

Problem-Solving Skills

These are the steps children need to develop to improve emotional awareness and problem solving skills.

3 - 5 Years

Use emotion coaching:

1. Name and validate the emotions
2. Let them process emotions
3. Problem-solving

Say "Show me the hard part."

Problem-solve with storybooks - try the 'dialogue-reading' technique

Problem-solve with creative play



5 - 7 Years

Teach problem-solving steps:

1. What am I feeling?
2. What's the problem?
3. What are solutions?
4. What would happen if...?
5. Which one will I try?

Problem solve with craft materials.

Ask open-ended questions: "How could we work together to solve this?", "What do you think will happen next?"



7 - 9 Years

Break down problems into chunks:

- Brainstorm together
- Ask open-ended questions
- Listen

Show 'The broken escalator' video and have a discussion



9 - 11 Years

Use creative problem-solving with prompts (create a jump ramp for cars, design your own game with rules)

Make them work for it (as *how* they can earn money to get what they want)

Encourage them to put it on paper (problem solving graphic organisers)



12+ Years

Play chess together. Players use critical thinking, creativity, analysis of the board, and more.

Have them learn to code. It promotes creativity, logic, planning and persistence.

Encourage to start a meaningful project.

Apply SODAS method. This method can be used for big or small problems:

- Situation
- Options
- Disadvantages
- Advantages
- Solution

Encourage to join problem-solving groups:



Open-ended questions

Using open ended questions can help to support your child's development of curiosity, reasoning, creativity, critical thinking and independence.

Tell me about what you made?

Can you describe what happened?

What do you like best about it?

How did you feel when you finished it?

What did you learn?

How did you feel when you finished it?

How might you do it differently next time?

How do you know that is the right answer?