



Child Protection Mediation (Abuse, Neglect, Dependency “AND”)

The **MAND (Mediation of Abuse Neglect Dependency) Program** is designed to provide an **opportunity for parties** involved in a formal court filing of Abuse, Neglect and/or Dependency, to reach agreement on issues related to the filing **without a formal trial**.

The purpose of the program is to strengthen parents’ voices by giving the parties themselves the opportunity to resolve the issues of the complaint and/or motions.

The mediator guides the communication process so that all participants have a chance to be heard. The mediator does not make any decisions for the participants but is there to help them come to an agreement that works for all parties involved in the case.

Who?

- ♦ Parent(s)
- ♦ Relatives / Caregivers
- ♦ Attorney for parents or relative caregivers
- ♦ Guardian ad Litem
- ♦ County children’s services caseworker
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- ♦ Any other professionals or individuals involved in the case.
- ♦ Sometimes a county attorney or Prosecutor - although Franklin County prosecutor’s office has an understanding, they do not participate at the adjudication stage unless deemed necessary.

What?

- ♦ Adjudication
- ♦ Disposition
- ♦ Placement of the child
- ♦ Access/Visitation plans for child in out-of-home placement
- ♦ Resolution of custody issues & permanency
- ♦ Case plan issues & logistics
- ♦ Communication & reunification
- ♦ Family conflicts
- ♦ Safety of the child
- ♦ Services for child and parents

How?

- ♦ Develop or modify a case plan to reunify the family and find the best possible placement of the child in the interim.
- ♦ Give the parents and caregivers direct input to encourage participation and understanding.
- ♦ If not reunification, permanent placement for the child can be discussed.

Why Mediation?

- ♦ Give parents a “place at the table”, less focus on blame and more focus on the child’s needs.
- ♦ Improve the quality of the agreement and parental compliance due to input from all parties.
- ♦ Facilitate the ability of the group to work as a team to find solutions.
- ♦ An opportunity to deal with emotions and relationships inherent in child protection matters outside of a contested hearing.