

PEER MEDIATION IN SCHOOLS

Outcomes from peer mediation programs

The following information is taken from the *2003 Evaluation of the Peer Mediation Program in NSW Government Schools*.

Schools implementing peer mediation programs expected the initiatives to bring a range of benefits for students and the school community. The evaluation found that students who participate in mediation experienced immediate benefits from having conflicts resolved. For teachers, with fewer disputes spilling into classrooms, less time was spent attending to minor conflicts. The peer mediators expected to gain important life skills and were provided with opportunities to exercise leadership.

The evaluation showed that in practice these outcomes were substantially achieved by the schools. A summary of the benefits which followed from peer mediation is presented below. These outcomes are congruent with those found in the 1997 evaluation of the Peer Mediation Program.

Summary of outcomes of peer mediation

	Main benefits
General student population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduced bullying• Opportunities to resolve conflicts• Exposure to alternative ways of solving conflicts
Peer mediators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership development• Improved academic and social skills• Improvement in family relationships• Increased self-esteem gained from successful mediation and recognition as a peer mediator
School staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less time required to deal with minor issues• Fewer conflicts flowing into class rooms
School overall	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safer and more harmonious playground and school environment• Opportunity to use peer mediation initiative to showcase effective dispute resolution to the whole school community (teachers, parents and students)