape of past mediations. In lieu of trained mediation staff, use selected students that have been prepped on how to carry out the role play. Write the following list on the board or overhead. Have the members of the Core Team model many of the items in the list and ask students to keep in mind these items as they watch the mock mediation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical arrangement of mediation area.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Body language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Facial expressions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Gestures, especially use of hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tone of voice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Verbal and nonverbal messages.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hand out the “Mediation Report Form – Page 97” to all students and explain that the peer mediators will be filling these out as they conduct the mediation.
Begin the mediation. It should not exceed fifteen minutes. Following the mediation, have students brainstorm what peer mediator skills and qualities that they either saw in the mock mediation or that they believed a peer mediator needed to be a successful mediator. List these on the board. Responses often include:

– Arranging the area so everyone felt comfortable and safe – parties were far enough apart to help avoid close contact.

– Paying attention – sat up, leaned forward, made eye contact.

– Nodded and let parties know they were listening.

– Calm voices.

– Not bossy – patient.

– Faces expressed concern but did not show sides or shock.

– Gestures encouraged parties to talk.

– Gestures were non-threatening, especially when mediators reminded parties not to interrupt and to follow rules.

– Asked appropriate questions without taking sides.

– Checked for understanding.

– Good listeners – able to summarize each side and identify party’s feelings.
– Let parties find solutions without telling them what to do.

– Caring and ready for follow up.

Review any responses involving listening skills, and ask students what listening skills mediators need. Students often identify:

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>– Eye contact.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>– Paying attention – avoiding distractions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Repeating or summarizing what has been said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Check the summary for accuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Ask questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Encouraging body language and looks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If students do not volunteer responses, call attention to your modeling – talk with a student, and ask others to identify some of your listening behaviors. This usually stimulates the above responses.
Listen with Your Heart – Identifying Facts and Feelings *

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict”
  by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

Choose a partner and have the partner role play one of the parties in the sample conflicts (Page 50) or have a student make up a conflict. The student role playing should explain in detail his or her side of the conflict. The listener should do the following:

– Listen for the main idea. Ask questions to be sure you understand how the person feels.

– Summarize or paraphrase what the person’s view of the conflict is. Make sure the person acknowledges that you have clearly understood the conflict from his or her point of view. Ask questions like: “Are you saying . . .?” “Do you mean . . .?” “I think you are saying . . .”

– Identify the person’s feelings as a result of hearing his or her side of the conflict. Ask questions like: “I hear you saying . . . happened and you feel . . .” Again, make sure you have accurately identified the person’s feelings.
Sample Conflict

Summary of Conflict:

Joseph, who uses a wheel chair due to paralysis, claims that Samuel has been making fun of him, especially saying things about Joseph being in a wheelchair.

Background Information:

Joseph’s role:

You say Samuel is constantly making fun of you. You claim that Samuel yells mean things like “here comes the wimp on wheels,” and also saying that no one is ever going to want to be your real friend. You also said that Samuel has been telling other students that the only reason anyone hangs around with you is because some students feel sorry for you. You admit that some of your friends have threatened to jump on Samuel if he does not stop making fun of you.

Samuel’s role:

You admit that you had been joking with Joseph, but you claim that Joseph has been making fun of you, especially saying that you are “super dumb.” Besides, you say all of the students joke and play around, kind of exchanging funny put-downs, and if Joseph wants to be treated like all of the other students, he needs to learn to take a joke. Also, you claim that Joseph should fight his own battles, and not send other students to threaten to jump on you.
**Note:** In role playing, students may use their own names and think of themselves and act as the persons in the conflict, or they may make up a name and personality to fit Joseph or Samuel (whoever they decide to play). It is important to play the role, not just read the part. To assist students in role play preparation, do the following:

– Ask for a volunteer to read the background for Student #1 in a conflict — thank the student.

– Ask for a volunteer to act like Student #1, and describe the conflict from Student #1’s point of view, using likely facial expressions, body language, gestures, and tone of voice.

– Follow the same procedure for Student #2.

– Make sure everyone understands how to role play because each will soon be playing one of the students in the sample conflicts.
Active Listening **

** Based on or adapted from Resolving Conflict Through Mediation, developed by Aetna Life and Casualty Company 1993, used with permission of Aetna Co.

(Adapted from Ongoing Training Activities for School Mediators, Our Town Family Center, Tucson, Arizona).

Procedure:

1. Explain that in mediation, the mediator uses active listening to help the disputants clearly explain the problem and understand each other’s point of view. Active listening involves:
   – Listening for the main idea;
   – Asking questions to be sure that you understand what the speaker means and how the speaker feels, or
   – Restating what you think you heard so that the speaker can clarify his/her message.

2. Examples of clarifying questions and restatements are:
   – So you feel . . .
   – Are you saying . . .
   – Do you mean . . .
   – I think you are saying . . .

3. Select a student who is verbal and creative – someone who can think on his/her feet – to help demonstrate active listening through a role play. Have the student silently read the Michelle and Krista role play. Tell the student to carefully consider the facts presented in the background section (e.g., disputants are good friends, sweater is soiled but may not really be ruined) when responding to the active listening questions.
4. Explain to the class that (name of student) will help you (the mediator) demonstrate active listening. Then, read the background section of the Michelle and Krista role play to the class:

- Michelle and Krista are good friends. Michelle received an expensive new sweater from her mother as a birthday gift. Krista borrowed the sweater from Michelle to wear to a picnic. When Krista returned the sweater to Michelle, it was soiled. Michelle is very upset.

5. Have the student read Michelle’s part to the class (with feeling).

- Michelle: “My mother is going to kill me when she sees this sweater. It’s ruined. Krista’s a pig – she doesn’t care about anything. I let her borrow my sweater and now look at it. I’ll never speak to her again.”

6. Clarify how Michelle is feeling through active listening (“Michelle” should respond to your questions/statements):

- What I hear you saying is that you are mad at Krista for not taking care of your sweater. (A possible response might be: “Yes, I am furious at her.”)

- Are you saying that you expected more from a friend? (A possible response might be: “Of course, I did her a favor, and look at how she re-pays me.”)

- You said your mother would kill you. Do you mean that your mother will be so angry she might punish you very badly? (A possible response might be: “I’m not really sure what my mother will do, but I know she paid a lot for that sweater, and she will probably be mad.”)

- You feel that your sweater is ruined? That nothing can be done to clean or repair it? (A possible response might be: “It looks pretty bad, but maybe it can be cleaned.”)
7. After you have finished the role play, ask the class to describe the possible effects of active listening in this situation. For example, provides an opportunity for Michelle to vent her anger; diffuses the situation – Michelle acknowledges that her mother will probably be angry but will not “kill” her. Sets the stage for exploring possible solutions – maybe the sweater can be cleaned.

8. Distribute blank sheets of paper to the class. Explain that they will read two conflict situations (see below: John & Tim and Carol & Marie). For each one, the class will “listen actively” and write on the worksheet two or three questions/statements that a mediator might use to restate or clarify what the disputant is saying and feeling.

9. After you have read each conflict scenario, allow a few minutes for the class to record their questions/statements, then discuss some of the questions/statements and the effects they might have on the disputant.

– **John and Tim Conflict**: John wears his watch to school every day but usually keeps it in his desk or gym locker during physical education class. Several hours after his last gym class, he could not find his watch in either place. A few days later, he noticed that Tim was wearing a watch “exactly like” his. He accused Tim of stealing it. Tim denied stealing the watch and now, John is complaining to his friends. John says, “Tim is a no good liar and a thief. He stole my watch, and now he is flaunting it. I’ll get him for this.”

– **Carol and Marie Conflict** *(Adapted from SPARC Role Play Packet, Community Dispute Resolution Center, Ithaca, NY)*: Carol and Marie are in the same art class. Carol has worked long and hard on a clay sculpture. Marie picked it up, without asking, to look at it. Marie dropped the sculpture and it broke into several pieces. Carol starts shouting in class “Look at what she did! I told people not to touch it. I’m going to find something of hers and smash it. We’ll see how she likes it when her work gets destroyed.”
Twenty Questions – Open Questions *

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.

The trainer may wish to use a fun activity that has been used by Terry Wheeler of the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution. The activity is a variation on the “Twenty Questions” game. The trainer informs the students that he or she is thinking about a particular person or place, and the students may ask ten or twenty questions (the trainer should decide how many questions depending on time and the rapidity of responses). Before they start to ask questions, the trainer should explain one catch – students must ask questions that require a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response. Here is an example:

- **Trainer:** “I’m thinking of a famous singer.”
- **Student:** “What type of singer, hip/hop or what?”
- **Trainer:** “Sorry, you must rephrase the question so I might answer ‘yes’ or ‘no.’”
- **Student:** “Is the singer a hip/hop star?”
- **Trainer:** “No.”

At the conclusion of the ten or twenty “yes/no” type questions, students will want to know what person or place the trainer had in mind. The trainer should reveal the answer, and then ask, “How could you have found out the answer faster–what type of question(s) might have helped you?” Students will probably suggest open-ended questions, like “What is the name of the singer you are thinking about?” or “What kind of music does the singer perform?” Students should be encouraged to ask open-ended and appropriate questions during mediation.
Open Questions**

** Based on or adapted from Resolving Conflict
Through Mediation, developed by Aetna Life and Casualty Company 1993, used with permission of Aenta Co.

(Adapted from Ongoing Training Activities for School Mediators, Our Town Family Center, Tucson, Arizona).

1. Explain to the class that a mediator uses open, rather than closed; questions to uncover the complete story when helping disputants solve problems. Open-ended questions are important; because they help the disputants get all of their thoughts and feelings out. The disputants cannot solve the problem unless they do this.

2. Explain:

   – Open questions are non-judgmental (they do not place blame, accuse, or suggest that the mediator favors one side over the other) and allow the person to respond in many ways. For example, “Can you explain how you got that cassette?”

   – Close questions allow for only short or one-word answers (especially yes or no) and can be judgmental or place blame. For example, “Did you steal his cassette?” or “Why did you steal that cassette?”

3. Write the following six questions on the board or flip chart. Ask the class to read the questions and label each one open or closed. Each closed question should then be rewritten as an open question. (Examples of how the closed questions can be rewritten as open questions are provided in parentheses):

   a. How did you feel when you discovered your bike missing? (open)

   b. Did you break his radio? (How did the radio get broken? What happened to the radio?)
c. Why can’t you just help your brother with his chores? *(How do you feel about helping your brother with his chores?)*

d. Are you sure you never called him a liar? *(What did you say about him when you were talking to your friends?)*

e. Why don’t you like her? *(Can you tell me how you feel about her?)*

f. Can you tell me more about that? *(open)*

4. Go over each question with the class and discuss the open questions rewritten as alternatives to the closed questions.
Pair Questioning**

** Based on or adapted from Resolving Conflict Through Mediation, developed by Aetna Life and Casualty Company 1993, used with permission of Aetna Co.

As an additional activity, have students select a partner, or the trainer may assign pairs, to play the role of a mediator and role of a person in a conflict. Have one partner review one of the sample conflicts (see this lesson, previous lessons, or Appendix) and role play. The partner playing the role of a mediator should practice asking effective questions. The trainer should encourage students to study and check the “Mediator’s CARE section to help ask clarifying questions, encouraging questions, and non-judgmental questions. Other than restating, questions that use terms like “right/wrong” or “good/bad” will probably be inappropriate. Mediators may focus on consequences in questioning, but not make judgments. For example, a student threatens or declares that he or she is going to beat up the other student in a conflict. The mediator needs to avoid judgment questions (e.g., “Don’t you know fighting is wrong?”). Instead ask, “What might happen if you get into a fight?”
Sample Conflict

Summary:

Robyn accuses Rachel of talking behind her back and spreading rumors. Rachel denies spreading rumors and threatens to jump on Robyn if she doesn't stop accusing her of spreading rumors.

Background Information:

Robyn’s Role:

You were told by one of your friends that Rachel had been saying that you like this particular person and according to your friend Rachel has been telling everyone that this person couldn’t stand you. You told your friend that you were going to jump on Rachel if she didn't shut her big mouth. You know that Rachel has heard about your threat through other students.

Rachel's Role:

You heard that Robyn was threatening to jump on you. You claim you did not spread any rumor about Robyn, although you did say that this particular person that Robyn likes could not stand her. You told your friends to be ready to jump on Robyn if she threatens you anymore.
One partner should role play Robyn or Rachel, and the mediator partner practices asking appropriate questions. The trainer may wish to model appropriate and inappropriate questions. For example, have a student role play Robyn. The comments and questioning might go like this:

– Mediator: Robyn, would you please tell your side of the story?

– Robyn: One of my friends told me Rachel had been running her mouth about me liking a particular boy, and she has been telling everyone that he cannot stand me . . .

– Mediator: (Respectfully asks permission to interrupt to ask a question)

Trainer as mediator might ask two questions and ask all students to identify which question is more appropriate:

a. “Excuse me, Robyn, why are you accusing Rachel of spreading rumors when you do not know what you are talking about?”

   or,

b. “Excuse me, Robyn, let me make sure I understand, did you say you heard Rachel saying these things, or did you say a friend told you Rachel had said some things about you and this boy?”

After students choose the latter as more appropriate, ask them why. The trainer might even ask for other examples of effective questions.

Now have students get with partners and practice asking appropriate questions. Support staff should monitor the paired questioning role play and where necessary, help facilitate the questioning.
Comparing “You” and “I” Statements

To reinforce the importance of modeling effective “I” messages, the trainer can have students compare and contrast the various responses to “I” and “You” statements.

Distribute sample conflict scenarios. Have students read a conflict. The trainer and/or support staff can role play this conflict using “You” and “I” messages. The confrontation and conflict might be stated as follows:

– **Student #1:** “You do that again and I will break your face!” *(Using likely body language, facial expression, gestures, and angry tone).*

– **Student #2:** “You better get that finger out of my face or I will break it off!” *(Responding to the above message with likely body language, facial expression, gestures, and angry tone).*

Have students debrief:

– What messages did student #1 send to #2?
– What messages did student #2 send to #1?

Now, replay the confrontation and role play using “I” messages. The role play might go as follows:

– **Student #1:** “I felt embarrassed and angry when you intentionally tripped me because I could get hurt and look bad.”

– **Student #2:** “I felt hurt and mad when you accused me of tripping you and when you threatened me because I did not want to get into a fight over an accident.”
Ask students to compare and contrast the “You” and “I” messages. Ask if they observed any differences in body language, facial expression, gestures, and tone of voice.

### “You” Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blame</th>
<th>Criticize</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threaten</td>
<td>Accuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause</td>
<td>Escalate conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defensiveness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stress, tension, and anger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### “I” Messages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify how you feel</th>
<th>Explain without accusing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are less likely to escalate conflict</td>
<td>Do not threaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seem more open</td>
<td>Convey honest emotions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indicate on the chalkboard or flip chart the formula for effective “I” messages:

- I feel . . . (express your feelings/emotions)
- When you . . . (describe the behavior that triggered the feeling)
- Because . . . (describe the consequences to you)
Activity: “I” Statements

(Adapted from Conflict Management Training Guide, Concerned Teens, Inc., Houston, Texas)

1. Review the definition of mediation and the role of the mediator in conflict resolution. Explain to the class that as a first step in learning to use mediation as a way of resolving conflict, they will learn more about the special communication skills that the mediator and the disputants use to resolve the problem.

2. Explain that during conflict situations (fights, arguments) we hear many “you” statements. For example: “You never listen” “You are a crook.” Ask for a few other examples.

3. Discuss the following:
   - How do “you” statements make the other person feel?
   - How does the other person respond?
   - What effects do “you” statements have on the conflict?

4. Summarize the discussion: “You” statements cause the listener to feel blamed or judged. They cause the listener to defend him or herself, withdraw (clam up), or fight back instead of trying to solve the problem. They can make the problem worse.

5. Explain that in mediation we use “I” statements instead of “you” statements. “I” statements let the other person know how you feel, why you feel that way, and what you want. For example, instead of saying to a boy who owes you money, “you’re a crook,” you could say, “I get mad when I loan someone money, and he doesn’t pay it back.”
My mom wants to know what I do with my money, and I get into trouble if I can’t explain.” Ask the class what type of response the “I” statement might have.

6. Explain that “I” statements are used in mediation because they help to get the disputants talking and set the stage for problem solving.

7. Distribute the “I Statement Worksheet” and do the first problem with the class using the following model:

   - “I” ______________________
     (Express feelings/emotions)
   
   - when ______________________
     (describe behavior that triggered the feeling)
   
   – because ____________________
     (describe the consequences to you)

Have the class complete the worksheet and then discuss various “I” statements they wrote.

8. Comment that “I” statements should be used any time you seriously want to resolve a conflict, but are especially useful in certain situations. Ask the class to identify situations in which “I” statements might be especially useful. Possible situations include:

   – When you do not want to hurt someone’s feelings but need to let him/her know that his/her behavior is bothering you or creating a problem for you.

   – When the conflict involves someone who is older or in a position of authority, such as a parent or teacher.
I Heard That! Are You A Good Listener?

Have a face-to-face conversation with someone (your choice and challenge). Using your listening skills, please answer the following questions once you have completed the conversation:

Please check the appropriate box.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If asked, could you summarize or highlight important information and points about the conversation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you make eye contact with the person during the conversation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you ignore distractions (for example, T.V., radio, other conversations or noise) and clearly hear what the person said?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did you concentrate and pay attention to what the speaker was saying; did your body language indicate that you were paying attention?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Did you maintain your concentration, or did you think about other things, like what you might be doing later, daydreaming, etc.?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Did you ask any questions during the conversation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Did you repeat or rephrase what the speaker said to make sure you understood?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Were you able to identify any of the speaker's feelings about the conversation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

My Super “A, B, C” Suggestions – Write down three things you do that makes you a good listener:

A. ________________________________________________________________
B. ________________________________________________________________
C. ________________________________________________________________
Body Language

Review the "You" message role play. Ask students to identify the body language and emotions. If necessary, replay the role play:

- **Student #1**: “You do that again and I will break your face!” *(Using likely body language, facial expression, gestures, and angry tone).*

- **Student #2**: “You better get that finger out of my face or I will break it off!” *(Responding to the above message with likely body language, facial expression, gestures, and angry tone).*

Debrief the role play asking the following:

- What messages did Student #1 send with:
  - body language?
  - facial expression?
  - gestures?
  - tone of voice?

  Emphasize identifying emotions (e.g., anger) and behaviors (e.g., aggressiveness). Follow the same debriefing with Student #2.
Explain that the mediators are going to have situations with parties expressing anger. Ask students to describe what signs of anger for which they should look. Responses might include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands on hips</th>
<th>Clinched fists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threatening &amp; waving finger</td>
<td>Bobbing of head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In your face</td>
<td>Big eyes/mean eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy breathing</td>
<td>Trembling body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid heartbeat</td>
<td>Pumping adrenaline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Revved&quot; up</td>
<td>Clenched teeth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mediators will need to recognize behaviors (verbal and nonverbal) that trigger anger, assess and analyze the level of anger, and take appropriate action.

Have students brainstorm responses to the following: “Identify triggers (verbal and nonverbal) that incite or escalate anger.” Record responses on board or flip chart. Explain that triggers are like hot buttons – a certain word, phrase, or gesture sets off anger and may escalate to an explosion. Our short fuse is lit and we're ready to explode. Responses will probably include:

- Certain types of name calling
- Bossy phrases (“You should .”)
- Accusatory phrases
- Labeling
- Insults
- In your face
- Cornering someone
- Pointing and shaking your finger
- Shaking your fist
- Putting down a significant other (“Your mama. .”)
Ask students to consider what action(s) they might take as mediators if they recognize parties triggering anger during the mediation session (e.g., “What should mediators do if someone’s hot button gets pressed during mediation and the party is ready to explode?”) Responses might include:

- Do a time-out and separate parties in a calm manner, asking each party to take a walk with a mediator.

- Ask parties if they want to have a cooling off time, postpone current mediation session, and calmly escort students to class or counselor’s office.

- Ask parties to count to ten.

- Do deep breathing exercises.

- Ask parties to express their feelings with “I” messages.

If mediators assess or sense too much anger, they may need to seek immediate assistance from support staff.

Ask students to brainstorm responses to the following question: What kind of body language do mediators need to use during mediation time and what kind of body language should they not use? Typical responses are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Not Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct eye contact</td>
<td>Looking away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open stance</td>
<td>Arms/legs crossed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nodding yes</td>
<td>Daydreaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaning forward in chair</td>
<td>Leaning back in chair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaking hands</td>
<td>Shuffling through papers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non-Verbal Communication

(Adapted from Project Response, Rockville, Maryland, and Conflict Management Training Guide, Concerned Teens, Inc., Houston, Texas)

1. Introduce the concept of body language through a demonstration that sends the class a “mixed message.” For example, storm into the room, slam a book down on your desk, stand with your arms crossed, frown, stamp your foot, and say, “Today will be a great day; we will do some really interesting and fun things today.” Then ask the class how they felt about the words you were saying. Did they believe them? Were they comfortable with them? Why not? How else were you communicating? Which was more believable?

2. Discuss the concept of body language with the class and that we all communicate on two levels; in verbal and nonverbal ways. Feelings are often communicated through body language.

3. Write the following ten words on the board: Angry, Sad, Guilty, Snobby, Hurt, Irritated, Bored, Excited, Worried, Scared. Ask for a volunteer. Have the volunteer demonstrate, through body language, one of the feelings written on the board and have the class try to identify which feeling is being demonstrated.

4. Continue with a short discussion on how nonverbal communication can be more powerful than verbal communication. Explain that sometimes a person says one thing, “Oh no, I'm not hurt,” or, “That doesn’t bother me,” and his/her body is telling his/her real feelings through misty eyes, looking away or down, shuffling walk, etc. Ask if anyone can recall any time they experienced this and discuss why people sometimes use body language to show their real feelings.
5. Explain that body language can show attitude as well as emotion. Ask the class if they can identify or demonstrate the positive kinds of body language that would help when trying to solve problems through mediation (nodding, maintaining eye contact, etc.), and the negative kinds of body language that would interfere with problem solving (turning away, drumming fingers, rolling eyes, etc.).

6. Explain that the mediator and participants in mediation need to be aware of and use positive body language.

**Hidden Agendas**

1. Write the term “hidden agenda” on the board and ask if anyone has heard of the term or knows what it means. Explain that in a conflict situation, a hidden agenda can be something that is bothering a person that he/she does not feel comfortable talking about. Hidden agendas can affect behavior. Explain that the mediator uses certain types of open questions to bring out hidden agendas. If the hidden agenda does not come out, it will be very difficult to resolve the conflict or reach a true or lasting solution.

2. Select two students to role play Bill and Jim. Give each his part, then read the background section of the Jim and Bill role play to the class:

**Background Information:**

This morning before he left for school, Jim’s mother yelled at him, for the third time this week, for not completing some household chores. Jim feels that he is doing more than his share, compared to his brother and sister. He is tired of his mother’s nagging and is feeling very “touchy.” Bill, Jim’s long-time friend, kidded with him when he got on the bus. He punched him softly on the arm and said, “How ya doing, Dude?” (or some other common nickname). Jim shoved Bill, and the two started to fight.
3. Conduct the role play:

   – Jim: “Bill is a real pain. He called me a name and I’m sick of it. Why doesn’t he just leave me alone?”

   – Bill: “I don’t understand that’s going on with Jim. We’re friends, we always tease each other and call each other names. Now he’s jumping down my throat.”

4. Have the class identify the hidden agenda by discussing the following:

   – How did Jim describe the problem?
   – Was that the only problem?
   – What else was bothering Jim?
   – Why didn’t Jim want to talk about this?
   – Is the real problem between Bill and Jim?

5. Ask the class if they can think of any examples of hidden agendas from their own experiences.

6. Ask the class if they can think of any questions that a mediator might ask to bring out the hidden agenda. Examples include:

   – Is something else bothering you?
   – Is something else going on?
   – Is there something else you would like to talk about?
   – You look like you have something more to say.
   – Is there anything you would like to add?

7. Review the concept of common ground, and ask the class if they can identify any shared needs in the Jim and Bill conflict.
Common Ground

1. Write the term “common ground” on the board and ask if anyone has heard of the term or knows what it means. Explain that in many conflict situations (especially those involving individuals who have an ongoing relationship) there is often something that the disputants can agree upon or something that they both want, a shared need. We call this area of agreement or this shared need “common ground.” The mediator must listen carefully to identify common ground and use it as a basis for helping the disputants reach a solution to the problem.

2. Distribute “Common Ground Worksheet” to each student. Explain that the area where the two circles overlap represents common ground. Read each of the following scenarios to the class, and ask them if they can identify any common ground and briefly describe it on the worksheet. Then, discuss the common ground identified by the class and how a mediator might use that common ground to help the disputants resolve the dispute.

Scenario One: Mike and Pete

Mike and Pete have lived in the same neighborhood for several years, but have never gotten along very well. They are often rivals, especially when involved in neighborhood activities requiring athletic ability, such as street hockey or skate boarding. They frequently get into fights trying to “show each other up.” Now they are both on the school’s soccer team. They find it difficult to work together and constantly argue during the course of team play. The coach has threatened to kick them both off the team.
If the class has difficulty identifying common ground, assist by asking the following questions:

- What things are important to both Mike and Pete? (e.g., reputation as a good athlete, staying on the team)

- What might happen if they cannot control their bickering while playing on the team?

- How important do you think it is for each of them to stay on the team?

- Could a mediator use “staying on the team” as a basis for helping them resolve the conflict?

Scenario Two: Sandy and Karen

Sandy and Karen are twin sisters. It is Saturday night, and both are planning to go to the movies with a group of mutual friends. Sandy must get the dishes washed before she can go out. Karen wants to wash her hair, and the sisters are arguing over who will use the sink. Sandy says, “If I don’t get these dishes washed right away, I’ll be late.” Karen responds, “But, I must get my hair washed quickly; I don’t have time to take a shower. I think Ted will be there and I want to look good.”

Again, if the class has difficulty identifying common ground, assist by asking the following questions:

- What does each girl want?

- Does each girl want the same thing?

- What type of relationship do you think Sandy and Karen have? (Even though they may be arguing now, they probably have a good relationship; they are twins and they share the same friends.)
– Is it important for them to maintain a good relationship? Why?

– How could a mediator use the fact that they are sisters, with the same group of friends, to help them find a solution to this conflict?

**Common Ground**

Pass out the handout: “I heard that! Are you a good listener?” Have students pair up with someone and have a face-to-face conversation using their listening skills. You might want to have some distractions such as conversation going on in the room, T.V., radio, etc., to help students learn to ignore distractions.

Have students answer the questions on the worksheet when finished. Encourage students to be honest in their answers, explaining that the goal is to become the best mediator that they can become.
Wrapping It Up

At this point, your PROS team is well on its way to maturing. Continual training should be utilized to continue developing the mediators. There are a number of places that this could be held. The best is to set up PROS meetings. This could be held at lunch, during a break or activity period, or before and after school.

Meetings should be set up at least monthly, but better weekly or bi-weekly. More training should be held. (See follow-up activities section in this manual). Get the PTA or PTO involved with these meetings and especially involve the Advisory Team and outside resource people.

All students have agreed to work hard, be professional, and hold mediation sessions in confidentiality. Now tell students that they are getting ready to take the last step in being a mediator. Be very formal and serious now. Tell students that this is one of the most important parts of the training and that they must complete this to become a PROS mediator.

– Write the following affirmation on the board, flip chart or on a handout and show the mediators:

I, (say your name) promise to uphold the ideals of being a peer mediator. I will act in a professional manner and be an example to other mediators. I will remain neutral in all mediations. I will follow the principles of CARE which demonstrate care and concern for others. I will try my hardest to be a model for other students. I will show others respect. Through mediation I will try to make my school the best it can be. Finally, and most importantly, I will hold all mediations in confidence, not divulging information to any peer.

– Discuss the statement with students and the importance of following it completely.

– Then the trainer should have students repeat the affirmation after him/her. Speak solemnly and slowly, breaking each sentence down into short phrases so that each student can not only follow along, but can understand each sentence completely.
– Now hand out certificates to each student. Suggest that they frame these and hang them in their homes. Another possibility is that they could be displayed in the office for all to see.

– Tell students that they are now full-fledged mediators. Tell them that the work will now begin and that they will be part of a program that will help their school be a better one.
SECTION 7

Role Plays
Additional Conflicts for Role Play *

The following conflicts are based on actual conflicts that have been mediated in Missouri schools. The true names have been removed and the parties in each conflict have been given names that are gender neutral. Due to the attempt to remain neutral, there will be many “he/she” and “his/her” terms in the reading making reading a little more difficult. The trainer should reserve some time to practice role playing.

While most of the following conflicts involve two students, some may be adapted to multi–party mediations. Also, emphasize that the background information is not testimony; it is a framework or skeleton, and the role players will give life to each part. Role players may improvise and embellish. The mediators should not read the background information.

As noted, the conflicts have been real and therefore the role-playing and actual mediations may identify larger issues of concern (e.g., prejudice, racism, sexism, struggles over power, injustice, inequalities, etc.). In many schools mediators and support staff have used these types of conflicts as an opportunity to address each issue with extensive educational plans, including small and large group activities. The following is a list of role plays:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We lost – it’s your fault</th>
<th>Lunch line tangle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We’ll get you</td>
<td>The recess problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t mess with that</td>
<td>You embarrassed me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You owe me</td>
<td>I’m leaving home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rules are Rules – Community based mediation scenario working with young adults in workplace settings.

* Based on or adapted from “School-Base Conflict” Management Manual – September 1992 Working Draft, by Steve Jenkins, used with permission of author.
We Lost – It’s Your Fault

Summary of Conflict:

Jerry is very upset because Chris publicly accused Jerry of losing a very important game. Chris claims that he or she is just telling the truth.

Background Information:

Jerry’s Role:

I admit that I missed an important goal in the game we played at school and, as I’ve said, I feel bad about what happened. But, after returning to class following the game, Chris started telling everyone that we lost the game because of me. And, yes, I was ready to fight him because he embarrassed me in front of everyone.

Chris’s Role:

Jerry’s had been bugging me for sometime, you know, making fun of the way I play the game. I probably did say something to Jerry about losing the game, but I did not intend to start a fight over the game.
We’ll Get You

Summary of Conflict:

Jerry is a member of a minority group at the school. Jerry claims that Chris and some of the other students who hang out with Chris have been making fun of Jerry and threatening him.

Background Information:

Jerry's Role:

I am a member of a minority group; I come from a different background and dress differently than a lot of the other kids at school, and I am proud of my background. But Chris and his friends have been making fun of me because I'm different and have even threatened me. Chris told me I should leave school and the neighborhood. And, he insulted my family. So, I told Chris and his friends that they don't scare me because I can protect myself, and he better had better stop messing with me.

Chris’s Role:

Jerry is irritating to the rest of us because he acts like he’s special or more important than everyone else just because he’s from a different group. I said if he could not learn to fit in and get along with others, he should just leave. He said he was going to get his family to tell school authorities that we were picking on him; and, he threatened to jump me. So, I guess I'm treating Jerry just like he’s been treating me.
Don’t Mess With That

Summary of Conflict:

Jerry accuses Chris of invading Jerry’s privacy, or space. Jerry claims that Chris was in his/her desk and messing with his/her stuff. Chris denies the accusation.

Background Information:

Jerry's Role:

I sit near Chris in class. I left my desk and when I returned, I found that some things on top and in the desk were messed with or missing. I saw Chris around my desk, so I am sure it was him messing with my stuff. Other kids also know that Chris is a “sneaky thief” who plays too much.

Chris’s Role:

It made me mad that Jerry accused me of messing with his desk in front of others. I didn’t do it, and I didn’t take anything from him. He is always accusing me of doing things and I’ve had enough. I’m really tired of being accused and then having to answer to the teacher. I think Jerry is very selfish; he never wants to loan or share anything.
You Owe Me

Summary of Conflict:
Mary loans Krissy an expensive piece of jewelry to wear for the day. Mary claims that Krissy did not return the jewelry, and that she could not locate Krissy at the end of the day. Mary could not reach Krissy although she tried to contact her at home to ask about the jewelry.

Background Information:

Mary's Role:
Krissy and I have been friends for a while, so when she asked if she could borrow some jewelry, I said O.K. I told her I wanted it back by the end of the day, and when I couldn't find her, I panicked. Then, I told some other friends about her taking my jewelry.

Krissy's Role:
Mary accused me of taking her jewelry in front of other kids and I didn't like it all. I didn't take the jewelry. Mary accuses me a lot of doing things and I'm tired of it, especially when I have to answer to the teacher. I think Mary is selfish and never wants to loan or share anything.
Lunch Line Tangle

Summary of Conflict:

Jerry and Chris were involved in a conflict in the school cafeteria. The conflict broke out over alleged cutting in the lunch line. Jerry claims Chris butted in line and called Jerry names. Chris says a friend saved a place in line and he/she defended him/herself when Jerry came after him/her.

Background Information:

Jerry’s Role:

We were standing in line for the cafeteria, and Chris started pushing people and ended up cutting in line. I told him I was going to tell the teacher, and he started calling me names! When I started after him, he knocked me down. So, really, Chris started the whole thing and I don’t think I should be punished.

Chris’s Role:

O.K., Jerry and I ended up fighting. But, my friend was holding a place in line for me and when I got in line, Jerry went crazy. And, he’d been bugging me all day, giving me mean looks. So, I guess I told a few people that Jerry’s crazy. I was just defending myself when he got in my face. Then, Jerry said he was going to get his big brother to come after me.
You Embarrassed Me

Summary of Conflict:

Jerry claims that his or her teacher embarrassed him in front of the other students. The teacher claims that he/she was trying to teach him a lesson.

Background Information:

Jerry’s Role:

I was at my teacher’s desk complaining about my grade. Then he/she yelled at me, saying I would not have received a bad grade if I had paid attention in class and if I would have done the work. And the class got real quiet when he/she started yelling at me. I was so embarrassed; I think the teacher owes me an apology.

Teacher’s Role:

I was at my desk and Jerry interrupted me complaining about a grade he’d received. I asked him to wait till after class to discuss it so there would be no further disruption of the lesson, but he continued to make a scene. Yes, I was frustrated and angry with his outburst, and reminded him that it was due to his poor performance that got him the grade. I will not tolerate outbursts / interruptions in class from him or anyone, and I want to make sure this does not happen again.
Tiffany Triangle Role Play

Summary of Conflict:
Mike and David used to be good friends. They see each other everyday at basketball practice, and they live in the same neighborhood. Mike had been going with a girl, Tiffany, for a short time. But, Tiffany recently broke up with Mike and starting going out with David.

Background Information:

Mike’s Role:
I really like Tiffany but we had a fight. Then I heard that David was bragging about taking Tiffany away from me, so I decided I needed to get back at him. I was really mad.

David’s Role:
I went out with Tiffany just once, and it was more her idea than mine; I’m not even sure I want to go out with her anymore. Mike and I are friends but I couldn’t back down from fighting him. And now, we both might be thrown off the basketball team. I really wish Mike and I had talked before we fought.
Class Clown Role Play

Summary of Conflict:

Mrs. Grant teaches a large English class with many difficult and unruly students. One boy, Charlie, in particular, seems to over-socialize with his classmates. During one very discouraging day, Mrs. Grant loudly reprimanded Charlie in front of his friends. Charles was embarrassed, shouted back and left her class saying he would never return.

Background Information:

Mr. Grant's Role:

My English class is really large, too many students for any effective teaching and is easily disrupted, especially when a kid like Charlie is in your class. And the class pretty much follows his lead. He's a bright kid but likes to show off, make smart remarks, you know, kind of the class clown. So, I have to enforce the rules, whether in front of the class or one-on-one, to ensure any kind of discipline.

Charlie's Role:

I wish Mrs. Grant had not yelled at me in front of the class; I was just being funny. And no matter what I do, she gives me a bad grade. (Charlie is insecure because he is short compared to the other students and being funny makes up for that. He does want good grades but right now would rather be popular).
Missing Math Assignment Role Play
(Adapted from SPARC Role Play Packet, Community Dispute Resolution Center, Ithaca, NY)

Summary of Conflict:
Susan and Jane are students in math class. They were arguing in class and were sent to detention by the math teacher. Although they used to be friends, now they will not speak to one another.

Background Information:

Susan’s Role:

I was sharpening my pencil and saw Jane at my desk. When I got back to me desk, my math assignment was missing and I think Jane took it, you know, turned it in as her own assignment. And I got an ‘F’ for turning in my assignment. I just don't think I can be friends with her anymore.

Jane’s Role:

I can't believe Susan thought I stole her assignment. I thought we were friends and she’s really hurt my feelings. I was at her desk because I accidentally knocked a book off her desk and I was putting it back.
Honor Student Role Play

Summary of Conflict:
Lisa’s mother is a doctor and her father is a lawyer. They are both very concerned with Lisa’s grades and believe that anything less than an honors grade is not acceptable. Lisa just failed her most recent English test. She is arguing with her father because now he will not allow her to watch television or use the phone during the week.

Background Information:

Father’s Role:

I believe that hard work is the key to success, academic or work–related. I know Lisa can earn straight ‘As’, but she must work at it and apply herself. I just want the very best for her and she must start now thinking about what it takes to get into a good university.

Lisa’s Role:

I’ve only been in this new school for a little while, and it takes time to get adjusted and make new friends. I know that grades are important, and I also know that I’ve probably let me parents down. But, I’m so worried about fitting in that I can’t concentrate on my studies. I guess that I am a little more concerned about getting in with the popular crowd than studying.
Tina Likes Joe Role Play
(Adapted from SPARC Role Play Packet, Community Dispute Resolution Center, Ithaca NY)

Summary of Conflict:

Tina and Meg, who are close friends, are now yelling in the locker room. They are arguing over that Meg said about Tina liking Joe.

Background Information:

Tina says:

“I don’t ever want to talk to you again. I thought we were friends and that I could trust you. I told you I like Joe, and you went and told everyone. I can’t believe I ever liked you.”

Lisa says:

“I didn’t tell everyone. I just told Joe’s friend Rick because I thought it would help you if Joe knew. That’s the last time I ever try to help you.”
“She Said” Role Play

Summary of Conflict:

Tiffany and Jackie have been best friends since the first grade. They recently entered Middle School and now their friendship is “off and on.” Sometimes, they eat lunch together almost every day and talk for hours at night on the telephone. But, other times they don’t see talk to one another for days. They seem to be getting caught up with new friends and new activities. Tiffany and Jackie are now arguing because Carrie, another girl they occasionally eat lunch with, told Jackie that Tiffany said that Jackie was a selfish snob, who would only be your friend if she thought she could get something from you.

Background Information:

Jackie says:

“I hear from Carrie that you’re spreading rumors about me all over school. Well, you know, I can spread lies, too."

Tiffany says:

“I don’t know what you’re talking about. Why would I spread rumors about you? Really, what is with you?”
Additional Conflicts for Role Play

The following conflicts have been suggested for mock mediations by trained student mediators who have conducted mediation sessions over these conflicts.

1. Two students are arguing over a yellow pencil that both students say is theirs.

2. Kids are playing basketball when one person trips someone. The person who was tripped wants to hit the other kid.

3. Two students are arguing about who will pick first for the kickball game.

4. Two students are arguing about whose team will kick first in the kickball game.

5. One student is taking French fries from another without asking.

6. One student knocks another student’s books out of her/his arms and runs away laughing. The student, who has to pick his/her books, yells that he/she will get the other student back.

7. An upper grade level student bumps into a lower grade level student and says, “Where are you going, you little shrimp!” The lower grade level student says he is not afraid of the upper level student.

8. Some boys keep pinching and teasing a group of girls, and the girls are saying they are not going to take this type of treatment anymore.

9. A male mediator tried to boss female mediators, giving them the Mediation Report Form and telling them what to do – “You write, I’ll do the talking.” Some of the female mediators are ready to tell him off.

10. One mediator often complains to the mediation team coordinator that his partners are messing up in mediation – not following the steps, telling parties how to solve conflicts, and not really listening. Some of his partners have heard that he is putting them down behind their backs.
Additional Conflicts for Role Play **

The following role play scenarios can be used for practice or follow–up training by mediators:

1. Hanging Out
2. Tiffany Triangle
3. Class Clown
4. Missing Math Assignment
5. Honor Student
6. Tina Likes Joe
7. “She Said”

** Based on or adapted from *Resolving Conflict Through Mediation*, developed by Aetna Life and Casualty Company 1993, used with permission of Aetna . . . Co.
SECTION 8
Forms
# Application to be a Peer Mediator

**Name**  _________________________________________  **Grade Level**  ________________

**Class Schedule:**

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<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Fourth</th>
<th>Fifth</th>
<th>Sixth</th>
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<tr>
<td>Room #</td>
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<td>Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
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</table>

What personal qualities do you have that will help you be a peer mediator

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Describe the program the way you understand it.

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

Why do you want to become a peer mediator?

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

What do you think you can give to the program?

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

What do you expect to gain from being part of the program?

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

What school activities do you participate in?

_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________________________

If selected to be a trained as a peer mediator; I agree to attend all training sessions. I further agree to make up all class work missed due to this activity (if any).

**Signature:**  ___________________________  **Date:**  _______________________
Sample Letter to Parent

Dear Parent or Guardian:

It is our pleasure to announce that your child has been recommended and selected for training and work as a peer mediator in the PROS Program (Peaceful Resolutions for Oklahoma Students). Peer mediators are students who, with adult guidance, mediate disputes between students. Your child was selected because of outstanding leadership skills and is known to be reliable, fair, a good communicator, and a leader in the school.

Conflicts are a part of daily life in schools as they are in life. The most common conflicts in school are rumors, name-calling, arguments, and put-downs. This program has been set up so that two (2) student mediators sit down with two students having a dispute and help them solve their conflict. They do not take sides and keep all information confidential. They act as third parties to the conflict and lead the mediation. The disputants will set face to face and talk until each side of the dispute is heard. After the problem has been determined, solutions are developed and evaluated. When an agreement is reached, it is put on an agreement form and signed by all parties.

Your child will participate in _____ hours of training to develop the skills necessary to be a mediator. After training, your child will occasionally be called to the mediation room to help other students resolve conflicts. Your child will learn listening and speaking skills. He/she will learn about different kinds of conflict and how to deal with them effectively. He/she will learn problem solving skills. In addition, your child will provide a valuable service to the school and to the community and will learn skills that will prove important for the rest of his/her life.

If you support your child’s desire to become a peer mediator, please sign below and have your child return it by ______________________________ (date).

I give my permission for ______________________________ to become a peer mediator and to participate in the training sessions.

_________________________________ _______________ __________________
Parent/Guardian Signature     Date

Address ______________________________________________________________________
City   ________________________________________  Zip ____________________
Telephone  _____________________________________
Peer Mediation Request

Names of Students in Conflict:
__________________________________________  Grade  ______
__________________________________________  Grade  ______

Where did the conflict occur:  (check one)
___ Bus  ____ Classroom  ____ Hallway  ____ Cafeteria  ____ Outdoors
___ Other  (specify)

Briefly describe the conflict:
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Mediation Requested by:  (check one)
___ Student  ___ Teacher  ___ Counselor  ___ Administrator
___ Other  (specify)

Signature of person requesting mediation  Date:
________________________________________________________________________
Mediation Report Form

1. **Introductions**
   - Hi! We will be your peer mediators today. We understand there is a conflict here and you both want to solve it. Is that true?
   - Please introduce yourself:
     - Party #1: ___________________ Party #2: ___________________

2. **Welcome**
   - Mediators are listeners and helpers.
   - This is not a court.
   - We are not here to decide who is guilty or innocent. We will not take sides.
   - We are here to help you solve the problem, but you are to find your own solutions.
   - Everything will be keep between us (confidential) except drugs, weapons, child abuse, crimes or suicide. Do you both agree to keep everything between us?

3. **Rules of Mediation**
   We must follow the rules of mediation or mediation will have to end and we will let someone else (like the principal) deal with the conflict (ask both sides to agree with each of the following):

   - We must show respect and have no name-calling or put-downs.
   - No interrupting each other.
   - We remain seated the whole time.
   - We all agree to try to find a solution to this conflict.
   - While showing respect, we will still be honest.

4. **Explain the basic steps of mediation**
   - Each person will get the opportunity to tell his or her side of the story.
   - We will make sure everyone understand each side and how each person feels.
   - Each person will suggest solutions to the conflict.
   - We will try to find a solution upon which you both agree.
   - We will write down the solution and have everyone sign an agreement form.
   - Someone will follow up to make sure that the solution is working.
   - Ask if there are any questions.

5. **Ask who would like to tell their story first.** If no one volunteers, ask one to start:
   - Listen closely to what the first person says and ask the second person to help you listen. Restate and rephrase what was said to make sure you totally understand.
   - Listen closely to what the second person says and ask the first person to help you listen. Restate and rephrase what was said to make sure you totally understand.

Situation: ______________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
7. **Ask students how they feel about the situation they have described.** If possible, rephrase what each person said to get the other person to “put themselves in the other person’s position.”

8. **Ask students what would be possible solutions to this conflict.** Write down all solutions, even if you do not agree with them; do not give solutions.

Possible Solutions:

9. **Finding solutions**
   - Look together over the solutions that are listed.
   - Find ones with which both can agree.
   - Discuss how realistic the solutions are; for example, never looking at each other is probably not realistic.
   - Have both students agree on a solution.
   - Write up an agreement in the students’ own words
   - Have everyone sign the Agreement Form.

10. **Type of Conflict:**
    
    - Personal Property
    - Verbal Argument
    - Boyfriend/Girlfriend
    - Harassment
    - Intrusion of Space
    - Physical Fighting
    - Game Rules
    - Put–down
    - Money
    - Threat
    - Rumor
    - Other

11. **Resolution/Agreement (use the back if necessary):**

    Student #1: ___________________________  Student #2: ___________________________

    ___________________________________________________
    ___________________________________________________
    ___________________________________________________
    ___________________________________________________

10. **Final step**
    - Explain how the follow up will be done.
    - Congratulate both sides for agreeing to mediate and thank them for their hard work in finding a solution. Emphasize that you believe the solution will work.
    - End mediation positively; for example, mediators shake hands with everyone, smile, etc.
    - Give complete form to program coordinator.

    ___________________________________________________
    Student Signature/Date  Student Signature/Date

    ___________________________________________________
    Mediator Signature/Date  Mediator Signature/Date
Mediation Practice
(Speaking parts are in BOLD print)

I. Introductory

A. Shake hands with everyone either before or while you are saying: **Hi! We will be your peer mediators today.**

B. **We understand that there is a conflict here and you both want to solve it. Is that true?** Wait for an answer; if they say no, then tell them that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problems and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

C. First mediator says: **My name is _________________________.**
   Second mediator says: **My name is _______________________.**

II. Welcome

A. Mediators are listeners and helpers.

B. This is not a court.

C. We are not here to decide who is guilty or innocent. We will not take sides.

D. We are not here to help you solve the problem, but you will find your own solutions to the conflict.

E. Everything said here will be kept in this room and between us except for drugs, weapons, child abuse, crimes, or suicide. Do you both agree to keep everything between us? If they do not agree, again tell them that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

III. Rules of Mediation

A. When going over the rules of mediation always say each line to each person and make sure that they agree to it before you explain the next rule. For example, pretend that Sam and Joe have a conflict. Read the first rule to Sam and wait for him to agree to it. When he does, then turn to Joe and ask him if he agrees to it. Wait for him to agree to it before you read the second rule to Sam.
B. **We must all follow the rules of mediation or mediation will have to end and we will let an adult like the principal deal with the conflict.** Let me explain the rules to everyone.

C. **First, we must show respect and have no name-calling or put-downs.** Turn to the first person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them. Then, turn to the second person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Again, wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

D. **Second, we must agree not to interrupt each other when talking.** Turn to the first person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them. Then, turn to the second person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Again, wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

E. **Third, we agree to remain seated the whole time.** Turn to the first person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them. Then, turn to the second person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Again, wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

F. **Fourth, we must all agree to try to find a solution to this conflict.** Turn to the first person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try
to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them. Then, turn to the second person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Again, wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

G. **Last, while we have agreed to show respect with no put-downs or name-calling, we must both agree to be as honest as we possibly can.** Turn to the first person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them. Then, turn to the second person and say: **Do you agree to this?** Again, wait for an answer. If the student does not agree, again tell him/her that we cannot have mediation unless everyone agrees to try to solve the problem and an adult will have to solve the problem for them.

IV. **Identification**

**Will each of you state your names?** Again, say hello to each person when they give their name.

V. **Explain the basic steps of mediation**

A. **First, each person will get the chance to tell his or her side of the story.**

B. **We will make sure that everyone understands each side of the story and also how everyone feels about things.**

C. **Then we are going to ask each person to come up with some solutions that are O.K. with them.**

D. **Then, we will all try to find a solution with which everyone can agree.**

E. **We will then write down the solution on a Mediation Form and have everyone sign it.**

F. **Then, someone will follow up with you to make sure the solution is working.**

G. **Do both of you understand the steps?** Wait for both to agree.
VI. Each side now tells their side of the story

A. So, who would like to tell their story first? If one person really wants to go first, you probably should let them. If no one volunteers, ask someone to start.
B. Listen closely to what the first person says and write down what he or she says on the Mediation Report Form.
C. Restate and rephrase what was said to make sure you totally understand.
D. Listen closely to what the second person says and write down what he or she says on the Mediation Report Form.
E. Restate and rephrase what was said to make sure you totally understand.

VII. Students will now try to “put him/herself in the other person’s position”

Rephrase what each person said to the other person to “put him/her self in their position.”

VIII. Finding solutions

A. What would be some possible solutions to this conflict? Write down all solutions, even if you do not agree with them.
B. Do not give solutions. Sometimes you might have to sit quietly and wait a long time. This will make you nervous, but wait as long as you can to speak. It is better for them to speak first.
C. If they are having problems coming up with solutions, go over the conflict again and emphasize what the causes were. For example, if the cause was name-calling, you might say something like, “What caused the problem was name-calling. Now that we know this, how could we solve the conflict?”
IX. Agreeing on a solution
   A. Look over the solutions together. Read them if you want. Ask: Which solution can you both agree on? If they won’t agree, then ask each person if they would agree to the other person’s solution.
   B. When you find one or more with which both agree, then discuss how realistic the solution really is. For example, if they both agree never to look at each other again and they are in the same class, then this is not a realistic solution.
   C. When both students agree on a realistic solution, write the agreement on the Mediation Report Form in the students’ own words.
   D. Read the solution out loud and then ask: Do you both agree to this solution? Wait for them to answer yes and when they do say: Great, I would like to ask each of you to sign this contract saying that you will follow this solution. We will also sign it as witnesses. Have everyone sign the Mediation Report Form in the appropriate places.

X. Final step
   A. Explain how follow up will be done. Tell them that someone will be checking with them soon to find out if this solution is working.
   B. Say: I want to congratulate both of you for agreeing to mediate and also for your hard work in finding a solution. I am really excited about your solution. I know this is going to work because both of you have agreed to make it work. The other mediator should agree with this.
   C. If possible, shake everyone’s hand. Usually, the two with the conflict will also shake, but this is not required.
   D. Finish filling out the Mediation Report Form and turn it into the coordinator.
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