

Teachers Helping Teachers Problem-Solving Steps

1. Invite the volunteer to sit next to you and explain what the *Teachers Helping Teachers Problem-Solving Steps* are. (And how he or she is now a co-teacher with you to help others.)
2. Ask for a scribe to write the volunteer's name, grade level, and student's name (asking that the teacher have a specific student in mind and use a fictitious name).
3. Ask the volunteer to give a newspaper type headline of the concern (just a few words). Ask the group for a show of hands of those who have had a similar concern or felt the same. (This is encouraging to the volunteer—and you can point out how many people he/she will be helping.)
4. Ask the volunteer to describe the last time the problem happened, in enough detail, so the group can get an idea for how to role-play the problem. To help the volunteer focus on specifics, ask, "What did you do and say? What did the student (or others) do and say? And then what happened?"
5. Ask the volunteer, "How did you feel?" If he/she has trouble finding a feeling (or says, "frustrated"), show the Feelings column on the "Mistaken Goal Chart" and ask him/her to choose the feeling that comes closest. Ask the group, "How many of you have felt the same?"
6. The volunteer and the group can now find the mistaken goal in Column One and the "belief behind the behavior" in Column Five. Point out that this is just a working hypothesis and move quickly to the next step.
7. Ask the volunteer, "Are you willing to try something new?"
8. Set up a role-play. Invite the volunteer to role-play the student (or, in some cases, offer the choice to watch). Ask for volunteers to play each part, starting with the lines they heard during the description of the problem. Advise that they "be" the part instead of "acting" the part. (Include 2 or 3 volunteers to represent other students in the room or nearby.)
9. Stop the role-play as soon as you think they have had time to experience feelings and decisions (usually less than a minute). Process by asking the role players, starting with the student, what they were thinking, feeling, and deciding (to do) as the people they were role-playing.
10. Ask the group to brainstorm suggestions the volunteer could try. Be sure suggestions are addressed to the scribe at the flipchart, not to the volunteer, so the scribe can record all suggestions. For ideas, invite the group to refer to the last column of the Mistaken Goal Chart, and/or the Positive Discipline Tool cards, or suggestions from their personal wisdom.
11. Ask the volunteer to choose one suggestion to try (even if he/she claims to have tried all).
12. Bring back the volunteers to role-play the suggestion the volunteer chose, with the volunteer playing him/herself (so he or she can practice) or playing the student if a punitive suggestion is chosen (so he/she can experience the child's reaction). At the end of the role-play, process the thoughts, feelings and decisions of each role player, starting with the student.
13. Ask for a verbal commitment from the volunteer to try the suggestion for one week and report back to the group.
14. Ask the group for appreciations for the volunteer. (What help did you get for yourself by watching this? What did you see that you appreciate about the volunteer? What ideas did you see that you could use? Etc.)