

Solving Problems Together

When family conflicts arise, parents who continually “lay down the law” can have just as many problems as those who always cave in to an adolescent’s wishes. Family conflict can lead to long-lasting anger and resentment, or it can strengthen communication and resolve difficult problems.

Effective problem-solving considers the differing wants and needs of family members. The focus is on finding a solution that everyone involved can accept. This problem-solving process is not appropriate for conflicts that deal with values, health, or safety, but it can help with many important family issues.

STEPS FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS TOGETHER

S—State the problem as you see it.

O—Open the discussion to others’ points of view.

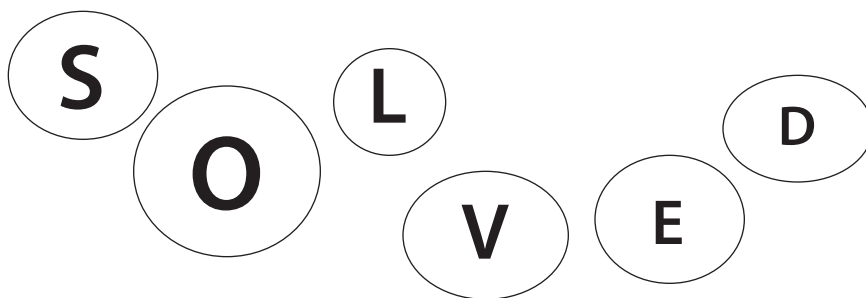
L—List the possible solutions together.

V—Veto the unacceptable ones.

E—Evaluate the remaining solutions.

D—Choose the one most acceptable to everyone.

After trying out the agreed-upon solution for a period of time, decide whether it is working. If the problem persists, everyone involved may need to go back to “list the possible solutions together” and see if they can think of other possible solutions.



THE BEST WAY TO
GET RID OF A
PROBLEM IS TO
SOLVE IT.