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If Heirs Are Fighting, Try Mediation

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Mediation — a way of settling disputes before they escalate into litigation — has grown increasingly popular in the trusts and estates field for two reasons. One, it is significantly less expensive for families than going to court, an advantage in today's tough economy; and two, an unprecedented intergenerational transfer of wealth is currently taking place. One report predicts that between 1990 and 2044, \$10.4 trillion will be passed on to the baby-boom generation. In this "Financing Your Future" column, *The Wall Street Journal* interviews SRZ founding partner William D. Zabel about the mediation process. The discussion includes an overview of the types of disputes that arise in family estate cases, how a lottery system can be used to settle disputes and the challenges of mediation.

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