

# Proposal for {Insert Your Organization's Name} to Support Implementation of *Program for Young Negotiators*

Prepared for {Insert the Foundation's Name}

## History, Goals, and Activities of the Organization

{Fill in this information for your organization}

## Need for Conflict Resolution Training

It is essential for young people to be taught how to be effective leaders, productive members of society and responsible decision-makers, while coping with the many differences a diverse society presents. By offering negotiation and conflict resolution as a real and compelling alternative to fighting or “giving in,” *Program for Young Negotiators* brings a positive, original approach to violence prevention through youth empowerment.

*Program for Young Negotiators* teaches effective negotiation and conflict resolution skills to youth and young adults. One of the most promising and comprehensive efforts to reduce the use of violence among students, *Program for Young Negotiators* already has reached more than 20,000 students nationally and internationally. Conceptual frameworks for the program were developed at Harvard University and the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law School.

The curriculum is deliberately targeted at the middle schools, as these years are a crucial time in a young person's social and academic development. Success in middle schools is correlated with success in the later years. *PYN* provides students with opportunities to develop critical interpersonal and intra-personal skills, while helping teachers create a safe, caring, cooperative learning environment – teachable classrooms.

## Objectives and Outcomes for the Project

Key objectives and outcomes of the *PYN* curriculum are:

- Interest-based negotiation

In contrast to arbitration and other forms of negotiation or hard bargaining, interest-based negotiation strives for “win-win” solutions to conflict, by encouraging people to examine the unexpressed motivations that underlie the stated positions in a dispute. In taking an analytical approach, it is quite often possible to identify common ground and areas of agreement that are not always at first apparent. In learning to negotiate using interests, children are continually asked to express why they want something. They can then reach agreement according to the underlying needs rather than their surface expression. Building upon the model, *PYN* has incorporated active listening and communication role-plays to build students' interpersonal skills and enhance their relationships with peers and adults.

- Engaging teachers as role models for negotiating behaviors

Because teachers are often the second most influential adults in children's lives, students are most likely to succeed when teachers themselves model new behaviors. Before they begin working with the students, all *PYN* facilitators (teachers) receive in-depth training in the skills of interest-based negotiation and basic curriculum implementation. Teachers not only rethink their approaches to classroom discipline; they are frequently inspired to innovate academic

content as well.

▪ The case study method of teaching

Just like many business schools, law schools, and other adult education settings, the *PYN* curriculum poses complex case studies to students that relate to their own lives, and in which there are no clear answers. Not only does this method set a clear expectation that students are fully capable of devising creative solutions; the applicability of these problem-solving skills is made immediate and apparent and to them. New case studies have been incorporated into the program that students themselves have produced with each curriculum upgrade.

▪ Focus on positive youth development

*PYN* focuses its curriculum on negotiation as an empowering life skill, rather than a way to simply dissipate violence. However, in contrast to the underlying negative message of “violence prevention,” *PYN* stresses the development of students’ capacities and strengths, giving them positive direction, meaningful ways to get adult approval, and important avenues for growth. Whereas the focus of many peace education programs is on the development of a peaceful classroom, *PYN* teaches negotiating and analytical techniques as life skills that can be used **in a broad range of situations.**

▪ Reaching all students

A distinguishing feature of *PYN*, compared to other conflict resolution programs, is its rigorous academic focus on teaching *all* children to use a systematic approach to solving problems themselves through negotiation, rather than through mediation. The program encourages children to *prevent* potential conflicts, primarily by teaching them communication skills and very specific language to enhance this communication. *PYN*’s pedagogy reaches children with diverse learning styles and has been particularly successful in engaging through role-play activity those children considered most “at-risk.”

Finally, *PYN* is distinguished by an ultimate vision: building a *movement* that will integrate negotiating skills into the core curricula of schools, to encourage more productive and fulfilling social interaction that will serve students throughout their lives and promote a more civil society.

We will use funds from the {insert Foundation name} to support our implementation of *Program for Young Negotiators*. Our overall goal for this program is {insert site-specific goals}. Specific objectives for the program include:

- Staff working supportively with youth to facilitate positive results from conflict resolution and negotiation training.
- Staff and parents communicating their commitment to negotiation skills.
- Youth developing plans for using negotiation skills in their daily lives.
- Youth using newly-acquired techniques to negotiate without relying on a third-party mediator.

{These are generic goals. Please modify to meet your specific goals in implementing this program.}

### **How funds will be spent**

We will use the funds to support our implementation of *Program for Young Negotiators*. Funds will be used to:

- Send {insert the number of people attending the Institute} of our staff members to a two-day training Institute in {location of Institute} to receive training to become facilitators for the program.
- Purchase materials for use by the facilitators in delivering the program, including facilitator’s guides, student workbooks, and videotapes.

- Deliver the program to {number of youth}.
- {“Evaluate the performance of the program using evaluation tools developed by an independent evaluator.” If you are purchasing the evaluation tools.}

### **Population Served by the Program**

{Insert information on the youth who will be served by the program – demographic information (gender, ethnic background, age), economic status, characteristics of the neighborhoods they are from, any information on their behavior challenges/skills, etc.}

### **Staff Qualifications**

Program training and implementation support is provided by SERA certified trainers. Below is a representative sample:

Melissa Manwaring is an independent negotiation and conflict management consultant. A Harvard Law School graduate and former practicing attorney, she has conducted negotiation skill-building workshops for hundreds of clients nationwide, including lawyers, judges, executives, salespeople, school administrators, teachers, and students ranging from middle school to graduate school. She served for two years as the first San Francisco Bay Area Coordinator for the *Program for Young Negotiators*.

Gabriella Salvatore is a trainer and consultant who focuses on negotiation, communication and relationship management. Trained as a psychotherapist, she has acted as a facilitator and educator in a variety of settings including the Boston and Newton, MA, public school systems; community based prevention programs for youth such as the Circles of Girls theater program; and Arbour HRI hospital, a privately held psychiatric facility.

{Insert information on the backgrounds of the teachers/staff who will attend the Institute and implement the program. For example, “Our own teachers will facilitate the course with the youth. <Insert name of staff> has worked for <number of years> years with our organization and has excellent rapport with our youth. Our staff also will learn the required facilitation skills through the SERA Learning Institute/training process.”}

### **Program Evaluation**

{If you will purchase SERA Learning’s evaluation materials, use the following language.}

We will purchase the evaluation package provided by SERA Learning, developed by an independent evaluator – Dr. Greg Roberts, Evaluation Research Services (ERS), Austin, TX – specifically for this purpose. The evaluation includes:

- A comprehensive implementation manual for our site administrator.
- Youth self-report measures and site administrator measures.
- Telephone assistance from SERA Learning to train our staff to implement the evaluation.
- A complete data analysis from SERA Learning with a brief written report of the results.

We hope to see changes in both student attitudes and behaviors as they learn the skills of negotiation and conflict resolution. We will measure changes through two different questionnaires:

Youth Questionnaires to be filled out by the young people who will be evaluated. This is a “self-report.” These youth questionnaires assess both attitude and behavior changes regarding conflict and negotiation related issues.

An Administrator Questionnaire to be completed by the site administrator, who is familiar with incident logs, files, and other written records cataloguing behavior incidents among our youth. By

documenting problem-behavior incidents, this form assesses the behavior changes of the participants.

Each youth questionnaire is administered two times – the first time just before the course begins (the “pre-questionnaire”), and a second time shortly after the course is over (the “post-questionnaire”). By comparing the results from the pre-questionnaire and the post-questionnaire, it is possible to get an indication of how a young person may have changed as a result of taking the course. The administrator questionnaire looks at behavior data from before and after program implementation.

Results of the evaluation will be used to validate program effectiveness for internal decision making purposes, to identify improvements needed in future implementations of the program, and to provide feedback to our different constituencies – funders, board members, staff, parents, the youth we serve, and the community at large.