

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social Skills: The I-Message

Overview:

When two or more people get together there is potential for conflict. Conflict is a problem between people. Conflicts can cause the feeling of isolation, so it is important to teach students how to resolve conflicts in a way that reconnects them to others. Conflict resolution involves communication – owning one’s perspective and listening to the perspective of others. Most conflicts can be resolved through positive communication. But sometimes, people just disagree. At these times, it is important to be able to negotiate a solution that allows everyone to feel good about the resolution.

Objectives:

Child will use constructive strategies for communicating their perspective in conflict.

Child Goals:

I can communicate effectively in conflict.

Vocabulary:

communication
conflict
I-Message
resolve

Learn- 5 minutes

A conflict is defined as a problem or disagreement between people. Your child can communicate using the I-Message to resolve conflict. The I-Message includes stating the problem, owning the feelings, and stating the desired change.

Discussion Questions:

- What is a conflict?
- Talk about a conflict you’ve had with another person?
- How did you resolve the conflict?
- What are some strategies for resolving conflict?

Strategies for Resolving Conflict

Conflict is a problem with another person.



When you have a conflict with another person:

Freeze! Calm down. Think.



Say the problem.



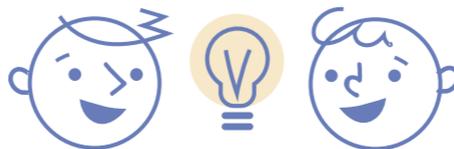
Listen to the other person.



Think of solutions with the other person.



Try the solution.



Practice-10 minutes

In the *Resolving Conflict Activity*, the class brainstorms a list of conflicts between friends, classmates, or siblings. Then practice saying a problem using the I-message, listening to the response, and coming up with a solution.

- Brainstorm conflicts with your Child that they have had with friends or siblings.
- Provide your Child with the I-Message Template.
- Choose a conflict and have them complete the I-Message sentence using a specific behavior, the feeling, and a statement of what he or she would like changed.
- Repeat with other conflicts as long as time and interest allows.

Resource

When you _____ I feel _____ because
State a specific behavior. Name the feeling.

_____, so _____.
Own the feeling. State what you would like to happen.

When you _____ I feel _____ because
State a specific behavior. Name the feeling.

_____, so _____.
Own the feeling. State what you would like to happen.

When you _____ I feel _____ because
State a specific behavior. Name the feeling.

_____, so _____.
Own the feeling. State what you would like to happen.

When you _____ I feel _____ because
State a specific behavior. Name the feeling.

_____, so _____.
Own the feeling. State what you would like to happen.

Deeper Dive – 5 to 10 minutes

In the Resolving Conflict Game, your Child is challenged to provide a positive solution to a conflict.

- Provide your Child with *Resolving Conflict Cards* and a number cube (or random number generator).
- Place the cards facedown in the center of the playing area.
- The first player draws a card and rolls the number cube.
- The player must provide the number of solutions to the conflict as the number rolled.
- The player scores one point for each acceptable solution.
- Play continues clockwise for as long as interest allows. The player with the highest score wins.

Resource

You and your friends can't decide what to do.

Your friend is ignoring you.

A classmate is saying things behind your back that aren't true.

You lost your lunch money and think a classmate might have stolen the money.

You want to play music, but your brother is trying to study.

A classmate accidentally tripped you. You ripped your pants and everyone is laughing at you.

Your friend wants to use your smart phone, but your parents said that no one can use the phone except you.

Your friend is mad at you because he or she thinks you spend too much time with another of your friends.

You're mad because your teammate won't pass the basketball to you because you're not very good at playing basketball.

Your friend wants to play soccer at recess, but they say the game is full and you can't play.

Your friend is missing his or her math book and thinks that you took the book.

A classmate is making fun of your new shoes.

Tip: Practice using I-Messages with your Child when resolving conflicts. This will allow your Child to feel more comfortable resolving conflicts effectively. Consider creating a Calm Corner and/or a Negotiation Station in your home where your Child can go to calm themselves as needed throughout the day. Include some of the resources from this activity or other helpful tools in that area.

