



**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**MIDDLESEX DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE AND MIDDLESEX PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR YOUTH, INC. HOST TRAINING ON CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**CAMBRIDGE** – The Middlesex District Attorney's Office and Middlesex Partnerships for Youth, Inc. hosted a training workshop yesterday, March 2, entitled, "Dealing with Conflict: Tools for Your Toolbox." The workshop was held at the Community Dispute Settlement Center, Inc., in Cambridge, and was presented by Gail S. Packer and Melissa Brodrick.

This workshop focused on dealing with conflict and increasing one's effectiveness in conflict situations within a school or community setting. Participants were taught to understand the dynamic of conflict, learn how conflicts escalate and how to identify contributing factors, develop strategies for diffusing conflict, and learn the principles and processes of mediation.

Gail S. Packer, MSW, has been Executive Director of the Community Dispute Settlement Center, Inc. since 1988. In her role, Packer has trained hundreds of mediators and provided conflict management workshops for groups such as the Cambridge Police Department, City of Boston Streetworkers, and Digital Equipment Corporation. For the past 11 years, she has supervised staff and trained high school students in a SCORE Peer Mediation Program at Northeast Metro Tech, a regional vocational high school in Wakefield.

Melissa Brodrick has been a dispute resolution trainer and mediator since 1985, with a private practice dedicated to education, workplace and family disputes. Broderick is also an Associate of the Institute for the Study of Conflict Transformation and a trainer and mediator for numerous national and local mediation panels. She has been a lecturer for Simmons Graduate School of Social Work and was a faculty member of the Harvard School of Public Health Program for Health Care Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Leadership for eight years. She holds a Masters in Education from Harvard University and a B.A. from Amherst College.

The Community Dispute Settlement Center, Inc. is a private, nonprofit mediation and training center that has been providing an alternative and affordable forum for resolving conflict for 26 years. CDSC promotes methods to understand and deal with conflict through skilled teams of pro-bono mediators, varied training programs, and broad community outreach.

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Middlesex Partnerships for Youth, Inc. (MPY) is a non-profit organization established in 1988 by the Middlesex District Attorney's Office and ten school districts to foster communication on school-related legal issues relating to substance abuse and violence. Through Project Alliance, MPY's primary initiative, the non-profit provides prevention and intervention resources, as well as training and programming to Middlesex school districts and communities using a combination of educational outreach, technical support, and community-based strategy development to address a variety of youth health and safety issues. MPY now includes over 60 member school districts. For more information on Middlesex Partnerships for Youth, Inc. and Project Alliance, please visit [www.projectalliance.org](http://www.projectalliance.org).

This training session was held yesterday, March 2, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Community Dispute Settlement Center in Cambridge. Approximately 20 people attended, representing the following communities and organizations:

- Bedford High School
- Bedford Youth and Family Services
- Cambridge Rindge & Latin High School
- The Amigos and King Schools (Cambridge)
- Everett High School
- Groton Police Department
- Minuteman Regional High School (Lexington)
- Medford Public Schools
- Newton Public Schools
- Plympton Elementary School (Waltham)
- Perkins School (Watertown)
- Nashoba Valley Technical High School (Westford)
- Abbot School (Westford)

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