

CONTACT INFORMATION

Quabbin Mediation offices are located in the Orange District Court Building, 13 South Main St., Orange, Mass. Office hours are 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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About Quabbin Mediation

Quabbin Mediation mediates disputes of all sorts, runs an elders' mediation project and an after school program for youth, and trains volunteer adults as mediators. Quabbin Mediation has trained more than 1,000 students as peer mediators in four school districts.

Quabbin Mediation's achievements are rooted in the enduring collaborations it enjoys with local individuals, organizations, agencies, and institutions. These partnerships are based on Quabbin Mediation's reputation as a reliable, professional organization that adheres to high ethical standards while it creates programming that meets the needs of people in the region.



SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS

PEER MEDIATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Quabbin Mediation mediates disputes that arise in all areas of community life and teaches mediation, conflict resolution, and violence prevention skills with the intent of weaving the language and process of creative problem solving into the fabric of the community.

PEER MEDIATION PROGRAMS

Peer mediators are students who receive training in helping others resolve conflicts. After the training, they mediate disputes for fellow students. Peer mediators are supervised by school staff and receive ongoing mediation training. Peer mediators' roles in their schools may also include assisting in conflict resolution training or co-mediating parent/student disputes.

PEER MEDIATION TRAINING

Quabbin Mediation works with staff members to develop program components prior to the beginning of the training in order to ensure that, once trained, students and the school community are informed of, and educated about, the use of the mediation program.

Mediation is a process that involves a neutral third party to assist those involved in a conflict to develop a solution their conflict.

Mediation is:

- *A win/win process* - No one loses by trying to resolve disputes through mediation. Mediation is an effective way of resolving conflicts with the potential to save time and relationships.
- *Voluntary* - All parties involved agree to be a part of the mediation and anyone can withdraw from the process at any time.
- *Neutral* - Mediators are impartial; they do not take sides, advise, or judge. Mediators facilitate.



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- *Confidential* - Everything said during the mediation process is confidential. Mediators do not share information learned in mediation unless immediate threats or harm are disclosed.

- *Self-determined* - In mediation, the parties have the opportunity and responsibility for designing the solution to their dispute. Mediators do not make suggestions or tell people what to do.

- *Informed* - Informed consent means no agreement is signed unless the parties have the knowledge and ability to fully understand and agree with the process and the terms of their agreement.

Students undergo intensive training in the concepts of mediation and conflict resolution and in the formal process of mediation. They participate in extensive role-playing to prepare them to conduct mediations for fellow students.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING

A unique aspect of Quabbin Mediation's conflict resolution training is the use of peer mediators as trainers. They help to design and run training and serve as invaluable role models.

Conflict resolution assumes that the individuals involved in a conflict often can find their own solution to the conflict. Conflict resolution training is intended to help students develop skills for constructive and positive conflict management.

The training is geared to a "whole class" format and includes large and small group activities, role playing, and opportunities to practice skills throughout the training.

Conflict Resolution Training Helps Students To Understand:

- Conflict is normal,
- Conflict and people's basic conflict styles,
- What escalates and de-escalates a conflict,
- Diversity and bias and the relation of each of these to conflict,
- How emotions influence conflict,
- Effective communication skills, and
- Strategies for effective problem solving.

Quabbin Mediation has conducted conflict resolution training in elementary, middle, and high school settings. Trainers work with school personnel to meet the needs of the school and the classes participating in the training.

SEMINARS/ADVANCED MEDIATION TRAINING

Mediation seminars are a venue for trained peer mediators to gather as a group, receive advanced training in mediation, have an opportunity to discuss cases that have been mediated, and do advanced role playing to keep their mediation skills sharp.

Quabbin Mediation staff works with the trained mediators to continue their training, evaluating those mediation skills

that need further practice and meeting the needs of the school community at large. The school mediation advisor is involved in the seminars and is an integral part of the planning process to develop those aspects of the advanced training that are most critical to the students involved in the mediation program.

TRAINERS

Quabbin Mediation has two full-time and four part-time staff. The executive director, with 15 years' mediating and training experience, is also co-founder of Quabbin Mediation. The training director has 14 years of experience teaching mediation and conflict resolution.

THE GOALS OF BOTH MEDIATION TRAINING AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION ARE TO:

- Empower students to take responsibility for resolving their own conflicts.
- Create a climate that encourages positive and creative problem solving in order to resolve conflicts peacefully.
- Facilitate discussion for parties to clarify issues, identify common interests, and seek their own solutions while creating agreements that satisfy the needs of everyone involved.

"I have run into many situations where I use peer mediation. I use it to help people learn to use better communication."

— High School mediator