

PROBLEM SOLVING



Purpose:

- Encourages development of intellectual processes through sorting of information and applying knowledge to difficult situations.
- Encourages development of effective coping skills.
- Encourages development of co-operation, while working together as a team.

Format:

- Observe as early as possible during the program what issues appear to be common problems for the children. List some common problems on the whiteboard with input from the children.
- Use the whiteboard and explain the problem solving formula to them. The following steps are a guide for you as the facilitator:

Step 1:

Determine exactly what the problem is. **State it as a fact** (not a question). Keep it simple and short.

Step 2:

Accept as many causes as possible. Use '**green light thinking**' ('go' with all suggestions). Don't use 'red light thinking' (don't 'stop' any suggestions). Don't evaluate. Summarise often.

Step 3:

Use '**green light thinking**'. Be specific. Provide evidence for your suggestion (eg. example, experience). Summarise often.

Step 4:

Review solutions and evidence. Vote. Move onto step 5 & 6.

- Split the group into two even groups – works best with a minimum of five in each group, otherwise one slightly larger group. Ask each group to select one of the common problems just discussed and work on solving that problem.
- Hand out a problem solving sheet to each person.
- Ask the children to work through the problem, as a group, using the formula.
- Give them approximately five minutes for each step, so they learn to work within the framework of the formula and 'stay on track'.
- They may wish to allocate a group leader and a scribe to keep the process flowing smoothly.
- Each group reports back to the larger group so that everyone learns from the exercise.

Note:

This formula is useful within the group setting, family setting, or for an individual to use on their own.