



Given the opportunity children and young people can change each other's lives for the better.

## **Peer mediation – the what, the how, and the why?**

Peer mediation is a process by which children and young people help their peers resolve conflict in a constructive, non-violent way. It involves two trained pupil mediators helping their peers deal with conflict through a series of mediation steps. The conflicts can include fights in the playground, rumour-spreading, or different types of bullying behaviour. During peer mediation disagreements are faced and brought out into the open with the help of the peer mediators. Importantly, shared understanding and agreements are worked toward through careful exploration of the conflict. Peer mediation programmes can be set up in schools, youth organisations or other relevant settings.

**Basically – peer mediation is children and young people helping each other deal with conflict, and building a lot of valuable skills along the way. What's more - it can have Incredible ripple effects, in their lives, in their communities, in society..**

## **Young Talk**

Young Talk is a peer mediation network and we exist to promote and support peer mediation as a preventative and restorative conflict resolution practice in schools and youth organisations in Scotland. We provide young people with development and networking opportunities in their mediation practice. We also support peer mediation services in schools and organisations and promote the sustainability of peer mediation programmes. We are a part of the Scottish Mediation Network, and funded by Young Start and The Big Lottery Fund. Young Talk has been developed with input and feedback from children and young people across Scotland – ensuring that it meets their needs and interest!

**Membership is free of cost. That's right, it's free. We want it to be accessible to all those interested.**

## So why should we join Young Talk?

### Membership benefits (Oh and by the way, they're all free of charge)

- ❖ Interesting and challenging CPD events and session for children, young people (and adults working with them) to develop mediation skills.
- ❖ Opportunities for networking among children and young people practising mediation, i.e. events and forums where children and young people can connect, share ideas and learn from each other!
- ❖ Support in creating, running and maintaining sustainable peer mediation programs. We are passionate about peer mediation services and making them work for you!
- ❖ Regular newsletters as well as access to valuable member resources to make it as easy as possible for you to set up and maintain peer mediation programme.
- ❖ Opportunities for free registration in the Scottish Mediation Register (SMR) for peer mediators

### Interesting.. and who can join?

Membership of the Peer Mediation Network is open to young people as well as to schools and organisations. There are two categories of membership with slightly different member resources available. The first category of membership is open to:

- 1) Schools, organisations and individuals that have undergone peer mediation training, in or around our target areas (Greater Edinburgh, Livingston, Greater Glasgow, South Lanarkshire, Greater Aberdeen, Greater Dundee)
- 2) Schools, organisations and individuals who have not undergone peer mediation training but have an interest or affiliation with peer mediation in or around our target areas.

**If you are outside our target areas, we still wholeheartedly welcome you to join, but we might not be able to offer all the member resources to you.**

### Tell me more about peer mediation training..

Peer mediation training is a 2 day (or longer) training that takes place within your school or organisation to teach the skills necessary for peer mediation and setting up a peer mediation programme. Both children/young people and adults/teachers take part in the training. Alongside the training valuable resources will be offered in order to help you with all aspects of setting up a successful and sustainable peer mediation service. The Peer

Mediation Network (through SMN) offers peer mediation training with guidance and support adapted to the needs of your school or organisation as well as other valuable resources, at a low cost.

**Think of it this way - it is a small investment (based on well-researched outcomes) with BIG effects on the health, well-being, and learning abilities of children and young people, as well as their future welfare, and the climate of your school/organisation.**

## **And why exactly is peer mediation so great?**

### **Research shows that..**

- ❖ Pupil-to-pupil conflict is highly reduced in schools, similarly suspensions and discipline referrals are much reduced.
- ❖ Relationships between peers are significantly improved, as well as relationships between pupils and teachers – again contributing to a healthy and inclusive climate.
- ❖ Bullying is highly reduced. Participation in peer mediation programmes has a positive impact on both the children who are being bullied, and the children who are bullying.
- ❖ Learning is enhanced on many levels - not only through more time for learning due to fewer conflicts, referrals and disciplinary measures but also through increased perspective-taking skills which develops cognitive abilities and leads to greater academic achievement in pupils.
- ❖ Improvements in problem solving skills, communication skills, interpersonal skills and leadership abilities are demonstrated in these pupils.
- ❖ An increase in self-esteem, confidence, empathy, trust and respect, much due to increased perspective-taking abilities, is demonstrated among pupils involved in peer mediation.
- ❖ Significant improvements are shown in the communication strategies pupils use to resolve conflicts in their homes and in their wider communities as well as their schools.
- ❖ Peer mediators experience empowerment, inclusion and the ability to actively make a profound difference in the lives of others - an ability which they greatly valued and used by their peers.

**Basically - peer mediation builds important life and social skills for all children and young people involved. This includes communication, conflict resolution and interpersonal skills. It empowers children and young people to become healthy and confident individuals, while helping their peers! It's a no brainer really...**

## What do children and young people say about peer mediation?

- ✚ "Peer mediation gives us common ground to build on, and makes it easier to talk communicate well" – S6 pupil, Baldragon Academy
- ✚ "Peer mediation has made me more comfortable in interacting with other pupils, especially the older ones", S3 pupil, Rosshall Academy
- ✚ "Peer mediation has given me an option in situations where I'm in trouble with friends, or they are in conflict" S6 pupil, Baldragon Academy
- ✚ "Peer mediation has helped me mature and deal with all the nonsense" P5 St Hilary's Primary School
- ✚ " Peer mediation helps get to root causes of problems, and relieving tensions between friends" S3 pupil, Rosshall Academy
- ✚ "I use the peer mediation skills I have to mediate conflicts between my siblings, and it works!" P5 pupil, St Hilary's Primary School
- ✚ "I have much more patience in dealing with younger pupils because of peer mediation" P5 pupil, St Hilary's Primary School

For more details and information,

please call the Scottish Mediation Network Office at 01315561221

or contact the Young Talk Coordinator at [roxan@scottishmediation.org.uk](mailto:roxan@scottishmediation.org.uk).

Please don't hesitate to get in touch!