

Mediation Service

Welcome to the latest issue of the RESOLVE:ASL Newsletter, featuring "Being a Resolve Mediator" by Pauline Linn (page 2)

We continue to support families and education staff across Scotland to get a positive education outcome for children and young people with additional support for learning needs.

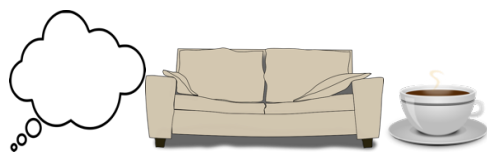
Good to Know

The Resolve Mediation Service is free to any parent and carer of children and young people with additional support needs if there is a disagreement about how those needs are met in delivering their education.

Referral to our service can be made by anyone involved in a disagreement - parents, carers, the young person themselves, schools or local authority education departments.

Mediation can be used instead of, or as well as, taking a case to the Additional Support Needs Tribunal.

To find out more, you can speak to a member of our team on 0131 313 8844 and hear how we can help resolve disputes through effective communication.



Communication is the Key

We have updated our "Steps to Success" guide which is an excellent guide to effective communication. By following a few simple steps this guide can be used by anyone when in disagreement or having challenging conversations, and in particular for parents involved in dispute with their child's education provider

To summarise

- **Keep your cool**
- **Focus on the positives**
- **Be clear about your goals**
- **Listen**
- **Ask questions**
- **Clarify**
- **Keep the focus on meeting the child's needs**
- **Present options in a collaborative way; for example say "we can" instead of "you should". Say "yes and ..." instead of "yes, but ..."**
- **Ask for the "yes"**



To get a copy of the leaflet email the Resolve Team resolve@childreninscotland.org.uk to request an electronic or printed copy

Pauline Linn, tells us what it is like to be a Resolve mediator

First, I have to convey how intrinsically rewarding this work is, which includes the diverse range of people I meet across the whole of Scotland and the variety of issues and concerns being grappled with by parents and educators alike as they pursue solutions to how best support our vulnerable children with ASN needs.

At best, mediation takes a disastrous set of circumstances and transforms them into a sustainable transition. Hence, the reason why mediation is often described as transformative.

People often say to me, your job must be really hard, dealing with conflict and disputes all the time. Does it not get a bit depressing?

Not at all, for it all depends on your mind set. I see conflict as an opportunity. Mediation is voluntary so before you start, you know the people attending are hopeful of a resolution. Where there is hope, there is a way forward.

Initially, I need to explain that, when in conflict, there is a tendency (as part of the human condition) to adopt, what we call a 'position'. We have our 'story' and we know it well, because each time we tell it, we embellish and distort it. We defend our position to the hilt, we are right, the 'other' is wrong, and sometimes although not always we can demonise the other. All of this leads to those involved in conflict being somewhat diminished. They are, in effect, not their true selves.

Mediation is a process to help those involved to become restored to who they are. How can one resist the temptation not to be part of this metamorphosis? I can't.

As mediators, we have theoretical concepts to help us 'read the room'. We have skill sets and strategies to assist us in the room but the most important ingredient to a successful mediation is the people who have come along with hope in their heart for change.

Training and Workshops

We are delighted to have been able to provide bespoke training sessions for delivery to local authority education teams across Scotland

The Accidental Counsellor, delivered by Richard Hendry for those who find themselves in the role of the "accidental counsellor" – a one day course for those who work with and support parents and education staff of children with additional support needs.

Challenging Conversations, a session delivered by Sandra Mitchell, to aid confidence to challenge behaviour, language, situations, explore our own feelings and responses and discuss the best way for us to approach this

Enquire - Cat Thomson gives an insight into the Scottish Advice Service for additional support for learning followed by an in depth overview of the extension of children's rights which came into effect in 2017



Please let us know if you enjoyed reading our newsletter or have any suggestions for future features, for this or to find out more about any of our services you can just drop us an email at resolve@childreninscotland.org.uk

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