STRUCTURED PROBLEM-SOLVING

1 WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

2 WHAT CAN YOU CHANGE? WHAT CAN'T YOU CHANGE?

3 BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR SOLVING THIS PROBLEM:

4 WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DID THIS IDEA?

5 WHICH IDEA IS BEST? HOW ABOUT SECOND BEST?

TRY OUT THE IDEA YOU THINK IS BEST!
COME BACK TO STEP 6 AFTERWARDS.

6 HOW DID YOUR IDEA WORK? WHAT WOULD YOU DO NEXT TIME?

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STRUCTURED PROBLEM-SOLVING
AN EXAMPLE

1 WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

Me and my best friend, Alex, had an argument about who would be goalkeeper during soccer at lunch. We both got really angry and now we're not talking to each other. I feel sad and I miss playing with him.

2 WHAT CAN YOU CHANGE? WHAT CAN'T YOU CHANGE?

- I can change: how I act, and what I say to Alex.
- I can't change: What already happened or make Alex do/say anything.

3 BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR SOLVING THIS PROBLEM:

1) Say sorry to Alex, even if I don't think it was fully my fault.
2) Wait and see if Alex says sorry to me first.
3) Suggest to Alex that we can take turns being goalkeeper each day during lunch.
4) Invite Alex to do something fun together.

4 WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DID THIS IDEA?

1) Alex would probably feel better and we could be friends again. It might be hard to do, but friendships matter more than being right.
2) We might both wait and stay sad for a long time. That doesn't help either of us.
3) This would help future fights, but doesn't solve things right now.
4) This would be fun, but, alone, doesn't solve the problem.

5 WHICH IDEA IS BEST? HOW ABOUT SECOND BEST?

I think idea #1 & #3 would be the best ideas - apologise to Alex, and suggest something that could prevent this from happening again. Maybe afterwards, I could do idea #4 also - invite Alex to do something fun together, like go kick the ball at the park after school!

TRY OUT THE IDEA YOU THINK IS BEST!
COME BACK TO STEP 6 AFTERWARDS.

6 HOW DID YOUR IDEA WORK? WHAT WOULD YOU DO NEXT TIME?

I said sorry to Alex after class, and he said sorry too! He agreed to take turns to be goalkeeper during lunch, and we went to the park after school to kick the ball, and even got some ice cream afterwards. I'm glad I said sorry, even if it was a bit scary.

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STRUCTURED PROBLEM-SOLVING

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

1

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- In this step, you want to check the accuracy of your understanding of the problem – trying to understand what your child actually means.

2

WHAT CAN YOU CHANGE? WHAT CAN'T YOU CHANGE?

- Here, you want to ask your child what they can actually change in this context – can they change anything about the situation, their reaction, or both?
- Depending on the situation, it can also be helpful to ask them to list down what they <u>can't</u> change too.
- Try to ensure that what your child says can or cannot be changed is accurate.

3

BRAINSTORM IDEAS FOR SOLVING THIS PROBLEM:

- Ask your child to brainstorm all the possible ways they could solve this problem.
- Try not to take over this task - sometimes just coming up with their own suggestions can make them feel a bit better.
- Praise them for their efforts in coming up with some options (even if they're not the most feasible) - the fact that they're engaging in this process with you is positive!
- If they're having a hard time coming up with solutions, you could try gently suggesting some (e.g., "Do you think ___ could be an option?")

4

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU DID THIS IDEA?

- One by one, go through each idea, and ask "what would happen if you did this?"
- Sometimes, asking them to think about the long-term outcome could also be helpful, "what would happen in the long-term if you did this?"
- If they don't know, gently point possibilities out (e.g., "I wonder if ____ would happen if you did this – what do you think?").

5

WHICH IDEA IS BEST? HOW ABOUT SECOND BEST?

- Ask your child to choose the idea (or a combination of ideas) that's most likely to result in the best outcome or be the most helpful.
- It can be helpful to have your child score each idea on a scale of **1** (not helpful at all) to **10** (super helpful) to help them choose the best ideas.
- They may need some support to plan out how to then implement the idea(s) – you may need to help them break it down into tasks that need to be done.

GET THEM TO TRY OUT THE IDEA(S) YOU COLLABORATIVELY DECIDED WAS THE BEST, THEN COME BACK AFTERWARDS FOR STEP 6.

6

HOW DID YOUR IDEA WORK? WHAT WOULD YOU DO NEXT TIME?

- After your child has implemented their plan, it's important to come back and evaluate how it went.
- Discuss with your child: what they thought was successful, what was tricky, and what they learned that could be useful for next time.
- If it didn't pan out the way they wanted it to, you could even try repeating a few of these steps to try come up with other solutions that may yield a better outcome.

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