



FREE Resources

for school counselors and their students



problem-solving • social skills development • identifying feelings • coping skills • and more

Within this activity you'll find...

1. Overview
2. A sample script to use with students to introduce the topic and activity
3. Ideas for engaging students using these resources



Problem-Solving Challenge Worksheet

We hope you find this just as useful in your work with students as other school counselors have! Please let us know if you have any feedback.



ACTIVITY: Hopscotch Problem-Solving Challenge Worksheet

Objectives:

- To develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills among students.
- Help the student identify a problem, generate potential solutions, and evaluate the best course of action.
- To guide students through the problem-solving process.

Materials Needed:

- Download and print the **Hopscotch Problem-solving worksheet**
- Pen, pencil, or marker for each group/student

OVERVIEW

Effective problem-solving skills involve the ability to identify, analyze, and evaluate a problem, and then develop and implement a solution. Children who develop problem-solving skills are better equipped to handle challenges and setbacks, and they are more likely to succeed in their academic and personal pursuits. Additionally, problem-solving skills promote critical thinking, creativity, and perseverance, all of which are important for success in life.

As a school counselor, you can help your students develop their problem-solving skills by facilitating problem-solving activities. Our worksheet helps the student to identify a problem, generate potential solutions, and evaluate the best course of action. By using a structured approach which involves providing students with the opportunity to practice problem-solving in a safe and supportive environment, you can help them to become more confident and effective problem solvers in their daily lives. Additionally, school counselors may schedule follow-up meetings to help to hold the student accountable and provide an opportunity for further support and guidance.

Individually, this worksheet provides a structured approach to problem-solving that can help a student to become more effective in addressing particular challenges they are encountering. It also helps to ensure that the student considers multiple options before selecting the best course of action.

As a group, this activity allows students to work collaboratively, think critically, and develop problem-solving skills. It also helps them to understand that there can be multiple solutions to a problem, and that it is important to evaluate each option before selecting the best course of action.



SAMPLE SCRIPT: Introducing problem-solving skills to students

Today, we're going to talk about developing effective problem-solving skills and why it's important for you to do so.

First, let me ask you a question. Have you ever faced a problem before? Maybe you couldn't figure out how to finish your homework or you had a disagreement with a friend?

When we encounter problems like these, it can make us feel frustrated, upset, or even scared.

But the good news is that we all have the ability to solve problems!

Problem-solving skills are the tools we use to find solutions to problems. Developing these skills is important because it can help you in many areas of your life, such as school, family, friends, and when you are experiencing pressure from others to make decisions and you are just not quite sure what to do.

When we have good problem-solving skills we can think critically, make good decisions, and come up with creative solutions to the challenges we face. When we learn how to solve problems, we feel more confident and in control of our lives. It helps us to be resilient and cope with unexpected changes in life.

There are several steps involved in effective problem-solving.

First, we need to identify the problem. That means we need to figure out what the problem is, and what we want to achieve.

Next, we need to think about possible solutions. We might come up with a few different ideas and evaluate the pros and cons of each one.

Then, we can choose the solution that we think will work best.

Finally, we need to take action and implement the solution.

Remember, problem-solving is a skill that can be developed over time. It's important to practice and keep trying, even if we don't solve the problem right away. So next time you face a problem, don't give up! Take a deep breath, identify the problem, think about possible solutions, choose the best one, and take action. With practice, you'll become better and better at solving problems.



IDEAS FOR ENGAGING STUDENTS

1:1 sessions with students

1. Define the problem: Ask the student to describe the problem in detail. Write down the problem on the worksheet in Step #1.
2. Identify potential solutions: Brainstorm potential solutions with the student. Write down 3 ideas, in Step #2, even if they seem unrealistic or unhelpful.
3. Evaluate the potential solutions: Ask the student to evaluate each potential solution. Write these down in Step #3. Use the following questions to guide the evaluation process:
 - What are the pros and cons of this solution?
 - How likely is this solution to work?
 - What are the potential consequences of this solution?
4. Select the best solution: After evaluating each potential solution, ask the student to select the best course of action. Write down the selected solution on the worksheet in Step #4.
5. Develop an action plan: Ask the student to create an action plan for implementing the selected solution. The plan should include specific steps and a timeline for completing each step. Write down the action plan on the back of the worksheet.
6. Follow-up: Schedule a follow-up meeting with the student to evaluate progress and make any necessary adjustments to the action plan.

Group sessions with students

1. Divide students into groups of two or more students.
2. Explain the concept of problem-solving and its importance in daily life. (see included script)
3. Provide an example of a real-life problem that students might encounter (e.g., bullying, peer pressure, academic challenges).
4. Ask each group to identify a leader. Pass out the Problem-solving worksheet and a pen/marker/pencil to each group leader.
5. Ask each group to write down the problem at the top of the page in Step #1.
6. Instruct the students to brainstorm 3 potential solutions to the problem and write them on the page in Step #2.
7. Once the groups have generated a list of solutions, ask them to discuss and evaluate each option, writing down the pros and cons of each of those solutions in Step #3.
8. After evaluating the options, the groups should select the best solution and write it down in Step #4.
9. Finally, discuss as a whole group the different solutions generated by each group, and compare the pros and cons of each solution.

Problem-Solving Worksheet



Step 1: What's the problem that you want to solve?

Step 2: Can you think of 3 ways to solve this problem?

Solution #1

Solution #2

Solution #3

Step 3: What are the pros & cons of each solution from Step 2?

#1 Pros & Cons

#2 Pros & Cons

#3 Pros & Cons

Step 4:

Choose the best solution and make a plan to put it in action!

