

May Newsletter

Once again, thank you to our clients and supporters for being an essential part of our journey. As we move into May, two of the Fulcrum programs are slowly evolving: The Sexual Exploitation Prevention program for high school and middle school students is entering its summer period where there are more non-school appearances, as well as more interchange families are going offsite. Our newsletter will try to keep you up to date with the new season.



FULCRUM'S FARM SUCCESSION MEDIATION Numbers Growing in Three States

The Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Clinic currently has certified mediator contracts with the USDA to provide agricultural mediation in the states of Washington, Idaho, and Alaska. One of the key aspects of the contracts is work being completed with farmers in those states to provide farm succession mediation.

Today, nationwide, there are 1.9 million farms found in America and 95% are family farms according to the USDA Census of Agriculture in 2022. They are operated by families, individuals, family partnerships or family corporations. The average size farm is just under 500 acres with 85% of those farms classified as small family farms. The total number of farms in operation decreases around two percent a year, and total farm land drops over a million acres each year. Farmers and ranchers receive only **15 cents (on average) out of every retail dollar** spent on food by consumers.

Family farms are typically operated with the hope of allowing family members to continue the operation following the working life of the original owner or founder of the farm. Fulcrum mediators are specifically trained and certified to work with farm families during succession discussions to review options, plans, organizations, and family support. Because many family farm members face pressures from major agricultural corporations and commercial developments for acquisition, family members are seeking assistance to develop plans to keep family farms just that, farms that support individual families.

In any successful farm succession process, there are five basic steps to identify and complete. The first step is to decide that this is a process that is important for the family. Does it make sense, is it accomplishable and should it be completed in a reasonable time frame. The second step is to decide who is to be involved in the decisions; family members

only, the owners of the farm through marriage, or the good friend from the next farm. The third step is a primary discussion of what is fair verses what is equitable. If one child has left home for 20 years and had not been around for any farming experience, and another child has worked the farm for the last 10 years, what is fair verses equitable in relationship to passing on the family farm? It is a tough decision. The fourth step is deciding what professionals may offer assistance. Will there be lawyers, accountants, financial advisers or others that need to be contacted?

Finally, the last step is deciding on a date to turn over control of the farm to the succession process. Many times, decisions are made for transfer, and the transfer is never completed. Call the Fulcrum USDA mediation program if you would like more information.

Farm succession mediation is a service of the Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Clinic. The process is never easy, and it may take a very long time to accomplish.

Resolution Washington Importance Grows

The organization comprising all of the 20 dispute resolution centers in the State of Washington continues to grow in importance to the State of Washington. The organization has published its annual report for the legislature and it continues to sponsor specific programs designed to enhance mediation services around The Evergreen State. The organization originally formed nearly 35 years ago following the passage of RCW 7.75 outlining organizational requirements and mandates for dispute resolution centers in Washington State. The organization changed its name more than a decade ago. Today, it distributes money from the State Department of Commerce to all centers, and it is overseen by a board of three members chosen by delegates of dispute resolution centers serving areas statewide.

Access and Visitation Grant Available

Moving to the second half of the fiscal year, Fulcrum is pleased to announce that it has money available through an access and visitation grant designed to provide money to lower income families for mediation services and supervised visitation. Fulcrum has long been a recipient of this grant fund and it is pleased to be able to provide those funds when services are needed.



Usually, when grant funds are provided to offset the cost of service, individuals will pay around 30% of the required costs. Additionally, Fulcrum offers a sliding fee scale for all mediations. Charges for supervised visitation are the lowest in the local area.

SAVE ONE Finishing School Year

The SAVE ONE Sexual Exploitation Prevention Program is wrapping up the current school year with a very busy work schedule in May and June. Members of the program have a number of high school and middle school presentations scheduled between now and the end of the academic year. In addition, the staff also has scheduled numerous public forum discussions outlining sexual exploitation prevention efforts in school districts around the state, and in communities, both large and small.

Recently, the organization was notified that its sexual exploitation prevention materials were added to two web sites presented statewide by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The material is available for administrators, teachers, and those who may instruct some classes in sexual exploitation.

Groups may contact Jaclyn Coyle to schedule presentations during the summer.

Angry? A Five Session Class Available

The Fulcrum organization continues to work with the Department of Corrections to make available to those who require a Court ordered anger management class a five session 10-hour course. Content focusses on specific learning styles of understanding anger, its causes, self-esteem, communication skills, stressful situations, and stress related issues. The course is also available for those who might like to learn more about their individual anger issues before there is any court involvement. Classes are taught on Tuesday nights from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Fulcrum offices.



Three Decades and Counting

This past month, Gayle Cooper, the Associate Director of the Fulcrum Institute Dispute Resolution Clinic celebrated three decades of service with the organization. Ms. Cooper also serves as the primary accountant for the organization. She is a certified qualified mediator and she represents the organization nationally with the United States Department of Agriculture. Ms. Cooper brings expertise and understanding to each of the functions she performs.

Superior Court Parenting Plan Forms

Just a reminder. Last year, Superior Courts in the State of Washington changed all of the parenting plan form for individuals with children going through a dissolution.

In days gone by, parenting plan forms were eight to 10 pages. New forms may now number in the 40-page range. Fulcrum does not give legal advice. However, it can answer questions about the forms.

The Search for Grant Dollars

The Fulcrum organization continues to apply for grant dollars on a local, state, and federal level. The dollars involved may be provided as a direct donation, or as a reimbursement for the operation of a specific needed community program. The organization has physical space available to add staffing, and it has the expertise to provide operational coordination and the completion of numerous identifiable programs related to the mission of the organization.



Haven says welcome to May.

It will be a busy month in our facility. The first weekend is Bloomsday and there are special rules to follow. Then there is Mother's Day which is always a big celebration in our supervisory facility. Finally, there is Memorial Day weekend. Fulcrum will **not** have special hours for that weekend. It will be business as usual for all visiting families.



Welcome New Family Time Supervisors

Join us in saying hi to three new family time supervisors this month. Joining the staff are Josephine, Nija, and TI. All three individuals meet strict training guidelines and each one will offer the best in professional visitation service for each and every family.

Parking Rules Explained

The Rock Point Center provides free parking for all clients of the facility. If you have a longer visit than two hours, please do not worry about where you park. The facility has not towed any vehicle in years, and longer visits are usually on the weekend. So, park, relax and enjoy the time with your child or children at the facility.



Art Review

Clients of Fulcrum, and local art critics have a new passion once entering the facility. Usually, on the left side of the main lobby there is an art wall displaying drawn, painted, and colored art pictures from clients of the facility. Those art projects are part of a monthly contest for clients to win a \$20.00 gift certificate in one of three age categories. Individuals visiting the office have been amazed at the talent exhibit by some who are as young as four years old. The next time you are in the facility take a peek. You will be pleasantly surprised!

On Site Eating

If you are a client of Fulcrum and looking for a quiet place on the weekend to have food with your child or children, please consider the table and benches in front of and on the side of the building. On a sunny day, or just as a relaxing break you may want to leave the facility to have lunch in the sunshine.

All observation and documentation specialists are pleased to allow you and your family to take advantage of that opportunity.

Photo Wall New Addition

The Interchange is pleased to announce that this month the office will feature a new addition called the Photo Wall. All interchange staff will have their pictures displayed on the new photo wall. Haven wants every person who visits our office to recognize members of the Interchange staff; knowing that they are professionals performing their jobs as observation and documentation specialists.

THE FULCRUM INSTITUTE DISPUTE RESOLUTION CLINIC:

Phone Number: (509) 838-2799

Website: www.fulcrumdispute.org

Questions: Call us today

