


PATHS Training


Session 3/4



PROBLEM SOLVING

Kindergarten – Turtle

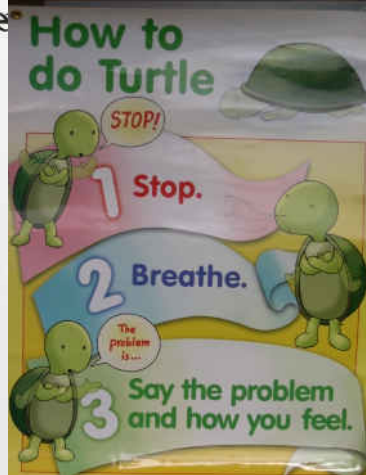
Grade 1 to 6 – Control Signals Poster



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The Turtle Technique

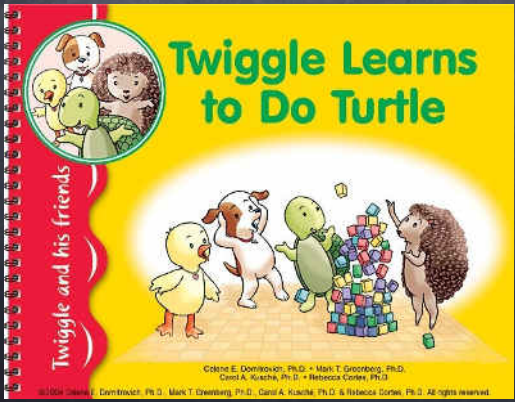
- ✦ Behavioral Inhibition
(Hug Yourself, Tell Yourself to Stop)
- ✦ Self-calming
(Take a Long, Deep Breath)
- ✦ Feeling Identification and Problem Analysis
(Say the Problem, and How you Feel)



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The Turtle Story

Lesson 14 & 15 uses a story to explain and build children's interest in doing turtle.

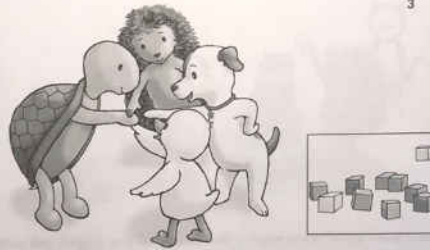


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2

Twiggie liked his teacher, Miss Cathy. He liked Circle Time and having cheese crackers for snack.



3

Twiggie's favorite place to play was the block area. Most days, Twiggie and his friends had fun playing together.



4

But sometimes, if Twiggie felt sad or mad, he would say or do mean things.



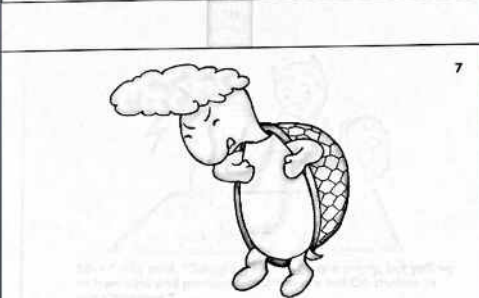
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One day, Twiggie and his friends built a super tower in the block area. Henrietta decided the super tower needed one more block. She stood on tiptoe to reach the top of the tower.



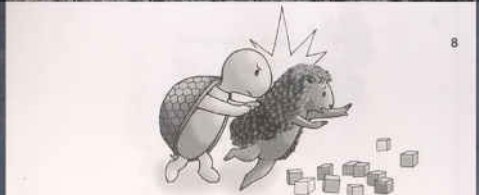
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All of a sudden, there was a loud crash. The super tower came tumbling down.
The blocks fell all over the floor.



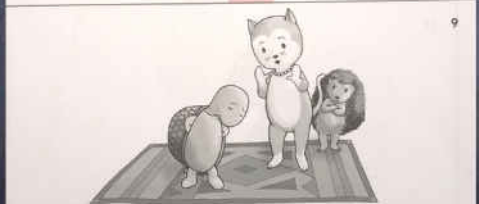
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Twiggie felt very, very angry inside. His heart was beating very fast. He felt like he was going to blow up.



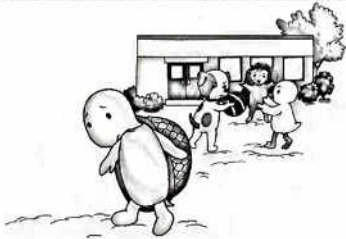
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"You ruined our super tower," he yelled at Henrietta. "I don't want to be your friend!"
Twiggie was so mad that he pushed Henrietta on top of the blocks. Henrietta felt scared. The blocks hurt her when she fell on them. Her feelings were hurt, too.



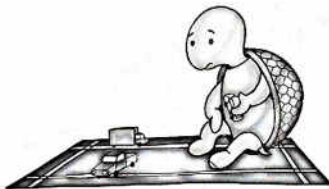
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Miss Cathy said, "Twiggie, I know you are angry, but yelling at Henrietta and pushing her down are not OK choices in our classroom."
"Tomorrow," she said, "I want you to talk to my friend. His name is Wise Old Turtle. He will help you learn how to calm down when you are upset."



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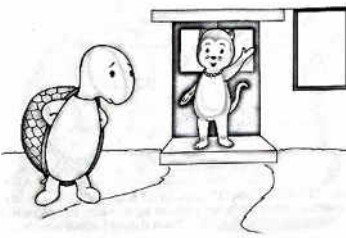
For the rest of the day, Twiggie's friends stayed away from him. On the way home from school, no one wanted to sit next to Twiggie on the bus. Twiggie felt lonely without his friends.



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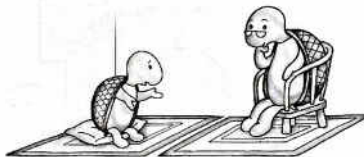
Part 2

The next day at school, Twiggie played by himself. He felt very sad about what he had done to Henrietta.



12

"Twiggie, Wise Old Turtle is here to talk with you," Miss Cathy said.

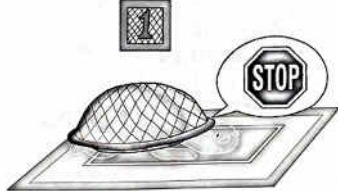


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Wise Old Turtle and Twiggie sat in the quiet corner. Twiggie told Wise Old Turtle what had happened with Henrietta. He told Wise Old Turtle that he sometimes has problems with his friends when he gets mad or upset.

"Twiggie, you already have the answer to your problem wherever you go," said Wise Old Turtle.

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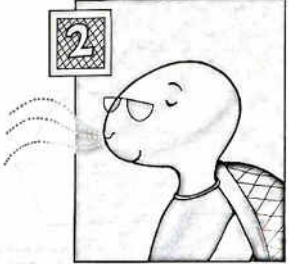


"It is your shell!" Wise Old Turtle said. "If you feel mad, sad or upset in any way, you can go inside your shell to calm down. I call this 'doing Turtle.' Watch me."

"Go inside your shell like this," said Wise Old Turtle. "When you are inside your shell, do three things."


"First, tell yourself to stop."

15



"Next, take one long, deep breath."

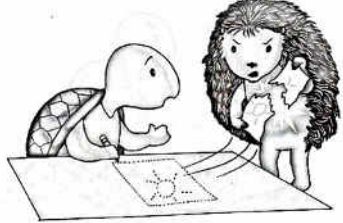
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"Then, say what the problem is and how you feel."

"This will help you calm down and stay in control," Wise Old Turtle explained.

17



The next day at school, Henrietta still felt mad at Twiggle for pushing her down in the block area. She grabbed a picture that Twiggle was drawing and ripped it in half.

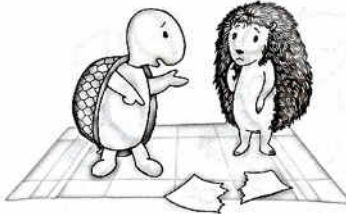
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Twiggle started feeling very mad inside his body. He wanted to hit Henrietta. Then he remembered what Wise Old Turtle taught him. He could do Turtle!

Twiggle pulled his arms, legs and head into his shell and said "Stop!"

19



Next he took a long, deep breath. Twiggle could feel that he was starting to calm down. Then he came out of his shell. He told Henrietta, "The problem is that you tore my picture—and I feel mad."

20



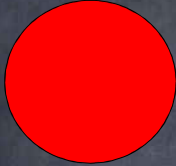
Miss Cathy gave Twiggle a compliment. She said, "I like the way you did Turtle to calm down and used your words to talk to Henrietta." Henrietta said she was sorry to Twiggle for tearing his picture. Twiggle said he was sorry for pushing Henrietta down in the blocks. Twiggle and Henrietta were friends again.

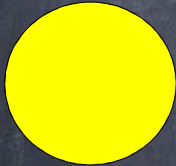
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Henrietta asked Twiggle to teach her how to do Turtle. Twiggle taught all of his friends how to calm down when they felt upset. Soon the whole class was doing Turtle!

CONTROL SIGNALS POSTER







STOP

Take a long deep breath
Say the problem and how you feel

THINK

What can you do now?
Is it a win/win solution?


GO

Try your plan
Evaluate the outcome

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Baxter and His Temper

Story by
Karen Bierman
Illustrations by
Andy Heckathorne



Dr 22-1. This is Baxter. Baxter is a boy about your age. Baxter likes school, especially recess. He likes to play with his friends and he likes to eat pizza and ice cream. Baxter is a lot like you.

Not too long ago, Baxter had a terrible problem. Whenever things happened that bothered Baxter—like when his sister took his stuff or when his mom said “No TV”—Baxter would get mad. He’d grow hot and red and, before he knew it, Baxter would find himself stomping his feet and yelling and sometimes even throwing things.

Poor Baxter. He’d be sent to his room or lose his allowance, and on top of it all—on the really bad days—Baxter’s mother would start to cry.



Dr 22-2. “Oh Baxter,” she’d say in a very sad voice, “you’ll lose all your friends if you carry on that way.”

It always made Baxter feel bad when his mom would say that. He didn’t want to lose his friends or get punished all the time, but what could he do? How could he stop his temper? He didn’t know how.

Well one day, when Baxter’s temper had gotten him into trouble again, he was sent to his room; he was feeling especially sad. He was so sad he began to cry, and he cried so hard he soon fell fast asleep.

While he was sleeping Baxter began to dream a most amazing dream. He dreamed that he was lying in an enchanted forest. Suddenly, a bird appeared—the most beautiful bird that Baxter had ever seen.

“I know why you’re crying,” the bird said, “and I can help.”

“W-w-what do you mean?” stammered Baxter.



Dr 22-3. "Well," said the bird, "I've seen your temper and I know what it's like."

"You've seen my temper?" Baxter asked. "Could you show me? I want to find it and stop it so it can't get me into trouble any more."

And the bird said, "OK, follow me." The bird began to walk through the forest and Baxter ran behind it.

"Will it be a monster?" asked Baxter. "It feels like a monster inside me when I'm mad."

"No," said the bird. "It's no monster."

"Will it be a lion then, or a tiger? It feels like a wild beast when I'm shouting and yelling."

"No, it's no wild beast," said the bird.

"What about a volcano then?" asked Baxter. "Sometimes I feel like a volcano inside, with fiery explosions and shooting rocks."

"No," said the bird. "It's no volcano. But here we are, you can see for yourself."

They had come to a forest pond and were standing beside it.

"What do you mean?" said Baxter. "Where is my temper?"



Dr 22-4. "Look down into the waters of the enchanted forest," said the bird, "and you will see your temper for what it really is." Baxter was feeling a little scared now, but he took a deep breath and leaned over to look into the pond.

"But I don't understand," said Baxter. "All I see is a balloon. That can't be my temper. Balloons aren't loud or scary or wild."

"It's a special kind of balloon," said the bird. "It holds your uncomfortable feelings—like your sad and your scared and your mad feelings."

"During each day, when things happen that upset you, uncomfortable feelings begin to fill the balloon. What do you think happens when the balloon gets full of uncomfortable feelings—when it gets so full it can't hold anymore?"

"Why, I guess it must burst," said Baxter.

"Exactly," said the bird, "and that's why it feels like an explosion inside."

"But if my temper is a balloon," said Baxter, "how can I ever stop it?"



Dr 22-5. "Well," said the bird, "when your balloon starts getting full of uncomfortable feelings, you must let them out. If you let them out slowly, they won't burst the balloon."

"How can I tell when my balloon is getting full?" asked Baxter.

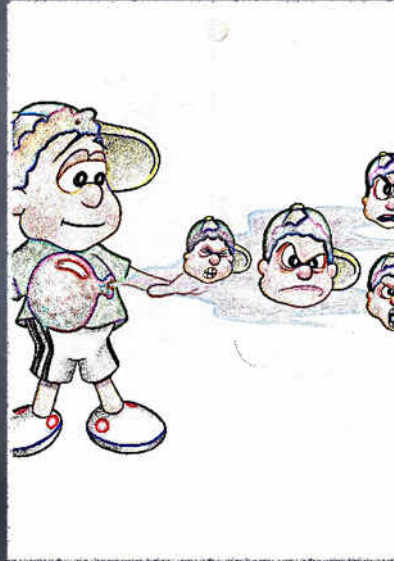
"You'll be able to tell if you try," said the bird. "You just need to stop for a minute and feel how it feels inside of you. If you feel calm and still, the balloon is empty. If you feel a little upset, the balloon is filling up. If you feel tight inside and hot, the balloon is almost full and about to burst."

"And then what do I do?" said Baxter.

"Then you can take a deep breath and let some of your uncomfortable feelings go," said the bird. "Then you can talk to someone, a friend or your mom, and tell them how you feel."

"I want to try that," said Baxter. "I really do." And then suddenly, Baxter woke up.

Baxter went downstairs. He felt happy inside. He had seen his temper and he knew just what to do.



Dr 22-6. As soon as he reached the bottom step, however, Baxter's happiness vanished. There, right in front of him in the living room, was his sister playing with the block castle he had built the night before. It had taken him three hours to build it, and she was knocking it down! Baxter felt so hot inside that he thought he was going to burst.

He was about to roar when all of a sudden he heard the voice of the magical bird coming from inside his own head.

"Stop, wait," said the voice inside. "Remember your balloon inside—it's filling up. Take a deep breath and let the air out slowly."

"Oh yes!" exclaimed Baxter. "I remember!" So Baxter took a deep breath and indeed, he felt much better. He was no longer so hot, and he no longer felt like he was going to explode.

"Now," said the voice, "tell her in a calm way how you feel."

"OK," said Baxter, "I will."

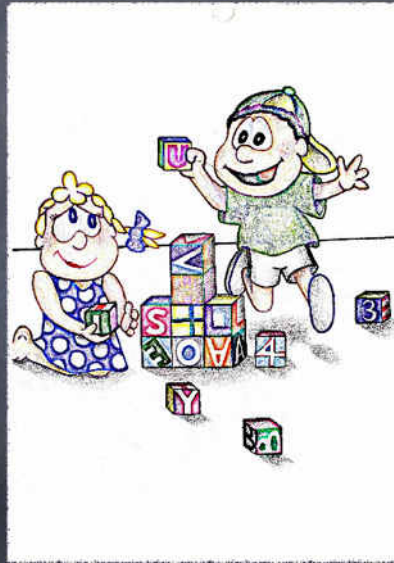
So Baxter walked quietly over to his sister and exclaimed, "I don't like it when you play with my blocks without asking. I spent a long time making that castle, and I wanted to save it."



Dr 22-7. "Oh, I'm sorry," said Baxter's sister. "I didn't know. I thought you were finished with them. But I'll help you fix it up again if you want." So Baxter and his sister worked together, and in no time at all, they had made the castle look even better than it had before.

"That worked really well!" exclaimed Baxter to himself.

After that day, Baxter began to find it a lot easier to control his temper. He remembered to listen to the bird's voice inside of his own head. He remembered to pay attention to how he felt inside. When he started to feel full of uncomfortable feelings, he remembered to stop, take a deep breath, and talk about how he was feeling instead of shouting and stomping and throwing things. Well, at least most of the time he remembered. Sometimes Baxter forgot and he roared again, but then he would hear the bird inside saying, "Stop Baxter, wait. I can help you," and it did.



Taking the Temperature: Hot vs. Cold Cognition

- ☞ When arousal is very high (emotional melt-down in progress), it is not a good time for learning. Time to calm down is needed.
- ☞ When arousal is moderate (distress or excitement), it is a good time to practice self-regulation with teacher coaching of turtle/CSP.
- ☞ When arousal is low, children can learn about concepts, but cannot practice "real-life" self-regulation.



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Beyond Compliance: Fostering Self Regulation



- Children who have developed self-regulation find it easier to follow rules and obey the teacher, but self-control is more than being compliant...
- Self-regulation involves the capacity to inhibit impulsive behaviors and engage in thoughtful, interpersonally sensitive, and goal-oriented behavior.
- Children with more well-developed self-regulation are **empowered, engaged, and enthusiastic** at school

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Behavior Management and Self-Regulation



- ❧ Teachers who only rely on direct commands and external consequences can get children to follow rules and behave obediently at school, but...
- ❧ External controls alone do not foster good relationships with others, empathy, or self-control capabilities.

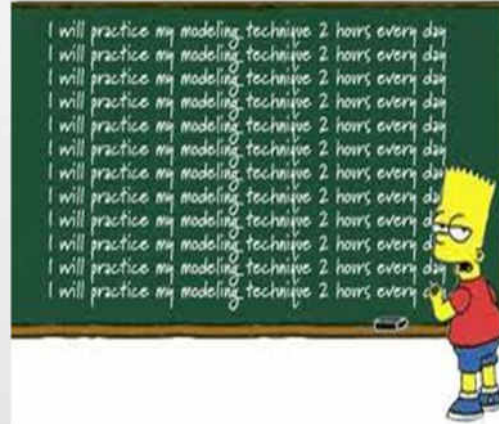


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Practicing Self-Regulation



- ☞ The PATHS lessons, feeling faces, and turtle story/CSP set the stage for the development of self-control.
- ☞ But opportunities to practice are essential!



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Costs: Time and Energy



Benefits:
Reduces Conflicts
Improves social
adjustment and self-
reflection

PATHS® Problem Solving Steps

1. Provide physical proximity and support.
2. Stay calm and use your tone of voice to de-escalate emotion.
3. Encourage children to stop and calm down by “doing Turtle” or “go to the Red Light”
4. Prompt each child to “say the problem and how they feel”
5. Use active listening to validate children’s feelings.
6. Reflect feelings to encourage emotion identification, communication and to frame the problem for solving.

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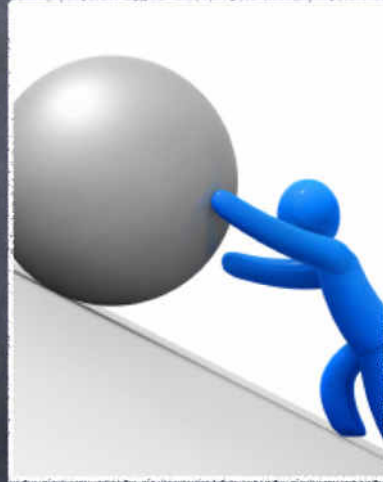
More steps...

7. Elicit ideas “What could we do to solve this problem?”
8. Ask children to consider each idea. Would that be an “ok” choice? Would it work?
9. If needed, remind children to “say yes to good ideas” if they want to solve their problem.
10. Praise children for their efforts, and for solving their problem.

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Challenges to Social Problem Solving....

Children have trouble calming down enough to talk about the problem
 Children suggest self-serving solutions
 Children will not agree to another's solution
 If the interaction takes too long, children get tired of talking about the problem and wander off
 Other problems? Real examples?



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Calming Down Enough to Talk About the Problem

When emotions are running high, it is not a good time for problem-solving. Cue "turtle"/CSP and if needed, provide additional time to calm down.
 When children are calm enough to state the problem and how they feel, problem-solving can proceed.
 Sometimes, problem-solving discussions will need to take place later in the day, rather than at the time of the conflict.



Carl and Mildred take another unsettling drive up a one-way street.

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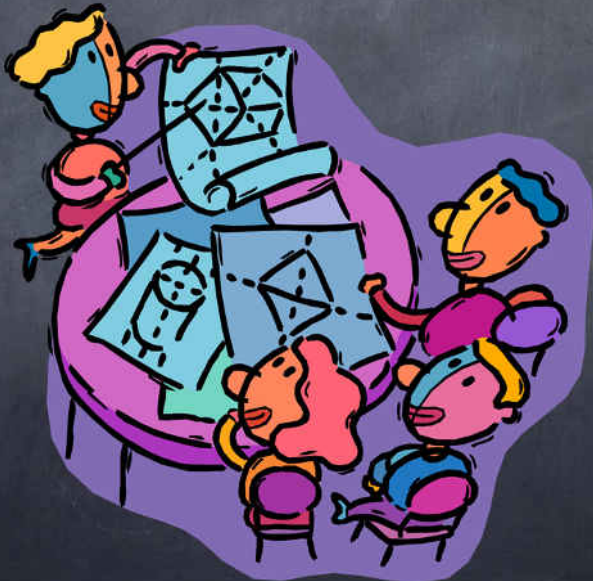
Helping children think of good solutions...

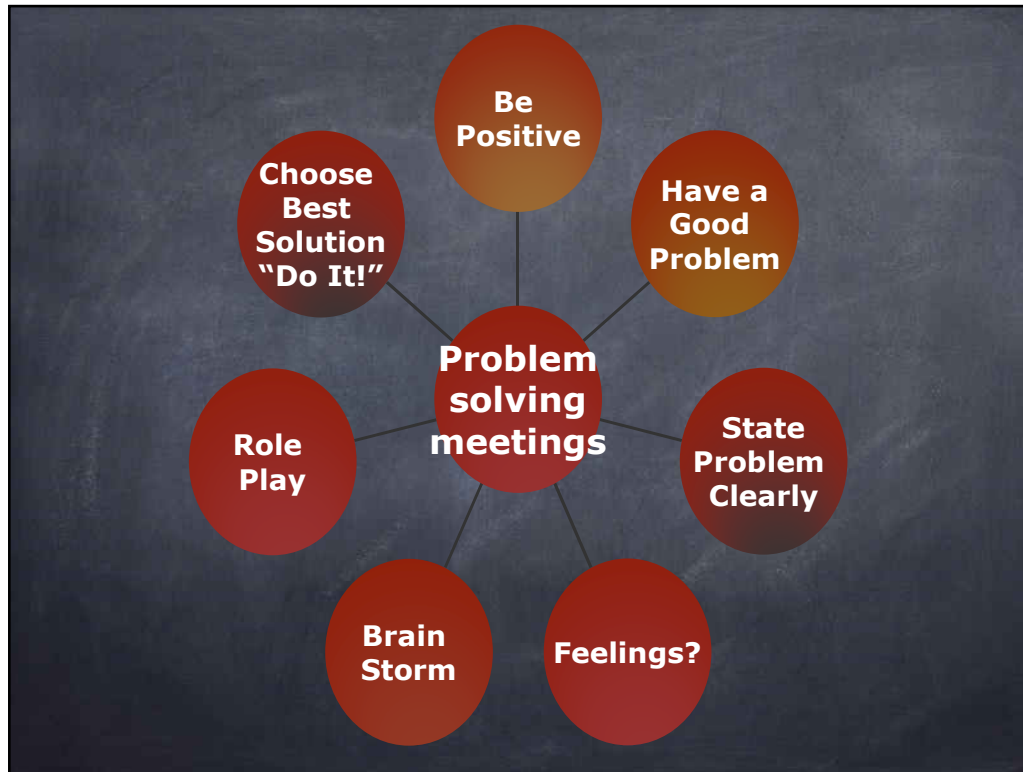
Use active listening to frame the problem in a way that can be solved.
If children suggest self-serving solutions, note that the friends need to find an idea that will solve the problem for both of them.
Ask if there are any classroom rules that can help
Ask if they have seen other problems like this before and if so, how were they solved?
Offer suggestions if children need them.



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Problem Solving Meetings





What kinds of problems to avoid?

- personality conflicts between children
- problems between teacher and child
- problems with serious behavior problems of specific children
- sensitive home related problems
- humiliating problems
- problems where people are too upset
- problems caused by breaking classroom rules

Develop the classroom
motto of:



Say YES to a good idea!