CENTENNIAL ELEMENTARY
peer mediation
Let’s chat!
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SECTION 1

What is Conflict?

Conflict is a disagreement between two or more people. Conflicts can end up three different ways:

1. LOSE / LOSE: nobody is happy with the outcome
2. WIN / LOSE: only one side is happy with the outcome
3. WIN / WIN: everybody feels good about the outcome

Conflict is a chance for two or more people who are involved in a conflict to communicate about the situation, share how they see the situations, understand each other, and see if they can form an agreement to help solve the conflict at hand so that both people are happy with the outcome.

Brainstorm other words for conflict:
SECTION 1: CONTINUED

What is Conflict?

Conflict Management Styles

People handle conflict in different ways. The way a person handles conflict depends on who the conflict is with and the importance of the situation. Here are some management styles:

Avoidance
Avoiders are too chicken to confront the problem. They pretend the disagreement didn’t happen or they deny/hide their feelings.

Persuasion
Like bulldogs, persuaders use power, authority, and physical force to get what they want.

Accommodation
Sheep follow their leaders, accommodating people. They give up or give in even if they are unhappy with the outcome.

Compromise
The fox. These people are foxy (sneaky). They give up something to get something they want more.

Communication and Collaboration
These people listen to one another. They respect other feelings, take responsibility for their actions, agree to work it out, and work together to find a solution to the problem.

Ways to Collaborate

• Apologize: say “I am sorry”
• Share and Take Turns: decide who will go first, make sure turns are equal
• Mediate: ask a peer mediator who is trained to help you solve the conflict
SECTION 2

What is Mediation?

Mediation: Mediation is the process in which an uninvolved third party (Mediator) helps resolve disputes between two or more people (Disputants). However, unlike a sporting event, there is no winner or loser. Mediation is completely voluntary and no one is forced to attend.

Mediator: The Mediator is the uninvolved third party who is trained to listen without taking sides and helps the Disputants think about how they will resolve their situation. Once both parties have come to an agreement, the Mediator will write down their decisions and promises on an agreement form and have everyone involved sign the agreement.

Disputants: Disputants are the parties (people) involved in the dispute.

Co-Mediation: Co-Mediation is when two or more Mediators work together as a team to help resolve a dispute.

How does a conflict reach mediation?

Student conflicts and disputes are referred to mediation for any of the following:

- Disputants can ask for mediation
- A friend or classmate can suggest mediation
- An adult or teacher can suggest mediation

Who are the Mediators?

At Centennial Elementary, students are the Mediators who have been trained by Teacher Mentors. The Mediators are trained to:

- Listen without making judgments
- Ask questions without placing blame
- Brainstorm without giving advice
- Help Disputants find solutions without telling them what to do
- Respect privacy at all time by not telling others what they have heard
SECTION 2: CONTINUED

What is Mediation?

The Four Step Mediation Process

- Set the Stage
- Tell Stories and Gather Information
- Options: Brainstorm and Select
- Put Agreement in Writing

Don’t worry, you will learn more about the four steps to mediation throughout this handbook!
SECTION 3

Setting the Stage

Body Language is a way to communicating. People express their feelings and attitudes with tone of voice, facial expressions, gestures and posture. For example, you see a disputant rolling her eyes, sitting sideways in her chair with her arms folded and her legs crossed. How do you think the disputant is feeling? What is her attitude?

What about a disputant who maintains eye contact with you and the other disputant, leans forward in her chair and nods her head?

Mixed Messages

Sometimes people’s body language and words don’t match. For example, a disputant could say, “I’m not upset” and at the same time be perspiring and nervously tapping a pencil. Do you think people’s words or actions tell you more about how they feel?

Mediator Neutrality

Mediator’s body language also demonstrates how they feel and their attitudes. An important skill for mediators to develop is remaining NEUTRAL. Other words sometimes used to express neutrality are OBJECTIVE and IMPARTIAL. Remaining neutral means mediators must not take sides with one disputant. The disputants must trust the mediators and their ability to help them. They must also believe that the mediators are not judging them or blaming them.

Mediators demonstrate their neutrality by using words and phrases that are nonjudgmental and do not place blame. Mediators also show they are neutral by their body language.

For example, how would a disputant feel if they saw the mediator giggling and whispering with the other disputant?

Mediators should also try to look professional and confident in their role as a peer mediator. For example, how do you think a disputant would feel if the mediator sat bent over the table, constantly shuffling papers and not looking at either disputant?
SECTION 3: CONTINUED

Setting the Stage

Preparing for Co-Mediation

Two mediators usually work together. Because they share the responsibilities equally, they are called “Co-mediators.” In some cases, a new mediator may be assigned to mediate with an experienced mediator. The experienced mediator may be asked to be a “lead” mediator and may help the new mediator.

When two students co-mediate, they should spend a few minutes together to plan how they will share responsibility. For example, one mediator might make the opening statement, while the other mediator might write the agreement.

Co-Mediation Tasks

1. Meet before the session at the bulletin board to get a clip board, several Intake Forms, pencil and a vest. Determine what duties each mediator will perform.

2. Decide on a signal you can give each other in case either of you wants to take a break.

3. Meet after the session to debrief (talk about any cases you did together – you may often have to handle cases individually if there are more than one dispute going on at one time).

Advantages of Co-Mediation

- It can be fun and you can see each other’s mediator style.
- If you get stuck or make a mistake, your co-mediator can jump in to help you.
- Planning together can be more productive than working alone. (Two heads are better than one!)
SECTION 3: CONTINUED

Setting the Stage

Co-Mediation Cautions

- Don’t interrupt each other; model courtesy and cooperation.
- If your co-mediator needs help, be polite; don’t make fun of each other.
- Don’t whisper to one another while the disputants are present.

Confidentiality

Mediation is CONFIDENTIAL. Mediators learn to respect the privacy of the disputants and promise not to tell anyone what they heard during mediation. Why is protecting the disputants’ privacy important?

The mediator must not talk about their mediations with anyone except their co-mediator and the mediation supervisor who monitors the mediation session.

The disputants DO NOT have to keep the contents of the mediation session a secret. They can talk about what happened to whomever they choose. If the disputants want to keep the mediation a secret, that promise can be part of the written agreement.

All mediation notes are destroyed after the mediation session. The only forms that are kept are the intake/agreement form. The mediation files are filed in a locked cabinet and the mediation supervisors are the only ones with access to them.
Telling Stories

Uninterrupted Time

Each disputant will have time to speak without being interrupted. During the UNINTERRUPTED TIME the disputants are asked to share their understanding of the situation. During the Opening Statement, the mediators ask the disputants not to interrupt one another. Each disputant speaks in turn with everyone else listening. It is important that the mediators also follow this ground rule. If someone interrupts, the mediator must remind the parties about the “no interrupting” ground rule.

Listening

While each disputant is speaking, the mediators should listen carefully. Developing good listening skills takes practice. One way to develop active listening skills is to avoid things that get in the way of hearing what is being said.

Blocks to Listening

“Blocks to Listening” are behaviors that might keep you from hearing what people are saying to you.

- **Interrupting**: Just as the other party is instructed not to interrupt, neither should the mediators. Avoid the temptation to interrupt, give advice or talk about your own feelings or experiences.

- **Rehearsing**: The pressure of knowing that you will be paraphrasing when the speaker finishes may interfere with your listening. Avoid preparing what you are going to say when the speaker finishes. Concentrate on what the disputant is saying.

- **Second Guessing**: Sometimes after mediating several situations involving rumors, you might think you’ve heard the same story over and over. Or a disputant may tell you about something with which you are already familiar. Avoid jumping in before the speaker has finished because you think you’ve figured out what the disputant is going to say.

- **Day Dreaming**: Are you day dreaming right now? Even if the disputant is boring or long-winded, try not to let your mind wander.
SECTION 4: CONTINUED

Telling Stories

- **Filtering:** While the disputant is speaking, try not to pick up only certain information. Even though some information may not seem important to you, it may surface later as something that the disputant really cares about.

- **Mind Reading:** Unless you bring a crystal ball, leave the mind reading to fortune tellers. Don’t assume; find out. If you are confused about something the person says, the other party could be, too. When the person is finished speaking, ask questions to be sure you understand.

- **Judging:** Judging the talker (e.g., stupid, geek, brain, bully) can interfere with the disputant’s perception of your neutrality. Avoid the urge to label the disputant.

Active Listening Tips

Mediators should learn the following skills to be a good listener:

- **Acknowledge:** If a disputant is having trouble talking about the situation, the mediator can encourage the disputant to say more by saying things like “Go on.” or “And then?” or “Oh.” This will let the disputant know you are listening.

- **Notice Repetition:** When people keep repeating things, it could mean that they are stuck or that the information being restated is very important to them.

- **Body Language:** Listen with your whole body. Show that you are listening. Use your eyes for eye contact. Use your face to give expressions. Use your head to nod and acknowledge that you are paying attention. And use the rest of your body in the way you sit.

- **Touching:** Mediators should not touch disputants except to shake hands at the end of the mediation. Why is touching not a good idea? Because (1) the disputant may not appreciate it; and (2) the other disputant may perceive the action as taking sides. What other body language could be misinterpreted by the disputants?
Summarizing

After each disputant finishes making a statement, the mediators summarize what was said. SUMMARIZING means to restate the facts and reflect the feelings expressed by the disputants. This is also called PARAPHRASING.

Mediators summarize for two main reasons:

- To focus on the important issues; and
- To show the disputants that you are listening for both facts and feelings

Here are some tips to help you develop good summarizing skills.

- Use your own words
- Don’t be too wordy; highlight the main points without repeating every word
- Don’t evaluate
- Don’t give advice
- Don’t talk about your personal experiences
- Don’t be judgmental
- Don’t take sides
- Don’t blame

Active Listening Starters

- So what I hear you saying is...
- Sounds like...
- You’re concerned about...
- As I understand it, you mean...
SECTION 4: CONTINUED

Telling Stories

Gathering Information

After the disputants finish telling their stories, the mediators may need more information. Here are some questions you might ask:

- What do you mean by that?
- How long have you two known each other?
- Can you tell me more about that?
- How long has this been going on?
- How do you feel about that?
- How do you think [the other person] feels about that?

Use Mediator Language

Mediators should ask questions using neutral language because the disputants should not think that the mediator is judging who is right and who is wrong.

- Don’t ask questions that might make matters worse just because you’re curious to find out what really happened. For example, what might happen if you asked Mark “Did you really steal Bob’s lunch money?” Can you think of a better question to ask?
- Don’t ask questions that place blame or assign guilt. For example, what would Juan think if you asked him “Why were you mean to Karen?” Can you think of a better question to ask Juan?
- Don’t ask judgmental questions. For example, what would Lisa think if you asked her, “Don’t you think you should apologize to Mary?” Can you think of a different question you might ask?
Telling Stories

List the Issues

After the information is gathered, the mediators should:

1. List the issues.
2. Ask the disputants if they think the list is okay.
3. Help the disputants decide which issue to discuss first.
SECTION 5

Options and Collaboration

Brainstorming Solutions

Now it is time for the disputants to develop possible solutions to their conflict.

- Ask the disputants how they think the conflict should be resolved
- Listen to each and every idea- NO CRITICIZING!
- Don’t be afraid to get creative!
- Make suggestions if they get stuck

Evaluating Options

Once they have brainstormed several ideas, they must choose one to agree on. There are several things you should consider:

- Is this realistic?
- Is this desirable for both disputants?
- Is this balanced?
- Do you need permission to do this?
- What will happen if…?
- Walk in other’s shoes:
- How would you feel?

Collaboration = WORKING TOGETHER!

After agreeing upon a solution, it is time to key to look ahead! Have the disputants think about:

- What happens after mediation?
- What will be done differently?
- Keeping an open mind
SECTION 6

Putting the Agreement into Writing

Writing the Agreement

The agreement is the written record of the decisions made by the disputants and should be:

• Specific: The 5 W’s and the how
• Realistic: Only promises that can be kept
• Balanced: Both disputants should contribute

Remember to write neatly and be sure to never include anyone who is not present. Always avoid blaming words.

Everyone present should sign the agreement.

Closing Statement

This sets the tone for what happens after the mediation session and should include:

• A Recap: briefly review what was discussed and decided
• Confidentiality: remind them that the issue will not be discussed with other students
• Encouragement: Congratulate them for their hard work and commitment to finding a solution

If you do not come to an agreement, thank the disputants for choosing peer mediation and making an effort to resolve conflict. Be sure to complete any paperwork and send the disputants back to the lunch aids.
SECTION 7

Roleplay

Scenario 1: The Broken Chain

The Situation

Kev and Tina are friends. They always sit at the same lunch table. Yesterday, Tina bought a gold chain for her mother. She came to lunch frantic because the necklace was missing from her backpack. After a while Kev admitted he took it as a joke. He tossed it on the table and when Tina grabbed it, a piece of the latch fell off. Tina got really mad, and demanded money on the spot, but Kev said, “It was an accident!” The lunchroom aide broke up the argument and refereed Kev and Tina to mediation.

The Roles

Disputant 1: Kev

It was an accident and really not your fault. You don’t have enough money to pay for it right now. You want to stay friends. It isn’t true that you did it because you are jealous. But you do think Tina has been acting a bit strange lately.

Disputant 2: Tina

You saved up fro the gift for a month! Your Mom’s birthday is in 2 days. Kev should pay you back now. Kev is jealous that you have a best friend and Kev doesn’t. You want to stay friends.

NOTES
SECTION 7: CONTINUED

Roleplay

Scenario 2: The Geek

The Situation

Jacky has been calling Jo names: geek, punk, dork, dweeb, etc. Jacky has a lot of friends but Jo doesn’t seem to have many. This morning, Jo punched Jacky’s arm and knocked Jacky’s books all over the hallway. One of Jacky’s friends who was helping to pick up the books and papers suggested they tell the teachers that they would talk it out in mediation so that they wouldn’t get into more trouble.

The Roles

**Disputant 1: Jo**

You are mostly good in school and you think that’s why kids are mean to you. But you are tired of it. Your sister tells you to just ignore the name calling, and you try, but it is getting embarrassing. You didn’t mean to hit Jacky so hard but you aren’t sorry that you did.

**Disputant 2: Jacky**

You don’t understand what’s the big deal. Everybody gets called names once in a while. Your friends often make fun of Jo, but you don’t want to admit it. You are embarrassed to be at this mediation. Its not just that Jo is smart that bugs you, but, that Jo acts like everyone else is stupid and Jo seems like a snob.

NOTES
SECTION 7: CONTINUED

Roleplay

Scenario 3: The Locker

The Situation

Martin and T.J. have shared a locker since last year. Yesterday, Martin accused T.J. of treating the locker like a trash can and of playing with his stuff. A big argument started. The case was referred to mediation by the gym teacher who was walking down the hall and saw the two arguing.

The Roles

Disputant 1: Martin

You and T.J. play the same sports, and sharing a locker was ok at first. Recently, the locker has gotten dirty and smelly. T.J. is a slob. You talked to T.J. about it once, but nothing has changed. Yesterday, some of your stuff was out of place and you yelled at T.J. There was an argument in homeroom and the teacher got upset with both of you.

Disputant 2: T.J.

Martin is a perfectionist so there are some problems with locker sharing. You admit you can be a little messy, but Martin forgets that lockers can get a little gross. Your real problem is space; Martin uses more than his share. Yesterday you had to move around some of Martin’s stuff just to get to your stuff in the locker or you’d be late for class. In the hallway, Martin started yelling and you yelled back. The gym teacher interrupted the argument.

NOTES
SECTION 7: CONTINUED

Roleplay

Scenario 4: He Said, She Said

The Situation

Kyle Jones and Tanesha Johnson are in the same homeroom. They go to different classes during the day and take the same bus home. They are not friends, but know each other because their last names are close together in the alphabet. Kyle and Tanesha were each playing different games in the schoolyard during lunch recess.

Tyrie is a friend both Kyle and Tanesha. During lunch he thought he overheard Kyle talking about Tanesha and how she falls asleep during class. Tyrie told Janice who told Tanesha that Kyle is talking about her. Tanesha went over to the group that Kyle was playing with and started talking loudly to Kyle. Several other people stopped playing their games because they thought a fight might happen.

You know both Kyle and Tanesha and saw the rumors being spread around the schoolyard. You think that peer mediation would help the situation.

The Roles

Disputant 1: Kyle

You are playing wall ball with your friends in the schoolyard. The next thing you know is that some girl from your homeroom is coming toward you talking loud. You decide to ignore her.

Disputant 2: Tanesha

The boys in your homeroom have been getting on your nerves ever since you got your hair cut. You heard from Janice that Kyle is making fun of you. You decide to let him know you don’t appreciate being talked about.

NOTES
SECTION 8

Discussion Leads to 212

Discussion Questions

Which situations are appropriate for peer mediation?

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. 

10. 

Which situations are **NOT** appropriate for peer mediation?

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

6. 

7. 

8. 

9. 

10.
SECTION 8: CONTINUED

Discussion Leads to 212

Scheduling Mediation

1. How will mediation be scheduled if it cannot take place on the spot?

All mediations should be able to take place on the spot. If you happen to already be in a mediation and another one is needed, finish with the mediation that you are doing at that moment and tell the others to wait patiently. If it is an issue that must be addressed immediately, refer them to the person on duty. If they can wait, just finish up and move on to the next one when you are ready.

2. What happens if the whistle blows and the mediation is not yet finished?

If you are in the middle of mediation when the whistle blows, take a second to evaluate where you are in the process. If you are almost done (2 minutes or less left) then go ahead and wrap things up. If there is more time needed just write down on the intake form exactly what was talked about and where you left off. For mediations that are not completed, please make sure to note it on the top of the intake form so that your mentor will know that they need to do a follow up with the disputants.

Peer Mediators are Role Models

1. What happens if a peer mediator is involved in a fight?

Being a part of this program is a privilege. You were selected based on your outstanding example and willingness to help everyone ACT212. If you as a peer mediator are in a fight, it is ground for automatic dismissal from the peer mediation program.

2. What will happen if a peer mediator breaks confidentiality?

Confidentiality is the most important part of this process. Students will not utilize this program if they feel that their business is not safe and could get spread. Talking about any dispute or disputant with anyone but the mentors is in direct violation of our confidentiality agreement. Please be aware that this is means for automatic dismissal from the peer mediation program. You as a peer mediator are being trusted by your peers with personal information. Please do not abuse that privilege or find it necessary to make it any one else’s business.
SECTION 9

Mentors and Resources

Mentors

Terri Schilling ................................................................. Room 226
Brittani Johnson ............................................................. Room 128
Amanda Craghead .......................................................... Room 225
Erika Pfaff ................................................................. Room 203

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<th>Terri Schilling</th>
<th>Brittani Johnson</th>
<th>Amanda Craghead</th>
<th>Erika Pfaff</th>
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<td>Makenzie Highley</td>
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SECTION 9: CONTINUED

Mentors and Resources

Bulletin Board and Supplies

The Centennial Elementary Peer Mediation bulletin board can be found in the 5th grade hallway and the following resources can be found:

- Callendar / Schedule
- Blank Intake Forms

Additionally the following resources and supplies can be found in Terri Schillings classroom (Room 226):

- Clipboards
- Vests
- Drop box for intake forms