



Teen and Youth Frequently Asked Questions

RNW's Family Mediation Program

What is Mediation?

Mediation is an opportunity for two people or groups in dispute to come together, talk, and reach their own solution to an argument or conflict. It is a chance to sit down in a quiet place with a trained, impartial mediator and talk about what is happening. The mediators do not decide who is right or wrong - their job is to facilitate a productive conversation that allows the parties to create mutually agreeable solutions. Through mediation, parents, caregivers, siblings and youth can:

- Open the doors to communication
- Create a positive environment to make change
- Build trust and understanding through listening
- Turn conflict into cooperation by working together on a resolution.

I'm a youth or teen having an issue with my parent or caregiver. Can I contact you or do I have to have my parents have to be the ones to contact you?

YOU can contact us. Please call 503-595-4890 x107 and our family mediation program coordinator will help you discuss your conflict and help you figure out the best way to get your parents involved in the process.

As a young person, how will I be sure that my side will be heard?

Mediation is a process that equally validates all sides to any conflict or problem. In an effort to ensure that youth voices are heard, we use a co-mediation model in which a trained adult and youth mediator pair up and work with a family together. These two trained mediators of different age groups help bridge generation gaps and open doors of communication and build trust.

How can I avoid getting in trouble if I say something during the mediation that I think might make my parents/caregivers mad?

The mediation process is designed to create a safe space for all parties involved. If you are concerned that you might get into trouble by sharing something with your parents, you can call talk with your mediators in private. During the private meeting, the mediators can help you decide if (or how) you can share certain information with your parents. If you decide that you don't want to share the information it is okay. You can choose to keep something confidential between you and the mediators. If you do choose to keep it confidential, the mediators will have to decide if the mediation can continue, based on the information discussed in the private meeting. Remember, the mediators don't take sides and are there to help you communicate with your parents.

What kinds of conflicts and issues can I bring to youth and family mediation?

- House rules, Household chores, or Responsibilities
- Curfew, Truancy, Runaway
- Sibling rivalry
- Unacceptable behavior
- Grades
- Issues around divorce
- Issues around step-parents
- Relationship/friendship issues
- Smoking/drinking/drugs
- Use of car
- Involvement with the Juvenile Department

How much does it cost?

Our family mediation services does have some fees for the service, based on a family's gross income. We will work with you and our parent or caregiver to discuss payment. However, the cost is secondary to our trying to help you resolve the conflict. Please don't let costs keep you from contacting us.

Why do people choose mediation at Resolutions Northwest?

Mediation is one method of resolving disputes. Some people choose mediation because they find it less expensive than litigation. Others wish to resolve issues in a more amicable, non-adversarial way. Mediation can help the parties decrease the conflict between them and work cooperatively to meet individual and collective needs. Additionally, the advantages of mediation are that

- Mediation is confidential
- Mediation gives individuals control over their own decisions
- Mediation helps individuals develop lasting agreements
- Mediation improves relationships
- Mediation improves quality of life
- Mediation reduces stress
- Mediation is successful

How successful is mediation?

Mediation satisfies participants. In 2007, well over 90% of our clients reported satisfaction with the mediation process.

Who are the mediators?

For our youth and family mediations, RNW uses a mediation team made up of one adult mediator and one youth mediator. These two trained mediators of different age groups help bridge generation gaps and open doors of communication and build trust. For our family mediations, RNW uses a team of trained adult mediators.

What are the mediators' qualifications?

RNW mediators have met the requirements to be Community Mediators under the Oregon Administrative Rules for Community Dispute Resolution Centers. In addition, they have completed an advanced training in Youth and Family Mediation.

Is mediation confidential?

The confidentiality of our mediations services are protected by state law. There are certain limitations to the protection of confidentiality. Your case developers will review the protections and limitations of confidentiality in your initial conversation.

What happens at the first session?

All involved persons come to this session and meet with the mediation team. The mediators will then explain the process, answer questions and begin the mediation. In some cases, this session of mediation can result in a written agreement for the family to take home.

How many sessions will we need?

The number of sessions that clients need varies, depending on the number and complexity of the issues the parties wish to resolve.

Can I bring another person to the appointment?

Third parties, such as new significant others, relatives, or friends, are only allowed to take part in a session if both parties to the mediation agree to have that third party present.