


Help Your Child Become a Great Problem Solver

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Preschoolers who can solve their own problems feel confident and enjoy learning. They are willing to make mistakes and learn from them and keep trying until they succeed. Families can help children develop problem-solving skills by taking advantage of opportunities to talk about solving problems. Here are some ways to start a conversation.

- Point out that it takes time to learn something new (like riding a bicycle). Explain that learning something new can take a while and that “practice makes better.”
- Remind your child that problems and challenges are chances to “grow our brains.” Say “You know how to do lots of things. You practiced until you got good at them.” Or “Remember when you didn’t know the letters in your name? Now you write them all in order! We can read your name!”
- Work with your child to think of three ways to solve a problem. Talk about each one and then have your child pick one to try out.
- Let your child know that you believe in him or her. Say “Do you think you can solve that problem on your own? I think you can. What do you want to do first?”
- Point out your own mistakes as part of life and learning. “Uh-oh, I spilled my soup. But everyone makes mistakes. Next time I won’t put the mug where my elbow can bump it.”

Source: Adapted from the Message in a Backpack, Teaching Young Children 5 (3): 12

Audience: *Family*

Age: *Preschool*

Topics: *Child Development, Social and Emotional Development*

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