# Shared Solutions – Workshop

Audience: Administration, teaching and support staff.

Overview: The following is a workshop on key concepts from *Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs*: *2007*.

Outcomes: Participants will develop an understanding of conflict, and be introduced to and practice "active listening".
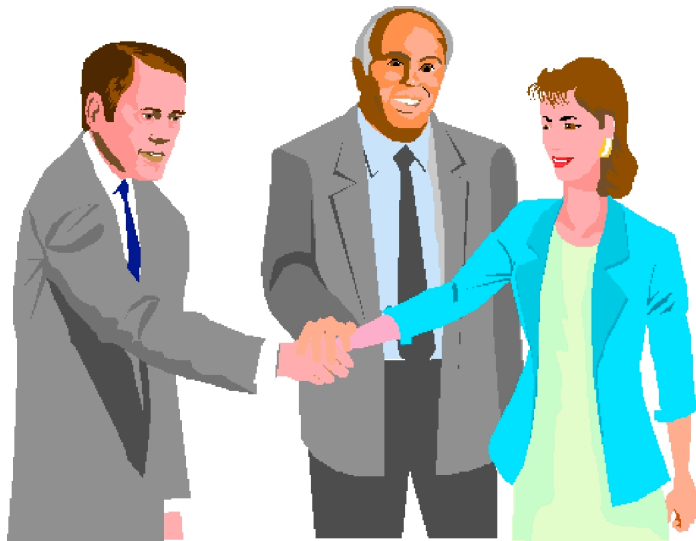
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Activities and Materials: See workshop outline

Shared Solutions – Workshop Outline

AUDIENCE: School staff

OUTCOMES: To introduce Shared Solutions: A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students with Special Education Needs: 2007.

Participants will:
- develop an understanding of conflict
- recognize the importance of collaborative problem solving in conflict resolution
- be introduced to, and practice "active listening"

SUGGESTED RESOURCES AND MATERIALS REQUIRED
- 1 copy of Shared Solutions per participant or print outs of http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/speced/shared.pdf
- Copies of the attachments as outlined in the resources/materials column
- Blank paper or overhead/chart paper/Smart Board

SUGGESTED AGENDA

TIME	DESCRIPTION	RESOURCES/ MATERIALS

5 mins.	**Defining Conflict**
	
	Think/Pair/Share
	
	a) Have audience work in pairs to answer the questions
	    • What is conflict?
	    • How do people respond to conflict?
	
	b) Share with larger group – please have a facilitator record the answers
	
	c) Facilitator shares provided definitions of conflict recognizing that conflict is normal and can have a positive outcome
		Paper to record
		
		Overhead/chart paper/Smart Board
		
		#1 Attachment "What is Conflict?"

TIME	DESCRIPTION	RESOURCES/ MATERIALS
15 mins.	**Understanding Conflict** *Conflict Chart - Factors, Signs and Solutions* a) Work in groups of 2 - 4 to fill out the chart provided b) Provide groups with handout of pgs 12 & 13 from Shared Solutions c) Share within the group, the following: • One factor that surprises you and why • Choose one solution that didn't appear on your lists and discuss	#2 Attachment "Conflict Chart" Photo copy handout of pgs 12 & 13 of Shared Solutions
5 – 10 mins.	**Recognizing the importance of constructive thinking/collaborative problem solving in conflict resolution** *Conflict Resolution Dos and Don'ts Sort* a) Facilitator reads top section of pg 30 – The Role of Constructive Thinking (not the chart) to the group b) Work in groups of 2 – 4 to complete the Conflict Resolution sort activity using the phrases given (Option for whole group – cut and glue/write phrases)	Shared Solutions document #3 Attachment "Conflict Resolution Dos and Don'ts"

TIME	DESCRIPTION	RESOURCES/ MATERIALS
25 mins.	**Learning and practising "Active Listening"** Role-playing in Triads (Speaker, Listener and Observer) a) Individually read the Active Listening Strategies b) Group forms into triads – assign roles as follows: • Speaker • Listener • Observer (Suggestion – provide participants with "role cards" identifying the role) c) Identify a topic for *Speaker* to discuss for a two minute conversation – i.e., What I did on March Break d) *Listener* chooses and identifies one or two of the active listening strategies to practice during the conversation e) *Observer* uses the Active Listening Observation Form to record their observations f) When the conversation is over (2 mins.), the observer provides feedback and the group debriefs Guiding Questions: • What did you notice? • How did you feel? • What were your thoughts? • What would you do differently next time? g) Rotate the assigned roles until every member has been an observer	#4 Attachment "Active Listening Strategies" (1 per person) Optional "role cards" identifying role #5 Attachment "Active Listening Observation Form" (1 per person)

TIME	DESCRIPTION	RESOURCES/ MATERIALS
15 mins.	**Extending the Learning** *Role-play scenarios* a) Work in groups of 3 or 4 b) Each group chooses a scenario and assigns roles (one person in the group must take the role of observer) c) Role play the scenario for 2-3 minutes while the observer takes notes using the Active Listening Observation Form d) When the conversation is over (2 mins.), the observer provides feedback and the group debriefs Guiding Questions: • What did you notice? • How did you feel? • What were your thoughts? • What would you do differently next time? e) Re-do the scenario using the feedback provided to improve communication skills	#6 Attachment "Scenario Sheets" (1 set per group) #5 Attachment "Active Listening Observation Form"
5 – 10 mins.	**Identifying Key Learnings** *Tear-Out sheet from Shared Solutions on the Go Exit cards* a) Hand out Shared Solutions on the Go sheet and Exit cards b) Collect completed Exit cards	Shared Solutions on the Go Tear-Out sheet (1 per person) #7 Attachment "Exit Card" (1 per person)

What is conflict?

- Conflict is an unavoidable dynamic in human interaction.

- Conflict occurs when what is important to us is overlooked, denied, attacked or endangered in some way. (Peer Power Peer Mediation Manual, p.3)

- In order to understand what is at the root of a particular conflict, we must recognize what interest or value is being threatened.

- As strange as it seems, conflict offers people the opportunity to look at a problem creatively, from a new perspective with new ideas.

- Conflict, well-managed, is a normal, positive productive feature of human interaction. (Managing Conflict OSSTF, 1992)

Factors Contributing to Conflict	Warning Signs	Possible Solutions
Concerns about resource allocation: - Resources may be perceived as inadequate	- repeated questions about how programs are being implemented	- brainstorming ways of using existing resources more creatively and/or effectively

Conflict Resolution Dos and Don'ts

Do	Don't

Look for someone to blame	Focus on change
Focus on the problem	Think that "everyone can win"
Look for solutions	Focus on the person
Use dialogue	Take a "non-adversarial" approach
Engage in debate	Focus on the student's interests
Focus on a predetermined outcome	Think that "someone has to lose"
Focus on control	Take an adversarial approach

Active Listening Strategies

At any level of formality, successful conflict resolution depends on the ability of all parties to develop a clear understanding of the issues and of the concerns of the participants. Active listening is the key to understanding and plays a central role in all communication.

The Ways We Communicate
53% body language
40% tone of voice and feeling
7% words we use

A.   Attending behaviours

Attending behaviours are behaviours that demonstrate your focus/concentration on the conversation. Attending behaviour is an essential requirement for listening as it communicates *respect, interest and involvement in the relationship.*

Positive Attending Behaviour	Negative Attending Behaviour
☐ face the person ☐ maintain eye contact ☐ use an open posture (relaxed but not sloppy) ☐ appear interested (minimal encouragers: smile, nod) ☐ concentrate on the conversation (give the person your undivided attention)	☐ turn away from the person ☐ avoid eye contact ☐ use a closed posture (rigid, tense) ☐ appear bored (yawning, looking away, tapping pencil) ☐ do not focus on the conversation (tap pencil, shuffle paper, fiddle with jewelry)

B.   Explore - Open Ended Questions

Ask questions about background and context to deepen understanding. This may also help enhance the speaker's insight into a problem.

Examples: "Could you tell me which of these things happened first? "
           "Tell me more about the situation."

Open	Closed
☐ open ended ☐ allows person to feel heard ☐ leads to a deeper examination of feelings, not just facts	☐ yes/no answers ☐ makes person feel interrogated/defensive ☐ inhibits communication, makes person feel shut down

C. "I" vs. "You" Statements

When speaking to someone, "you" messages often are interpreted as criticisms of the other person. As a result, they can encourage conflict because the listener may become defensive. Instead, "I" messages improve communication because the sender owns the idea or feeling and is not making judgements or assumptions about the receiver. "I" messages express how you feel, when you feel that way, and why you feel that way. "I" messages show your concern in a calm and respectful way.

I-messages	You-messages
☐ show respect for the other person ☐ tell how you feel ☐ share what you want to happen	☐ do not show respect ☐ blame, cause hurt and anger ☐ accuse, ridicule, criticize

Practising "I" statements:

"You're always late submitting your assignments."
I feel _____
when you _____
because _____.

"You're never going to graduate if you keep failing tests like that."
I feel _____
when you _____
because _____.

D.   Restate

Repeat in your own words what the speaker has told you. This shows that you are listening and helps check for accuracy. Restate the facts.

Example: "So she said that she would call right back, and then she called two days later?"

E.   Clarify

Outline for the speaker how you interpret what he or she has said. This may lead the speaker to offer further clarification of key points. Paraphrase the content and feeling together.

Example: "It sounds like you might be feeling hurt when you were not asked."

Other Clarifying Lead Statements:

I hear you saying that you are (feeling) because _____.
I'm not sure if I am with you, but you are (feeling) because _____.
Correct me if I'm wrong; I'm wondering if you're feeling ___ because _____.
I imagine you're feeling (word) because _____.

F.   Summarize

Reiterate the major ideas, themes, and feelings the speaker has disclosed. This draws all the threads together and gives participants a common base of understanding from which to move forward. When summarizing, it is important to neutralize all negativity and listen for what is important to the speaker.

Example: " So I am hearing you say that there have been several incidents at school in which you were not informed.(*neutral summary*)
It has been frustrating. (*Identify feeling*)
Communication is important to you (*identify what is important to speaker*) and you would like to work towards improving the communication between home and school."

Adapted from: **Shared Solutions:** *A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students With Special Education Needs - 2007 and Peer Power Centre, London*

Active Listening Observation Form
To be completed during a role play by an observer.

ACTIVE LISTENING SKILL	OBSERVATIONS/FEEDBACK
Attending Behaviours	
Explore - Open Ended Questions	
"I" vs. "You" Messages	
Restate	
Clarify	
Summarize	

Important components of collaborative problem-solving include:

- believing that a solution can be found
- believing that all parties are focused on the student's interest and want to remove apparent barriers to a solution
- accepting that there can be more than one way to solve a problem

Scenario A - Jovan's Story

Jovan is a Grade 9 student with behavioural challenges. Jovan's IEP had been quite successful in helping him met these challenges in the past, but his English teacher noticed that he was becoming increasingly withdrawn from other students and was showing signs of anxiety. When approached about the problem by his English teacher, Jovan insisted that nothing was wrong. The teacher was not reassured. She approached the special education teacher, the principal and the parents to discuss her concerns. The teacher made several phone calls to Jovan's parents before reaching his father. Jovan's parents had also noticed that he was withdrawing from daily activities and people. The parents' are concerned about their son, but work schedules meant that they could not be available during school hours for a meeting.

Adapted from: **Shared Solutions:** *A Guide to Preventing and Resolving Conflicts Regarding Programs and Services for Students With Special Education Needs - 2007*

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Scenario B - Paul's Story

Paul is a Grade 4 student recently diagnosed with a learning disability. An IEP with modified expectations was developed that took into consideration Paul's current level of reading competence. However, Paul was not doing his homework, and his teacher and parents became concerned. School personnel had been proactive in providing additional resources for Paul, but Paul's parents feel that there is a need for improved communication among the parties involved and wonder if there are any other supports available that can help Paul stay organized and complete his work.

Important components of collaborative problem-solving include:

• believing that a solution can be found
• believing that all parties are focused on the student's interest and want to remove apparent barriers to a solution
• accepting that there can be more than one way to solve a problem

Scenario C - Ziyaad's Story

Ziyaad is a Grade 1 student with a language delay. Since the age of three, Ziyaad had been receiving speech and language services through the preschool program run by the local health agency. When he entered Grade 1, his mother expressed concerns about the level of speech and language services supplied by the school board. She had already talked to the teacher about her concerns, and Ziyaad was still not getting the services. She shared her concerns about Ziyaad's language skills and insisted on a certain type and frequency of speech and language services that was inconsistent with the delivery of speech and language services at the school.

Important components of collaborative problem-solving include:

• believing that a solution can be found
• believing that all parties are focused on the student's interest and want to remove apparent barriers to a solution
• accepting that there can be more than one way to solve a problem

Scenario D - Brigitte's Story

Brigitte is a Grade 5 student. Brigitte had recently been assessed by a psychologist in private practice. Following the assessment, Brigitte's parents asked the school to recognize Brigitte as a gifted student and to provide an IEP with modified expectations that would better meet her needs. The principal requested a copy of the assessment, but the parents refused to share the information. The principal insisted that without a copy of the assessment he could not develop an IEP for Brigitte or refer her to an IPRC to be identified as a gifted student. The parents obtained a letter from the psychologist stating that Brigitte had scores in the superior range on the intelligence test. However, the parents did not want Brigitte to be formally identified as gifted, but to be provided with an enrichment program. The principal continued to maintain that he needed to see the assessment report in order to plan and develop the IEP.

EXIT Card - My Key Learnings

WHAT?	Strategies I learned or used. . . Strategies I practised or applied. . . I noticed that. . .	
SO WHAT?	Things I did well . . . The part that I am not really clear about. . . That situation is just like. . . It makes me think of. . . It makes me feel that . . . Challenges or questions I have. . .	
NOW WHAT?	I wonder how. . .if. . ,why. . ., when. . ., This gives me an idea to. . . Now I understand that . . . I can apply . . . I need to know . . . I need support . . . If I could do anything differently, it would be. Now I plan to . . . What will I do differently next time? **Which two (2) tips for reaching a shared solution will I practice over the next month?**	

Participant:

School: