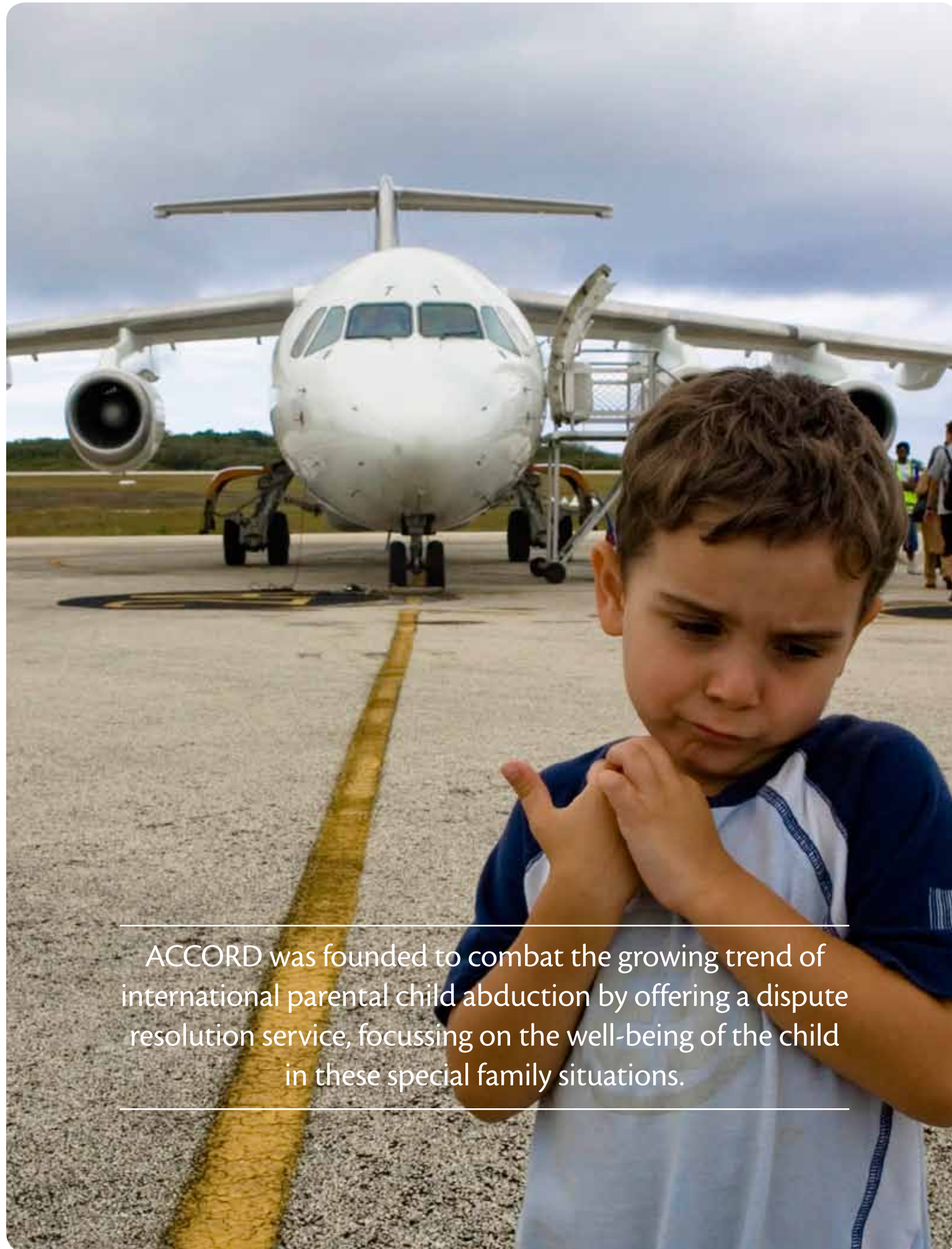




ACCORD

Mediation for the global family

*International parental
child abduction &
Cross-border mediation*



ACCORD was founded to combat the growing trend of international parental child abduction by offering a dispute resolution service, focussing on the well-being of the child in these special family situations.

Welcome to ACCORD

Mediation for the global family

As a consequence of the growing ease of global travel today, partnerships between people from different cultures, across borders, embracing different customs and faiths are becoming more and more familiar. This has added a new dimension to the practice of family law, expanding it to a global level and causing the complexity to escalate.



Mediation is taking root as the preferred model for resolving access swiftly and efficiently, particularly in international parental child abduction cases.

The child often bears the brunt of the conflict. Mediation allows parents to concentrate on the interests of their child, and lays the foundation for parents to begin a new era in their parenting. The approach engages parents to share responsibility and to talk together to find common resolution. Having achieved success in mediation, parents are better equipped to solve forthcoming conflicts without the stresses of litigation. A brighter future emerges for their child, free from the resulting harm of those battles.

ACCORD was founded to combat the growing trend of international parental child abduction by offering a dispute resolution service, focussing on the well-being of the child in these special family situations.

Our knowledge spans multiple jurisdictions, nationalities, faiths, traditions, and tribal law and practices to bring families our experience and expertise with our respect and integrity. We are happy to work with Hague and non-Hague countries, and work within the framework of the Hague Convention best practices to do the utmost for the child.

ACCORD combines a unique partnership of knowledge and experience in executing mediation, negotiation and alternative dispute resolution solutions specific to the complexity involved with cross-border, culture, faith, language and tradition in the global family.



About us

ACCORD is a partnership between the principals of Dabbagh & Associates and Commonwealth Mediation Group, Inc. (CMG), with the purpose of collaborating on cross-border/international, interfamilial abduction dispute resolution services. This combination of knowledge and experience brings a comprehensive approach to facilitate and manage alternative dispute resolution services and training.

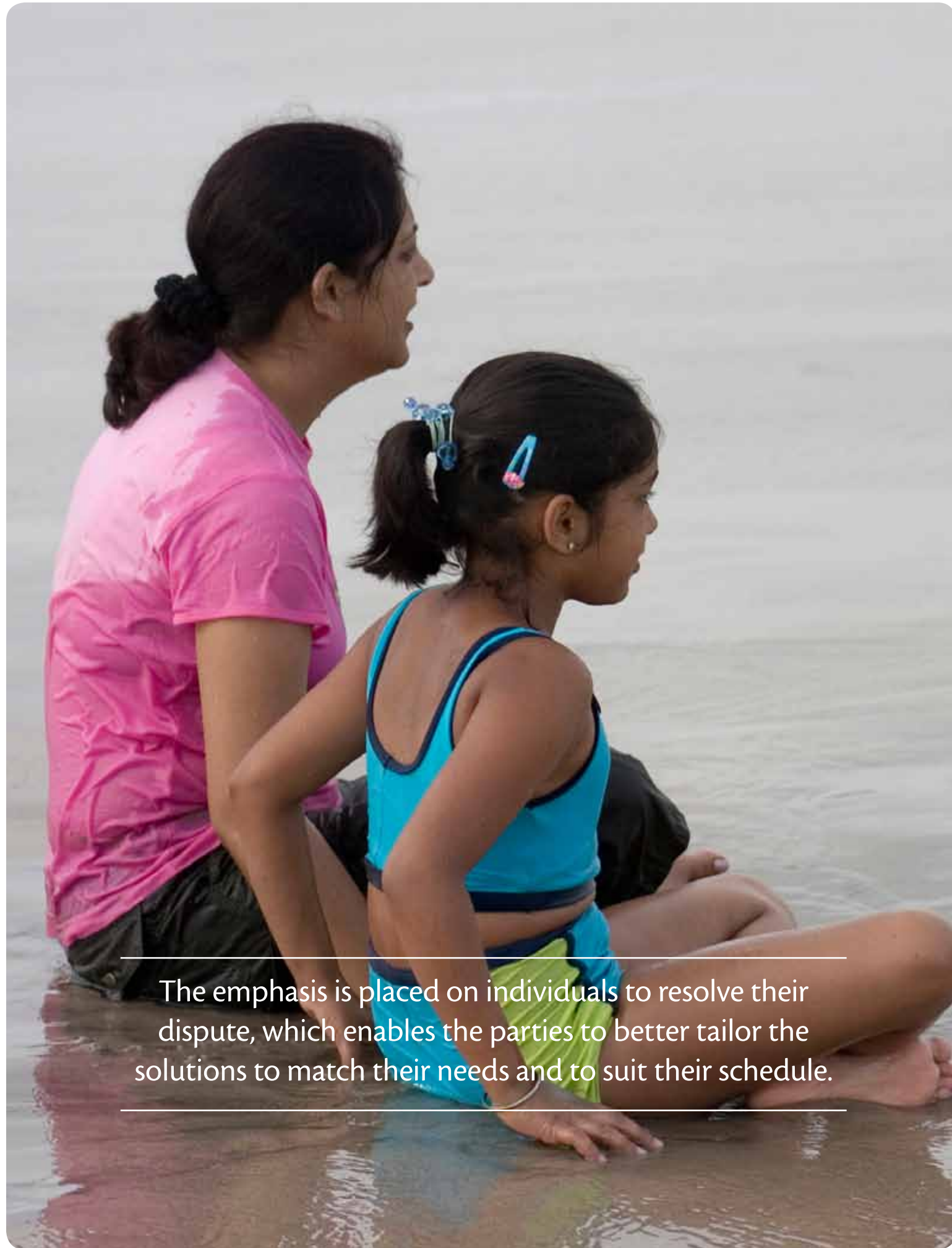


Dabbagh & Associates was founded more than a decade ago by Maureen Dabbagh to provide professional dispute resolution services to parents and professionals. Working globally, Ms. Dabbagh has been engaged in a wide range of activities relating to international parental child abduction issues. From the United Nations to local organizations, Ms. Dabbagh has shared her knowledge, experience, and skill for the betterment of families worldwide, and encouraged the adoption of effective remedies and resolution to this growing problem.

Commonwealth Mediation Group, Inc. (CMG) was established in 1996 by Morna Ellis to provide dispute resolution services, training

and education, and program design and coordination. CMG seeks to empower individuals, families, business entities, organizations and agencies to use collaborative approaches to transform conflict into opportunities for positive growth and change. CMG is one of the largest providers of mediation services in Virginia and pioneers innovative leadership in alternative dispute resolution services.

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The emphasis is placed on individuals to resolve their dispute, which enables the parties to better tailor the solutions to match their needs and to suit their schedule.

About parental child abduction

As the world and its people have become more closely knitted together, cross-border relationships have intensified in both number and nature. However, with this surge has come the corresponding percentage of breakdowns in these relationships. This rise in cross-border, interfamilial disputes and a resulting increase in the number of child abductions pose unusual demands on the typical method of dispute resolution within the judicial system.

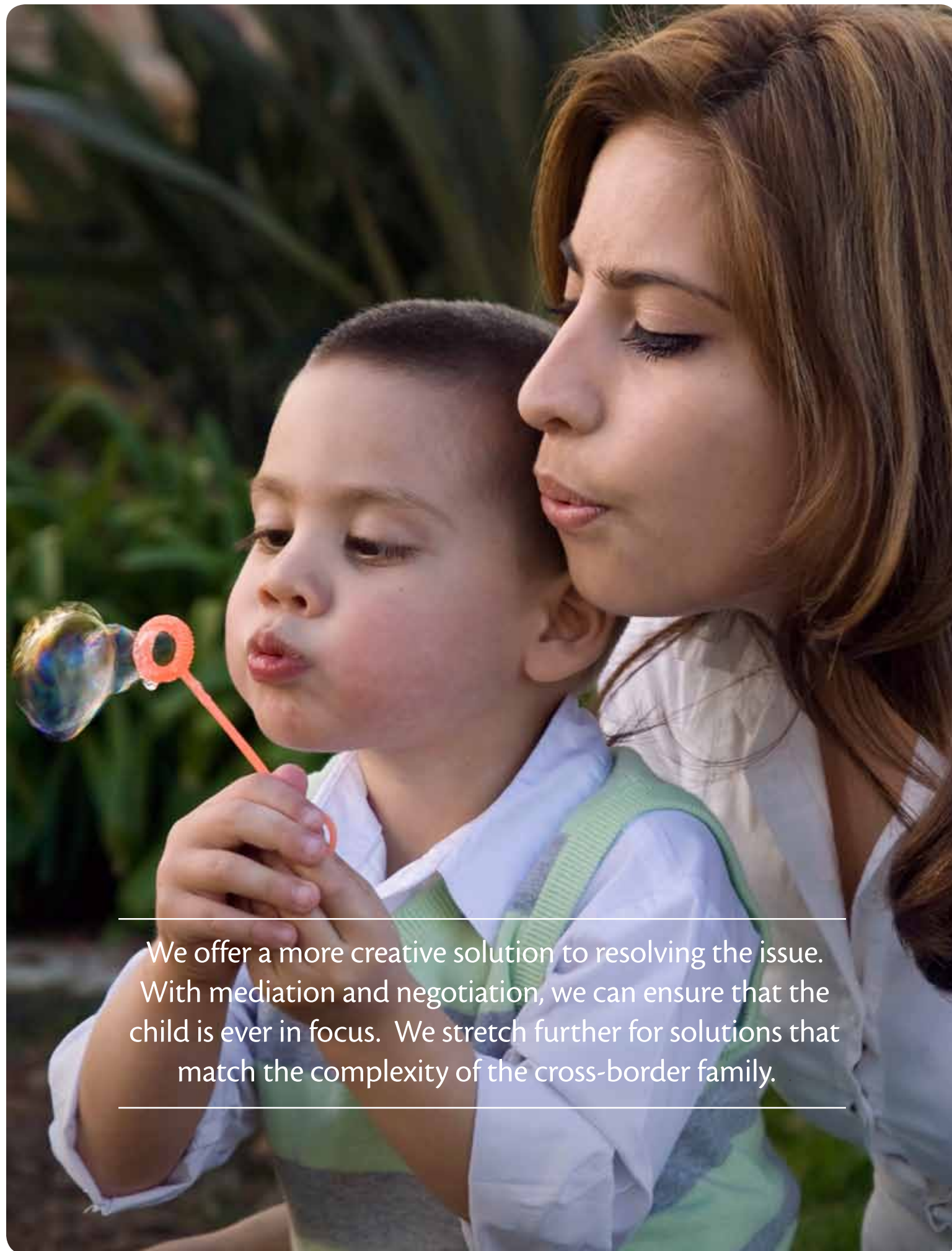


An effectively executed program for mediation and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services and training would alleviate much of this burden on the judicial system, supplying a network of qualified professionals with specialized skills in cross-border, culture, customs and faith issues, and the tools to bring these individuals to mutually beneficial agreements.

The breakdown of the family can have detrimental effects, particularly on the children involved. Mediation and ADR bring a creative and flexible approach to conflict resolution. The emphasis is placed on individuals to resolve their dispute, which enables the parties to better tailor the solutions to match their needs and to suit their schedule. The processes strive to increase communication between parties, thereby encouraging future relations and circumnavigating the stresses, time and turmoil of litigation and the courts.

With the cross-border nature of these relationships comes a need for specialized knowledge, training and sensitivity in the appropriate measures and options available to these families. The complexity of these cases often increases the time to process an application and any subsequent appeals, and the difficulties in correctly applying the Convention's legal requirements and enforcing decisions.

Article 7 (c) of the Hague Convention obligates the Central Authority of signatory countries "to secure the voluntary return of the child or to bring about an amicable resolution of the issues" either directly or via an intermediary. The Convention gives a guideline of six weeks for return of a child, as the damage to both child and parent, and their relationship is extensive if this is prolonged. The current state of the judicial system is ill-equipped to cope with the complexity and time criticalness of these disputes.



We offer a more creative solution to resolving the issue. With mediation and negotiation, we can ensure that the child is ever in focus. We stretch further for solutions that match the complexity of the cross-border family.

About mediation

Mediation is a voluntary method of settling disputes. A neutral third party, a mediator who does not exercise decision-making authority, assists the parties in negotiating a mutually beneficial settlement. It has been called “no-fault conflict resolution” because the goal is to reach a solution fairly and quickly, instead of deciding who is right, or who is wrong, in a costly court battle. Cross-border mediation is the specialized form of mediation that targets the intricacies of custody and visitation concerns of the global family.



Our mediators

With compassion, skill and experience.

Our knowledge and experience give us an edge in mediating and/or negotiating international parental child abduction cases. We are neither here to pass judgment, nor to place blame. We take pride in our neutrality, and our ability to see through to the heart of the issue without bias. We derive from a multitude of diverse backgrounds, combining an array of cultures, educations and languages to meet and help your specific circumstances.

Our areas of expertise/services

Post Child Abduction:

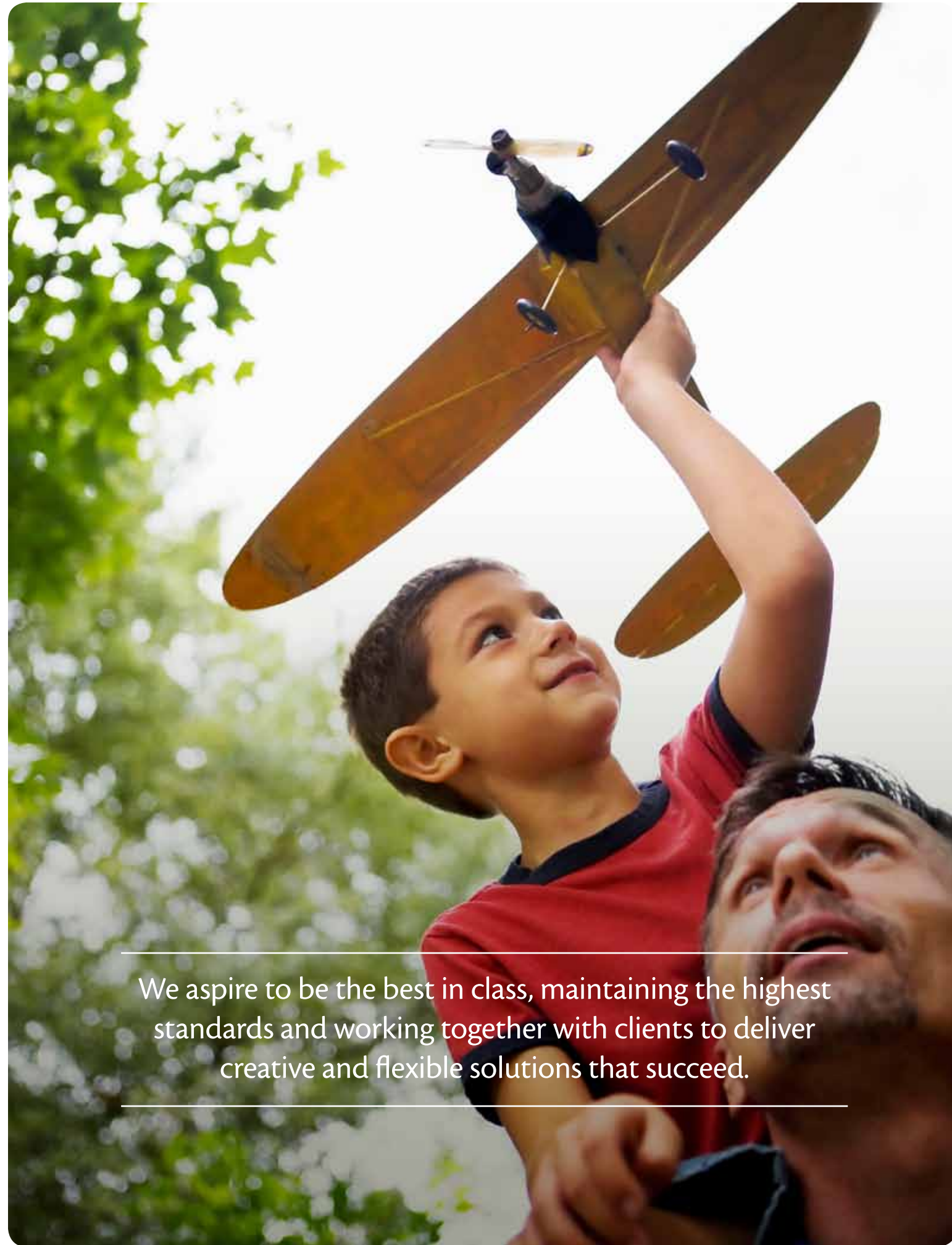
- Mediation
- Negotiation

Preventative:

- Mediation for child custody, parenting plans and support
- Training

Consultation:

- Case support and reporting
- Forensic risk assessment
- Subject matter testimony



We aspire to be the best in class, maintaining the highest standards and working together with clients to deliver creative and flexible solutions that succeed.

Our approach

We aspire to be the best in class, maintaining the highest standards and working together with clients to deliver creative and flexible solutions that succeed. We adhere to the standards and best practices of the Hague Malta Conference on cross-border mediation.



We work with you, within your constraints

We understand the emergency nature of this work, and how essential it is to the well-being of the child to offer a timely and efficient process. The Hague Convention recommends a six-week turn-around time and we strive to fit with these tight constraints.

Our mediators are flexible to travel and accommodate these time restraints and look forward to working as a team to fit your needs and schedule. We partner with local and national agencies, and government officials to ensure that each is well-informed and the solution will span the appropriate jurisdictions.

We realize that the longer time marches on, the more the separation can affect and damage the child.

We love to learn

Our team is passionate about learning, not only to maintain the highest professional standards and keep abreast of the latest techniques, skills and developments, but also to conduct training to prevent international parental child abduction and to encourage parents to work together across borders and cultures for the sake of their child.

We serve as expert witnesses and case support around the globe to help ensure that parents and judicial officials are given sound, practical advice.

We develop educational programs to teach corporate, government and military bodies on how to prevent and cope with international parental child abduction. We are happy to design a program or tailor one to suit your needs.

*Learn more about us,
our process and our services.*

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