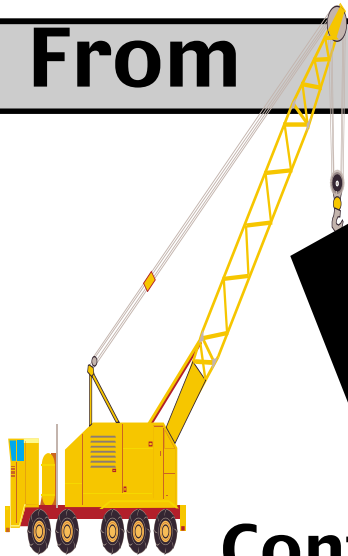


**From the ground up:**



# **BUILDING**

## **Your School's Conflict Management Program**

**An action guide for teachers,  
students and the community**

- **Tips for getting started**•
- **Making your program work**•
- **Sources for program funding**•
- **Local Ohio resources that can help**•
- **Parent & community involvement**•



**The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management**

Riffe Center, 77 South High Street, 24th Floor

Columbus, Ohio 43266-0214

Phone: (614) 752-9595 • Fax: (614) 752-9682

[www.state.oh.us/cdr/](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/)

# Breaking Ground:



## What is

### The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management?

The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management, together with the Ohio Department of Education, the Ohio Board of Education, and other educational organizations, work to provide Ohio schools with constructive, nonviolent methods for resolving disputes.



### What can the Commission do for you?

The Commission is a State agency that provides schools with funding, age-appropriate resource materials, training, and assistance needed to teach both youths and adults the techniques of effective conflict management. This booklet was designed as an introduction and basic reference for general use by all ages.

For more information on Commission programs and services, please contact the Commission at (614) 752-9595. An extensive listing of conflict management resources is available through the Commission's Web site at <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr)>>.

*This packet was designed, compiled and written by OCDRCM intern Kevin Joy. Special thanks to Jennifer Batton and Maria Mone for their assistance and guidance on this project.*

## What is Conflict Management?

The term 'conflict management' refers to programs that teach individuals concepts and skills for preventing, managing and peacefully resolving concepts. These programs can teach life skills, "win-win" negotiation strategies, mediation skills and violence prevention. They are implemented in grades K-12 to help students, teachers, administrators and parents resolve conflicts effectively.

Conflict is natural, and in differing degrees occurs daily in everyone's life. In a time where school violence has become more and more common, teachers are increasingly recognizing the importance of conflict management programs to handle classroom misbehavior and to enhance the teaching of core academics. Student peer mediation groups are also giving rise to programs aimed at resolving conflict within schools.

Conflict management programs have proven that young people and adults can quickly learn to use effective problem solving concepts. If they are given an opportunity to practice the skills in real life situations, the acquisition of conflict management techniques empowers individuals to take responsibility for their own conflicts and follow through with the resolution of those conflicts.

Ideally, all students, teachers, personnel, parents and community members would receive conflict management training. Although this goal cannot be accomplished immediately, it should be a long-term goal of school and community leaders. The greater the number of individuals who possess conflict management skills, the more likely it is that the skills will be valued, encouraged and used by individuals in conflict situations.



# Structural Details:

## What are the **benefits**



### of these programs?

*Studies have cited the following benefits as a result of adopting conflict management programs:*

- improved academic achievement and knowledge of conflict resolution
- enhanced interpersonal communication skills
- higher scores on proficiency tests
- fewer in-school suspensions
- increased ability to control behavior in conflict situations
- less teacher time spent on managing classroom conflicts
- increased respect for individual differences, cultures and perspectives
- less time handling playground and lunchroom disputes
- improved school climate
- fewer instances of name calling

For more information about evaluation and assessment, see the Commission's Web site at <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/assessmentevaluationscm.htm](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/assessmentevaluationscm.htm)>>

### Did You Know?

- Ohio **leads the nation** in supporting school-based conflict management programs.
- Ohio is the **first state** to fund a joint Commission/Department of Education conflict management initiative.
- Since 1990, the **number of Ohio districts** with conflict management programs has grown from 30 to **more than 380**.
- Today over **1,400 Ohio public schools** report having some type of conflict management program.

# Moving Forward:



## Tips for Funding Your Conflict Management Program:

Funding is often an issue for schools interested in starting conflict management programs. School programs are funded in a variety of ways, depending on the available resources of the school, community and federal agencies. Various funding mechanisms include the following:

- existing school budgets
- community foundations
- community civic groups
- parent groups
- local businesses
- state and federal programs, such as *The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management*. <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr/](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/)>>
- Safe and Drug-Free Schools grants*

The cost of starting a conflict management program also varies. Like buying a car, the cost depends on the quality and type of model you want. Potential costs for starting a conflict management program may include:

- staff training
- curriculum integration materials
- program coordinator stipends
- release time to attend trainings/conferences

## Violence Prevention Funding Sources:

**Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management**  
77 South High Street, 24th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43226  
(614) 752-9595

**Office of Criminal Justice Services**  
400 East Town Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4242  
(614) 466-7782

**Ohio Violence Prevention Center**  
400 East Town Street, Suite 120  
Columbus, Ohio 43215-4242  
(614) 466-3445

**Ohio Safe Schools Center**  
University of Cincinnati  
P.O. Box 210105  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45221-0105  
1-800-788-7254 (Option #2)

**U.S. Department of Education  
Safe & Drug Free Schools**  
<<[www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SFDS](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SFDS)>>

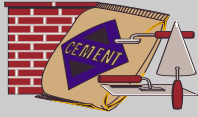
**Columbus Foundation**  
1234 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43205-1453  
(614) 251-4000

**The George Gund Foundation**  
1845 Guildhall Building  
45 Prospect Avenue, West  
Cleveland, Ohio 44115  
(216) 241-3114

**United Way of Franklin County**  
360 South Third Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 227-2700

**Reclaim Ohio**  
373 South High Street, 5th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 462-3157

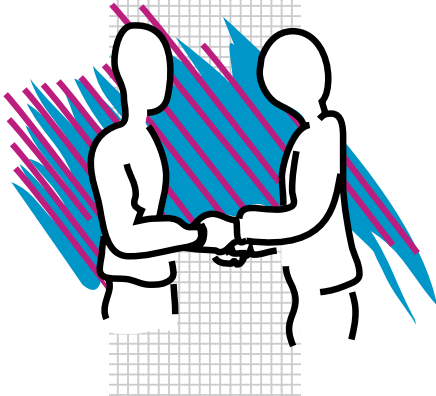
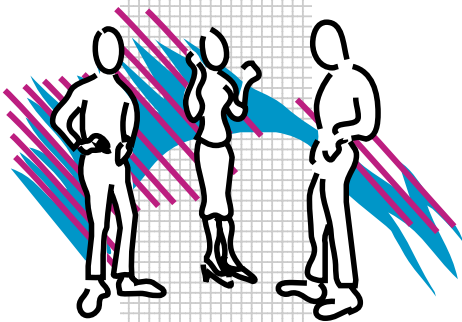
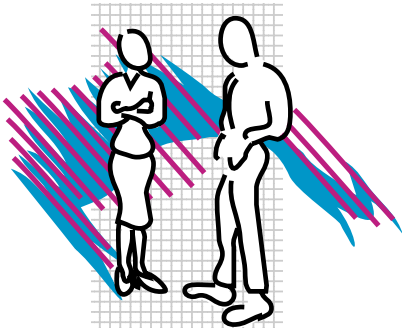
**For a listing of statewide resources and ideas, visit the Commission's funding page at:**  
[www.state.oh.us.cdr/schools/funding.htm#ideas](http://www.state.oh.us.cdr/schools/funding.htm#ideas)



# Effective Results:

## What can I do to make my program work?

There are many different and unique ways to make your individual program work. The following recommendations represent the most comprehensive and innovative approaches for establishing and maintaining successful school conflict management initiatives.

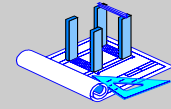


### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Form a diverse planning committee to conduct an assessment of the school's needs and to determine what types of conflict management initiatives are best suited to the school.
2. Map out a plan for how conflict management will be institutionalized in all schools within a district.
3. Include both a peer mediation and conflict management curriculum in the plan to provide all students with conflict resolution skills.
4. Designate a conflict management coordinator for the school district and for each school.
5. Adopt mediation as an option for resolving all school conflicts.
6. Educate students, administrators, parents and the community about conflict management initiatives.
7. Actively involve students, parents, teachers and administrators in the operation of peer mediation programs.
8. Develop curricular materials and in-school training expertise.
9. Evaluate your conflict management activities to determine if they are meeting your expected goals and objectives.
10. Develop partnerships with parents and teachers to explore how conflict management concepts can be infused into school activities.

More suggestions on how to make your program work are available at <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools.htm](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools.htm)>>

# Blueprints for Success:



## Integrating Conflict Management into Academics:

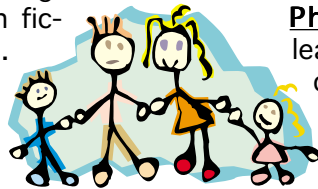
Inclusion of conflict resolution principles in classrooms helps students better understand the relationship between academics and the real world. Visit <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/curriculumindex.htm](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/curriculumindex.htm)>> as well as <<[www.ncip.org](http://www.ncip.org)>> for further ideas and assistance.

**Art:** Feelings, use of contrast and varying perspectives are conflict management concepts that can be discussed when studying works of art. <<<http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/contentpages/art45.htm>>>

**Health:** Learning to handle emotions in a healthy manner, to assertively resist what is unhealthy, and to realize consequences when making decisions.

**Reading:** Students can analyze and identify the root causes of specific conflicts and brainstorm options for resolving conflicts that arise in fictional literature. <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/contentpages/litintro4950.htm](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/contentpages/litintro4950.htm)>>

**Music:** Conflict management can be reinforced through song and by principles of harmony and discord. Lyric writing also provides an opportunity for exploring the



## Comprehensive Conflict Management: Imagine the Possibilities

[www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/componentsofscm.htm](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/componentsofscm.htm)

| STUDENT CONDUCT:   | CURRICULUM:  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--school-wide student conduct plan consistent w/ conflict mgmt.</li> <li>--problem-solving-based classroom management philosophy and practice</li> <li>--classroom and community service programs</li> <li>--youth empowerment and peer leadership initiatives</li> <li>--peer mediation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--conflict management curriculum for all students</li> <li>--conflict management infusion into academic subjects and co-curricular activities</li> <li>--prejudice reduction and diversity education</li> <li>--values and character education</li> <li>--violence and substance abuse prevention programs</li> </ul> |
| PEDAGOGY:  | SCHOOL CULTURE:  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--problem-based learning for students and staff</li> <li>--cooperative team teaching and learning</li> <li>--critical thinking approaches</li> <li>--intergrated, thematic teaching</li> <li>--individualized instructional approaches</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>--shared decision making approach</li> <li>--facilitative leadership and effective meeting practices</li> <li>--parent involvement program</li> <li>--community and agency partnerships</li> <li>--schoolwide dispute resolution system</li> </ul>  |

principles of conflict management.

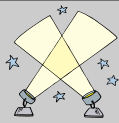
**Phys. Ed:** Students can learn differences between competitive and cooperative games and how ground rules can encourage a safe, healthy and enjoyable climate.

**Social Studies:** Students can look at local, national and world conflicts and discuss potential

conflict resolution strategies, both past and current, to resolve the issues.

**Science:** Positive and negative effects in nature, and "win-win" relationships, such as symbiotic organisms can be used to teach conflict management.

**Writing:** Peace concepts can be applied in composition and feelings can be expressed through writing daily journals.



# Spotlight on Schools:

Advisor Tom Murray, left, with students.



## Over a decade of success for Newark High School peer mediation

"We began by solving mostly petty disputes," advisor Tom Murray said. What started out as a small group of 22 mediators in 1992 has grown to become a successful mediation program that now holds between 80 and 100 mediations per year. From petty disputes to more serious problems, peer mediation is becoming the preferred method of handling conflict at Newark High School.

"It has done much to relieve the workload that administrators had experienced in the past in dealing with student-related conflicts," Murray said. The group's high mediation success rate of 95 percent also relieves the need for further staff intervention.

While different conflict resolution techniques exist, Newark has worked to develop their own mediation training. Individuals interested in the program attend a 16 hour group training program featuring issues related to conflict (anger, sexual harassment, male/female relations) and icebreaker activities to orient the

mediators. The students then break into smaller groups to focus on important mediation tactics like listening skills and how to ask open-ended questions.

Whether new or experienced, mediators always read from a phase sheet which lists the steps of a walk-through mediation:

- Respectful listening from both parties**
- Each disputant shares his/her side of the story**
- Both sides of the story are summarized by mediators**
- Disputants share their feelings towards the situation**
- Disputants brainstorm suggestions for a solution**
- Sign and seal contract, wrap up mediation**

Disputants also agree to a follow-up in one week to ensure that the resolution is working.

Newark's successful peer mediation program has gained both local and national recognition. Recently the State Department of Education

and the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution honored the team at a celebration in Columbus during Conflict Management Week. Selected students and Murray also conducted workshops of their techniques at the National Conference on Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution last May in Phoenix.

The group also teaches mediation skills at camps, churches and schools. Newark High School has over 2,300 students and between 6 and 8 principals, so the need for an effective program within the school and community is vital. Student mediator Alana Hamilton said, "It's a great program. I really like what I'm doing and the service is essential to our school."

Over 1,400 Ohio public schools, K-12, report having some form of a conflict management program in their school. For the recommended national peer mediation standards, visit the Conflict Resolution in Education Network Web site at <<[www.crenet.org](http://www.crenet.org)>>.

# Build Upward:



# Looking for Ideas?

A selection of conflict management activities and practices used in Ohio elementary, middle and high schools:

## Alexander G. Bell Elementary School — Cleveland, OH

-Rewards to motivate and encourage peaceful qualities in students: sticker charts to earn rewards, commendation by principal, or lunch with a teacher.

## Buckeye North Middle School — Brilliant, OH

-Peace Week dedicated to promoting and celebrating peace and conflict resolution.  
-Poster contest: entries are peace themes.

## Carl F. Shuler Middle School — Cleveland, OH

-Annual 'Peaceful Night Out': provides conflict management training for parents and families.

## Colebrook Elementary — Orwell, OH

-Weekly meetings for parents, students, faculty and community members to update them on the conflict resolution program and other events.

## Dublin Scioto High School Dublin, OH

-Annual Peace Week celebration, with guest speakers, musical performers, a homeroom peace-themed door decorating contest with prizes, and a free peace breakfast for students and staff to kick off the week.  
-"Warm Fuzzies" sale where students can send kind messages to each other.  
-Each club, sport and activity designed a square for a peace quilt, hung in the front entry to the school.

## Elida Elementary — Elida, OH

-Created a peace pole displayed outside the school.  
-Random Acts of Kindness program to reward students for courtesy and respect of others.

## Faircrest Memorial Middle School — Canton, OH

-Students created videos that dealt with conflict resolution and character education. The videos were later shown to the entire school on the building TVs.  
-Each classroom has a conflict resolution techniques poster on display for reference.

## Falls-Lenox School — Olmstead Falls, OH

-Monthly skill lessons in conflict management techniques taught to students by principal, assistant principal, school counselor and school psychologist.

## Garfield Middle School — Garrettsville, OH

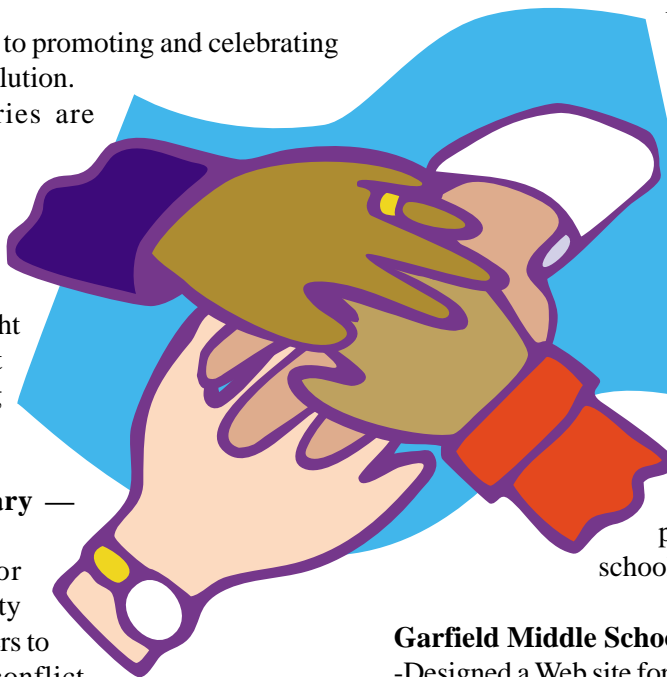
-Designed a Web site for their conflict management program, with extensive information for all ages:  
<http://www.jagmscm.homestead.com/>

## Gettysburg Elementary — Gettysburg, OH

-Students rewarded with 'gettysburg bucks' for showing responsibility and being respectful to others. Dollars can be traded in for prizes sold at the school store.

## Hawthorne Elementary — Columbus, OH

-A Word of the Week relating to peace and/or conflict management.  
-Parents are involved with the program through open





# Limitless Possibility:

meetings with staff and are updated through a newsletter.

## **Hillsdale Elementary School — Hayesville, OH**

-Designed a conflict bridge which was installed on the playground to help resolve conflicts at recess.

## **Hopewell-Loudon Elementary — Bascom, OH**

-Adult/high school mentors are paired with students to be a positive influence and help them learn conflict management issues.

## **Morrison Elementary — Dayton, OH**

-A word of the week is displayed in halls relating to peace and conflict management.

-Teachers and students focus on literature that deals with and shows the benefits of conflict management and the consequences of fighting and avoidance.

## **North Central Local School System — Pioneer, OH**

-The high school holds open meetings for parents and community members to learn about their conflict resolution program and its benefits in hopes that program practices will spread into the community.

## **Pleasant Run Elementary — Cincinnati, OH**

-Purchased peace flags for hallways and each classroom to promote a peaceful atmosphere.

-Some classrooms established a peace corner, a place where problem solving can take place. Students write down their feelings when dealing with a conflict and think of creative and positive ways to resolve it.

## **Port Clinton Junior High School — Port Clinton, OH**

-School administration holds frequent fireside chats with the student body to discuss and address school

climate issues.

## **Tecumseh Elementary School — Xenia, OH**

-Students recite a peace-themed pledge each morning.  
-Classes participate in peace celebrations for earning

peace points by avoiding conflict and being respectful.

## **Westland High School — Columbus, OH**

-Students and parents are given the opportunity to participate in a conflict management-related program in lieu of suspension.

-Personal development and life skills courses teach respect and conflict resolution concepts.

-Monthly schoolwide character-building themes for tolerance and peace are used with related classroom activities.

-9th grade conflict management retreat.

-Art and local agency exhibits are created that reflect the theme of peace.

## **Westlake Elementary School — New Carlisle, OH**

-Staff attended a two-day retreat in August to create a schoolwide conflict management program centered around the theme T.A.R.G.E.T, which encourages:

- Try Your Best
- Actively Listen
- Respect Yourself And Others
- Go For Your Goals
- Express Your Feelings Appropriately
- Think Before You Act

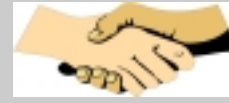
-Parents participate in quarterly events such as an ice-cream social, bonfire, and health awareness fair.

-Classrooms nominated for promoting peace at school receive OSCAR the Grouch or an OSCAR trophy.

**For more ideas on what Ohio schools are doing to support conflict management, visit:**

**<http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/schools/componentsofscm.htm>**

# Above and Beyond:



The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management offers a wide variety of publications, videos and materials to educate and supplement your conflict management program. For more information contact the Commission at 614-752-9595 or e-mail a request through the Commission's Web site <<[www.state.oh.us/cdr/](http://www.state.oh.us/cdr/)>>. Available resources include:

- *Introductory Kit to School Conflict Management* - Provides general information on how to start a school conflict management program.
- *Directory of Ohio's school Conflict Management Programs* - Lists over 1,300 school conflict management programs by school district, county and grade level. Contacts and phone numbers are provided for each program.
- *Directory of School Conflict Management Trainers* - Lists individuals who provide school conflict management training, including their background, experience and fees.
- *Resolving Conflicts Together video* - (14 min.) Students, teachers and administrators from three Ohio schools describe their experiences in implementing conflict management programs.



## National Online Resources: Selected Web sites that focus on conflict resolution and mediation education in schools

- Association for Conflict Resolution: [www.crenet.org](http://www.crenet.org)
- Youth M-POWER!: Youth Making Peaceful Options With Effective Results:  
[www.youthm-power.org](http://www.youthm-power.org)
- National Curriculum Integration Project: [www.ncip.org](http://www.ncip.org)
- Cooperative Learning & Conflict Resolution Center: [www.clcrc.com](http://www.clcrc.com)
- The Conflict Resolution Information Source: [www.crinfo.org](http://www.crinfo.org)
- National School Safety Center: [www.nssc1.org](http://www.nssc1.org)
- U.S. Department of Education Safe and Drug Free Schools Program:  
[www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS](http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS)



# Looking to the Future:

## The Importance of Conflict Resolution

The most effective school conflict management program is comprehensive, which means the entire school and local community are knowledgeable about and regularly use *win/win* approaches in attempting to resolve conflicts. A comprehensive program offers schools and local communities the opportunity to learn, practice and model effective conflict management skills.

A comprehensive program cannot be implemented overnight. It must be carefully implemented in phases. The first phase may include a small peer mediation program or a few teachers piloting conflict management in a few classrooms. As more and more students, teachers and parents experience the benefits of teaching conflict management, the program can expand into all classrooms and into the community.

Schools provide a readily accessible opportunity to teach young people effective, nonviolent conflict resolution skills. Students also need consistent, effective modeling of these skills by adults outside

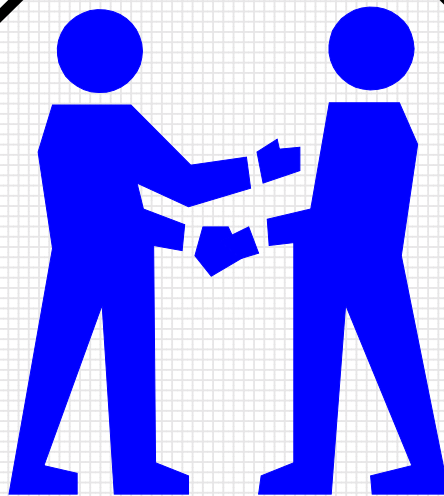
the school to overcome the competing messages often portayed by print media, television, music and movies.

Staff development programs, parent education programs, civic organization presentations, and church-sponsored programs provide opportunities to teach youth and adults effective conflict resolution skills.

A comprehensive program increases the chances that conflict resolution skills will be taught in homes, schools, after-school centers, and in the community.

The more these skills are adopted by both youth and adults, the more frequently they will be used as an alternative to fighting and violence.

Whether starting from the ground up or continuing an existing school conflict management program, the value is priceless and can benefit schools and communities in numerous ways. The means of teaching young people alternatives to violence are limitless. With a creative and comprehensive conflict management program, the sky is the limit.



The Ohio Commission on Dispute  
Resolution and Conflict Management  
Riffe Center  
77 South High Street, 24th Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43266-0124



*The Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution  
and Conflict Management, © 2001*