GUIDELINES FOR REFERRING CASES TO CHILD WELFARE MEDIATION

FACT PATTERNS WHERE MEDIATION HAS BEEN HELPFUL:

**PRE ADJUDICATION**

- Demand for a bench or jury trial
- Parents who are exceptionally angry at the DCFS caseworker
- Parents who could benefit from being helped to communicate with the “system” representatives
- Relatives are demanding placement
- Any case where the parents would benefit from getting an early start on the service plan

**POST ADJUDICATION**

- Worker/parent conflicts which are difficult to sort out and interfere with progress
- Foster parent conflicts with agency/worker and/or birth family
- Visitation problems
- Relatives intervening asking for placement
- Significant breakdown in parental compliance
- Parental complaints about the service plan
- The need for a transition visiting plan between the child and their next placement
- Significant courtroom conflict which tends to hamper the progress of the review hearing
- A need to try something different because nothing else has worked very well
- Significant delay in permanency for the child for any reason
- Putative or legal father appearing late in the case
- Cases with complicated service coordination issues

**PERMANENCY HEARING**

- Uncertainty as to what the plan should be or what is in the best interest of the child
- A need to develop a very specific reunification plan

**ANY STAGE**

- Cases in which it is important to enhance, improve or re-establish relations in order to move the case forward because the child will suffer from fractured relationships
  - Intra-family relationship
  - Parent relationship with Placement Resource, Caseworker or Attorney
  - Caseworker/Attorney relationship
- The case has strong conflicts which are rooted more in emotion than fact
- Communication between the parties has broken down
- Permanency for the child is on hold because of the conflict
- People feel “at their wits end”
- Whenever the parties indicate that the alternative would be a contested hearing