Au Pair
IN AMERICA

Successful Mediations:
Best Practices for Community Counselors

When do you mediate?

When both sides have the goal to resolve the conflict.

Meet separately first:

Always speak with both the au pair and host family separately before scheduling a mediation. Counsel, educate, and empower each side. This can prevent the need for a mediation. This also helps to ensure you fully understand the situation and each party's concerns. Once you've spoken with both separately and heard their concerns, then come together for a mediation if it is still needed. This will limit any surprises by anything the host parent(s) or au pair shares in mediation.

Strategies

Ask exploratory questions
What are you feeling? What makes you think that?

Repeat Back
So you feel…

Ask for more
Did I get that right? Am I missing anything

Be Prepared For…

Emotional responses

Silence

Body Language

Interrupting

… and Address It

Do not mediate if one side has made up their minds not to continue the match or there are allegations of abuse. If allegations of abuse are made, call the office.

When do you mediate?

1. **Opening:** Thank everybody for joining.
2. **Process Overview:** How the mediation will go and what to expect
3. **Ground Rules:**
   - no interrupting
   - be polite
   - use I-statements
   - try to stay calm
   - listen respectfully
   - avoid venting or arguing
   - take responsibility for one's own actions
   - the goal is to resolve differences
4. **Voluntary:** All participants should be willing; nobody is required to be here.
5. **Confidentiality:** CC will not share information they learned 1:1, but hopes that AP and HF will share.
6. **Forward-looking:** The focus is on the future of the match, not blame.
7. **Participants' solutions:** Au pair and host family will brainstorm solutions and work together to choose.
8. **Action Plan:** CC will assemble an action plan based on what the au pair and host family decide, with reference to program policies and regulations. CC will follow up to evaluate how the plan is working.