

## **Conflict Management/Peer Mediation**

Peer Mediation / Conflict Management is a process for resolving disputes in which a neutral third party (parties) acts as a moderator for the process. In mediation, the goal is to work out differences constructively. Conflict management provides schools with an alternative to traditional disciplinary practices. Students involved in this process, either as mediators or disputants learn a new way of handling conflict. In conflict management, trained students help their classmates identify the problems behind the conflicts and to find solutions. Conflict management is not about finding who is right or wrong. Instead, students are encouraged to move beyond the immediate conflict and learn how to get along with each other. Conflict managers ask the disputing students to tell their stories and ask questions for clarification. The mediators help the students identify ways to solve the conflict. Not every kind of problem is suitable for peer mediation, For example, assault or other criminal activities are usually not referred to a school's mediation program. Common situations involving name calling, rumors, bumping into students in the hallways, rumors and some bullying have been successfully resolved through peer mediation. The following lists illustrate the ground rules and the steps of the mediation process. When both students agree to the ground rules, the mediation can proceed.

### **Mediation Steps**

- Agree upon the ground rules
- Each student tells his/her story
- Verify the stories
- Generate solutions
- Discuss solutions
- Select a solution
- Sign a contract

### **Ground Rules - Participants should be willing to:**

- Solve the problem
- Tell the truth
- Listen without interrupting
- Be respectful
- Take responsibility for carrying out the agreement
- Keep the situation confidential
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Adapted from Indiana University- Center for Adolescent Studies, 1996.

**Services available through SCOE:** The AV Library has many resources available for schools with contracts. For more information, contact Anne Hinchcliff at 842-8430 or [ahinchcliff@siskiyoucoe.net](mailto:ahinchcliff@siskiyoucoe.net)