

What is conflict resolution?

We can all get pretty angry. We may feel that something is unfair, something has been taken or broken that we value, someone is being mean, we're not getting a fair share, etc. So what do you do? You could throw a tantrum, get upset, be mean to somebody, etc. Would any of these things solve the problem?

Conflict Resolution: Try to sort things out so that everyone gets a fair go and something of what they want. There are 4 things that you can do:

- 1 Understand
- 2 Avoid making things worse
- 3 Work together
- 4 Find the solution

Understand

Everyone involved needs to understand what the conflict (argument) is about.

To do this, everyone needs to:

- say what they feel about it (without interruptions).
- listen to what other people have to say about their feelings (without interrupting them)
- try to put themselves in the other person's shoes and try to understand their point of view.

Avoid making things worse

- no put-downs
- no mean, nasty remarks that will hurt people's feelings - no personal remarks about a person's looks, gender (whether they are a boy or girl), their 'secrets' or things that have happened in the past
- no screaming and shouting
- no fighting, hitting, kicking, pushing or any kind of hurting the other person's body.

Work together

Make "I" statements, like:

"I feel hurt when..."

"I need to feel or be..."

"I hear what you are saying, but I feel..."

- Say what you feel without blaming the other person, e.g. "I feel sad when you shout" is better to say than "Your shouting makes me feel sad."
- Take turns at speaking. You might even want to decide on a time limit for each person to speak before you get started. That way everybody gets the same chance to say what he or she wants.
- Talk quietly. It's hard to keep your voice down when you feel upset, but a quiet firm voice is far better than someone shouting. A loud nasty voice makes everyone upset and unwilling to listen.
- Write down what you each see as the problem and then read what the other person has written.
- Do some **active listening (show the person that you are listening) by:**
 - o **looking at them**, to show that you are giving your full attention. Don't overdo it though. Staring hard at someone makes that person feel uncomfortable.
 - o **making 'listening noises'** (but not interrupting). You know the sort of thing - "Uh huh", saying "yes" or "no" in the right places.
 - o **repeating what you heard**. When they've finished, say what you think you've heard from them, eg. "So, your problem is that I haven't tidied my part of our room?"

Find the solution

Once you have listened to each other and found what the problem is, then you need to look for a solution.

- Brainstorm together to think of ways in which you could resolve the conflict. Think of as many solutions as you can, even if they seem silly at first.
- Another person may be helpful to write down your ideas or suggest ways of making your ideas work so that you can resolve the conflict.

Source: <https://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetailsKids.aspx?p=335&np=287&id=1521>

