**Session 8: Improving Family Relationships with Effective Problem Solving and Communication**

***Domain: Family Relationship Building***

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| **Relevant Family Goal:** |  |

* **Session Goals** *(check all that apply)*
  + Explore the rationale for effective problem solving
  + Provide an overview of problem-solving strategies
  + Explore effective communication
  + Identify common mistakes in problem solving
  + Practice neutral problem statements
* **Handouts to Use** *(check all that apply;* [*click HERE*](https://thefamilycheckup.com/content/everyday-parenting-handouts#session8) *to find handouts)*
  + 8A Problem-Solving Questionnaire, pg. 144
  + 8B Common Problem-Solving Traps to Avoid, pg. 145
  + 8C What, When, and Where of Problem-Solving Conversations, pg. 146
  + 8D Examples of Neutral Problem Statements for School-Age Children, pg. 147
  + 8E Bringing up a Problem: Checklist, pg. 148
* **Videos to Share** *(check all that apply;* [*click HERE*](https://thefamilycheckup.com/content/parenting-videos#family-relationships-young) *to find videos)*
* Neutral Problem Statements (Younger/Older Child)

**Bear videos** *(available in English or Spanish)*

* Effective Communication (Younger Child)

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* **Teaching Process for Each Skill Chosen for Session**

*Add notes below from your review of EDP book. Handouts and page numbers are listed to help you, but you will choose which specific activities, scripts, handouts, etc. to use tailored to the parent and family, and based on what matches parent needs and goals.*

* + **Check on Home Practice from last meeting**
  + **Confirm with parent agenda and goals for session**
  + **Teach**: Consider using relevant video(s) checked above. Discuss rationale, benefits, and child development considerations for problem solving (pgs. 136-137).
    - **Guidelines for effective problem-solving**: facilitate parent reflection regarding problem solving (Handout 8A); review what, when, and where of problem solving (Handout 8C) and common traps to avoid (Handout 8B)
    - **Neutral problem statements**: explain that neutral problem statements are first step in problem-solving conversations. Review strategies to use neutral problem-solving statements (pg. 138, summary at bottom of next page)
  + **Model**: Consider using relevant video(s) checked above.
    - **Neutral problem statements**: Consider using scenario in manual (pg. 139) to model Wrong Way/ Right Way for Neutral Problem Statements and/or using video listed above. Review examples (Handout 8D). Provider also can model for parent.
  + **Practice**: tailor to family
    - **Neutral problem statements**: Consider practicing using real problem, and/or doing the following: identify fictional problem; sit back-to-back with parent to help parent focus on words without distraction of nonverbals; practice Right Way of using neutral problem statement (pgs. 140-141).
  + **Debrief**: Facilitate parent self-assessment, then give your feedback on strengths and challenges from the practice (Handout 8E); plan for possible barriers to use of new strategies (consider Tips for Success at Home, pg. 142-143)
* **Home Practice**
  + Plan for parent’s use of neutral problem statements at home. Parent can continue to reference handouts 8C (structuring problem-solving conversations) and 8D (examples of neutral problem statements), and can use Handout 8E to self-assess.
  + Tailor home practice to child, parent and family, including cultural and general context
  + Optional: prep for use of Emoji Tracking Worksheet [Tracking Parent Skills Practice Emojis - English](https://thefamilycheckup.com/sites/default/files/Tracking%20Parent%20Skills%20Practice%20-%20Emojis.docx)
  + Other:
* **Schedule Next Session**
  + Discuss which goal and parenting strategy parent wants to address in next session
  + Plan to enable session to be focused and not distracting, such as arranging for child(ren) to be occupied. See [*Establishing a Focused Environment for Sessions*](https://thefamilycheckup.com/sites/default/files/Establishing%20a%20Focused%20Environment%20for%20Sessions.docx).

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**Making Neutral Problem Statements (pg. 138)**

* Use calm and respectful approach to bringing up difficult topic
  + Calm tone of voice
  + Be brief and specific about the problem
  + Provide opening for conversation; show that child’s input is welcomed
* Start by doing one or more of the following
  + Accept responsibility for some part of the problem, as appropriate
  + Recognize child’s positive contributions related to the area being discussed
  + Compliment the child regarding something connected to the area being discussed