

## **MEDIATION**

*A voluntary settlement process to help resolve conflict and crime.*

### **WHAT IS MEDIATION?**

Mediation is an informal process where a mediator helps people with a dispute to reach agreement. The mediation process identifies important issues, clarifies misunderstandings, explores solutions, and negotiates an agreement for resolution.

### **WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MEDIATOR?**

The mediator is not a judge and does not make a decision or impose a solution on the case. Rather, the mediator helps those involved talk to each other, thereby allowing them to resolve the situation themselves through a contract. The mediator remains impartial & manages the mediation session, which is confidential.

### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A VORP PROGRAM?**

The main purpose of a Victim Offender Reconciliation Program is to personalize and increase accountability in the Justice System by bringing offenders together with the victim of their crimes. It is hoped that this experience will impart a feeling of the seriousness of their crimes and the impact on the victims and increase their desire to make restitution to the person(s) they have hurt. The victims will have an opportunity to learn why they were victimized and express their feelings directly to their offenders. The process is voluntary and confidential and of benefit to all parties.

### **BENEFITS TO THE VICTIM**

The victim is given the rare opportunity of confronting the offender. This face-to-face meeting in the presence of a trained volunteer mediator allows the victims to express feelings of frustration, hurt and anger and what they need to heal the wrong...

- Reduction of fears; questions answered
- Real voice in criminal justice system
- Opportunity to be a reconciler
- Opportunity to affect positively the life of the offender

### **BENEFITS TO THE OFFENDER**

The offender is held personally accountable by the reconciliation process and able to learn the human dimension of the crime.

- Realizes the consequences of action
- Participates in criminal justice system in a restorative way
- Expresses remorse; asks for forgiveness
- Makes amends to victim and community

### **BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Community mediation particularly in neighbor disputes makes more sense than using the courts and is free of charge. Working in the schools teaching peer mediation, conflict resolution and anger management has helped significantly with behavior problems according to feedback. Perhaps even more important, a reconciliation program in a community strengthens the teaching of nonviolent techniques to resolve conflicts. Everyone connected with the reconciliation process – the victim, offender and mediator- usually leave the experience feeling moved by the empowerment that occurs through the mediation process. Righting the wrong in this way is the basis of the global trend toward restorative justice.

### **THE WAY THE PROGRAM WORKS**

- Case is referred to Mid South Mediation Services by criminal or juvenile justice system or school system (for example... assault, theft or family dispute.)
- Case is reviewed for suitability (offender must admit responsibility for actions)
- County Coordinator talks individually with court personnel, victim and offender.
- With approval from all parties, time for a face-to-face meeting with mediators is set up.
- Mediation: Both sides tell their experiences – from thoughts to feelings – in a confidential and neutral setting. With assistance of the fair witness/mediator and resolution or restitution is agreed upon.
- Results are returned to justice system, school, or other referring parties with report on the outcome of mediation and a copy of the agreement.
- Restitution/resolution agreements are monitored to completion with contract follow up over time.
- Unsuccessful mediations and non-completed contracts are returned to referring sources for possible court action. **Vorp7@hotmail.com**

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to help with the mediation program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to be trained as a mediator.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to refer a situation for mediation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like a representative from Mid South Mediation Services to speak to my group.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution.  
Enclosed is my gift of : \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## MISSION STATEMENT

Mid South Mediation Services (MSMS) offers mediation as an impartial forum to address differences between parties, in which individuals are brought face to face to discuss and come to terms with their issues and accountability. MSMS trains volunteer mediators to assist parties in reaching an agreement in a safe, non-adversarial setting, which each party believes is fair. A Victim Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) is available to the courts in each of the counties served. Mediations are helpful in resolving criminal, civil/family, school, and community issues. Objectives are to reduce crime and violence, to enhance restitution fulfillment, and to foster harmony within families and their communities. "Both the victim and the offender agree upon the restitution, and the keeping of these agreements is what allows healing to take place."

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*We accept referrals from Lewis, Perry, Hickman, Williamson, Lawrence, Wayne, and Giles Counties.*

### MID SOUTH MEDIATION SERVICES

Mary Ellen Bowen, Executive Director, Rule 31

Main Office: (Lewis County)

P.O. Box 13, Hohenwald, TN 38462

(931) 796-0487 (931) 796-7053fax

email: [vorp7@hotmail.com](mailto:vorp7@hotmail.com)

website: [www.midsouthmediationservices.org](http://www.midsouthmediationservices.org)

#### Offices in other counties:

Perry (931) 628-8277

Hickman (931) 622-1462

Williamson (615) 599-0510

Lawrence (931) 766-1580

(931) 242-5172

Giles (931) 242-5172

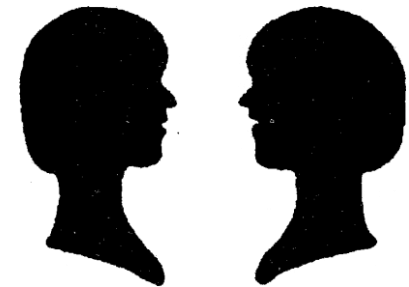
Wayne (931) 209-6773

Mid South Mediation Services is a nonprofit organization and does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, gender, or physical ability.

Mid South  
Mediation Services  
P.O. Box 13  
Hohenwald, TN 38462

## Mid South Mediation Services

### COMMUNITY MEDIATION PROGRAM



MEDIATION...  
Seeks Justice  
Face to Face



### VICTIM OFFENDER RECONCILIATION PROGRAM