

THE COUNSELORS' CONNECTION



The Newsletter of the
Elementary Counseling Department

TEACHING KIDS HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT

*It's hard to solve a problem when you're so angry you can't think straight.
That's why helping kids learn to solve conflicts starts with helping them calm down.*

What's in this month's issue:

- TEACHING KIDS HOW TO DEAL WITH CONFLICT
- WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEARNING IN SEL: RELATIONSHIP SKILLS
- TRY IT AT HOME!
- RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT: SUNSHINE PARENTING PODCAST
- SEL BOOKS OF THE MONTH

First, kids need to recognize their emotions. Young kids might have a hard time naming their feelings. It can help to have a feelings chart to look at. A stoplight can also work. A red light means emotions are big and they need time to cool off. A yellow light means they're beginning to calm down. Green means they're ready to solve the problem.

You can help your child come up with tools to calm down. They might splash some water on their face, take some deep breaths or play with a pet. When they're ready to focus, you can help them find the source of the conflict. This can be hard for younger children. The fight may have started with a toy, but it might really be about something bigger.

Have your child pitch some solutions to their conflict. Then you can both pick out which are best. Remind them that the best option isn't just the one that feels best. It's also the one that gets them to their goal. It's good to praise your child for their efforts to fix a problem, even when they don't pan out.

Learning to say what you need in a way others understand is an important problem-solving tool. "I" statements, like "I felt sad when you didn't sit with me," are also a good tool. Kids can even role-play with a grownup who can give feedback. It's good to teach these skills when your child's not in the middle of a conflict. It's important to model these skills for your child, too. You can walk them through how you'd solve your own problem step by step.

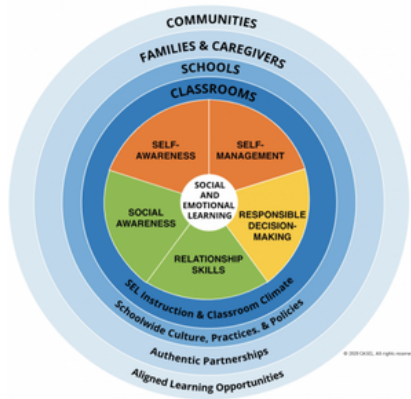
To read the full article, visit the following link: [Teaching Kids How To Deal with Conflict](#)

RESOURCE HIGHLIGHT OF THE MONTH: SUNSHINE PARENTING PODCAST

[Click here to listen to the Sunshine Parenting Podcast, "5 Steps to Help Kids Resolve Conflicts"](#)



WHAT STUDENTS ARE LEARNING IN SEL



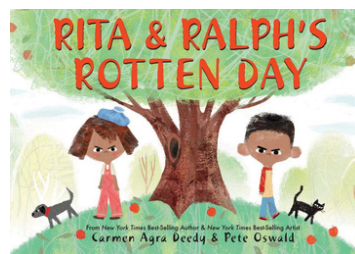
Relationship skills: The ability to establish and maintain healthy and supportive relationships and to effectively navigate settings with diverse individuals and groups. This includes the capacities to communicate clearly, listen actively, cooperate, work collaboratively to problem solve and negotiate conflict constructively, navigate settings with differing social and cultural demands and opportunities, provide leadership, and seek or offer help when needed.

Such as:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Demonstrating cultural competency
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Resisting negative social pressure
- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others

Check out [this video from PBS Learning Media](#) for more information.

FEATURED SEL BOOKS OF THE MONTH



TRY IT AT HOME! SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD THROUGH THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

As we all can attest, although uncomfortable and often upsetting, conflict is a normal part of every relationship. Rather than solving the problem for them, teaching your child how to work through a conflict in a respectful and productive way now, will benefit them as they grow into adults. Here is a format to help guide your child through conflict resolution.

- First ensure that those involved (you child and the other party/parties such as a sibling, friend, peer, etc) have time to calm down enough to be able to participate.
 - Use language such as: *Let's all take a break and then come back together in 5 minutes so we can try to work this out.*
- Bring the children together (only those involved- not witnesses) and say: *I would like to help you solve your problem. Do you agree to this?*
 - Once all parties agree to #2, state something similar to the following: *You will both (all) have a turn to tell your side of the story. However before we can start, you both (all) need to agree to the following:*
 - *There will be no interrupting. Do you agree?*
 - *No name-calling. Do you agree?*
 - *You will tell the truth (what really happened). Do you agree?*
 - *And you will do your best to try to solve the problem. Do you agree?*
 - Next, after everyone agrees to the rules, choose one person to share their side of the story.
 - *(Child's name), tell me what happened and how you feel.*
 - Listen closely and then repeat back a summary of the child's answer so that all parties can understand the perspective. Repeat this for each person involved in the conflict.
 - Return to the first person who shared their story and ask them the following: *What do you think you can do to help solve this problem?*
 - Ask the same question to the other person/people involved and then summarize the ideas. If you hear a similar idea shared by the kids, you can point that out. However, if solutions sound silly or unreasonable (ie, never talk to them again), remind them that they agreed to try to solve their problem and that means not giving silly or impossible solutions.
- Help guide the children to a consensus on the reasonable, fair, and clear solution(s) that they are willing to implement.
- Once a solution is agreed upon, congratulate them and encourage them to congratulate one another through a fist pump, high five, thumbs up, etc.