By utilizing either mediations or facilitated staffings at any stage in the case...

During the Adjudication/Disposition phase of the case:
Promotes discussion of permanency goals and the necessary steps to reach those goals.

Surrounding the Review Hearings:
Provides an opportunity for parties to assess the case, while still providing time for any misunderstandings to be addressed.

During the Permanency Hearing phase of the case:
Provides an opportunity for discussion regarding placement options, needed services, and sets the tone for collaboration.

During a TPR phase of the case:
Provides an alternative to formal termination proceedings. Focuses on the child’s needs and how they can best be met rather than focusing on parents’ failures or inadequacies.

DEPENDENCY/NEGLECT MEDIATION:
Approximately 70% of D/N cases referred to mediation end in a mutually acceptable agreement.

DEPENDENCY/NEGLECT FACILITATED STAFFINGS:
100% of survey participants feel facilitated staffings are an effective use of their time.

90% of survey participants feel facilitated staffings help them work better as a team.

100% of survey participants agree that facilitated staffings are more effective.

ATTOORES who participate in mediation
CONSISTENTLY RATE THE EXPERIENCE WITH THE HIGHEST MARKS POSSIBLE

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION
PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING

Arkansas Youth Mediation Project
1201 McMath Avenue, Room 105
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202
office: 501-324-9939 • toll free: 1-866-273-3959
uar.edu/law/clinical-programs/mediation
ARKANSAS DEPENDENCY/NEGLECT MEDIATION PROJECT

The Arkansas Dependency/Neglect Mediation Project allows parties to participate in a mediation process to help children achieve permanency and safety in a timely and effective manner. Parents, children, ADHS employees, parent counsel, attorney ad litems, court personnel and Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) may request mediation. If the request is not an order of the court, the Mediation Project Administrator will contact the court to offer the service.

Dependency/Neglect Mediation

The average length of time between the initial case filing and permanent placement was 295 days for mediated cases, and 533 days for non-mediated cases. – MidSOUTH training Academy study

FACILITATED STAFFINGS:

Both mediation and facilitated staffings:

• improve communication and promote problem solving between children, families and professionals
• create specific, well-tailored case plans
• encourage greater parental compliance with case plans and orders
• develop concurrent plans that explore relative placement options
• assist teens and case workers in developing successful transition plans which...

EXPEDITES THE PERMANENT PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN

non-mediated cases = 533 days
mediated cases = 295 days

FAMILY IN NEED OF SERVICES

Mediation is also available for families in need of services (FINS). FINS case managers may refer a FINS petition to the Arkansas Youth Mediation Project before the scheduled court date. If an agreement is reached in mediation, the case manager will notify the court of the agreement. The hearing will take place on the scheduled court date if an agreement is not reached in mediation.

A FINS case manager may also refer a case to mediation instead of referring the family to services. In this instance, no action is filed in the court. If an agreement is reached, the case will be closed because there is no pending court action.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Mediation is available for any first offense misdemeanor or juvenile delinquency offenses (thefts, criminal mischief, minor fights with serious personal injuries, etc.). Juvenile delinquency cases referred to the Arkansas Youth Mediation Project may be diverted by intake officers before a petition is filed for a formal court hearing.

The mediation clinic may also mediate truancy cases referred to the program directly by the truancy prosecutor before a petition is filed for a formal court hearing. The participants in the mediation will be the parent(s), the youth, and a representative from the youth’s school. If the terms of the agreement are successfully completed, the case will be closed and no further action will be taken. If no agreement is reached in mediation or if the terms of the agreement are not completed, the case will be returned to the truancy prosecutor for a hearing.

Funding for the projects are provided by the Arkansas Supreme Court Administrative Office of the Courts and the Arkansas Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission in conjunction with the UALR William H. Bowen School of Law.

The Arkansas Youth Mediation Project at the UALR William H. Bowen School of Law assists courts, families and state agencies by providing multiple types of mediation for the community. Mediation is a rapidly expanding area of modern legal practice.

It’s free, statewide and effective.

The Arkansas Youth Mediation Project encompasses several programs focused on the state’s youth. Mediation provides a confidential dispute resolution process in which a mediator assists the parties with communicating and developing mutually acceptable solutions. Although parties may be ordered to attend mediation, participation in the mediation is voluntary and there is no requirement to reach an agreement.

The mediations are held in neutral locations and are free to participants. Because the project is based at the UALR William H. Bowen School of Law, students often observe mediations for educational purposes. This, of course, is pending approval from all parties involved in the mediation. Student observers are strictly bound by the Arkansas Confidentiality Code (ACA §16-7-206).

Dependency/Neglect Mediation

mediated cases = 295 days
non-mediated cases = 533 days

MEDIATION

Funding for the projects are provided by the Arkansas Supreme Court Administrative Office of the Courts and the Arkansas Alternative Dispute Resolution Commission in conjunction with the UALR William H. Bowen School of Law.