



Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

Serving Charlevoix
and Emmet Counties

August 16, 2010

NAME
ADDRESS
CITY

Dear

Gretchen and Ralph, who had been married for 30 years, had one biological child and two adopted children. They were in the process of adopting a third child when Ralph was brought to the attention of the courts. He had been sexually molesting his 12 year old adopted son since he was six years old. As a result, Ralph is presently serving a ten-year term in jail.

Northern Community Mediation (NCM) became involved in the case in order for placement of the children to be determined. At the mediation table were a total of 15 people, including the prosecuting attorney, several case workers, legal advocates for the children, as well as Gretchen and Ralph. During the mediation process, Ralph realized that it was in the best interest of all of the children that he relinquish his parental rights. Gretchen realized that the accusations against Ralph were not fabrications and decided that divorce was an essential step in protecting her children and to ensure the adoption of the third child. Representatives from the Department of Human Services and the court worked with Gretchen to schedule counseling sessions for the children and Gretchen, as well as implement a strategy for ensuring a healthy environment for all of them.

This case took place two years ago. Gretchen and the four children are doing well. They are a loving, happy family. In all likelihood, if this case had gone through the traditional, court system, the children would have been taken from Gretchen and placed in separate homes, and the fourth child, who was a special needs child, may never have been adopted.

These are the types of cases that NCM deals with on a daily basis. That is why it is essential that NCM be available to provide mediation services.

Unfortunately, in all probability, NCM is facing a \$7,000 reduction in state funding for the 2011 fiscal year. Since NCM operates on a relatively small budget, this will have a severe impact upon its finances. For example, \$7,000 pays the rent for a year.

You can help. Please, consider giving a donation—small or large—to our organization. Your generosity could ensure that we will be able to continue offering quality services to the citizens of Charlevoix and Emmet counties. Your contribution would have a direct impact upon people like Gretchen and her four children.

Sincerely,

Jane Millar, Ed.D.
Executive Director

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