

ALBERTA FAMILY MEDIATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Edition 2: November 1, 2004

Special points of interest:

- AFMS is pleased to feature the new look for the newsletter
- Newsletters will be distributed six times yearly
- We welcome your input about the newsletters and encourage you to submit articles and features
- This newsletter features information on provincial pilot programs, book reviews and various areas in which mediation is being utilized

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Pilot Project initiated by Alberta Justice, Civil Litigators in Edmonton and Lethbridge has new tools to creatively resolve civil non-family disputes commenced in the Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta.

The Pilot begins January 1st, 2005 until approximately December 31st, 2006. Interest based mediation will be encouraged through the provision of information to parties and stakeholders; the establishment of a roster of qualified mediators; and the implementation of a Practice Note which allows a party to file a Request to Mediate.

A Request to Mediate may be filed by a party after the service of the Affidavits of Records but prior to the entry of the Certificate of Readiness. If everyone agrees to mediate, the parties select a mediator (either from the roster provided by the Pilot Project or a private mediator), and proceed to mediation.

If a mediator cannot be agreed upon, or if a

party objects to mediation after being served with a Request to Mediate, an application may be made to the Mediation Coordinator for the selection of the mediator or for exemption of the action from mediation.

The process is confidential except as required by law and certain time limits apply to the steps to be taken. Litigants who cannot afford the mediation process may qualify for funding assistance.

For further information or questions, you may contact the Mediation Coordinators:

Sandra L. Schulz, Q.C., or Marnie Plucer
Phone: (780) 427 – 2721

Introducing the AFMS Board of Directors for 2004 and 2005

Dr. Kent Taylor (President)

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Ms. Shelley Taggart

Mr. Terry Zibin

News from around our province

Grande Prairie by Shelley Taggart

Shelley Taggart has been mediating in Grande Prairie for over 7 years and in that time has witnessed a dramatic increase in the demand for mediation services in the area. Private practice and government programs offer a choice of services to residents of Alberta's northwest. A specialist in the area of Family & Divorce mediation, Shelley is a service provider for the Alberta Justice: Custody Mediation Program. This program is being well utilized in the Grande Prairie area, providing assistance to certain parents who are experiencing difficulty in resolving parenting issues.

Another program aiming to help families in conflict, Grande Prairie is part of a mediation pilot project which is a collaborative effort between Alberta Children's Services and Alberta Justice. The pilot program will target contested child protection cases to be mediated within the initial 42 days following apprehension, specifically applications for Temporary and Permanent Guardianship Orders.

The City of Grande Prairie has initiated a Community Mediation Program which aims to allow for collaborative resolution of community disputes. Program Coordinator Frances Amery has overcome some major hurdles in the area of insurance to get the program running; her next goal is to educate citizens, city departments and agencies about collaborative conflict resolution.

Community Features:

November 3-4/04 Fourth Annual Family Violence Conference—Edmonton AB

Guest speakers include: Ellen Pence (Domestic Abuse Intervention project, Minnesota), Anne O'Dell (retired Detective Sergeant), Rev. Shianne Egelheart, Jacquelyn Campbell (Hopkins School of Nursing), Peter Jaffe (Center for Children & Families in the Justice System), and Mark Wynn (retired Nashville Police).

Contact: ICDR Intercultural & Community Development Resources Inc. phone: 780-437-8013 or email: dorothy@icdr.com

Our Directory is on line.

Have you listed your name in our directory on line? If not, please contact Sue at the office for information. Please feel free to provide this directory and web link to referral agents.

Did you know we also have a directory of trainers and education providers? This directory is also found on our web page.

Divorce Coaching

By Barb Hepperle (Life and Divorce Coach)

Divorce coaching helps individuals adjust to transitions and difficult emotional aspects and challenges that occur through divorce. It is a collaborative 1:1 partnership that is custom designed to meet the particular needs of the client.

A Divorce Coach is one that provides support, motivation and uses a solution focused

approach. It is not therapy although it may have some therapeutic value. The coaching process helps clients develop communication skills to reduce emotional turmoil, manage and contain conflicts. It gives the individual the tools to let go of the past and take personal responsibility to re-design his/her life for the future.

Barb suggests that there are benefits of divorce coaching when one is involved in mediation or litigation. The divorce coaching provides support for the emotional issues and helps the individual be able to move through the process with less disputes as well as helping them be more successful during negotiations.

For more information contact Barb at www.lifeline-coach.com or 780-436-9541

Family Conflict Hurts– on line tools to help

There are a couple of resources available for families experiencing separation and divorce. There is a “**Kids guide to separation and divorce**” available from

www.fmc.ca (or through the BC Justice institute website). There is also one for teens at the same site.

Also, www.familieschange.ca

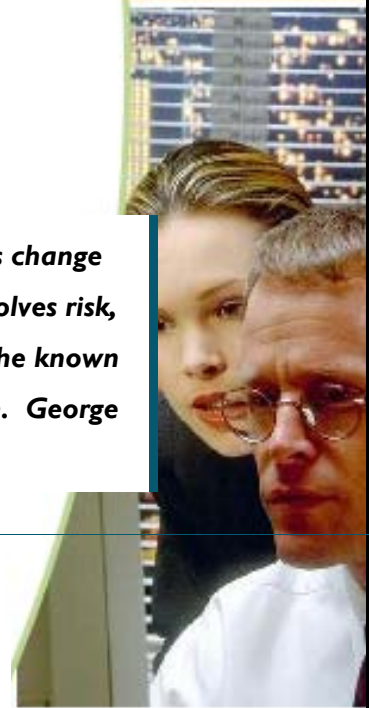
Do you know of other tools, websites, books, etc. that are helpful for families? If so please let us know so we can feature them in our upcoming editions of the

Growth means change and change involves risk, stepping from the known to the unknown. George Shinn

Provincial Mediation Pilot Program

The provincial mediation pilot program is to support the early resolution of issues through mediation. The pilot program targets contested child protection cases to be mediated within the initial 42 days following

apprehension. A secondary purpose is to allow contested Supervision Orders access to the mediation pilot program. The outcome is support early resolution of issues and early permanency for children. The following areas have been targeted for the pilot program: Grande Prairie, Edmonton, Red Deer, Calgary, Lethbridge. Alberta Children’s Services and Alberta Justice are employing a collaborative approach in planning and implementing this project. Watch for updates in future editions of the newsletter.



Lunch and Learn Sessions– Edmonton

Mark your calendars for the 2004-2005 Lunch and Learn sessions!

The location is always the Edmonton City Hall in the Heritage Room. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. and the presentations run from noon until 1:00 p.m. There is a question period and mixer beginning at 1:00 to 1:30. This is a great venue to learn, share information and network with colleagues (all over a lunch break).

Wednesday November 24/04– Cassie Palamar (Alberta Human Rights Commission). Human Rights, ADR programs and conciliation.

Wednesday January 19/05– Rhonda Fox Miles (Fox-Miles & Associates). Bankruptcy, credit counseling applicable to families and family businesses in financial concern.

Wednesday February 16/05– Marnie Plucer and Averie McNary (Alberta Justice). Civil Claims Pilot Project.

Wednesday May 18/04– Lloyd Steier of University of Alberta School of Business Center for Entrepreneurship and Family Enterprise. Sibling partnerships at best and worst.

Wednesday June 15/04- /TBA

There is no cost and you just need to bring your own lunch.

These sessions have been held now for several years.



Lunch and Learn

Restorative Justice Awareness Fair

In recognition of Restorative Justice Week, MRJC presents an opportunity to raise awareness of the Restorative Justice work happening in Edmonton.

At noon, hear Susan Sharpe speak on this year's theme: Engaging us all in the dialogue.

Sharpe is known around the world for her work in Restorative Justice and is the author of **Restorative Justice: A vision for healing and change.**

12pm-1pm
Tuesday, November 16, 2004

CBC Interactive Space
Main Floor, Suite 123,
Edmonton City Centre
Mall

10062 - 102 Avenue
For more information or to add your display to the fair: Jennifer Warren,
MRJC Board Secretary:
437-8622 or jlwarren@telusplanet.net

Look at life as an energy economy game. Each day, ask yourself, "Are my energy expenditures (actions, reactions, thoughts, and feelings) productive or nonproductive? During the course of my day, have I accumulated more stress or more peace?"

-- The HeartMath Solution, Doc Childre and Howard Martin, (c) 1999, Harper San Francisco

From the newsletter Editor– Charmaine Hammond

Resiliency– the ability to bounce back after change, challenge or adversity. What makes some families more resilient than others? This is a topic for which I have a lot of passion and interest. Research shows that resilient people:

- Adapt quickly, takes initiative
- Constantly learn from experience

- Have strong sense of esteem - confidence
- Are playful and Curious and humorous
- Have healthy and caring relationships
- Are Optimistic—pursues personal growth
- Make use of intuition, insight, Show empathy and interdependence

- Show interdependence (distancing from trouble spots)

How, in our work with families, can we frame the process to provide a safe foundation for post conflict resiliency?



Book Review: By Pam Taylor, M. Ed. My Changing Family: A First look at a family break up (by Pat Thomas)

Pat Thomas has created a valuable picture book to support children and their parents as they explore the issues of divorce. Children's emotions are acknowledged, reassurance is thoughtfully provided for feelings of anger, sadness, loss and helpful questions are posed to create a meaningful dialogue between children and their parents. The one message

that is stated repeatedly is that a child will still be loved by both parents regardless of all the changes in the family.

Illustrations are colorful and accurately portray the range of emotions experienced by adults and children. The text would be appropriate for an adult to read

to a preschool aged child but would require repeated readings to fully explore this complex topic.



Children will still be loved by their parents.

Lunch and Learn Summary by Barb Bishop

At the first Lunch and Learn session Randy Sloan, Director of Operations for Native Counseling of Alberta, gave a narrative presentation based on his 22 years of serving the aboriginal community.

Randy enriched our understanding of the native culture with an awareness of connectedness in the aboriginal community. Through advocacy of familial lines and how conflict with one individual can affect the entire community he gave an example of a community torn apart by a crime.

He recognizes the obligation within the culture to adhere to "lots of coaches" (the community), the obligation to "speak their truth, to listen and speak with respect" through a commitment to the Elders and the Creator, as well as advocate for the connection of the individual to the "Red Path". (traditions and culture).

Family Group Conferencing lays the foundation for resolving conflicts connecting the history of the culture, respecting the ceremonial aspects of a strong spiritual component and adher-

ing to the aboriginal history of peace-keeping. The subtleties and protocols of different aboriginal communities allow the community to take responsibility and control through the process or adapt the model that is appropriate for them..

Randy presented a "holistic" approach to conflict and brought new understanding of the dynamics of the aboriginal culture.

Membership Categories with AFMS

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in separation/divorce mediation

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in Family Business Mediation.

Practicing Mediator (designation for those who are continuing to gain mediation experience or for whom mediation is a small part of their practice.

Registered Family Mediator (RFM) specializing in General Family Mediation



AFMS Membership Categories

General Member

Student Member

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Alberta *family* Mediation Society

*Advancing the practice of
family mediation.*

*We're on the web—
look us up!*

About AFMS

Established in 1984,
the non-profit
society provides
services to family
mediators.

The organization has a
part time administrative
assistant and is managed
by a volunteer board of
directors, with
representatives across the
province.

The society is dedicated to
both professional and public
education regarding family
mediation.

In communications that are
difficult or draining, ease into
the heart and
find something to appreciate
about the person you're dealing
with, or find
a feeling of compassion or
kindness. This will clear your
mind and give you
the coherence you need to
know what to say next.
That's energy efficiency
at work.

-- The HeartMath Solution, Doc
Childre and Howard Martin, (c)
1999,
Harper SanFrancisco

Striving for Family Harmony in the Context of Two Cultures

submitted by the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op , Yvonne Chiu

Context:. Over 50% immigrant and refugee families have been found to live under the poverty line despite of their efforts to create better lives for themselves and their children. Combined with additional stresses emerging from gender roles changes and inter-generational conflicts, many families struggle with relationship deterioration and conflict.

Who are we - Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op (MCHB Co-op):

As a group of 28 community health workers with over 15 language and cultural backgrounds, we emerged as a “pilot project” of the local public health department over 12 years ago. Our primary mandate is to help immigrant and refugee families gain equitable access to culturally and linguistically relevant health services/ education and family support. Grounded in the principles of holistic care and community development, the MCHB's have over the years become deeply involved in helping families and communities resolve issues of family conflict and relationship deterioration.

What do we do in relation to family mediation:

Within immigrant and refugee communities, often families seek out indigenous mediators or respected elders to resolve family conflicts. Yet because of the changes in the social and cultural context, traditional approaches to family mediation are not always relevant to the circumstances and struggles of immigrant and refugee families. As a result, the MCHB's began 5 years ago to seek out a spectrum of new solutions that address the bi-cultural reality of family conflicts:

- Seek out mainstream family mediators who are comfortable with collaborating with MCHB's in implementing culturally negotiated process of mediation, whereby the mediation process is modified according to the cultural context of the families.
 - Create processes for sharing and exploring culturally relevant mediation processes between traditional/indigenous mediators within immigrant/refugee communities and mainstream family mediators. The hope is to generate alternative models of family mediation that meet the unique needs of immigrant/refugee families for conflict resolutions.
- Pursue additional alternative conflict resolution processes that would recognize the importance of positive outcomes for the collective (beyond the family) at the level of immigrant/refugee communities, processes that help transform relationships and shift cultural perspectives within communities.

Thank you to the MCHB Co-op for submitting this article for the newsletter!!!

Other AFMS news and updates:

We are looking for articles for our special Christmas edition—please contact Charmaine 780-464-3828 for a short interview or email an article to her at charmaine.hammond@hammondgroup.biz.

Thank you all for sending in your favorite web links, they are now on the website, don't forget to check it out. (and please send more links if you have any).

So far we have featured Grand Prairie and Medicine Hat in our newsletters and would like to feature Calgary in the next feature. If you are interested in a short interview for the newsletter, please call Charmaine.