

CRU for Secondary School Peer Mediators

Excerpts from Training Manual

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ABOUT CRU *INSTITUTE*

CRU *INSTITUTE* was founded for the purpose of helping young people learn and use alternative dispute resolution skills at school as well as in their daily lives.

Experience and training make CRU *INSTITUTE* a unique organization. Since 1987, our trainers have conducted Student Mediation Training Programs at hundreds of schools throughout the United States. Today, the majority of these schools train their own students and continue the Student Mediation Program.

CRU *INSTITUTE* trainers are professional mediators who have conducted mediation training since 1980 for attorneys, mental health professionals, educators, and business people. They developed the School Mediation Program curriculum as an interesting, exciting way to teach young people the sophisticated mediation techniques used by adult mediators.

CRU *INSTITUTE* will continue to promote mediation as a conflict resolution skill with universal applicability. The ability to effectively deal with conflict is a life skill that everyone should possess. It is our goal to bring an understanding of the mediation process and techniques to as many young people as possible.

Introduction

Teaching young people to understand conflict and develop effective ways to deal with it is the purpose of this program.

This manual was prepared by CRU trainers and is based on many years' experience training student mediators. The program can be used to train a core group of students to act as Mediators for other students who have disputes, or it may be offered to every student in the school. Training faculty and parents is a way to create a whole-school program. The basic program includes these major teaching topics:

THE MEDIATION PROCESS

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

FEELINGS

MEDIATION TECHNIQUES

DEALING WITH DIFFICULT SITUATIONS

BEING YOUR OWN MEDIATOR

Student Mediation Training is an interactive, action oriented program. It includes a series of demonstrations, exercises, interactive discussion with the students, and role play practice. The interactive nature of the program is especially important. When students struggle with new concepts, they tend to learn more.

How to conduct the training: The best room for the training is the library or another very large room with good acoustics. Students should be seated in chairs in a semi-circle. There should be several tables in the room for role play practice.

The program is best presented by two trainers. However, one trainer may conduct the training using teacher volunteers to play the second trainer's role. The program

is divided into five sessions. The basic training consists of the first four sessions. The remaining one is a follow-up session. The most effective way to teach the program is to present the first four sessions over a two or three week period and to present the last one six weeks to two months later, after the students have had a chance to practice mediating.

Choosing students: Because “Mediation Training” teaches students effective ways to deal with conflict, it is especially helpful to students who have interpersonal difficulties themselves. If you are training a core group of students to be Mediators, it is important to choose some students to be trained who have anger management problems themselves, some who are shy or have low self-esteem, and a few who avoid conflict. You will also want to include a group of students who have well developed social skills. A cross section of students representing all socio-economic and racial groups in the school is important.

The ideal way to choose students is to make a brief presentation discussing the program and its benefits with each class in the school. (See A-4) Asking for student volunteers for the training usually results in hundreds of student volunteers. You will then need to choose a group of students representing the groups and qualities discussed above.

The ideal number of students for the training is twenty-five to thirty. In addition to training students, all counselors, administrators and a selection of teachers should be trained. This gives the program a wide base of support in the school. Also, if a group of adults is trained, student-teacher disputes may be mediated by student-teacher mediation teams.

Coordinating the Program: A pivotal person at each school is the Coordinator of the Mediation Program. The Coordinator receives written referrals from administrators, counselors, teachers, or students regarding students or students and teachers who have disputes or conflicts. The Coordinator assigns a team of mediators to meet with the disputants in a private room and go through the mediation process. The Coordinator sits in on mediations until the students can function on their own. When a mediation is complete, the coordinator debriefs the student mediators. The Contract is given to the Coordinator who keeps all contracts in a confidential file. The Coordinator has periodic peer consultation meetings with the student mediators, and conducts mediation trainings once or twice each year.

The benefit of Student Mediation Training far exceeds the techniques and mediation processes taught. Through Mediation, students learn to use effective

listening skills. They learn to express themselves in a clear, positive way, and they discover new ways to deal with conflict constructively, both as mediators and in their day to day lives. The real benefit of the program is that young people begin to realize that they are responsible for their behavior. If they have a conflict with another person, it is up to them to resolve that conflict—sometimes with the help of mediators, sometimes on their own. “Fighting it out” or relying on authority figures to solve your problem is “out,” while taking responsibility for one's own behavior is “in.”

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The Mediator and the Mediation Process

Objective	Materials	Approximate Time
To demonstrate the mediation process and model the qualities of a good mediator.	Chalkboard, a table and four chairs, handouts “ <i>What is a Mediator</i> ” (A-24), and “ <i>Mediation: The Three Phases</i> ” (A-25), and a <i>Mediation Contract</i> (A-33), VCR/Video	1 hour 25 minutes

Training Guide

To demonstrate the mediation process, you may use either the video, “Everybody’s Talking” or you may choose to demonstrate the mediation process with a role play. If time permits, the students may benefit from observing both the video and the trainers role playing the process.

This demonstration or observation of the video introduces students to a “mind set” or an alternative way to deal with conflict. Students will have the opportunity to observe the mediation process and mediation skills. When demonstrating the process, it is important to choose a topic for dispute that is common for the students in training but not too difficult to resolve.

If you choose to do a live demonstration, the most important part of demonstrating the process is to model neutrality, good listening skills and a structured, cohesive process. It is less important to demonstrate numerous mediation techniques at this point than it is to show students the qualities of a good mediator and the structure of the process.

At the end of the section, students will have the opportunity to try out the process. It is important to remind them that this is only the beginning of their training so that they will not be afraid to chance looking foolish in front of their peers.

NOTE: The mediation process is illustrated by the video, “Everybody’s Talking”
Distributed by CRU Institute

Teaching Points

- A Mediator
 - ...is a good listener
 - ...is neutral
 - ...helps the disputants solve the problem themselves
 - ...keeps the conflict confidential
- A Mediator is not
 - ...a person who interrupts
 - ...a person who takes sides
 - ...a judge or police officer
 - ...a person who gives advice
 - ...a person who talks about other students' conflicts
- The Mediation Process has three phases:
 - Phase I: Define the Problem
 - Phase II: Explore the Problem
 - Phase III: Find Solutions and Get Agreement

Procedure

OPTION #1

1. Briefly discuss with the students the three phases of mediation and tell the students to observe the video with these phases in mind:

Phase I: Setting the stage for mediation and helping the disputants to Define the Problem.

Phase II: Exploring the problem by using communication skills and various mediation techniques.

Phase III: Finding solutions and reaching agreement.

2. **SHOW THE VIDEO**, “Everybody’s Talking.”
3. **(AFTER THE BREAK)** Ask the class to identify the qualities of a good mediator.
 - a. A good listener
 - b. Neutral
 - c. Understanding, but firm. Able to conduct a structured process
 - d. Patient
 - e. Keeps the conflict confidential
 - f. Helps the disputants solve the problem
4. Point out and briefly discuss the techniques used by the mediators in the video. Use the video “Leader's Guide” as a reference.
5. **DISCUSS THE MEDIATION PROCESS** and ask the class to outline with you the steps the mediators used in the process. (See OPTION #2, p. 13 - 15: Phase I, II, III, for a detailed outline of the process).

Point out to the students that although the mediators in the video ask the disputants, “Do you know what mediation is?” It is wise to assume that the disputants do NOT know what mediation is and to explain it to them.

When discussing the mediation process, emphasize that the mediators restate what each disputant says in their opening statement. Later in the mediation (as

illustrated by the video) the mediators may ask the disputants to say what the other disputant has said.

**Distribute handouts, “What is a Mediator” and
“Mediation: The Three Phases.” (You may choose to distribute a
student handout booklet at the end of the training.)**

6. **ROLE PLAY:** Divide the class into groups of six to eight students. Assign an adult to supervise each group. Distribute two relatively easy role play scripts (A-51 - A-174) to each group and instruct the groups to practice the mediation process. The role play practice should be about 50 minutes.

Suggested Role Plays: **Two Boys and One Girl**
 The Threesome
 The Art Class
 Secrets
 Friends, Boys & Rumors
 Working Together

OPTION #2

1. Ask for a student volunteer to help you demonstrate the mediation process. The volunteer will have a dispute with one of the trainers.
2. Choose a conflict that occurs frequently, and one that is amenable to resolution.

POSSIBLE TOPICS:

- Two girls in a dispute because one accuses the other of stealing her boyfriend.
 - Two students in dispute over a rumor that one called the other a name.
3. Trainer #1 = The Mediator (use two mediators if you have three trainers)
Trainer #2 = Trainer Disputant (acting as a student)
Student volunteer = Student Disputant
 4. Demonstrate the mediation process in a ten or fifteen minute role play.

PHASE I: DEFINE THE PROBLEM

- a. Introduce yourself and explain your role as a mediator.

- b. Explain the six rules of mediation
 - 1. Make a commitment to solve the problem
 - 2. Don't interrupt
 - 3. No name calling or put downs
 - 4. Tell the truth
 - 5. No physical fighting
 - 6. Keep it confidential (discuss the exceptions: if a person plans to hurt him/herself, or another, you must report this).
- c. After the disputants have agreed to the rules, have them sign the contract.
- d. Ask the first disputant what the problem is and restate what he/she has said. Write a list of the problems.
- e. Ask the second disputant what the problem is and restate what he/she has said. Write a list of the problems.
- f. Summarize the issues presented by the disputants.

PHASE II: EXPLORE THE PROBLEM

- a. Encourage the disputants to discuss the problem and express their feelings about it. Ask open-ended questions such as, “When did this problem begin? Why do you think it started? What else can you tell us about the situation?”

PHASE III: FIND SOLUTIONS AND GET AGREEMENT

- a. Ask each disputant for possible solutions. Help the disputants reach an agreement.

- b. When agreement is reached, write the agreement on the contract, restate the agreement, and have the disputants sign the contract.
 - c. Congratulate the disputants.
5. Lead the class in a discussion of what they observed you doing as a mediator. Help them identify the qualities of a good mediator and discuss why these qualities are important to the mediation process.
 6. Discuss the three phases of mediation and the techniques and listening skills you used in each phase.

Distribute handouts, “What is a Mediator” and “Mediation: The Three Phases.”

7. **SHOW THE VIDEO** “Everybody’s Talking” and use the leaders guide to discuss the highlighted points.
8. Point out to the students that although the mediators in the video ask the disputants, “Do you know what mediation is?”, it is wise to assume that the disputants do NOT know what mediation is and, therefore, you should explain it to them.

When discussing the mediation process, emphasize that the mediators restate what each disputant says in their opening statement. Later in the mediation (as illustrated by the video) the mediators may ask the disputants to say what the other disputant has said.

9. **ROLE PLAY:** Divide the class into groups of six to eight students. Assign an adult to supervise each group. Distribute a relatively easy role play script (A-51 - A-174) to each group and instruct the groups to practice the mediation process. The role play practice should be about 50 minutes.

Suggested Role Plays: **Two Boys and One Girl**
 The Threesome
 The Art Class
 Secrets
 Friends, Boys & Rumors
 Working Together

Teach Disputants to Use ‘I’ Messages/Restating

Objective	Materials	Approximate Time
To demonstrate how Mediators can <i>teach the disputants communication skills</i> as part of the mediation process.	Chalkboard	5 minutes

Training Guide

Teaching disputants to use Restating is straight forward. Teaching “I” messages is more difficult. The Mediator does not need to have the disputant say a complete “I” message. The disputant should be asked to state the feeling and why he/she feels that way.

It may be helpful for the trainers to discuss with the class the importance of teaching communication skills to disputants. If the students can learn to communicate effectively, it will help them in their daily lives.

NOTE: This technique is illustrated in the video, “Everybody’s Talking.”

When / Why / How

When Whenever it becomes apparent that there is misunderstanding between the disputants. When disputants are racially insensitive or when any type of bigotry is an issue. Also, communication can become destructive or accusatory, and it is the mediator's role to intervene if this should happen.

Why Effective communication is the key to successful mediation. Not only does communication affect the outcome of mediation, but communication skills learned in mediation may be used by the disputants in the future.

How Encourage the disputants to use “I” messages instead of “You” accusations. “I feel (state the feeling) when (state the situation) because (state the reason).”

Request that the disputants paraphrase each other to encourage listening skills.

Be sure each person has the opportunity to complete his/her thought without interruption.

Teach “I” messages and Restating during the mediation process, but do not use these techniques when the disputants make their opening statements.

In disputes involving cultural differences or any type of bigotry, ask the disputant who has been offended to say how he/she feels and why and ask the other disputant to restate what he/she heard.

Teaching Points

- Teaching the disputants Restating, helps them understand each other's point of view.
- When things are getting out of hand, teaching Restating helps slow down the Mediation process.
- Using “I”-Messages lets one disputant say how he/she feels, without making the other disputant defensive.

Procedure

1. Ask for a student volunteer to have a conflict with one of the trainers.

2. #1 Trainer = Mediator
#2 Trainer = Trainer Disputant (acting as a student)
Student Volunteer = Student Disputant
3. Give the disputants the topic of their dispute.

TOPIC FOR DISPUTE:

Trainer Disputant is angry because Student Disputant started a rumor that she only thinks about boys and never has time for friends. Student Disputant is concerned because she and Trainer Disputant used to be friends and now Trainer Disputant never returns phone calls or talks to her at school.

4. Tell the class that the disputants have agreed to the rules and that they have each stated what the problem is. Now they are discussing the problem. Do not use this technique at the beginning of the process when the disputants are stating what the problem is. At that time, the Mediator, not the other disputant, should restate what the first disputant has said.

As the demonstration proceeds, the Trainer Disputant should appear not to be listening. The Mediator notices this and asks the Trainer Disputant if she would restate what the other Student Disputant has been saying. The Trainer Disputant will say, “Uhhh, I don't know.” The Mediator will ask the Student Disputant to say what she was saying again. Then the Mediator will ask the Trainer Disputant to say what the Student Disputant said.

5. Ask “*What was going on here?*”
6. Discuss teaching the disputants restating and why it is important for the Mediation process.
7. Role play, same vignette but this time, Trainer Disputant should begin to accuse Student Disputant of spreading rumors and use “You” accusations. The Mediator says, “*Could you say how you feel?*” The Trainer Disputant says, “*I feel (mad or angry).*” The Mediator says, “*Why do you feel that way?*” The Trainer Disputant says, “*Because I don't like being accused of thinking of nothing but boys and ignoring my friends.*”
8. Thank the volunteer.

9. Ask “*What was going on here?*”
10. Discuss teaching “I” messages and discuss how you might teach this skill to disputants.

Questions for Discussion

(These questions are suggestions.

Use the ones you believe are appropriate and valuable for your class.)

1. When would it be appropriate to use this technique?
2. Why is this important for Mediators?

Working Together

Two students are referred to mediation by the Social Studies teacher, Ms. Cooper. She wants the students to cooperate on a project that they have been assigned to work on together.

CHRIS

You and Pat are in the same Social Studies class. You are a student who does as little work as possible. You were really happy to be assigned to work with Pat on the major project of the year, *Hunger Around The World*. You figured that Pat would do the usual 'workaholic' thing and you would only have to do minimal work.

You told Pat you would get information about Southeast Asia, but you have had to deal with a lot of stuff. You couldn't use your computer at home because your father spent most of the nights lately on it. You were going to do the work over the weekend, but you went to the dance Friday night, stayed up really late, and slept most of Saturday. Sunday you played baseball and had to meet with some friends.

Now the project is due in two weeks. You figure Pat will pick up the pieces--get the job done. You don't see why this is such a big deal.

PAT

You and Chris are partners in your Social Studies class for the most important project of the year, *Hunger Around the Word*. You were really upset when you were assigned to work with Chris because you knew Chris was a student who put little effort into work and you figured you would have to do the project by yourself.

The two of you divided up the work and Chris agreed to do the part on Southeast Asia. You have been spending long hours on your part of the project. You agreed to do South America, the USA, and Africa. Now you are almost done with your part, and Chris is still giving excuses for not completing the section on Southeast Asia.

The project is due in two weeks and you are really worried it won't be completed. You complained to Ms. Cooper, your Social Studies teacher, and she referred both of you to mediation.

Techno-Power

Shalya and Covina were best friends until today when Covina discovered that Shayla was talking to everyone on-line about her. The two told their friends they would never talk to each other again.

SHAYLA

You were best friends with Covina until a few days ago when you saw her talking real close to your boyfriend. You tried to ignore it, but then everyone started coming up to you saying that Covina and Bryant were sitting next to each other at the game—and they sure were getting ‘friendly’.

Last night you were on-line talking to a bunch of people. You made the comment, “Covina has a really big butt!” Everyone agreed and they all said they just couldn’t understand what Bryant was doing hanging with her anyway. You heard a few people saying, “Well, Covina is a total slut—which rhymes with ‘butt’ which, as a matter of fact, she has plenty of!”

You were just having a little fun on-line. But today the whole thing got out of control and now Covina, who used to be your best friend, is furious with you. You are pretty mad at her too—the Slut with the butt!

COVINA

You always thought Shayla was your best friend. Then today at school you heard that she was on-line IMing everyone about you, saying you had a big butt and that you were a slut. Maybe the problem started when Shayla’s boyfriend, Bryant came up to you at the game and started talking about how he would really like to see Shayla more but she was always studying and her Mom wouldn’t let her go to games too often.

You and your boyfriend broke up last week. In fact, you were talking with Bryant about that—but you don’t really want Bryant as a boyfriend—he’s much too short for you!

You feel betrayed by Shayla and you are so angry with her that you don’t really want to talk about it. But now the counselor says you have to go to this mediation and ‘talk things out’. How can you be friends with someone who calls you names like that?

Some Cool Guys Read

Two black boys are referred to mediation. They almost got into a fight but decided to go to mediation to talk things out. The boys have been friends for a long time.

MARCUS

You are black and 15 and really into being cool. Lately you have decided that you need to keep up your grades because you don't really think you can count on a football scholarship. Studying is different, and you have to spend time catching up with the other kids.

Your friends are teasing you about 'acting white', being nerdy, having four eyes (you need to wear glasses). Today, your friend Bryant started saying these things, and you exploded. You tried to tell him you had to read the history book for your test tomorrow and he just kept calling you names. You almost hit him, and then someone mentioned talking things out in mediation.

BRYANT

You are black and 15 and very cool. You listen to rap music, you have more girls than you need, and you have at least ten pairs of shoes - all cool.

Studying is stupid. No one cool reads books. Only nerds and white kids study. Yesterday as you and your friend, Marcus were leaving football practice, you asked Marcus to hang with you and some girls. Marcus said, "No. I have to study. Got a big test in history tomorrow. Need to read the book."

You said, "You nerd. You're a sell out. You acting white!"

Next thing you knew, Marcus was threatening to beat you up. Someone mentioned mediation. You said okay, but you really don't know what mediation is.