

Community Justice Centres are learning a great deal about how conflicts between people do and don't get resolved.

We want to share this information with our community.

What we've learned may improve your communication skills and help you work the problem out.

People aren't perfect of course and won't always say the 'right' thing. However our experience tells us that if people respect and work together on resolving their differences and disputes, everyone wins.

That's what Community Justice Centres are all about.

1. If you're in conflict with someone and assuming there is no threat of physically getting hurt, dealing with the person face to face is better than letters and messages, or talking to everyone else but the person with whom you have concerns.
2. Plan to talk to the other person at the right time and make enough time to do it. Don't start when the other person is on their way to work, when you've had a terrible day or just before you have to cook dinner. It only adds to the frustration. Find a place where you can both sit comfortably and quietly for a while.
3. Think beforehand what you want to say. It's important to state clearly what the problem is and how you feel about it.
4. Don't blame the other person for everything or begin with your opinion of what should be done. Avoid the unnecessary "You're a" This only makes it harder for the person to take in what you're saying.
5. Don't interpret their behaviour. Don't say "You're blocking my driveway on purpose just to make me angry." Instead, say "When your car blocks my driveway I get angry because it is difficult to get in or out".
6. Give the other person a chance to give their side of the story and what they think has been happening to cause the trouble. Be prepared to relax, listen and take in everything.
7. Let them know you hear what they're saying. You may not agree with them but there's nothing more frustrating than trying to talk to someone who doesn't even appear to be listening. Tell them you hear what they're saying (*there's nothing better for moving things toward an agreement*). Tell them you're glad you're talking about the problem.
8. When you've reached this point try working on the problem co-operatively. Work out what you both have to do to resolve the problem. Two or more people working on a problem together can get further than one person telling the other they have to change.
9. If you take the time to work on a problem, take the time to get it right. Get the whole problem out in the open. Don't leave out the part that seems "less important" or is the hardest to talk about. Those are the things that will ruin the solution you come up with.
10. Agree to check with each other at a specific time in the future to see how things are going and don't forget to do it.
11. If you find it too difficult to talk to the other person on your own or find that each time you try, you end up shouting or getting upset, call CJsCs and we will talk to you about arranging a mediation.
12. At a mediation session both sides have a chance to talk about the problem with the help of our trained, impartial mediators.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you would like more information about Mediation, or to speak to one of our Mediation Advisors, please call us on:
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