PROBLEM SOLVING FRAMEWORK

Heartland GRANT SOLUTIONS

Mediation Skills for Childcare Center Staff
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MANAGING CONFLICT

• Diffuse anger
• Listen to people’s feelings with respect
• Use “I” statements
“YOU” OR “I”
“YOU” STATEMENTS

“You” statements begin with the word “you.”

Some examples of “you” statements include:

- “You are always late.”
- “You don’t try to clean up hard enough.”
- “You need to communicate better.”
DISCOURAGING COMMUNICATION

• “You” statements often play a role in discouraging communication.

• “You” statements:
  – Intimidate others
  – Imply blame or responsibility
  – Tell other people that they do not know how to think or act correctly
  – Encourage defensive behavior
  – Focus on an individual instead of the problem that needs to be solved
“I” statements begin with the word “I”. Some examples of “I” statements include:

- “I” am worried about this problem.
- “I” think we need to talk.
- “I” want to resolve this problem.
ENCOURAGING COMMUNICATION

• “I” statements encourage individuals to work cooperatively towards solving a problem.

• “I” statements:
  – Clarify problems without placing blame
  – Allow others to save face by describing the event impersonally
  – Keep the focus of communication on the problem to be solved instead of an individual's behavior
  – Allow you to own your own behavior and create a solution that works for you
TURNING “YOU” STATEMENTS INTO “I” STATEMENTS

• There are three processes included in changing a “you” statement into an “I” statement.
  – Describe emotion
  – Describe event or situation
  – Describe how a behavior is detrimental to your relationship or the success of a situation
THE “I” STATEMENT FORMULA

“I” feel ________________________________________________
(describe emotion)

when ____________________________________________________
(describe event or situation)

because _________________________________________________
(describe how behavior is detrimental to your relationship or to the success of a situation)
1. Define the problem to be solved
   ➢ Collect information from both parties
2. Express needs and feelings
   ➢ State the problem clearly, including everyone’s concerns
   ➢ Find common ground
PROBLEM SOLVING FRAMEWORK

3. Create solutions
   ➢ Propose a solution in which everyone’s needs can be met.
   ➢ Look at the possible consequences of the solutions.

4. Try a solution (take action)
   ➢ Implement the solution and help as needed.
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5. Evaluate the solution

- Follow-up to assess whether the solution is working to solve the problem.
CIRCLES FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

How did it Work?

Define the problem

What do you both need?

Ideas for solving problem

Try the idea

Which idea do you want to try?
CONFLICT AND CREATING SOLUTIONS TO INCORPORATE VALUES

• Conflict provides opportunities for building community.

• When in competition, people think their own thoughts and don’t think together
  – The result may be individual domination, not collective power of the community.
DEALING WITH CONFLICT

• There are many ways to deal with conflict:
  • Denial
  • Competition
  • Avoidance
  • Accommodation
  • Compromise
  • Collaboration
The framework will give a structure to working with disagreements and conflicts in ways to promote community and build collaboration.