



# Moving forward with a problem solving approach to social conflict

## Overview

HighScope's problem solving approach to social conflict resolution offers teachers a specific set of steps to follow as they scaffold children's ability to resolve conflicts on their own. Understanding and teaching these 6 steps depends upon a mindset that sees children as capable and sees misbehavior as mistakes and teaching opportunities.

## 6 steps of conflict resolution

1. Approach calmly.
2. Acknowledge feelings.
3. Gather information, understanding the children's point of view.
4. Restate the problem, using positive language.
5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together.
6. Be prepared for follow up support.

## Goals for moving forward

1. Examine your classroom expectations for clarity and consistency.
2. Consider ways to model self-calming strategies for the children.
3. Take a look at the materials in your classroom, ensuring that you have plentiful diversity and supply.
4. Use and teach the 6 steps of conflict resolution consistently. Talk with and reflect with children about conflict resolution outside the actual conflict.

## Implementation plan

1. Explore helpful resources: [HighScope dvd: 'I want all the turns' (["I WANT ALL THE TURNS!" SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN RESOLVING PROBLEMS AND CONFLICTS DVD](#)) , poster to hang in the classroom, wallet cards (<https://highscope.org/product-category/curriculum/?srch=conflict+resolution>)

YouTube clips: Let's be a family:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nXMSKxlfW28&t=69s>; Words do hurt my feelings: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm4WdS7eruc>, It's my baby's blanket: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfHd6XtCWq8>.

Books: *You can't come to my birthday party* ([You Can't Come to My Birthday Party, 2 Ed.](#)), *'You're not my friend anymore!'* ([You're Not My Friend Anymore!](#)) and *Make room for boys* ([MAKE ROOM FOR BOYS! HELPING BOYS THRIVE IN PRESCHOOL](#))

2. Create an acronym for remembering the 6 steps. What will help you to remember these 6 steps so that you can call on them in the heat of the moment?
3. Choose to focus on one step of the conflict resolution process. Once you are comfortable using that step, move to the next. Intentionally introduce the step with children.
4. Review the PQA, Item III-M, focusing on Level 5 responses. Ask a co-teacher or other staff member to use that item to offer you feedback on your response to a recent conflict in your classroom.
5. Find or create social stories to help children reflect on their responses to conflict.
6. Use the attached self-assessment to gauge your comfort level with implementing a problem solving approach to social conflict.
7. Reflect with your team about conflict resolution with children and adults.
8. For further information and resources please visit our website: <https://www.famconn.org/resources-1>

### Conflict Resolution Strengths and Needs Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructions: Read each statement and consider your comfort level in using these effective practices. Choose 1 or 2 to focus on at a time.

Practice	I need some help to use this practice effectively.	I am becoming comfortable using this practice.	I am confident using this practice.	I would like to focus on this practice as my goal.
1. I post visuals of and refer children to problem solving ideas and steps.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
2. I post and refer children to 3-5 clear, specific, positively stated classroom rules.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
3. I model and teach behavior expectations and classroom rules.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
4. I use my physical presence strategically to proactively respond to potential conflict.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
5. My voice tone and body language remain respectful and positive. I move quickly and calmly to children in need of support.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
6. I acknowledge children's feelings and offer support for children to acknowledge their own feelings.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No

7. I positively reframe children's actions and gather information about children's view of the problem to be solved.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
8. I ask for children's ideas for solutions and try out possibilities with each child involved in the conflict.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
9. I offer follow-up support and remain with children as they move back into classroom activity, offering specific encouragements and acknowledgments.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
10. I individualize support for the conflict resolution process by learning key phrases in children's home languages and by using visual and nonverbal cues.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No