FOLLOW-UP TO
IT’S A BIG PROBLEM! TEACHING CHILDREN PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Teacher Time Webinar, February 21, 2014

Thank you for participating in February’s Teacher Time webinar. Please send your problem-solving ideas, activities, songs, or strategies to us at ncqtl@uw.edu, and we will send you a token of our appreciation.

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<th>WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT</th>
<th>HOW TO APPLY IT</th>
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<td>Presentation: Teaching Children How to Solve Problems</td>
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<td><strong>We discussed how to:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Ask children if it is an “elephant” problem, such as a physical fight, or is it a “mouse” problem, such as someone took my toy. Children can learn to solve mouse problems themselves.</strong></td>
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<td>Help children strive towards independent problem solving</td>
<td><strong>Encourage children to think of some possible solutions when they are calm.</strong></td>
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<td>Teach children how to recognize when they are having a problem</td>
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<td>Teach children simple problem solving steps</td>
<td><strong>Possible solutions:</strong></td>
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<td>1. What is my problem?</td>
<td>• Solution kit with problem-solving cues to try, such as use a timer, take a break, or flip a coin</td>
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<td>2. Think, think, think, of some solutions.</td>
<td>• Bugs and wishes</td>
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<td>3. What would happen if...?</td>
<td>It bugs me when you__________</td>
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<td>✓ Would it be safe?</td>
<td>I wish you would ______________</td>
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<td>✓ Would it be fair?</td>
<td>• Be a Super Friend! Use the superhero theme to show children that they can use their superpowers to be super problem solvers!</td>
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<td>✓ How would everyone feel?</td>
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<td>4. Give it a try.</td>
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**Try It Out:**

Here are strategies teachers can use to support children through the problem-solving process. Consider how to use them when you help children solve problems.

**ANTICIPATE** – Think ahead and be aware of events, materials, or relationships that may cause problems.

**BE CLOSE** – Be there to help before a problem occurs.

**PROVIDE SUPPORT** – Help children to remember problem-solving steps, and stay in the situation until it is resolved.

**MULTIPLE SOLUTIONS** – The same solution isn’t going to work every time, so have multiple solutions ready to go and encourage children to think of multiple solutions to a problem.

**CELEBRATE SUCCESS** – Acknowledge children when problems are resolved.
### WHAT WE TALKED ABOUT

**NCQTL 15-minute In-service Suite**  
Problem Solving in the Moment  

**Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning**  
http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#teachingskills  
- Problem-Solving Steps PowerPoint and PDF for Pre-K and Toddlers, (PowerPoint also in Spanish)
- Solution Kit PDF
- Solution Kit Cue Cards PowerPoint in English and Spanish

**Head Start Center for Inclusion**  
Classroom Visuals and Supports on Problem Solving  
http://depts.washington.edu/hscenter/teacher-tools#problem

### HOW TO APPLY IT

**Resources**

- Use the problem-solving steps in the PowerPoint for ideas on how to teach the steps.
- Print out the visuals from these two websites and have them ready to go. The cue cards are available in English and Spanish.

**Resiliency & Wellness**

**We discussed how:**  
Our own social-emotional health and general well-being can make the difference between effective and ineffective moments in the classroom.

Three things you can do to improve your social-emotional well being:

- Exercise
- Eat well
- Get good sleep

**Think about when you feel like a superhero in the classroom. Why do you feel that way? What is working?**  
**Think about when you feel a little less fantastic or like a tired superhero. What might be causing that?**

As a staff, you can:

- Start a walking challenge
- Do IML at staff meetings
- Start a plank challenge
- Find a supportive buddy
- Make a healthy food only policy for the staff room
- Celebrate events with healthy snacks
- Aim for 8 hours of sleep at night

**What is one next step you can take?**

### Looking ahead

Don’t miss the Teacher’s Choice webinar on **Friday, March 21, 1:00 p.m. EST (10:00 a.m. PST).**