

# *Positive Parenting:* Collaborative Problem Solving Approach

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# Agenda

- 01.** Understanding concerning/challenging behaviour
- 02.** Executive Skills
- 03.** Collaborative Problem Solving Approach

# Understanding Concerning Behaviour



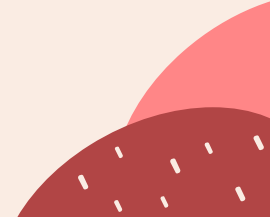
View child's difficulties as lacking skills instead of giving them negative labels such as manipulative and lazy.



Children may be developmentally younger than their actual age.

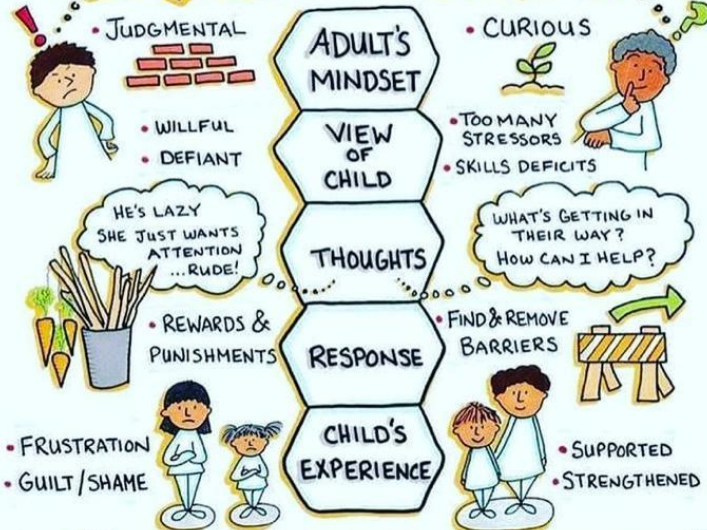
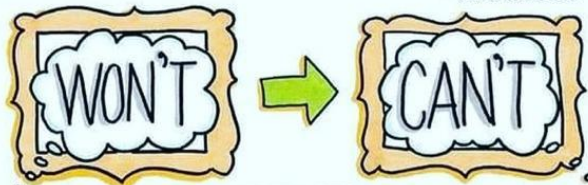
Children communicate that they are having difficulties through their behaviour.

Motivational strategies such as rewards and consequences may not make things better if it is an issue of lacking skills and not lacking motivation.



# REFRAME THE BEHAVIOUR

"KIDS DO WELL IF THEY CAN"  
~ROSS GREENE



"SEE A CHILD DIFFERENTLY, YOU SEE A DIFFERENT CHILD"  
~Dr. Stewart Shanker

When kids exhibit challenging behaviour we can be "STRESS DETECTIVES"...finding and removing barriers.

- FIND STRESSORS → REDUCE THEM
- FIND UNMET NEEDS → MEET THEM
- FIND SKILLS DEFICITS → TEACH THEM

@kwiens62

# Executive Skills



# Executive Skills (Dr. Peg Dawson)

- Brain-based skills managed out of the frontal lobes of the brain.
- Skills that begin to emerge shortly after birth but take a full 25 years to reach full maturation.
- Skills required to get things done.

# Executive Skills - Foundational

## Response Inhibition

The ability to stop and think before you say or do something. Other names for this skill include: self-control, self-regulation, the ability to delay gratification.

## Working Memory

The ability to use your memory as you are performing a complex task.

## Emotional Control

The ability to manage your emotions in order to achieve goals, complete tasks, carry out actions.



# Executive Skills - Foundational

## Flexibility

The ability to make changes to plans in the face of obstacles, setbacks, new information or mistakes.  
To adjust or adapt to changes.

## Sustained Attention

The ability to maintain attention to a situation or task, ability to pay attention in spite of distractibility, fatigue or boredom.

## Task Initiation

The ability to start tasks promptly.

# Executive Skills - Advanced

## Planning/Prioritisation

The ability to create a roadmap to reach a goal or to complete a task. It also involves being able to make decisions about what's important to focus on and what's not important.

## Organisation

The ability to create and maintain systems to keep track of information or materials.

## Time Management

The capacity to estimate how much time one has, how to allocate it, and how to stay within time limits and deadlines. It also involves a sense that time is important.

# Executive Skills - Advanced

## Goal-directed Persistence

The capacity to have a goal, follow through to the completion of the goal, and not be put off by or distracted by competing interests.

## Metacognition

The ability to stand back and take a birds-eye view of oneself in a situation. It is an ability to observe how you problem solve. It also includes self-monitoring and self-evaluative skills (e.g., asking yourself, “How am I doing? or How did I do?”).

## Stress Tolerance

The ability to thrive in stressful situations and to cope with uncertainty, change, and performance demands. We generally reserve our discussion of this skill to adults, since it seems more relevant with this population.

# Explicit Teaching

- Label the skill for our child and help them understand why the skill is important so that they know the rationale for practising the skill.
- Example: When a child asked why they need to clean their room because they are happy with the mess, parent could respond by saying that ‘organization’ is an important skill and cleaning their bedroom is a way to practise this skill.

# Explicit Teaching

- Recognise and label the lack of executive skills in our child rather than give them negative labels is a more positive way and more solution-oriented way to communicate with our child.
- Example: Tell your child “It looks like this kind of task is difficult for you to start on and you need to practise the skill of ‘task initiation’ instead of calling them lazy.”
- Help our children by being their surrogate frontal lobes when they are young.

# Explicit Teaching

ABC model is helpful in teaching executive skills

**A**

## Antecedent

altering the **antecedent** by setting up a more conducive environment (eg. Turning off TV when it's homework time to reduce distraction)

**B**

## Behaviour

teaching the **behaviour**  
(mentally screen out distractions or listening to music to tune out noisy room)

**C**

## Consequence

**consequence** after they perform the behaviour  
(reward after homework is done, use of specific praise)

# *Importance of Sleep Routine*

- Healthy sleep is critical in promoting children's growth and development (6 to 12 years old recommended to have 9 to 12 hours of sleep)
- Studies have shown that children who regularly get enough sleep have improved attention, behavior, learning, memory, and overall mental and physical health.

# Sleep Routine

- Set a regular bedtime and wake time.
- Limit screen time near bedtime. Stop use of electronics/screens at least an hour before bed.
- Provide a cool and quiet sleeping environment.



# Case Illustration

Scenario: Child struggling with sleep routine

1

## Organisation

Discuss and come up with a time-table/schedule with your child so that they have a routine to follow.

2

## Time management

Child to learn how to manage their time by keeping track of the time such as checking the clock from time to time, using timers to time the amount of time spent on each activity, use of alarms to signal bedtime so that they can go to bed and wake up at a fixed time regularly.

3

## Planning/Prioritisation

Child to learn how to prioritise sleep as something important instead of playing handphone game

# Collaborative Problem Solving Approach



# CPS Model (Dr. Ross Greene)

Collaborative & Proactive Solutions (CPS) is the evidence-based model of care that helps caregivers focus on identifying the problems that are causing concerning behaviors in children and solving those problems collaboratively and proactively. The model is different from other methods emphasizing the use of consequences to modify concerning behaviors. The CPS model does not involve harsh physical punishments and is beneficial for our children's emotional and mental well-being.

# ALSNUP

## Assessment of lagging skills and unsolved problems

- Discussion guide created to assist caregivers in identifying a child's lagging skills and unsolved problems.
- Unsolved problems and not lagging skills are the primary targets of intervention.
- If you solve those problems collaboratively and proactively, the child's skills will be enhanced.

# 18 Lagging Skills

<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty maintaining focus	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty seeing the “greys”/concrete, literal, black & white thinking
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty handling transitions, shifting from one mindset or task to another	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty taking into account situational factors that would suggest the need to adjust a plan of action
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty considering the likely outcomes or consequences of actions (impulsive)	<input type="checkbox"/> Inflexible, inaccurate interpretations/cognitive distortions or biases (e.e., “Everyone’s out to get me,” “Nobody likes me.”)
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty persisting on challenging or tedious tasks	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty attending to or accurately interpreting social cues/poor perception of social nuances
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty considering a range of solutions to a problem	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty appreciating how his/her behavior is affecting others
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty expressing concerns, needs, or thoughts in words	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty shifting from original idea, plan, or solution
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty managing emotional response to frustration so as to think rationally	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty starting conversations, entering groups, connecting with people/lacking other basic social skills
<input type="checkbox"/> Chronic irritability and/or anxiety significantly impede capacity for problem-solving or heightened frustration	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty empathizing with others, appreciating another person’s perspective or point of view
<input type="checkbox"/> Sensory/motor difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty handling unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, novelty

# Unsolved Problems

- An unsolved problem is an expectation a child is having difficulty meeting.
- The wording of the unsolved problem is going to translate directly into the words that you will be using when you introduce the unsolved problem to the child when it comes time to solve the problem together.

# Unsolved Problems

## Guidelines on writing unsolved problems:

- Contain no reference to the child's challenging behaviors. Eg. Don't include what they will do such as cry, scream, swears.
- Contain no adult theories/reasons for behaviour.
- They should be split, not clumped. Don't include as general problem to more than one person.
- They should be specific:
  - Include details related to who, what, where, and when
  - What expectation is the child having difficulty meeting?

# Unsolved Problems

Examples of unsolved problems:

Begin with the word Difficulty, followed by a verb.

- Difficulty getting out of bed at 6 am in the morning to get ready for school on weekdays
- Difficulty stopping handphone game at 9 pm
- Difficulty completing the word problems on the Maths homework.



## Plan A

Problems solved unilaterally through imposition of adult will

Problems not solved durably

End up increasing the likelihood of concerning behavior

## Plan B

Problems solved collaboratively so the child is a fully invested participant

Solutions are more durable

Over time, the skills the child is lacking are enhanced

# Plan B

1

## *Empathy*

Involves gathering information from the child so as to achieve the clearest understanding of what's making it hard for the child to meet a given expectation

2

## *Define Adult Concerns*

Involves having caregivers enter their concerns into consideration on the same unsolved problem (i.e. how the problem is affecting the child and/or others)

3

## *Invitation*

Involves having the adult and child work toward a solution that is realistic and mutually satisfactory. A solution that addresses the concerns of both parties and that both parties can actually perform.



# PLAN B BUILDS SKILLS

Solving problems collaboratively and proactively with a student not only helps solve the problems that are causing challenging behavior but also helps them build the skills they are lacking. This graphic lists some of those skills:

## PLAN B STEPS

### EMPATHY

- Considering and identifying concerns
- Articulating those concerns in a manner that others can understand
- Inhibiting of strong emotions during discussion

### DEFINE ADULT CONCERNS

- Listening
- Empathizing
- Considering and understanding another person's perspective
- Appreciating how one's behavior is affecting others
- Tolerating frustration when hearing another person's point of view

### INVITATION

- Generating alternative solutions
- Thinking of solutions that not only work for oneself but also for others
- Considering the likely outcomes of potential solutions
- Resolving disagreements without conflict

# Problem Solving Plan

**PROBLEM SOLVING PLAN** Collaborative & Proactive Solutions  
THIS IS HOW PROBLEMS GET SOLVED

CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

UNSOLVED PROBLEM #1	UNSOLVED PROBLEM #2	UNSOLVED PROBLEM #3
Adult taking the lead on Plan B:	Adult taking the lead on Plan B:	Adult taking the lead on Plan B:
Kid concerns identified: (Empathy step) DATE _____	Kid concerns identified: (Empathy step) DATE _____	Kid concerns identified: (Empathy step) DATE _____
Adult concerns identified: (Define the Problem step) DATE _____	Adult concerns identified: (Define the Problem step) DATE _____	Adult concerns identified: (Define the Problem step) DATE _____
Solution agreed upon: (Invitation step) DATE _____	Solution agreed upon: (Invitation step) DATE _____	Solution agreed upon: (Invitation step) DATE _____
Problem Solved? YES? _____ DATE _____ NO? _____ COMMENT: _____	Problem Solved? YES? _____ DATE _____ NO? _____ COMMENT: _____	Problem Solved? YES? _____ DATE _____ NO? _____ COMMENT: _____

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**LIVES IN THE BALANCE**

1. Identify unsolved problem
2. Identify child concerns (empathy step)
3. Identify adult concerns (Define the problem step)
4. Decided on solution agreed upon (invitation step)

Prioritize which unsolved problem to work on first!

# Case Illustration

Scenario: Child will throw tantrums when parent asked him to do his homework

1

Unsolved problem

Difficulty completing Maths homework

2

Child concerns identified (Empathy step)

Maths is boring and questions are difficult

# Case Illustration

3

## Adult concerns identified

Concerned that teacher will scold the child for not completing homework.  
Child will not be able to improve in Maths due to lack of practice.

4

## Solution agreed upon (Invitation step)

Child agreed to attempt the questions he is able to answer and ask for help for the remaining difficult questions.  
Parent will coach the child for the questions that he has difficulty doing.

# Resources/References

- <https://www.smartbutscatteredkids.com/about/terms/>
- <https://livesinthebalance.org/>
- <https://livesinthebalance.org/our-solution/>



# Thank You!

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