



LOOK Strategies for Families: Supporting Problem-Solving with Others

WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Supporting problem-solving with others is a set of strategies. You can use these strategies to help your child resolve problems with others. For example, two children might need to figure out what to do when they want to play with the same toy.

Problem-solving with others includes:

- ◆ Noticing and considering how others feel
- ◆ Thinking of different solutions
- ◆ Agreeing on a solution

Preschoolers are still learning how to get along with other children. They need our support to think of other children's feelings. They also need help to come up with fair solutions to problems. This is even more true when they are feeling a big emotion. With our help, children develop the skills they need to work through conflict with others.

HOW TO AND TIPS:

Preparing your child to manage problems:

- Play "What would you do?"

Describe a problem and ask your child how to fix it ("What could be a solution if two children want the same toy?", "What if a friend is not keeping their hands to themselves?").

- Use books, movies, or other materials to practice problem-solving.

Point out disagreements or problems that characters have in books or movies. Ask your child questions about the problem. Help your child think of ways to solve the problem.

- Ask your child to think about other's feelings. Ask your child how something might make someone else feel ("Her friend took her toy without asking. How do you think she feels?").

- Check out the NCPMI Solution Kit for ideas:

English: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Solution_kit_cards_home.pdf

Spanish: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Solution_kit_cards_home_SP.pdf

Somali: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Solution_kit_cards_home_Somali.pdf

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Supporting Problem-Solving at Home

- ◆ Two children are arguing over a toy stroller. A caregiver comes over, kneels down next to the children, and says, "It looks like you both want to play with the stroller. How can we fix this problem?" Together, they come up with a solution. The two children decide to take turns.
- ◆ While reading a story, a caregiver points out a disagreement between characters saying, "It looks like the animals in this story have a problem." They follow-up asking the child questions about what the problem is, how each of the animals might be feeling, possible solutions, and what the outcome might be.



LOOK Strategies for Families: Supporting Problem-Solving with Others

HELP YOUR CHILD PROBLEM-SOLVE DURING A CONFLICT:

1. Notice a problem:

- Ask your child to tell you what the problem is.
- Ask your child how it makes them and the other person feel.
 - If your child is unsure, you can help by describing the situation (“You both want to play with the ball. You are feeling frustrated.”).

2. Think of solutions:

- Help your child to think of lots of different ways to solve the problem. Ask them if they have any ideas for a solution. Offer solutions if they are unsure.
- Some solutions include:
 - Take turns
 - Ask for help
 - Take a break
 - Get a timer
 - Say, “Please stop.”

3. Talk about what would happen and how everyone would feel if you used these solutions:

- Some questions to ask are:
 - “Is it safe?”
 - “Is it fair?”
 - “How will everyone feel?”

4. Try your solution:

- Choose the best option and try it out.
 - Make sure to let the child know you can try something else if this solution does not work!

5. Talk about the situation after with your child:

- Describe what happened.
 - Praise your child for using problem-solving skills (“You did a great job agreeing on a fair solution!”).



LOOK at you: You are the expert on your child. We’d love to hear from you! How are you supporting your child to problem solve at home? Let us know what works well for your family!