



New Beginnings

Family Engagement Model

Why?

From a FYSB report to Congress, 2014-2015:

In FY 2014 86% of youth in Basic Center programs came from a private residence prior to entry

According to RHYMIS data, 90 percent of youth served by basic centers in FY 2014 said they faced difficult family dynamics at home, such as constant fighting and screaming.

Youth living on the street accounted for six percent of the youth served

“I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life.”

— Maya Angelou

Zena Zumeta

Zena Zumeta, Internationally known as both a mediator and trainer of mediators, Zena D. Zumeta is president of the Mediation Training & Consultation Institute, Zena Zumeta Mediation Services, and The Collaborative Workplace in Ann Arbor, Michigan:

“Transformative mediation is based on the values of "empowerment" of each of the parties as much as possible, and "recognition" by each of the parties of the other parties' needs, interests, values and points of view. The potential for transformative mediation is that any or all parties or their relationships may be transformed during the mediation.”

Immediate Impact

Quotes from New Beginnings shelter youth:

- *“Me and my mom are getting a better understanding between each other”*
- *“I can tell me and my mom have gotten closer”*
- *“My mother and I now have a great relationship”*
- *“I’m on good terms with my parents now”*

Parent quote:

- *“Staff did an excellent job helping both of us understand each other without arguing”*

Immediate Impact 2

Quotes from New Beginnings' shelter mediators:

- *“My favorite part of being a mediator is seeing families begin to work together and develop a deeper understanding of one another.”*
- *“Family conflict mediations are a way to help support families before it gets too out of control or before the family breaks down.”*
- *“Parents and youth who have ‘tried everything’ are often reluctant to try mediation and are shocked when it helps.”*

Immediate Impact 3

"And once the storm is over, you won't remember how you made it through, how you managed to survive. You won't even be sure whether the storm is really over. But one thing is certain. When you come out of the storm, you won't be the same person who walked in. That's what this storm's all about."

—Haruki Murakami



Process Development

“It’s become the culture of the program and the staff”

- trainer Debbie Mattson of
Mediation and Facilitator Resources

Key elements of the program

- The process begins at first contact where we are developing relationships and trust with the youth and family
- Neutrality is crucial for success-it's important for staff to be self-aware of this
- Preparation for the mediation and clarification of the format for all parties is important
- Mediation is an opportunity to address prior conflicts but keep future orientation of relationships first and foremost
- Focus on the interest (needs) not the position is a key element
- Schedule as many sessions as needed and make interim agreements along the way that can be tried out before final agreements
- Maintain healthy communication and safety at all times
- Stay strength-based, positive and promote hopefulness

Quotes

- *“It was helpful having time to say what I needed without interruption or yelling”* (parent)
- *“It is an opportunity for the family to determine what is needed in order to accept the past and make compromises for the future”* (mediator at the shelter)
- *“My dad and I don't usually talk when something is bothering us so it helped a lot.”* (youth)

Outcomes

“Family conflict mediations are a way to help support families before it gets too out of control or before the family breaks down.”

— New Beginnings
Shelter Mediator

Evaluation/Sustainability

- Choose easily measurable outcome indicators, e.g. rate of return home etc.
- ASK! Get feedback from participants (youth, family members, mediators)
- Evaluate effects on program in general and staff (appreciative inquiry)
- Ongoing training and support is sometimes challenging, but effective
- Prevention aspect is valuable for staff morale and retention, appealing to funders

