

# problem solving at school

every problem has a solution

Problem solving is an important skill to learn for both school and life, because it is impossible to go through life or any day sometimes, without coming across problems that you have to deal with. With the correct attitude and practice problem solving is a skill that you can get better at. Part of having the right attitude to solving problems is to feel confident that **problems do have solutions.**

Some problems are easy to solve, but some problems are bigger and you have to think especially hard to solve them. Some problems you definitely need help with. Examples of problems that you may encounter are listed below.

- School work
- Problems with family
- Troubles with friends
- Personal issues

## ➤ What other problems can you remember that you or others have experienced?

To assist you to become a better problem solver, here are some steps to follow.

### **STEP 1 – Clearly identify the problem**

Write down exactly what your problem is. Sometimes it is more than one problem, so make sure that you only try to solve one problem at a time. One mistake that people make when trying to solve problems is that they do not identify exactly what the issue is.

### **STEP 2 – Think of a range of possible solutions to your problem.**

Think of as many different answers to your problem as possible. You can also ask other people to think of some suggestions. Some of the ideas that you have might seem silly at first and some might be good, but when you write down as many possible solutions that you can think of, it helps you feel like there is something you can do. If you have time, a good thing to do is to leave this list for one day and come back to it, when you are fresh. This may help you to think of some solutions that you could not see before.

### **STEP 3 – Choose the best option**

After you have written down as many solutions as you can think of, choose one solution that you feel will be most helpful. Sometimes, you may need assistance choosing a solution. If you cannot choose a solution, go back and try to think of other solutions.

### **STEP 4 – Act on your choice**

Once you have chosen one solution, the next step is to act on your choice. Hopefully, because you have tried to think of all the possible solutions, you can be confident that you are taking the right action. When you act on your choice, you will be doing something that will hopefully solve your problem. Sometimes, if your problem is complex or difficult, it is helpful to have a plan about how to best implement this choice.

# problem solving at school

## **STEP 5 – Review your choice**

After you have taken action to solve your problem, you can review and check if you have solved your problem. If it worked, congratulations! If it did not work, you can now go back and check any other possible solutions that you listed and try them instead, until you have a solution that works.

As you are solving your problem, it can be helpful if you write down your answers to each step as you go, because it can be too hard to solve some problems in your head.

Remember that there are some problems that you cannot solve alone and you will need to ask a parent, a teacher or another adult for help.

➔ **Who would you ask for help?**

➔ **Think of a problem and try STEP 1 to STEP 5.**

every problem has a solution