

Problem Solving Skills Training

Caregiver Handout



Your student is participating in problem solving skills training at school.

What is Problem Solving Skills Training?

- An intervention that teaches students to apply decision-making skills to analyze and solve a variety of problems.
- Students learn the 5-step problem solving process.
- Students build skills with repeated practice and positive and corrective feedback from teachers.
- Students are encouraged to practice the skills in real-life situations during the school day and/or at home.

What is the 5-Step Problem Solving Process?



Define the
problem



Define the goal
for the situation



Brainstorm
Solutions



Select
Solutions



Evaluate the
solution

PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS CAN HELP YOUR STUDENT:

Navigate conflicts with
peers, teachers, and
family members

Manage challenging
situations that produce
disappointment, frustration,
or anger

Succeed in school, work,
and life

Tips for Supporting Problem Solving Skills at Home

Caregivers play an important role in helping students learn and use problem solving skills. Like with any other skill, your student's problem solving skills will improve faster if they practice them at home in addition to school. See below for how you can guide your student through the problem solving process when they encounter challenging situations.

PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS



Help your student define the problem

Encourage your student to explain in their own words.

Prompts: "What happened that's bothering you?"

"How would you describe the problem?"



Help them define their goal for the situation

Help your student focus on what they want to happen.

Prompts: "How do you want this to end up?"

"What would you like to happen instead?"



Help them brainstorm solutions

Write down or repeat back their ideas without judging. There are no bad ideas when brainstorming.

Prompt: "Let's brainstorm all possible options, regardless of whether you think they will work."



Help them select solutions

Encourage them to choose one and give it a try.

Prompts: "Which of these ideas do you think will work best?"

"Are there reasons why some of these may not work?"

"Which of these would you be willing to try? Let's talk through this."



Help them evaluate the solution

If the first try didn't work, remind them that it's okay to try another solution.

Prompts: "How did it go? What went well? What was challenging? What could have gone better? Did your solution work the way you wanted?"



- This can be tough; offer encouragement as your student is using the process.
- Acknowledge when your student tries to use problem solving skills. This helps them feel good about their efforts and encourages them to keep using the strategies.