

*Celebrating 13 Years of Connection*

**Susquehanna Valley Mediation**

713 Bridge Street, Suite 29  
Selinsgrove, PA 17870  
570-374-1718

**SVM office hours:**

Monday - Thursday  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Mediation appointments available:**

Monday through Saturday  
10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Monday through Thursday @ 6:30 pm

**To contact us or request an appointment:**

Call 570-374-1718  
or email Meg Martin at:  
casecoordinator@svmediation.org

**Visit our website:**

www.svmediation.org

**Executive Director:**

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sjordan@svmediation.org

**2024 Board of Directors**

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**From Our Director...**

Someone recently asked me how it is that SVM does “so many different things.” My answer was this: “We really do only one thing, it’s just that the one thing is needed in a lot of different places.” Many people are hungry for more constructive, humanizing communication, and sometimes that can be difficult. Our staff and mediators are here to help.



Our work is both *proactive* and *responsive*. This year we brought people together to share stories, engage in dialogue, and learn how to become more responsive and less reactive to conflict. These types of *proactive* activities create more resiliency in our families and communities so when difficult issues do arise, we can deal with them more constructively. When people realize they could use a hand, we *respond* by providing mediation and facilitation through some of those difficult conversations.

Our mediators help people listen to one another, see their situation more clearly, and make decisions about how to move forward. Would you like to join us? We are looking for volunteer mediators for our next training that starts in February!

We hope you enjoy reading about what we’ve been up to this year, and consider a donation to support our work. Your support means so much! You can donate through our website at svmediation.org, or send it the old fashioned way in the enclosed envelope. We wish you and yours a happy holiday season!



**Mediators Needed!**

Our next mediator training is scheduled for **February 23-25 and March 8-10**. Our volunteer mediators are critical to the success of SVM and our ability to provide service to the community. To apply, **call our office** or **visit our website**. What **qualifications** do you need? 1) A desire to serve our community; 2) A desire and willingness to learn something new and challenging; 3) A willingness to put aside your own opinions and biases about others and support them in their communication and decision-making. We’ll teach you the rest!

**Come join our team!**



You can scan this QR Code to make your donation today!



**Our mission:** SVM is a community mediation center committed to supporting constructive responses to conflict in the Susquehanna Valley through mediation, facilitation, training, and education.

We believe in people’s abilities to treat one another with **dignity** and **humanity**, even when they have conflict and profound differences.

## MEDIATION SERVICES

- Custody and divorce
- Family conflict, elder
- Community, neighbor
- Workplace
- Prison reentry & reintegration
- Landlord/tenant



## MEETING FACILITATION

- Crisis family meetings
- Group/Community dialogue
- Listening sessions
- Story Circles



## EDUCATION

- Kids First program for co-parents
- Basic mediation training
- Active bystander workshops
- Responding to conflict training



For more information, call Meg in our office @ 570-374-1718

## Evangelical Honors Our Director and the Work of SVM

This November, the work of Susan Jordan and SVM was honored at the 'Evangelical Honors the Community' event. During her remarks, Evangelical CEO, Kendra Aucker, spoke about the vital role civic engagement plays in fostering belonging, shared responsibility and social cohesion within our community. She thanked Susan for sharing insights into conflict and bias that have helped her in her work.



SVM Staff Terrell Mosley, Susan Jordan, Meredith Lemons, Meg Martin enjoy a break from their work to celebrate with the community.

## SVM by the Numbers

**3,269** cases since we opened our doors in 2011.

### In 2023:

- **127** Crisis/Rapid Response family meetings to support child safety and family healing were held with over **975** people participating
- **12** Plan of Safe Care meetings were held for families of babies born drug-affected
- **177** new mediation cases initiated
- **139** mediations held with over **312** people participating
- **20%** of cases were self-referred
- Over **50** individuals participated in Community Dialogue
- **30** volunteers donated more than **2,500** hours to the community
- 2 Interns gave over **500** hours to support SVM's work
- Over **215** people participated in Story Circles
- Over **50** individuals impacted by incarceration served
- Collaborating with over **20** partner organizations

## Kids First and Custody Mediation

While all relationships have some level of conflict, high parental conflict has adverse effects on children. Separated and divorced parents and other caregivers who have positive co-parenting relationships can insulate their children from some of the potentially harmful impact of separation and divorce.

Our **Kids First and Custody Mediation** program, in collaboration with area courts, continue to give **hundreds** of parents and caregivers the opportunity to work through conflict and create their own co-parenting plans based on their needs and resources.

In mediation, parents can make decisions about:

- co-parenting schedules.
- what is in the best interest of the children.
- how they want to communicate with each other.
- consistent rules and boundaries for their children.
- how to reintegrate a parent into the lives of the children after time apart.
- how to handle holidays and other special occasions.
- and much more.

## Volunteer Profile - Jeff Byerly

**Jeff** joined SVM after completing his mediation training in the spring of 2023. He has always felt strongly about community connections. One of his greatest strengths is being able to meet new people and strike up conversation easily. He is a retired business owner who served the community for four decades. With years of customer service under his belt it felt like a natural fit to become a mediator with SVM. Jeff is also an active member of his church with a focus on teaching and leadership. He has also been involved with the local 4-H extension livestock program. His ties to the neighborhood will serve him well in his new role as a mediator. Jeff says he "appreciates the training he has received so far from SVM and looks forward to more learning opportunities in this field." We're grateful to have him on our team!





# Susquehanna Valley Story Circles

SVM's tagline is the Power of Conversation. We know we need both difficult and joyful ones! That's why we are partnering with the GSV United Way and Susquehanna Valley Story Circles to bring people together to share stories, and experience a sense of belonging through story telling.

This year, we facilitated story circles with hundreds of people of all ages, including:

- high school students
- older adults
- empty nesters
- families of children with disabilities
- health care workers
- and so many more

Story circles are a chance for people to tell stories in response to prompts like, "Tell a story about a time you felt included."

They are simple, confidential, participatory, and a great way to feel connected!

If you have an idea for a theme or group of people who might like to get together to share stories, contact SVM and we will help make it happen!



SVM staff member, Meg Martin, and interns Lydia Witherite and Teisha Spaid, facilitate story circles with groups of students from Lewisburg Area High School (LAHS).

SVM participated in two G.O.L.D. (Growth, Opportunities, Leadership, Development) events at LAHS in the spring and fall. The teachers and staff who organized the event said they were "desperate to reach out to our students and make them feel seen, heard, and valued." After the event, students reported that the Story circles helped them feel more "heard, understood, and connected to their peers." And they had fun in the process!

"SVM is proud to be part of this community effort in bringing people together to relax, share stories, and maybe feel less alone," said Meg Martin.

## Transformative Dialogue in the Valley

When people ask SVM to facilitate dialogue, our first question is: Who needs to talk to whom about what? Transformative Dialogue is a co-created process that gives **voice** and **choice** to participants about the process and content, from the start.

This year, SVM staff, Terrell Mosley and Susan Jordan, are facilitating a dialogue series co-created by police and the Williamsport community. The first event (*pictured below*) had a great turnout from both the community and law enforcement. People left feeling hopeful and eager to plan a second, taking place in December. The next event will include young people, especially those who interact most with the police, co-designed with them, of course!





# Family Engagement

So far this year, SVM's Rapid Response Family Meetings, part of the Family Engagement Initiative (FEI), quickly brought together more than **127 families** and their support systems in Union, Snyder, and Northumberland Counties, at the moment of crisis, to have a voice in the critical decisions that keep kids safe and support long-term family healing.

Snyder County Children and Youth Services director Jenn Evans, said that through the FEI, "We've been able to use the funds we would've spent on expensive congregate care facilities and be more upstream, more front door, more preventative, which is a huge difference for our families in a rural area."

"My job is to work with families to engage their supports for the meetings. It is pretty inspiring to see the way people show up for each other, in really hard circumstances, to offer help, encouragement, and sometimes even some 'tough love,'" said SVM's Meredith Lemons. "Often people feel they have no one but that is very rarely the case."

Involving family, close friends, and community members is key to helping kids grow up healthy and happy. That's what this initiative aims to do.

## 2023 Fall Fundraiser - Thank you!

Many thanks to everyone who attended our Fall Fundraiser at Fero's Winery, and to the Folk Justice Band for providing the tunes! What a fun night. We raised almost \$10,000 to support the work of SVM! We couldn't do what we do without your support. We are already looking forward to next year's event!



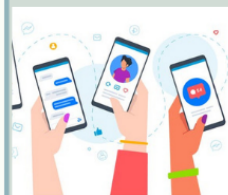
# THANK YOU!

- Our many generous donors
- Our volunteer mediators and board members
- Our dedicated staff: Susan Jordan, Meg Martin, Terrell Mosley, Meredith Lemons, and Kendra Parke
- Our interns: Lydia Witherite and Nick Beers
- Our growing list of partners and collaborators.

### Donate Online!

Visit [svmediation.org](https://svmediation.org) and click "Donate Now"

*Susquehanna Valley Mediation is classified by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501 (c)(3) organization, and your donation is fully tax-deductible as allowed by law.*



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