PARENT RESOURCES

This week we are continuing to focus on the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Standard of self-management. Last week we focused on the skill of impulse control, stopping to think before we act. This week will be focusing on the skill of problem solving.

As parents and teachers, we can't always be there to solve *every* problem for our children. In fact, this isn't our job. **Our job is to TEACH our children how to solve problems by *themselves*.** This helps them to become confident, independent, and successful individuals. Instead of giving up or getting frustrated when they encounter a challenge, kids with problem-solving skills manage their emotions, think creatively, and persist until they find a solution.

Last week you were introduced to a parenting approach called parenting with Love and Logic. Love and Logic believes that if our children are going to survive and thrive in this world, they need to be effective problem solvers.

One way to improve a child's problem solving skills is to ask them **open-ended questions**. Open-ended questions improve a child's ability to think critically and creatively, ultimately making them better problem-solvers.

Examples of open-ended questions that you can ask your kids while supporting them at home:

- ✓ How could we work together to solve this?
- ✓ What do you think will happen next?
- ✓ What do you think would happen if…?
- ✓ What would you do differently next time?
- ✓ What are some possible solutions?

Open-ended questions have no right answer and can't be answered with a simple "Yes" or "No."

Love and Logic Step One: Empathy.

- "How sad."
- "I bet that hurts."

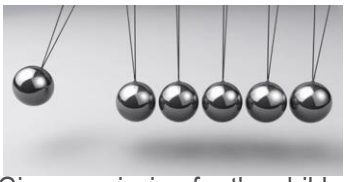
Love and Logic Step Two: Send the "Power Message."

- "What do you think you're going to do?"

Love and Logic Step Three: Offer choices.

- "Would you like to hear what other kids have tried?"
- At this point, offer a variety of choices that range from bad to good. It's usually best to start out with the poor choices.
- Each time a choice is offered, go on to step four, forcing the youngster to state the consequence in his/her own words. This means that you will be going back and forth between Love and Logic steps three and four.

Love and Logic Step Four: Have the child state the consequences.



- "And how will that work?"

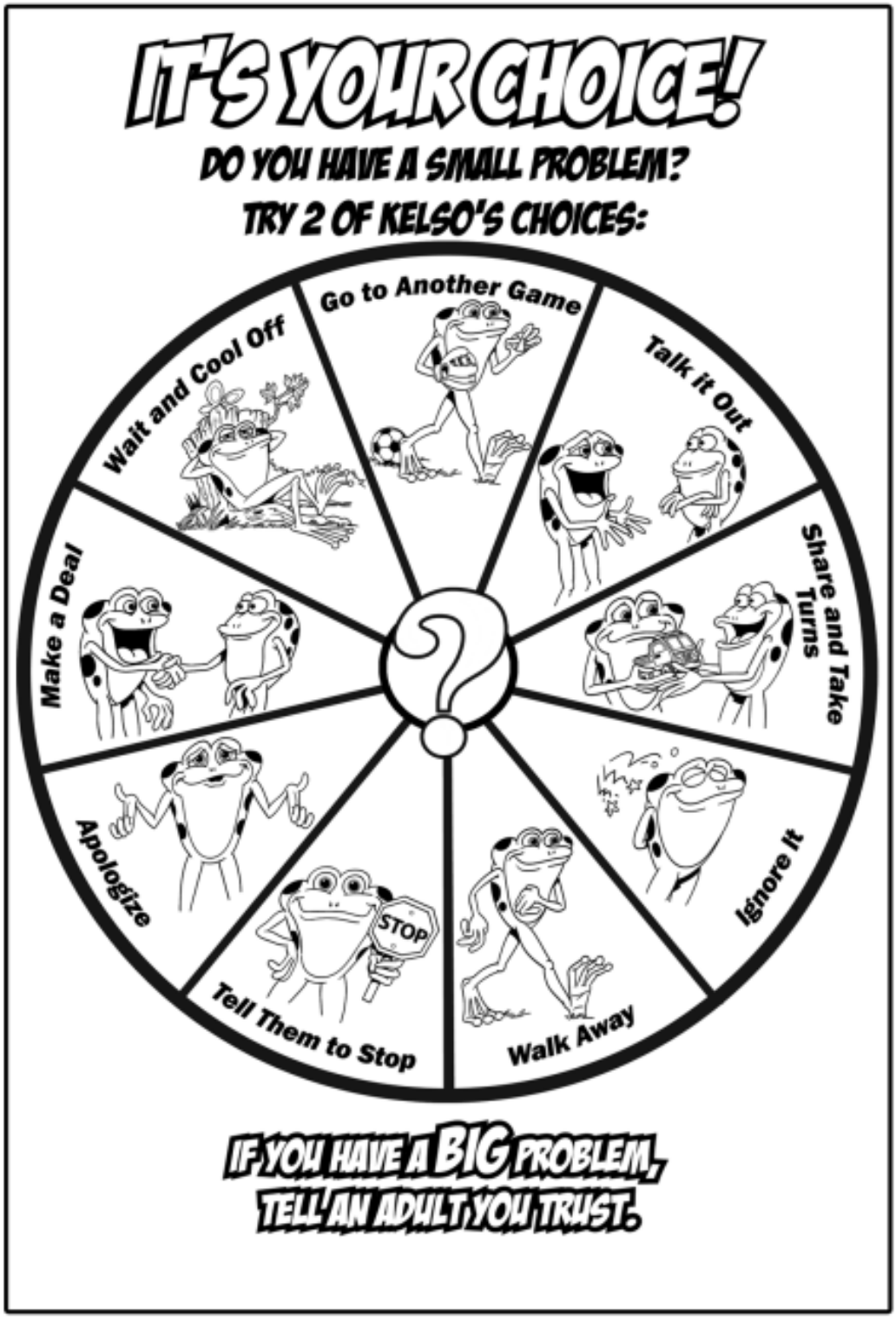
Love and Logic Step Five: Give permission for the child to either solve the problem or not solve the problem.

- "Good luck. I hope it works out."
- Have no fear. If the child is fortunate enough to make a poor choice, he/she may have a double learning lesson.

If the problem-solving steps are not working and you find yourself in a power struggle, try one of these Love & Logic One-Liners.

PRIMARY RESOURCES

When you have a problem you first need to decide, is it a BIG problem (dangerous and scary) or a small problem? If you have a BIG problem, tell an adult you trust. If you have a small problem, try one of Kelso's Choices. Here are the nine Kelso's Choices that we learned this year:



Here are some scenarios you can practice with a family member:

You do not want to do your chores.

Is this a small or BIG problem?

How would you solve this problem?

Your sister or brother takes a toy away from you.

Is this a small or BIG problem?

How would you solve this problem?

You do not want to take a nap or go to bed.

Is this a small or BIG problem?

How would you solve this problem?

You do not want to stay home; you want to go out with friends.

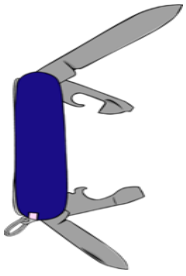
Is this a small or BIG problem?

How would you solve this problem?

You see your 6 year-old neighbor outside playing with matches, trying to start a fire.

Is this a small or BIG problem?

How would you solve this problem?



You see your 4 year-old neighbor playing with a knife and she just cut herself and is bleeding?

Is this a small or BIG problem?

How would you solve this problem?

There have been some big changes in the last few months. Talk to other people in your house about problems you're having at home right now. Discuss how you can use Kelso's Choices to solve these problems.

Intermediate Resources

Hello, students! You might be feeling kind of stuck right now. Maybe you're stuck at home or stuck on a math problem or maybe something else. Whatever it is, it's important to know that it's okay to feel stuck sometimes, especially nowadays. So, let's talk about and practice ways to get ourselves unstuck from our problems, whatever they might be. ☺

A. First, watch this escalator video and answer/think about the following questions:
   1. Have you ever had a problem and couldn't think of any solutions? How did you help yourself?
   2. What would happen if we were like the people on the escalator, and always waited for someone else to fix our problems?

B. Now, watch this video on problem solving. Answer/think about the following questions:
   1. Think of a problem you have experienced at school and at home. Practice the 4 steps from the video:
      1. **Name** the problem
      2. Make a **plan**
      3. Put the plan into **action**
      4. **Check** the result
   2. If your first plan didn't work, revise your thinking and try again.
   3. If you can't decide between multiple plan options, think about the pros and cons. What are the potential positive and negative consequences for each potential solution you identified?

It's common to become overwhelmed and anxious when stuck on a problem. Check out the posters below to learn how to practice grounding, a process to help you feel focused and think clearly. There are also great ideas on practicing grounding using your five senses. These easy steps can help you and your family problem solve together during these uncertain and unknown times. Remember, we can do hard things!