



CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR CHILDREN AGES 13-16 A CAREGIVER'S GUIDE

Presented by Military & Family Life Counselors

OBJECTIVES

- Understanding conflict
- Tips for addressing conflict
- Communication guidelines
- Ground rules for handling conflict
- Problem solving
- Resources



UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

- Conflict occurs when people perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns
- People respond on the basis of their perception
- Conflicts are a normal part of life
- Conflicts present an opportunity for growth
- Good Problem solving skills are essential



COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

- Do not escalate along with teens – remain calm and speak in a soft to moderate tone
- Invite everyone to sit down
- Allow time for cooling off if necessary
- Respect personal space
- Assure teen that you are interested in hearing what they have to say



COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

CONTINUED

- Treat the teen with respect, and teach them to treat you with respect
- Use “I” statements
- Be specific – avoid terms like: “always”, “never”, “everyone” and “nobody”
- Listen attentively



GROUND RULES FOR HANDLING CONFLICT

- One person talks at a time
- Each person speaks for himself/herself
- No physical fighting
- No emotional or verbal abuse (no name calling, hurtful personal attacks, profanity, ignoring or berating)



GROUND RULES FOR HANDLING CONFLICT

CONTINUED

- Discuss only one issue at a time
- Do not bring up old issues
- Do not blame others
- Use good eye contact
- Take a time out if needed – agree on a time to follow up



PROBLEM SOLVING

- Ask the teen to talk about their view of the problem and then tell them your view
- Talk with the teen about what they said or did, and then explain what you said or did in creating the problem
- Have each person describe how they feel and then have them describe how they think the others are feeling



PROBLEM SOLVING

CONTINUED

- Brain storm solutions – list as many possible solutions as you can think of
- Choose one solution
- Try the solution
- Get together later to discuss whether or not the solution worked



PROBLEM SOLVING

CONTINUED

- Model good problem solving behavior for teenagers – talk out loud in front of teenagers in a problem solving manner
- It is helpful for teenagers to see adults express their feelings in an appropriate way
- Help teenagers label all of their feelings and express them appropriately



PROBLEM SOLVING

CONTINUED

- It is important for teens to understand that strong feelings do not excuse disrespectful behavior
- Emotions are not bad and we are all entitled to feel whatever we feel – how we act in response to those feelings is important



PROBLEM SOLVING

CONTINUED

Guide teens to use problem solving skills through questions such as:

- “What can you do?”
- “I am confused.
- Explain it to me.
- How could you solve that problem?”
- “How are you going to solve this problem?”
- “What’s the first step? Then what do you do? Okay, now what’s the next step?”



TEENS

- Help teens understand that everyone's point of view is important
- Encourage teens to put themselves in the other person's shoes to understand how they are feeling



SUMMARY

- Conflict is inevitable and provides an opportunity for growth
- Good problem solving skills are essential and will provide teens a life long benefit
- Adults are powerful role models and can look for opportunities to allow teens to learn from their example.





QUESTIONS?



RESOURCES

- Chaplains and Local Clergy
- Behavioral Health Services available through TRICARE: www.Tricare.mil
- Military OneSource (800) 342-9647
- Veterans Affairs www1.va.gov/directory



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THANK YOU

