

Solving Problems and Getting Along: First Grade

Helping your child to solve problems will give him the opportunity to:

- Brainstorm ways to solve his own problems
- Cooperate with others and come up with solutions that work for everyone
- Talk about his actions and how they might affect others

Ideas to try with your child:

- Practice ways to solve conflicts using these steps:
 - State the problem without blaming anyone
 - Think of solutions that are safe and respectful for everyone involved
 - Explore consequences- 'What would happen if...'
 - Pick the best solution and make a plan for how to solve the problem.
- Teach your child how to use an "I message". For example, if someone is bothering them, teach your child to go to the person and say, "I feel _____ (fill in with an emotion word like angry, sad, frustrated) when you _____ (fill in with the negative action or behavior like hit me, tease me, etc). Please STOP!"

If your child is struggling:

- After a conflict has happened, list the problem-solving steps together.
- Have your child illustrate a picture for each problem-solving step.
- Role-play solving common problems such as taking turns, sharing a toy, etc.

Going further:

- Read the story *The Recess Queen* by Alexis O'Neill or *King of the Playground* by Phyllis Naylor and discuss how the characters solved their problem.
- Encourage your child to make up his own story about problem solving; for example, writing about how he would handle a bully at school.

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children in First Grade** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: "Work with others to come up with solutions to their own problems." *Building Relationships, First Grade*, pg. 100