This article is specifically geared towards understanding how mediation is being used in the schools and colleges to prepare the next generation of mediators and in the larger context, how this field is expanding.

It was back in the early 1990’s when I was living in Delray Beach, Florida that I received a grant from the U.S. Dept. of Education to provide a six month pilot project at a local high school and middle school in West Palm Beach. At that time, the Alternative Dispute Resolution Center of New Mexico had excellent programs in Peer Mediation in the Schools which was used to start the project.

Fast forward to the 21st century and 2015, I introduced the Peer Mediation Program to the local Board of Education in Sarasota County through a pilot series several years back when there was a shooting at a local theatre in town between two male high school students from different schools.

Today the program is run under the auspices of the Sarasota World Affairs Council housed at New College. It is the only program we know of where college students are trained in an 18 hour intensive to be able to accompany me into the local high schools thus far to co train the students. The high school students really appreciate having college students as part of their mentoring for they can relate to them.

To find out about the program and how to begin it, you can visit two websites where it is outlined in entirety. www.conflictperspectives.org which is from the Institute of Multi Track Diplomacy in Alexandria, VA. Click on the link for Peer Mediation in Sarasota. Then there are numerous articles explaining the process at www.sarasotaworldaffairscouncil.org and click on the link for Peer Mediation.

Dr. Deri Ronis is also available for consultation and has been a trainer with the Anti Defamation League in S. Florida for over two decades providing training at schools for parents, students and teachers in bullying, cyber bullying and sexting in the state of Florida. She can be reached at 561-644-3904 or DrDeri33@gmail.com or www.DrDeri.com.