**Weekly Tip – Conflict Resolution and Compromising**

Conflict is a normal part of life. But resolving conflicts is not always easy. Teaching children these skills will help them better navigate issues that crop up throughout their lives.

1. **Understanding Feelings** - In any type of conflict scenario, it’s essential that all parties involved are aware of and [understand their own feelings](https://shop.counselorkeri.com/products/identifying-emotions-classroom-guidance-lesson-understanding-feelings). Sometimes we feel angry on the surface when there’s a problem, but there might be an underlying feeling like fear, embarrassment, or loneliness.

**2. Scale the Event -** After students have had a chance to identify their feelings, t’s helpful to have them to [scale what actually happened](https://shop.counselorkeri.com/products/how-big-is-the-problem-conflict-thermometer-classroom-guidance-lesson). Ask questions like:

* Is this a little deal? Is this really going to affect the rest of my day? Will I be okay if I just let it go?
* Is this an issue I feel like I need to address with the person? Will this continue to bother me if we don’t address it?
* Is this a huge deal? Do I need to get an adult involved? Is someone in danger?

3. **Expressing Feelings** - When students are ready to talk about the issue, they have to be willing to [express how they feel](https://shop.counselorkeri.com/products/sharing-feelings-with-i-feel-statements-classroom-guidance-lesson). When we share our emotions with others, it’s easier for us to relate to one another as human beings who have feelings instead of just someone who disagrees with me.

4. **Actively Listening and Reflecting** - After spending time focusing on how we feel and expressing ourselves, it’s an important shift to help students remember that there’s another person involved and their feelings and needs are important too! Some students sometimes even seem shocked to hear this. But of course, to resolve a conflict, both parties need to be heard.

5. **Brainstorming Solutions** - For smaller deals or little problems, it’s important to give students a toolbox of [solutions to try on their own](https://shop.counselorkeri.com/products/problem-solving-conflict-resolution-classroom-guidance-lesson). They can do things like walk away, choose a different activity, ignore it, or go to the calm down area. When students scale the problem and identify that they need to talk it out to resolve a conflict, they can brainstorm solutions. Provide instruction on win-win, win-lose, and lose-lose solutions first, and talk about how people feel given each type of solution.

6. **Choosing Solutions -** Once the list is narrowed down, try to compare all of the win-win solutions. If there is only one win-win solution, take a look at the win-lose solutions and see if there’s any way to modify them to be win-win solutions. An analogy to show uses a rope with two people in a tug of war. Each person is trying to get a win-lose solution. Each person wants only what he wants and isn’t worried about what the other person wants. Both people get hurt in this process (illustrated by red hands!).

7 **Moving On** - Sometimes moving on is the hardest part of the whole thing. But when students pick a win-win solution, it shouldn’t be too terribly hard.