

## Common Questions.....

- How do I prepare my child for the class? Talk to your child regarding sharing their feelings about their family with friends their own age.
- Will I be able to talk to the child(ren)'s facilitator at the end of class? Children's facilitators will be happy to discuss with you the activities your children were involved in. However, they will not be able to provide you with specific comments made by individual children.
- Who do I ask about special needs? Call the Custody Department for further information regarding your situation.
- Do you have daycare available? For the education class there is not daycare available. Family Division provides a children's room when parents attend their mediation session.

## Quotes from parents and children who attended the Generations program

### Parents:

- "I am glad that I attended this session. The Generations program is here to help parents keep their children out of the middle."
- "This seminar really taught me some things that either I was unsure of or didn't know. On my way to the class, I was angry that I had to come. Now I'm so happy that I attended."
- "Thank you for an alternative to court."

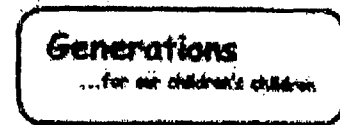
### Children:

The best thing that happened to me in class today was...

- "I got to talk and get the scary feelings out of my stomach." Age 6
- "The class taught me that it's ok to have fun and not worry about the grownups." Age 7
- "I learned that it's not alright for my mom or my dad to put me and my brother in the middle, and I'm going to ask them to stop it." Age 14

## Generations

...for our children's children



Allegheny County Court of Common  
Pleas, Family Division  
Child Custody Department  
440 Ross Street, Suite 1030  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219  
Phone: (412) 350-4311  
Fax: (412) 350-4370  
[CUSTODYDEPARTMENT@alleghenycourts.us](mailto:CUSTODYDEPARTMENT@alleghenycourts.us)  
The Honorable Kim Eaton  
Administrative Judge

## What is Generations?

Generations is a program administered by the Allegheny County Children's Court Child Custody Department, which provides information to parents and children about changing families and offers parents/caregivers the skills to reach their own resolution on custody issues. The Generations program consists of two parts: 1.) a mandatory custody education seminar for adults and an interactive group for children staffed by individuals with over twenty years experience in the field of child development, and 2.) a mediation orientation session for parents/caregivers only. Effective February 1, 1997, Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas Family Division requires all parties filing an action for any type of custody to participate in the Generations Program.

## Adult & Children's Classes:

Family Law Center  
440 Ross Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (downtown Pgh.)

## Mediation Sessions:

Allegheny County Children's Court  
Child Custody Department  
440 Ross Street, Suite 1030  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (downtown Pgh.)  
412-350-4311  
412-350-4370 (fax)

## The Adult Seminar

The adult education seminar of the Generations program is approximately 3 hours long and addresses the following topics:

- How to build a co-parenting relationship
- Learn to communicate & problem solve
- Help children cope effectively with their changing family
- Identify how parent/caregiver conflict can affect the behavior of children
- Understand that most children do best when they have the right to know and love both parents
- General overview of the mediation session

## The Children's Group

Children between the ages of 6-15 years old are required to attend an interactive group at the same time as the adult session. Children under 6 or over 15 years are not permitted at the class. Children are appropriately grouped by age so that they can identify and share with peers similar experiences in their families. These groups are facilitated with activities, discussions, art, music, and play.

## SECURITY NOTICE

Only the parties on the order of court shall be permitted in the Custody Department office. No third parties will be permitted in the Custody Department.

## The Mediation Session

The custody mediation session gives parents/caretakers an opportunity to meet with a trained mediator to address issues related to meeting their child(ren)'s needs and to formulate a custody arrangement. Neither children nor attorneys participate in mediation. Parties will meet with a mediator for 2 to 2 1/2 hours to discuss approaches to a successful parenting plan. The goal of mediation is for parents to create their own parenting plan, called a Memorandum of Understanding. Mediation is not therapy and does not include legal advice. The mediation process encourages adults to work together and to be responsible for their own parenting decisions.

Mediation sessions are confidential with limited exceptions. The discussions during mediation cannot be recorded or copied. The mediator cannot be required to testify in court. Mediators are often members of the legal or mental health fields with advanced degrees, in addition to having basic and ongoing advanced training in mediation.

## Attorneys and Mediation

Prior to mediation the parties' attorneys can assist them in organizing their thoughts about what to address in the session. Once a parenting plan is reached, the parties may proceed to an attorney to prepare a consent order of court consistent with their parenting plan.