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## Coaching to Support Friendship Skills and Problem Solving

### Viewer's Guide

This viewer's guide gives you ideas for friendship skills and problem-solving practices and strategies you can support your coachee to use with children and families. The reflection questions and activities will help you think about ways to support each coachee's learning about these practices and strategies. There will also be opportunities for you to reflect about your own practice as a coach. Helpful resources can be found in the Resources section of this guide.

### Friendship Skills and Problem-Solving Practices

#### Pyramid Model Practices



Each episode of Coaching Corner this season focuses on different tiers of the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model is a framework of evidence-based practices for promoting young children's healthy social and emotional development. In this episode, we are focusing on friendship skills and problem solving, which are tier two targeted social emotional supports.



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# Teaching Friendship Skills and Problem Solving



**Friendship skills** are the skills required to have positive interactions with peers. Some friendship skills children may acquire by the time they turn five include showing affection, using kind words, being helpful, taking turns, sharing toys/materials, giving compliments or play ideas, understanding how and when to apologize, and beginning to show empathy.

**Problem solving** occurs in social situations and is a complex skill that takes time and practice to learn. It is the process that involves children working together to identify the problem and find a solution to the problem.

## Teaching These Skills

When a coach is teaching friendship skills and problem-solving, similar strategies can be used. See ideas below for how to teach these skills to young children. Many of these strategies could also be used by families wanting to teach these skills to their children.

### Strategies

- Teach the friendship skill and problem-solving steps and solutions (applicable for ages 2-5, material links available in the resource list)
- Model
- Provide opportunities to practice
- Use materials and visuals (see resource list for links to materials and visuals to use)
- Teach and support children in the moment
- Provide descriptive feedback
- Reflect with children about their use of skills (applicable for ages 2-5)



**How might you share these strategies with coaches? What support(s) might coaches need to use these strategies in the learning environment?**

## Modeling Friendship Skills Problem Solving

### Problem Solving Example



Step 1

*I have a problem. I want to sit with my friends at the table but there is no room for me.*

Step 2

*I could try asking nicely for someone to scoot over or wait for a spot to open up.*

Step 3

*We might not all fit if someone must move. If I wait for a spot to open up there will be plenty of room for everyone at the table.*

Step 4

*I'll try waiting for someone to leave the table. Can you let me know when you leave? Yay! My solution worked!*

### Provide Opportunities to Practice

Help coachees intentionally plan opportunities for children to practice friendship skills and problem-solving throughout the day. One way to do that is by using an activity matrix to think about the skills and time of day a coachee plans to help children practice these skills. Coachees who are working with parents can also use a matrix with parents to help them identify times during the day they might plan opportunities for their children to practice these skills.

### Center-Based Preschool Example

Scheduled Activity	Skill to Target: <i>Asking a friend for material</i>	Skill to Target: <i>Problem solving in the moment</i>
Arrival	X	
Snack	X	
Circle time		
Center time	X	X
Outside		X
Lunch	X	
Rest time		

Snack		
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**Problem Solving in the Moment**

Children need support from adults to problem solve in various social situations. Below are some strategies you can support your coachees to think about using when supporting children to problem solve in the moment. Watch the video below to see problem solving in the moment example.

- Anticipate social problems (birth-5)
- Remain close (birth-5)
- Provide support to children (birth-5)
- Encourage children to come up with multiple solutions and keep trying if one solution doesn't work (3-5)
- Provide supportive feedback on effort and success of problem solving (3-5)



**Problem Solving In Real Life Situation**

**What strategies do you see this coachee using in the video?**

**Provide Specific Feedback**

Providing specific and positive feedback helps to encourage children to continue with their effort in friendly interactions and problem solving. Coaches can support coachees to provide specific feedback to children when they are using (or trying to use) friendship skills or problem solving. Coachees can also encourage parents to use this strategy in the home. The complexity of feedback will vary based on age and developmental level of the child. Below are some examples.

*“Omar, you wanted the ball, and you asked your friend for a turn! Nice asking!”*

*“Sylvia is smiling at you, Jamal; you are sweet friends.”*

*“Kion, you are a problem solver! You wanted the purple crayon Tucker had and used the ‘ask nicely’ solution and it worked! Tucker gave it to you!”*

*“Jada is looking at that toy. I think she wants to play too. Let’s roll it back and forth together.”*

### Turn Taking – Providing Specific Feedback



What do you want to remember about this clip?

### *Reflect About Use of Skills*

When coaches and parents reflect with children about their use, or an opportunity to use skills, it can help children know what to continue doing and help them think critically about how to do something differently. Reflecting with infants and toddlers looks like adults narrating what children are doing and connecting what they are doing with how it is related to being a friend or solving social problems. Check out this video example of a preschool teacher using a group time to reflect with children about their use of friendship skills!

### Reflecting on How Children Used Friendship Skills



What do you want to remember about this clip?

## Mindful Moment

### Interview with Abby Taylor

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What friendship skills would you recommend coaches teach first?

What does this look like for infants and toddlers?

What is the coach's role in supporting coachees with these practices?

What is one thing you want our viewers to know about friendship skills and problem solving?

## Coaching and Practice

### Focused Observation:

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**Action Plan Goal: (preschool teacher)**

*I will support children to problem solve in the moment by helping them identify the problem and talk through some possible solutions. I will remain close and support children until there is a resolution.*

Observation Notes:



## Reflection and Feedback:

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Was Sandra implementing her goal? Yes/No. How do you know?

What suggestions do you have for Sandra?

## Focus on Equity

### Interview with Abby Taylor

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What are some things a coach should be observing to ensure these practices are being supported equitably in the learning environment?

How can a coachee be sure they are being culturally responsive to a families' values related to friendship and problem solving?

## Koko's Corner



The Head Start Coaching Companion is a video-sharing and coaching-feedback application for early care and education staff and providers. It helps coaches, coachees, and peer-coaching teams work together, even between coach visits or from a distance. Share video files, ask questions, exchange feedback, and develop individualized coaching plans that support quality teaching and positive outcomes for young children.

To login or join the Head Start Coaching Companion click here:

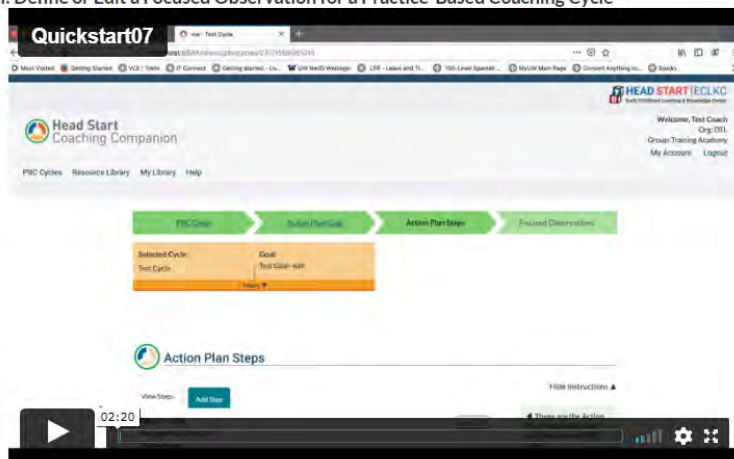
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/professional-development/head-start-coaching-companion/head-start-coaching-companion>

For more information, contact [coachingcompanion@eclkc.info](mailto:coachingcompanion@eclkc.info)

## Try it Out!

**Instructions:** Scan the QR codes below to watch how to define or edit a focused observation.

7. Tutorial: Define or Edit a Focused Observation for a Practice-Based Coaching Cycle









What do you want to remember about these videos?



# The BASICS: Friendship Skills and Problem Solving

The BASICS are effective practices coachees can apply no matter what content they are focusing on (e.g., math, literacy, social emotional skills). It is always important to remember the basics. These are a collection of strategies that can be used in any group care setting when interacting with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Home visitors can also encourage families to use these practices with their children. During each Coaching Corner, we will focus on two letters of the BASICS and include an action plan to illustrate how a coachee might implement these practices.

-  **B** Behavioral expectations in advance
-  **A** Attend to and encourage appropriate behavior
-  **S** Scaffold with cues and prompts
-  **I** Increase engagement
-  **C** Create or add challenge
-  **S** Specific feedback



**Create or Add Challenge** to support friendship skills and problem solving. One way to create or add a challenge to promote these skills is by planning for and adding materials to the learning environment that support requesting, giving, turn taking, sharing among children.

**What are some ways you can encourage coachees to create or add challenge for children using friendship skills and problem solving? If your coachees include home visitors, what are some ways you can support their work with parents related to creating or adding challenge?**



**Specific Feedback** to support friendship skills and problem solving. Provide positive specific feedback or support parents to provide feedback when children are using or attempting to use friendship skills and problem solving in the learning environment.

**What are some ways, activities, or times of day you can encourage coachees to provide specific feedback to children using friendship skills and problem solving? If your coachees**

include home visitors, what are some ways you can support their work with parents related to providing specific feedback to their child?

## Helpful Resources

### Online Resources

Interactive Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five (English and Spanish)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/interactive-head-start-early-learning-outcomes-framework-ages-birth-five>

Effective Practice Guides: Social and Emotional Development (English and Spanish)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/effective-practice-guides/relationships-adults>

Can We Be Friends? Peer Interactions and Your Curriculum  
Infants and Toddlers

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum/teacher-time-series/can-we-be-friends-peer-interactions-your-curriculum>

Preschool

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/curriculum/teacher-time-series/can-we-be-friends-peer-interactions-your-curriculum-0>

Head Start Center for Inclusion (Preschool)

<https://headstartinclusion.org/tools-and-supports/classroom-visuals-and-supports/>

[Friendship Visuals](#)

[Friendship Kit](#)

[Problem Solving Kit](#)

PRISM Practice Implementation Checklist: Peer Interactions (Infants and Toddlers)

<https://prism.ku.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/PRISM-Peer-6-Practice-Implementation-Checklist-PPI.pdf>

Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist (Preschool Classrooms)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/pyramid-model-practices-implementation-checklist/>

Pyramid Model Practices for Family Child Care Homes (Birth-5)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/pyramid-model-practices-for-family-child-care-homes/>

Circle Time Magazine: Teaching Problem Solving and Friendship Skills (Birth-5)

<https://cultivatelearning.uw.edu/circle-time-magazine/season-2/episode-4/>

Children's Book List (Includes books for a variety of emotions and social emotional skills like friendship and problem solving) (Birth-5)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/implementation/program-wide/books/>

Peer Mediated Social Skills and Visual Supports (for teaching friendship skills – available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/peer-mediated-social-skills-and-visual-supports/>

I Am a Super Friend! (Scripted story – available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/i-can-be-a-super-friend/>

Super Friend Award (available in Spanish) (Birth-5)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/super-friend-award/>

We Can Be Problem Solvers! (Scripted story – available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/we-can-be-problem-solvers/>

Problem Solving Steps (available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/problem-solving-steps/>

Problem Solving Steps – Wrist Cards (available in English and Spanish) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/problem-solving-steps-wrist-cards/>

Solution Kit: Classroom Edition (available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/solution-kit-classroom-edition/>

Introducing the Solution Kit! (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/introducing-the-solution-kit/>

We Can Be Problem Solvers at Home! (Scripted story - available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/we-can-be-problem-solvers-at-home/>

Solution Kit: Home Edition (available in multiple languages) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/solution-kit-home-edition/>

Problem Solving Notes (reinforcer – available in English and Spanish) (Preschool)

<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/problem-solving-notes/>

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## Articles

You've Got to Have Friends

[https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Youve-got-to-have-friends\\_article.pdf](https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Youve-got-to-have-friends_article.pdf)

Sharing Doesn't Come Naturally to Kids. Here's What You Can Do To Help.

[https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/how-to-help-children-learn-to-share\\_uk\\_63a2c1cbe4b04414304c3ef7](https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/how-to-help-children-learn-to-share_uk_63a2c1cbe4b04414304c3ef7)

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## Mobile Apps

ELOF2GO Mobile App

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/elof2go-mobile-app>

ELOF@Home

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/teaching-practices/article/mobile-tools-home-visitors>

Text4Teachers

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/teaching-practices/article/text4teachers>

Text4HomeVisitors

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/teaching-practices/article/mobile-tools-home-visitors>

Ready DLL Mobile App

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/ready-dll-mobile-app>

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## Online Communities

MyPeers: Practice-Based Coaching Community

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/mypeers-collaborative-platform-early-care-education-community>