



Problem Solving Guide

Some children may need support to learn effective problem-solving skills, as difficulties with problem-solving is often a reason for frustration or outbursts. Often, the challenging part of problem solving is making decisions after coming up with and choosing options for a situation that needs resolving.

The following decision making process can assist children to think about options to a problem or situation. Encourage and support children to come up with two options, write the positives and negatives of each and then implement the one they think is best. It is important for children to have only a few options to choose from, especially when learning these skills, as too many choices may be overwhelming and impact their ability to make a decision. By writing down the positives and negatives of the options, they will be able to evaluate their choices, guiding them to find the best one.

The level of support you give children will depend on their age or abilities. Younger children in early childhood education and care settings will need lots of support. The main focus for these children is thinking of options for them to try in response to the problem they face. Help them identify their problem, then focus on supporting them to think of options. You may choose to skip writing down the positives and negatives.

If children are able to, they can also work through the other steps. Encourage them to identify the problem and think of options. Offer support if they get stuck. They can also begin to think about positives and negatives, although they don't need to think of too many! They will still need a lot of your support.

Steps for problem solving



1

Clearly define the problem



2

Think of two options for resolving the problem



3

Write a positives and negatives list for each option.



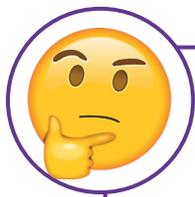
4

Choose an option based on the positives and negatives list and carry it out



5

Think about how successful the option was in addressing the problem. If it wasn't helpful or only addressed some of the problem then the process can be restarted



What's the problem?

Blank space for writing the problem.



What's one option?

Blank space for writing the first option.



What's another option?

Blank space for writing the second option.



Positives

Blank space for listing positive aspects of the first option.



Positives

Blank space for listing positive aspects of the second option.



Negatives

Blank space for listing negative aspects of the first option.



Negatives

Blank space for listing negative aspects of the second option.

I would choose option _____ because: _____

