My Problem Solving Steps

When something goes wrong, I can stop, think and choose. Five steps, one at a time.

Name: _____ Date: _____



Stop and calm down

My body first. I can breathe slowly, count to 10 or take a break.

☐ Slow breaths ☐ Count to 10 ☐ Take a break ☐ Ask an adult

My body feels calmer when I: _____



Say the problem

What happened? Say it without blaming. What do I want?

The problem is: _____

I feel: _____ I want: _____

Size of the problem (circle): small medium big



Think of solutions

Brainstorm. Every idea counts for now. Try for three.

Idea 1: _____

Idea 2: _____

Idea 3: _____



Check each idea

Is it safe? Is it fair? How will others feel? Will it work?

My best idea is: _____

It passes the check: ☐ Safe ☐ Fair ☐ Kind ☐ Could work



Try it, then check

Pick one and try it. Did it work? If not, try my next idea.

Did it work? ☐ Yes ☐ A little ☐ Not yet

If not, my next idea is: _____

An adult who can help: _____

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Solution Checker

Write your ideas, then check each one. The best idea passes all four checks.

My problem

_____

_____

My idea	Safe?	Fair?	How will others feel?	Will it work?
1 _____	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No		☐ Yes ☐ No
2 _____	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No		☐ Yes ☐ No
3 _____	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No		☐ Yes ☐ No
4 _____	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No		☐ Yes ☐ No

Circle the face that fits. Any idea with a No goes back to the drawing board.

My choice and my plan

I will try idea number: _____ When: _____

What I will say or do: _____

Plan B, if it does not work: _____

Who can help me: _____

After I try it

What happened: _____

How I feel now: _____

What I learned: _____

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Problem Solving Practice Cards

Cut out the cards. Pick one, then use the five steps out loud or on page 1.

1

Two friends both want the last swing at recess.

2

You forgot your homework at home and it is due today.

3

A classmate keeps tapping their pencil and you cannot focus.

4

Your team is losing and a teammate starts yelling at you.

5

You were not invited to a birthday party your friends are going to.

6

Your little brother broke your favorite toy.

7

You do not understand the math directions and everyone else started.

8

Two friends want you to pick a side in an argument.

9

Someone took your seat at lunch.

10

You lost a game and feel like quitting.

11

A friend told a secret you shared with them.

12

You have two things due tomorrow and only time for one tonight.

How did it go?

Card number: _____ My best solution: _____

Why it passed the check: _____

Something I can do next time: _____

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