



Middle and High School Guidelines

2008 Peer Mediation Invitational and Peace Festival

Middle and High School Invitational

Tuesday, March 18, 2008

8:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals & WJCF Headquarters

125 and 55 South Grand Avenue

(Parking in courthouse lot)

Sponsored by the Western Justice Center Foundation (WJCF) and held at WJCF's historic campus and at the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Judicial Circuit, Pasadena

In partnership with

Asian Pacific American Dispute Resolution Center, Centinela Youth Services, Los Angeles County Bar Association Dispute Resolution Services

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Guidelines for Preparing Middle and High School Students

Thank you for participating in the Peer Mediators' Middle and High School Invitational. The students attending the Invitational have been invited to participate either because they are mediators on their own campuses and this is a way of recognizing their unique contributions to their campuses, or because they are interested in learning more about peer mediation and they want the opportunity for hands on learning experience in this non violent method of conflict resolution training.

To ensure that students are well-prepared for the Peer Mediation Invitational and get the most educational benefit from the day, we have compiled this information for school coordinators and trainers. Included are:

- The goals for the program;
- The schedule for the invitational;
- The feedback form the coaches will use so that students can know in advance what the coaches will be looking for;
- A sample mediator's note sheet; and
- A sample mediation scenario.

GOALS

During the Invitational, students will participate in age-appropriate demonstration sessions where they will take on the role of disputing parties as well as the role of mediator, managing each stage of the mediation from welcoming the parties to writing the agreement. Students will have the opportunity to:

- demonstrate their strengths as peer mediators; if the students have not had any experience as a peer mediator, they will be taught the concept and steps of a mediation, before role playing in a practice mediation.
- receive feedback and coaching from attorneys, judges, professional mediators and peers;
- receive recognition for their skills and contributions to their campuses;

STEPS FOR PREPARING STUDENTS

To prepare the students we suggest that you:

- review the schedule so they are familiar with the activities and time frames of the Invitational;
- review the goals so they know why they are attending;
- discuss the Feedback Form so they understand what the coaches will be reviewing;
- review the mediator's note sheet so they know that they can take notes during the mediation;
- review and practice the mediation skills they will demonstrate if already peer mediators;
- review typical cases they may face at their grade levels and in their schools.

THE MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL INVITATIONAL SCHEDULE

8:00 AM	Children's Registration and Breakfast (WJCF, 55 S. Grand Avenue)
9:30	Welcoming Remarks, Hon. Dorothy W. Nelson (Courthouse, 125 S. Grand Ave., Courtroom One)
10:00	Groups go to their rooms to begin mediations
10:10	Mediation Sessions (concurrent in both Courthouse & WJCF)
12:15 PM	Guest Speaker
12:45	Lunch (WJCF)
1:30	Closing Session with Najeeba Syeed-Miller (WJCF)
2:00	Students Return to Schools

THE MEDIATION SCHEDULE

Time	Activity
10:10am	Arrive at and settle down in room, review mediation procedure and read scenario.
10:15am	Begin first mediation (45 min.)
11:00am	Begin feedback for first mediation (10 min.)
11:10am	Participants switch roles, familiarize with second mediation (5 min.)
11:15am	Begin second mediation (45 min.)
11:55am	Begin feedback for second mediation. (10 min.)
12:05pm	Awards ceremony (conducted by coach) (5 min.)
12:15pm	Break for lunch. Lunch will be served at WJCF

Students from each school will be paired with another student from their own school. Each pair will be teamed up with another pair from a different school. These two pairs will complete a group of four (two mediators with two disputants). One or two adult coaches will also be assigned to that group. After each mediation, coaches will provide feedback.

Students who do not have a peer mediation program at their school will be paired in groups together. The coach will take time at the beginning of the session to explain peer mediation, why it is important, and the steps each peer mediator goes through when conducting a mediation. After this explanation, students will follow the above mediation schedule.

After introductions, the coaches will read the first scenario for that day to the whole group. Then they will talk privately to each of the two disputants and tell them their respective “underlying issue” of the disagreement. The mediators will demonstrate their skills by identifying those issue through careful questions and listening skills.

The Invitational scenarios were not distributed in advance so that students’ flexibility and creativity would not be inhibited by practice sessions. However, a sample scenario is included for review with the students.

The coaches will use the Feedback Form (sample enclosed) to make notes on how well the students handle the scenario and then lead a short discussion providing feedback and asking the other students for feedback as well.

After the first scenario has been debriefed, the coaches will ask the teams to reverse roles and introduce a different scenario. After the second scenario has been completed and students have received feedback, the groups will go to lunch. Lunch will be followed by time for students to participate in arts and crafts themed in peace and end with an awards ceremony where students and schools will receive certificates from WJCF.

RULES FOR BEHAVIOR IN THE COURTHOUSE

It is very important that students act respectfully in the Courthouse and speak softly while inside the building. The Courthouse has formal security systems in place, so students should be prepared to go through the metal detectors at the front door. Students may not bring food or beverages into the Courthouse, and taking pictures or videotaping the sessions is prohibited, as are audio recordings. Signs will be posted reminding everyone of these rules. Please be sure your students know what is expected in advance.

THE FEEDBACK FORM

To organize the feedback from coaches so it is easier to absorb, mediations have been divided into five stages:

- Setting the Stage: Introductions and Ground Rules;
- Defining the Problem;
- Identifying the Issues;
- Finding Solutions; and
- Closing.

Each stage has five or six specific skills associated with that stage on which the coaches will focus. The skills demonstrated by the mediators will be noted as Good or Excellent, and the coaches have ample room for comments on other skills they observe or areas for improvement. In addition, the last section of the Feedback Form asks the coaches to note any particularly effective behaviors or areas for improvement that might have been observed in any of the five stages.

The feedback forms will be given to the school coordinators at the end of the Invitational so they can review them and plan other trainings.

The Feedback Form was based on evaluation forms currently used by training agencies working with the schools, and reflects their consolidated approach to structuring the mediation process. The skills associated with each stage are those considered most important for that stage.

COACHES' AWARDS

Immediately after the mediations, the coaches will present Invitational Medallions to each of the mediators. Students are encouraged to wear their medallions during the Invitational and at their schools to show that they were recognized for excellence.

CLOSING CEREMONY

Lunch and the closing ceremony will all take place at the Western Justice Center Foundation. During the closing session, the students and adult supervisor from each school will be asked to come forward to receive their certificates of participation. Each school will receive a certificate. Students will leave directly from Western Justice Center Foundation at 2:00 PM after the closing ceremony.

Attachment A

WJCF Peer Mediation Invitational Coaches Feedback Form for Mediators

Coaches: Next to each item in each stage of the mediation, please circle “G” for Good or “E” for Excellent. At the end of the mediation, use these assessments or summary comments to provide feedback to co-mediators. Turn in your completed evaluation as they will be provided to the associated schools.

School: _____

Team (circle one): A B

Scenario (circle one): A B

STEP I: SETTING THE STAGE: INTRODUCTION AND GROUNDRULES

Mediators:

- Introduce themselves. G E
- Explain the process of mediation and that it is voluntary. G E
- Explain that mediators are neutral. G E
- Explain confidentiality. G E
- Get agreement on ground rules: G E
 - Don't interrupt. Be honest.
 - No name-calling or put-downs. Show respect.
 - Agree to solve the problem. Be willing to listen.
- Establish a safe and comfortable environment. G E

STEP II: DEFINING THE PROBLEM

Mediators:

- Ask who will talk first. G E
- Ask what happened. G E
- Ask how he or she feels about what happened. G E
- Summarize each statement. G E
- Give each party approximately equal time to talk. G E

STEP III: IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES

Mediators:

- Use active listening skills (repeating, summarizing, clarifying). G E
- Create an agenda. G E
- Focus on issues important to both parties. G E
- Stay neutral. G E
- Ask if any issues have been missed. G E
- Identify areas of miscommunication or wrong assumptions. G E

STEP IV: FINDING SOLUTIONS

Mediators:

- Address issues one at a time. G E
- Brainstorm solutions. G E
- Ask what each party would like the other to do differently in the future. G E
- Ask what each party can do to resolve the dispute. G E
- Ask what can be done differently if the problem occurs again. G E

STEP V: AGREEMENT AND CLOSING

Mediators:

- Write specific agreements for each issue outlining who will do what, where, how and by what date. G E
- Balance the agreement so both parties take responsibility for the solution. G E
- Be sure the agreement is realistic for each party. G E
- Be sure the agreement really addresses the issues. G E
- Ask if any issues have been missed. G E
- Ask parties to prevent rumors by telling people the dispute is resolved. G E
- Thank the parties and congratulate them for their hard work. G E

Comments: To benefit the students, please provide feedback and coaching on what they did really well or how they can improve their skills. Cite examples from the mediation.

Please comment if you observed any of the following effective techniques:

- Reminding the parties of the ground rules when necessary.
- Helping parties express themselves by using “I-statements.” (“I feel. . .when . . .because.”)
- Asking the parties to repeat what the others said as a way of clarifying understanding.
- Summarizing to help keep people from rambling.

Points for improvement:

- Taking sides or not staying neutral in any way.
- Saying someone was right or wrong or making judgments.
- Telling the parties what to do to solve the dispute.
- Being rude or bossy.

WJCF Peer Mediation Invitational

MEDIATORS' NOTES

Step I: Setting the Stage: Introductions and Ground rules

Step II: Defining the Problem

Step III: Identifying the Issues

Step IV: Finding Solutions

Step V: Agreement and Closing

Attachment B

Sample Scenario

Below is an example of the kind of scenario that will be used during the Peer Mediation Invitational. Please remember to surface underlying issues to help find solutions and resolve the dispute.

Scenario:

Disputant #1: One of the people at your lab table keeps bugging you during class. You both get into trouble with the teacher for being disruptive.

Disputant #1's Underlying Issue: You need a good grade in this class and you can't afford to hand in incomplete work or a messy lab book.

Disputant #2: You and your friend got in trouble for talking in class the other day while you were trying to catch up with your friend. The problem is that your friend keeps ignoring you.

Disputant #2's Underlying Issue: You hardly get to see your friend anymore except during class and you wish you two had more time to catch up with each other.