

FMC - Public Outreach Committee Report  
Vancouver October 31, 2009

We are thankful to FMC's Operations Manager, Carrie Cekerevac for her valuable help. Linda Bonnell, the FMC board and the committee members all contributed in building this committee to advance and promote mediation. Additionally we extend a big thank you to Mina Vainish for her dedicated contributions.

The Public Outreach Committee receives numerous emails and phone calls during the year from across Canada. We try to accommodate and direct emails towards the appropriate organization.

The Public Outreach Committee assisted with the radio interview, CHIN radio following FMC's annual meeting in Ottawa on November 15th 2008. FMC's President L. Bonnell, E. Sterritt and G. Schoel contributed to an informative discussion on mediation exploring topics such as - "Why mediation? How to choose a mediator?"

In January 2008, The Public Outreach Committee distributed press releases to radio and television programs, in Canada, promoting Family Mediation Day.

Family Mediation Canada participated in two radio programs with CHIN radio in Ottawa. Host, Ernie Tannis, facilitated interesting and thought provoking discussions with Dr. Larry Fong (FMC's past president) and Mary Damianakis. We want to extend our warmest gratitude and thanks to Dr. Larry Fong and Ernie Tannis for their assistance with this project.

The Public Outreach Committee has discussed different ways to implement a plan of action that includes regular media press releases and other action items that fosters our visibility. We hope to strengthen our committees' work in the future.

FMC hopes to participate in trade shows and exhibitions in the future because the committee recognizes that this is another avenue for the promotion of mediation.

In April 2009, The Public Outreach Committee, sent a letter along with FMC brochures to Mr. Rod Phillip President of Shepellfgi (SHEPELL•FGI), communicating the advantages of mediation. Since workplace mediation is a service that many EAPs provide - we expressed our interest in future dialogue with SHEPELL•FGI to explore the benefits of family mediation. In our letter we stressed, that family mediation is a valuable tool which can minimize the impact that separation and divorce can have in the

workplace. We intend to send letters along with FMC brochures to additional EAP providers and perhaps open dialogue with SHEPELL•FGI and other EAPs in the near future.

In August 2009 Dr. Hughes Director, of The Law Commission of Ontario contacted The Public Outreach Committee extending an invitation to the FMC board to participate in preliminary consultations. This request was forwarded to the board.

Several of our FMC board members, met (and or via telephone conference) with Dr. Hughes in Ottawa on September 4, 2009. Dr Hughes discussed some of the LCO's family law projects such as "Best Practices at Family Justice System Entry Points: Needs of Users and Responses of Workers in the Justice System". FMC has added this link on our website for LCO consultations, where members can email their input. Mary Damianakis and the committee, appreciates Dr. Hughes' efforts in including FMC in the consultation process. FMC hopes to continue cooperation with the LCO in the upcoming year.

In early September 2009 The Public Outreach Committee received a request from IMI Mediation (UK) to become one of their Qualifying Institutions. IMI Mediation (UK) acknowledged FMC's high standard of assessment for certification which became the catalyst for initial contact with FMC. We hope that our new working relationship with IMI Mediation will strengthen our visibility within Canada and internationally. This request was forwarded to the board and the certification committee.

The Public Outreach Committee received a request from the Canadian Foreign Affairs Department asking for FMC's input for the "Working Party on Mediation in the context of the Malta Conference". The Third Malta Conference on Cross- Frontier Family Law Issues, hosted by the Government of Malta in collaboration with The Hague Conference on Private International Law, brought together representatives, from two groups of States: (1) countries party (signatories) to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Abduction ("Hague State Parties") and (2) non-Hague States (such as Egypt, India, Jordan, Malaysia, Morocco and Pakistan). There were a total of 24 countries and 9 international organizations present at the Malta Conference.

This request was forwarded to the board. FMC hopes to continue its collaboration with the "Working Party on Mediation in the context of the Malta Conference".

FMC is cognizant that parental abductions are on the rise and hopes to remain involved with the "Working Party".

We thank Linda Bonnell and the entire board for their assistance in building this new bridge with FMC and the “Working Party”.

FMC, Mary Damianakis and the committee, appreciate and recognize efforts of the “Working Party on Mediation in the context of the Malta Conference”. We thank the “Working Party” for their hard work and hope that our input is of some value to them.

FMC, Mary Damianakis and the committee recognizes that mediation can be a viable option for parental abduction cases – both Hague cases and non- Hague cases. We hope to promote mediation with Canadian non-governmental and governmental agencies including our Central Authorities.

We welcome input from all of our members who have experience with this very difficult topic.

*Respectfully Yours,*

*Mary Damianakis  
FMC Public Outreach Committee Chairperson*