

SCHOOL MEDIATION IN FINLAND 2009

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Finnish Forum for Mediation

Maija Gellin

Eeva Saarinen

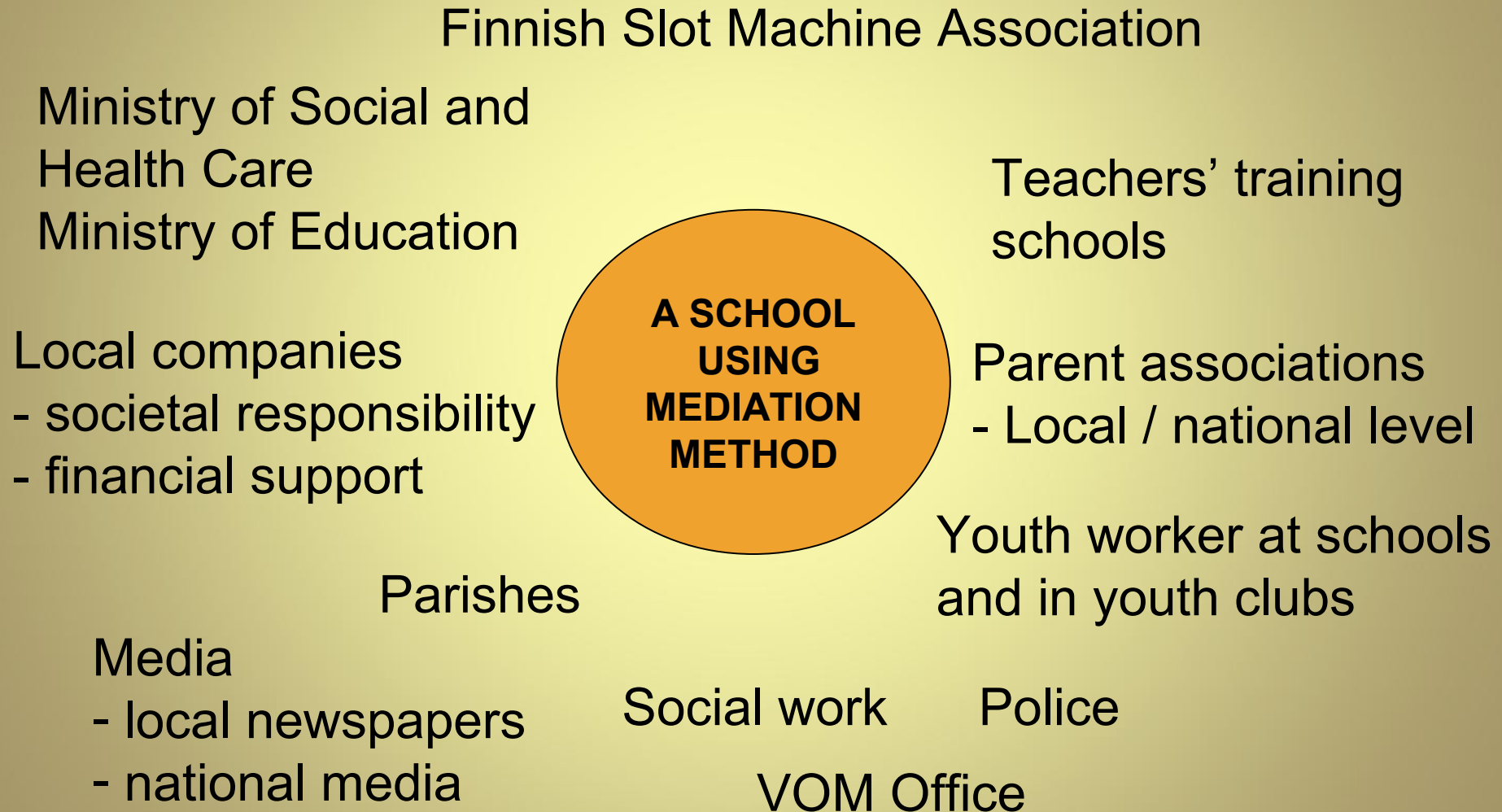
School mediation project in Finland

- Started 2000 by Finnish Red Cross, continued by Finnish Forum for Mediation since 2006
- Supported by the Ministry of Education and the Finland's Slot Machine Association
- Co-operating with Teachers' Training Schools, Finnish Parent Association, local police and VOM-offices, local parishes and companies etc.
- New cooperation with UN Association of Finland
- Multi-professional steering group and development group

Situation in numbers, autumn 2009

- 360 mediation schools; primary, secondary and high schools, and vocational schools
- 7200 trained peer mediators
- 1800 trained supportive adults
- over 7500 cases mediated during year 2008
- 15 000 conflict parties have solved their conflict in mediation
- concerns 90 000 pupils plus their parents

School mediation networking



School mediation training program

- A . Starting module
 - A 1 . Training to whole school staff (half day)
 - A 2 . Training to peer mediators and supportive adults (whole day)
- B . Advanced training modules
 - B 1 . Further training (whole day)
 - B 2 . Consultation
- C . Additional training modules
 - Parent's evenings , local seminars and workshops etc

Peer mediation

- Pupils are mediating conflicts of other pupils
- Training is essential
- Information for whole school community
- Cases come from teachers, other staff, pupils and parents

Supportive adults

- Adults are systematically supporting peer mediators
- Supportive adults can also mediate, for example: serious bullying, social difficulties, conflicts between a teacher and a pupil, unwillingness to be at school etc

School mediation in cooperation with VOM-office

- In more serious cases a school can contact local V O M -office
 - Sometimes local police or youth worker advises parties to contact the V O M -office before starting the official criminal process
 - V O M -office workers or voluntary mediators are mediating these cases
- Cases come usually from parents or the head of the school

Quickened process in juvenile cases

- Co-operation between local schools, health care, police, youth and social worker and V O M -office workers
- Regular network meetings to regognice and to focus the need of support
- Straigh contacts possible when deciding together how to work in a specific case
- After succesfull mediation the police can close the case

Criminal cases to VOM-office

- M e d i a t i o n i s w e l l k n o w n i n t h e w h o l e c o m m u n i t y a s a m e t h o d t o m a n a g e c o n f l i c t s a n d c r i m i n a l c a s e s
- M e d i a t i o n b y V O M - o f f i c e c a n b e s e e n a s a n o p p o r t u n i t y t o s o l v e s e r i o u s c o n f l i c t s i n s t e a d s t a r t i n g a j u r i d i c a l p r o c e s s
- P o s s i b i l i t y t o l e a r n s t i l l o c c u r s

Coming in autumn 2009

- The evaluation report by Finnish Youth Research Association
- The fourth survey report by Finnish Forum for Mediation
- A book about whole mediation field in Finland (Univ. of Lapland, Dept. of Education)
- A book about school mediation (at Spring 2010, FFM)

The great opportunity to increase the knowledge of restorative practises

- The finnish school meditation method has a honor to be presented as a one of the three finnish good practises in the conference of the UN Crime Prevention Network in Stockholm in December 2009

The survey 2009

”My life has a new meaning!”

(a peer mediator)

- 86% of mediated cases deal with physical or mental violence
- 95% of all cases lead to an agreement and were successful after 1-2 weeks follow-up
- 89% of peer mediators feel that it is very important to deal cases immediately
- 90% of mediators think that peer mediation is very meaningful and important

The survey 2009

” Finally I could tell somebody.” (a party)

- 82% of the peer mediators feel they have helped the parties
- 88% of the parties told that they had kept their agreement
- 87% of the parties feel that it is good that pupils may solve their conflicts in peer mediation
- 91% of the parties felt that they have been heard

The survey 2009

The supportive adults:

scale 1 -5

average

- "Mediation is a central part of the school culture" 3,8
- "I have learned methods to solve conflicts in my work"
3,9
- "Parties have got help from mediation"
4,0
- "Peer mediation is works"
4,4

- "Using peer mediation has lowered the treshold to see
and work with different conflicts in schools." (a supportive adult)

The survey 2009

The supportive adults:

scale 1 -5

average

- "It is meaningful to be a supportive adult to peer mediators"
4,4
- "The mediators apply well the principles of mediation" 4,5
- "Peer mediation is a good early intervention"
4,5

- The supportive adults have mediated more serious cases
- Even conflicts between teachers and pupils have been mediated successfully

The survey 2009

Challenges

- Good intentions but slow change in the school culture
- How to increase the real participation and commitment?
- "I can do it faster and better" – how to move from this attitude to the insight that pupils are capable experts of their own communities

First Results of the Evaluation 2009

- Kiilakoski T. 2009. "It is surely better to mediate than not to mediate." Peer mediation, conflicts and school culture. Helsinki: Finnish Youth Research Society
- The evaluation has been done in one city in Northern Finland
 - School mediation has started in this primary and secondary schools 2002
 - Interviews and narrative data from 9 pupils and 5 adults

Kiilakoski 2009

Mediation works in schools

- The models of training are good and sufficient
- Commitment of the supportive /active adults is very important
- Almost every mediated case has been successfully solved in mediation
- "For once we are listening to each others and really finding solutions." (a peer mediator)

Kiilakoski 2009

Mediation is a part of school culture

- Participation
 - Mediation is understood as a method of participation
- Learning
 - Most of the learning benefits in are experienced by the parties of the conflict and the peer mediators
 - "We have learned good social skills for our coming marriages." (a peer mediator)
- Prevention
 - The use of mediation has decreased the need to do the interventions by teachers and principals
 - "Even the small cases should be mediated before they grow up bigger." (a peer mediator)

Kiilakoski 2009

What to develop?

- Increase the information of restorative practices to all pupils
- Develop arenas to increase the right information from pupils to pupils with their own language
- Give more active roles to pupils when increasing the restorative practices
- "Every day I see conflicts which could be mediated but adults don't give us a chance."
(a peer mediator)

Kiilakoski 2009

Change of the school culture needs cooperation

- Develop the virtual forums for network to supportive adults and peer mediators
- How to break the tabu of silence among youngsters?
- Create virtual environments for youngsters with the youngsters

Finnish Forum for Mediation, FFM

- Project Manager Maija Gellin
 - `maija.gellin@ssf-ffm.com`

- Training Manager Eeva Saarinen
 - `eeva.saarinen@ssf-ffm.com`

www.sovittelu.com

All conflicts can be solved

- "We have learned to take responce of our own conficts."
- "We don't always need teachers to tell us what to do."
- "We have learned good manners, self controll, equality, social skills, how to work together."
- "Give us a chance to grow !"