



## Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

It had been two years since Walter and Martha, the paternal grandparents of Sally age 5 and Rick age 7, had seen their grandchildren. Sally and Rick's parents were divorced. Their father had been an excessively abusive parent and was allowed only supervised visits with his children. Their mother Mary had full custody of the children, and would not allow Walter and Martha visitation of any kind.

As grandparents, Walter and Martha had no legal rights. Without Mary's consent, they may never have seen their grandchildren. In desperation, Martha called Northern Community Mediation (NCM) to see if we could help. Reluctantly, Mary agreed to come to mediation. During the mediation process, Mary expressed her fears that if Walter and Martha were granted visitation they would allow their son to be present. Walter and Martha shared their heartbreak at not being able to be a part of their grandchildren's lives. By understanding the concerns of one another, they were able to come to an agreement that allowed Walter and Martha supervised visitations with the understanding that if all went well, ultimately no supervision would be required.

That mediation took place a year ago. Today, Walter and Martha regularly see their grandchildren. Mary has found friendship and support from Walter and Martha. Most importantly, Sally and Rick have the joy of a healthy relationship with their grandparents.

I cannot make the statement that this scenario never would have occurred had it not been for the services of NCM, but I can make the statement that the presence of NCM made a significant difference in the lives of these five people.

Most disputes can be resolved through mediation. In 2006, NCM handled close to 500 cases representing 1,320 people and 197 children. We want to continue offering quality, mediation services to the citizens of Charlevoix and Emmet Counties. To do so costs money. Therefore, we are enlisting your financial support by asking for a monetary contribution.

Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, we have a 1:1 match for every dollar that is given during our donor campaign. I hope that you will be a part of this fund drive.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter, and thank you for making a difference.

Sincerely,

Jane Millar, Ed.D.  
Executive Director