

What is my problem? How does it make me feel?



Think of a solution.



What would happen?



Give it a try!



The Power of Problem Solving

Often, our first reaction when our child has problem is to solve it for them.

- Children are capable of learning how to be independent problem solvers.
- An important part of having positive interactions with peers is being able to problem solve. The ability to identify a problem, consider possible solutions, and follow through until you find a solution that works, is a life-long skill.
- Remember that this is a worthwhile investment of your time. Taking the time to teach them how to problem solve will save time later and pay off in the long run when they are able to do it with greater independence.
- Visuals are so important! They help children see what each step of problem solving look like, while also providing pictures of potential solutions that they can try.

You can teach your child how to problem solve by coaching them through the following steps:

1. Stay calm.
2. Identify and label how the situation makes them feel.
3. Teach them that uncomfortable emotions means that they have a problem that needs solving.
4. Use the word “problem” when talking about what happened (i.e. “What is the problem?”)
5. Once they state the problem, restate and clarify it. (i.e. “The problem is...”)
6. Think of possible solutions together (i.e. “What could we do to solve this problem?”)
7. Encourage them to try another solution if their attempt does not work. (i.e. if a child chooses to ask nicely and it doesn’t work, they might want to try waiting for a turn instead.)
8. Use nurturing feedback (i.e. “What a great solution. You found a way to get the ball and everyone is happy.”)

