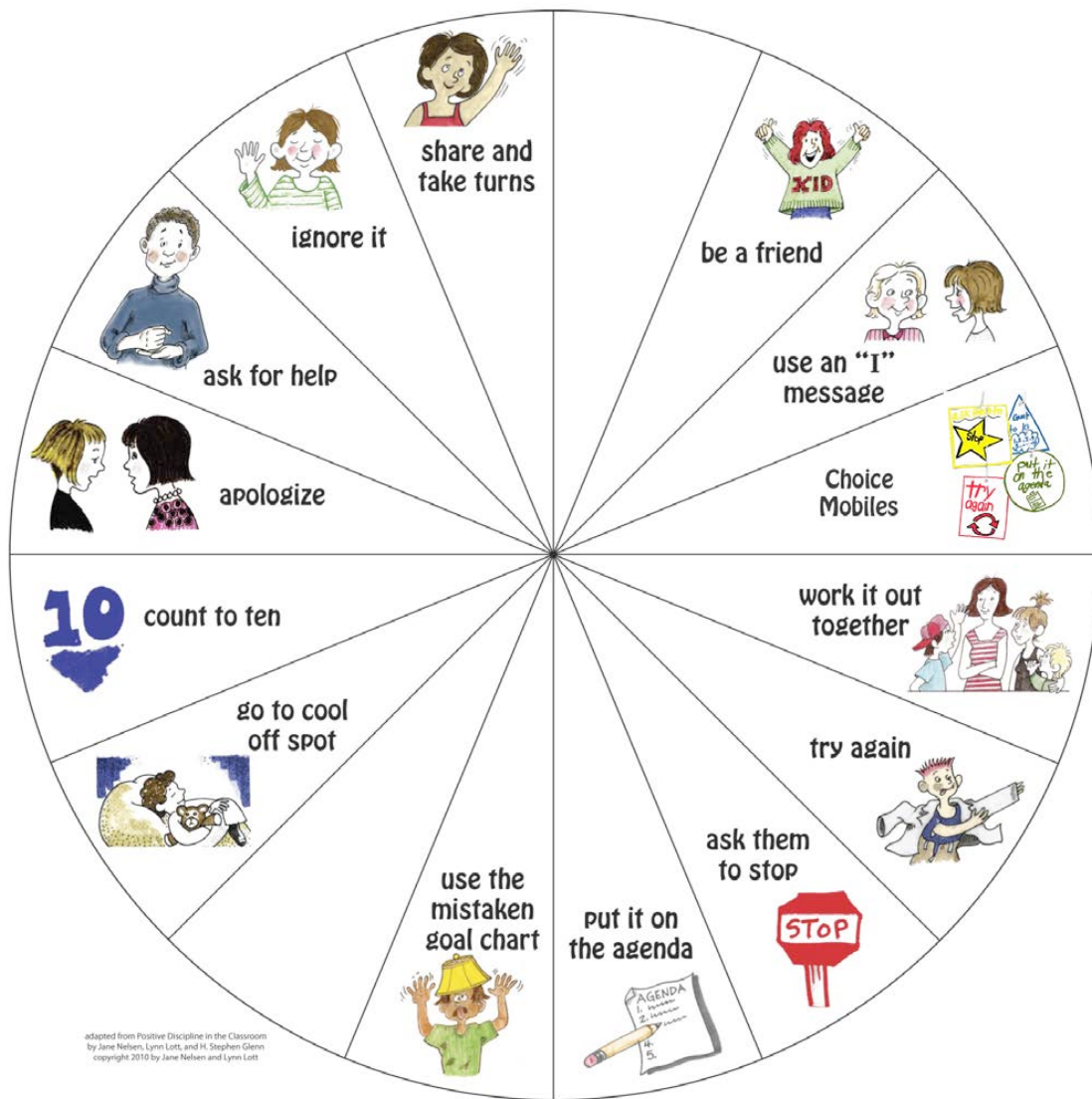


The Wheel of Choice: A Problem-solving Program

By Lynn Lott and Jane Nelsen



The Positive Discipline

Wheel of Choice

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Dedicated to Debbie Ramirez, Meredith Gilardoni, Jeanna Ruppel, Brenda Rollins, Lynnette Casey, Kathryn Vyenielo, Kristy Harris, and Tammy Keces who gave their time and expertise to create this project.

Thanks for adding wisdom, fun and richness to the work.

Why Lessons Plans for the Wheel of Choice?

Since *Positive Discipline in the Classroom* was first published, many teachers have used and loved having the Wheel of Choice in their classrooms—even though they didn't have the advantage of these lesson plans. After all, don't all students know how to do something as simple as count to 10 to calm down, or to share and take turns?

At some level they do, and the Wheel of Choice has been effective. However, the teachers who helped create these lesson plans found that the effectiveness of the Wheel of Choice was greatly increased when students were involved in activities that helped them practice the skills to gain a deeper understanding of the choices presented on the Wheel.

The Wheel of Choice has caught on in homes, as well. The effectiveness will be increased at home when parents take time to teach the skills necessary for using the Wheel of Choice. This is just one way that parents and teachers can work together to teach problem-skills. Class meetings in classrooms and family meetings in homes is another way, as is "focusing on solutions" in any form.

The lessons include activities that involve children in learning the skills to use the Wheel of Choice, and then coloring in each slice to create their personal Wheel of Choice.

All of the choices on the Wheel of Choice are life skills that will serve children in their homes, their classroom, and in all their relationships with others. They are worth learning at a deeper level and practicing on a daily basis.

Sustaining the Skills

Teachers would never consider teaching reading skills just once. Parents know that children need constant training to learn social skills. We suggest you find creative ways to teach these lessons over and over. Consider some of the following:

- A few weeks after teaching the lessons, assign students to take turns teaching the lessons to each other. Children at home can do the same.
- Allow older students to teach younger students. In homes, consider inviting another family to your home and let your children teach a lesson
- Invite students and children to keep a journal of their results when they use the wheel of choice. When something doesn't work, they can be invited to put the problem on the family or class meeting agenda and brainstorm for solutions.

We hope you and your children enjoy participating in these lessons and the greater peace you will experience in your homes and classrooms due to valuable social and life skills learned and practiced on the daily basis through the Wheel of Choice

General Directions

The Wheel of Choice empowers children to solve their own problems instead of putting pressure on the teacher or parent to be the sole problem-solver. In the process, they learn respect for others, cooperation, problem-solving skills, and confidence in their own capabilities.

1. On the last two pages you will find a color Wheel of Choice and a black and white Wheel of Choice.
2. Enlarge the color Wheel of Choice to hang in a prominent place in your home or classroom.
3. Make copies of the black and white Wheel of Choice for everyone in your classroom or home. As you teach each choice, let your kids color in that slice of their pie.
4. There are 14 choices, plus two blank slices so your kids can create other choices.
5. Each choice (solution) needs to be taught through the 14 lessons to make sure kids have developed the skill.
6. Once you've taught at least one choice, your kids can use the Wheel. We suggest you teach one skill a day or one a week during your family or class meetings or circle time.
7. For permanency, you may want to have all individual Wheels of Choice laminated.

Teaching the First Lesson for the Wheel of Choice

1. Let your kids know that they will be creating a Wheel of Choice so there is somewhere to go for solutions when problems arise.
2. Use the first lesson on "Share and Take Turns" on the next page to get your kids involved creating a home or classroom Wheel of Choice.
3. Hand out the individual Wheels of Choice so each person can color his or her first slice of the Wheel of Choice on Share and Take Turns.

4. Remind kids that they will soon have several choices from which to choose, but they don't have to wait until the Wheel of Choice is finished to start using it.

Share and Take Turns

**Objective:**

To teach children how to share and take turns.

Materials:

The “Share and Take Turns” slice of the Wheel of Choice

2 puppets, 1 piece of paper, colored markers including a red one

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Sometimes sharing and taking turns is easier said than done. Children may need help understanding the importance sharing and taking turns—ad time to practice.

Directions:

1. Tell your children that you are going to put on a puppet show and follow the script below:

Scene 1: Call the first puppet Spot and the second puppet Whiskers. Spot is drawing with the red marker and Whiskers says, “I want the red one.” Whiskers tries to grab the marker away from Spot. They struggle. Spot says, “I’m not done with the marker.” The struggle continues until the teacher or

parent says, “Stop!” The teacher or parent asks both puppets what they were thinking, how they were feeling, and what they were deciding they were going to do when Spot wouldn’t share the marker.

Whiskers says, “I was thinking that Spot was being selfish and I felt angry and I was deciding to take it anyway.” Spot said, “I was thinking that Whiskers wasn’t very patient and that he should know I was using the marker. I felt annoyed and was deciding to ignore Whiskers.”

The teacher or parent then asks the puppets, “Would you like to learn a better way to take care of this problem?” Spot and Whiskers say yes, they would like to.

Scene 2: Spot is drawing with the red marker and Whiskers says, “I want the red one.” Spot says, “I’m not done,” and pulls away. The teacher/parent then asks the two puppets, “Would you be willing to share and take turns?” They think for a moment and then say, “Okay.”

Scene 3: Spot is drawing with the red marker and Whiskers says, “How much time do you need with that because I’d like to use the red marker.” Spot stops to think and says, “Let me finish coloring this star. Then you can have the red marker.” Spot finishes and gives the marker to Whiskers. Once again, the teacher/parent asks the puppets what they were thinking, how they were feeling and what they were deciding to do. This time Whiskers says, “I was thinking that Spot was a nice friend and I was feeling happy that I could use the marker when he was done, so I decided to wait my turn.” Spot says, “I was thinking that it was nice that Whiskers asked how much time I needed and I felt happy that he wasn’t tackling me. I decided to finish up and share with Whiskers.”

2. Ask your students/children for their thoughts about the puppet show and whether they have other ideas about ways to share and take turns. Write them on the board or a sheet of paper. Some suggestions might be, use a timer, figure out a trade, different groups of students have access to certain equipment on different days of the week, use a sign up sheet.
3. Allow time for kids to color in the “Share and Take Turns” slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Apologize



Objective:

To teach kids how to offer a sincere apology.

Materials:

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Sometimes mistakes require that you make amends where possible, and at least apologize when amends are not possible.

Directions:

1. Teach that making mistakes is not as important as what people do about them. Anyone can make mistakes, but it takes a secure person to say, "I'm sorry," and to make amends when possible.
2. Ask your kids to think of a time when their feelings were hurt by another person who gave them an insincere apology (said, "I'm sorry when they knew the other person didn't mean it).
3. In classrooms, have your students get in pairs and give each other fake apologies. Switch so each has a turn giving and receiving the fake apology.

4. At home, take turns role-playing giving and receiving fake apologies with your children.
5. Model a sincere apology with the following 3 S's:
 - a. See it
 - b. Say it
 - c. Solve it.

Example: "I realize that the pencil (toy) I took was yours (see it). I'm sorry (say it). Here, take one of mine (solve it).

6. Have kids practice sincere apologies.
7. Regroup and invite them to share how that felt.
8. Remind your kids that they can recognize their mistakes with a feeling of responsibility instead of blame.
9. Allow time for your kids to color in the "Apologize" slice on their individual Wheel of Choice.

Comment:

Apologies create closeness and trust so that people are ready to work on solutions.

Ask them to Stop



Objective:

To let kids know that they have boundaries and that if someone is crossing them, it's okay to say, "Stop."

Materials:

A balloon

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Many of us, children and adults, do not realize the power of saying, "Stop!" with confidence.

Directions:

1. Blow up the balloon and tie the end in a knot.
2. Poke the balloon with your finger and ask your kids what might happen if you keep poking the balloon. Continue poking while you're talking and make the pokes deeper.
3. Explain that the balloon is like a boundary and that if people keep poking, eventually the balloon will explode. Ask your kids if there are

times when they are like the balloon and people are pushing on their boundaries. Explain that while they can see the balloon, their boundaries are invisible.

4. Ask them what they could do if someone pushes too hard on their “invisible” boundary. If they don’t come up with the idea to say, “Ask them to stop,” recommend it.
5. Invite your kids to practice saying, “Stop,” three different ways. First, without changing their position or looking at the person, have them say, “Stop.” Usually this first method is not very effective, which is why they are going to learn the next two methods. The second time, tell them to make eye contact with the person who is crossing their boundary and ask him or her to stop. Sometimes that’s enough, but if it isn’t, the third time, while making eye contact with the person, use the person’s name and say, “I really need you to stop (while naming the behavior) in a forceful way. For example, “Ben, I really need you to stop poking me with your pencil, now!”
6. Invite the kids to share examples of when they could use this tool.
7. Allow time for your kids to color in the “Ask Them to Stop” slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Comment for Teachers:

Make sure that the examples are classroom examples. This activity might bring up things that happen at home, but your job is to help the kids feel safe in the classroom.

Be a Friend



Objective:

To teach empathy and listening skills.

Materials:

Flip chart paper for classrooms
8 ½ X 11 blank sheets of paper in homes
Marking pens or crayons

Comment:

Sometimes a misbehavior will resolve on its own when individuals feel heard and encouraged and know they are liked.

Directions:

1. Divide your students or family into smaller groups. In classrooms, each group will have four to six students. In families your groups will be much smaller. In a family of two, each person will do one of the following drawings.)
2. Have half the groups draw a “dream friend” while the other groups draw a “nightmare friend.”

3. In the classroom groups will brainstorm as many adjectives as they can think of while one chosen “artist” in the group quickly illustrates the ideas to depict the “friend” on the butcher paper.
4. In homes, after each small group (or individual person) makes a drawing, they can all work together to brainstorm adjectives that would describe a “dream friend” and a “nightmare friend.”
5. Allow five to ten minutes for brainstorming and drawing. Give a one-minute warning to finish. Then have them bring their pictures to a common area to view side by side.
6. In classrooms, ask for a volunteer from each group to explain the drawings. Allow for a few minutes for each explanation.
7. Invite the class or family members to respond to the following questions. You may want to record their responses on a flip chart, board, sheet of paper—or this could be a family or class discussion.
 - a. What makes a friend?
 - b. What are your strengths as a friend?
8. Create a list called “Acts of friendship” by asking what they do to show they are a friend or what others do that makes them feel liked and included. If your kids don’t include the following, you can suggest: talk it out; friends don’t pick on each other; if you do something wrong, admit it; cheer someone up with snacks, a card, a letter, a smile, a hug; listen without fixing, show understanding.

9. Allow time for coloring in the “Be a Friend” slice on the individual Wheels of Choice.

Go to Cool-off Spot

**Objective:**

Parents, teachers, and kids can learn that taking some space can be an effective tool for practicing self-control and learning to calm down. This tool is meant to be encouraging and empowering rather than a punitive “time out.”

Materials:

Flip chart paper for classrooms
8 ½ sheets of paper for homes
Marking pens or crayons

Comment:

Everyone needs to cool off once in a while to take time to sort out feelings, calm down, and make a decision about what to do next.

Directions:

1. Get your kids involved in designing a positive time-out area.
2. **Teachers:** have your students get into groups of six and give them butcher paper and a marking pen. Allow five minutes for each group to brainstorm the ideal cool-off area designed to help them feel better. Let them know that brainstorming means no idea is too outrageous (or too practical) and that they should write down every idea without

analyzing or criticizing it. Explain that the reason for giving them only five minutes is to encourage excitement and enthusiasm.

3. Ask students to turn their papers over and brainstorm guidelines for their cool-off plan. Ask them to consider common objections of many teachers, such as “What if students misbehave just so they can go listen to music?” or “What if students want to stay in time out all the time because they would rather play with toys or sleep in the bean bag chair?”
4. In five minutes, ask each group to read their suggestions; then form a plan for a cool-off spot that would be respectful to everyone in the classroom and helpful to those who need it.
5. **Parents:** Let each one of your children have a sheet of paper to design a personal “Cool-off spot” while you create one for yourself.
6. Ask each person to give a name to his or her “Cool-off spot.”
7. Create some guidelines together such as, “We won’t send people to their cool-off spot, but we will as them if they think it would help them to go to their cool-off spot.” We might provide a choice, “What do you think would help you the most right now—to go to your cool-off spot or to put this problem on the agenda.”

Comment:

Many cool-off spots include books, stuffed animals (even for high school students), and an iPod for listening to soothing music. One 9th grade class designed their cool-off area to look like Hawaii, complete with a palm tree, a mural of sand and the ocean, beach chairs, and headphones for listening to Hawaiian music.

Count to Ten

**Objective:**

To teach children the importance of calming down until they can think more clearly.

Materials:

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Sometimes when people get angry they want to hit, or call names, or fight. This is called “reacting” instead of acting. When children (and adults) learn calming methods, they can “act” instead of react

Directions:

1. Ask your kids if they know what they do when they’re mad, sad, hurt, or angry. How do they react?
2. Invite them to share what happens when they react. What are the long-term results?
3. Teach four ways to count to ten to calm down. Practice each one with your kids.

- a. Slowly count to 10 in your head.
 - b. Take 10 slow, deep breaths in and out, put your hand on your belly and feel the slow rise and fall.
 - c. Raise both hands as high as your shoulders and lower them on the count of one. Raise your hands again and lower them on the count of two. Continue the same movement while counting to ten.
 - d. While you are counting to 10 in your head, do the arm pretzel. Put your arms straight out in front of you, turn your thumbs down toward floor, cross arms at wrists, grasp hands, interlock fingers, keeping hands locked, roll hands down and then up towards your chest until they are touching your chin. Drop your elbows to your chest and place your tongue on the roof of your mouth. Sit that way quietly for a short time. It helps calm you down.
4. Ask your kids to share how they feel after counting to ten. Do they feel calmer? Are they ready to think more clearly?
5. Ask your kids to brainstorm a list of things they might do after they have counted to ten that would be different from things they might do while feeling upset.
6. Allow time for your kids to color in the "Count to Ten" slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Ignore It

**Objective:**

To teach children that they don't have to react to every little thing that happens that bothers them.

Materials:

Marking pens or crayons for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Sometimes when you simply ignore a problem, it will go away all on its own.

Directions:

1. Teach that when someone else's behavior is upsetting to them, they can choose to ignore the behavior. Others often stop their annoying behavior when they don't get any attention for it.
2. If the annoying behavior stops, the irritated person doesn't have to do anything else. If still upset by someone's behavior, try ignoring it by taking a vacation in your mind, or pretend you are putting the noise in a hot air balloon and letting it go up in the sky, or pretend it is a wet suit and peel it off.

3. Brainstorm, together, a list of behaviors others do that are annoying or upsetting. Include behaviors such as making noises when others are trying to concentrate, teasing, won't take turns, etc.
4. Invite a volunteer to role-play one of the upsetting or annoying behaviors, and another volunteer to role-play ignoring the behavior. After each role-play invite each of the role-players to share what he or she was thinking, feeling, and deciding about what they would do.
5. Role-play as many situations a time allows.
6. Ask how many think they are now prepared to try ignoring a behavior that is upsetting to them.
7. Allow time for coloring the "Ignore It" slice on individual Wheels of Choice.

Mistaken Goal Chart

**Objective:**

To teach tools to help encourage each other in ways that can make a difference and help people with difficult behaviors find belonging and significance without having to act out—to be pro-active instead of reactive.

Materials:

Laminated Mistaken Goal Chart (master attached) enlarged enough for everyone to see

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Teachers and parents who teach their kids how to use the Mistaken Goal Chart to recognize discouraged behaviors and find options that actually work, say this is one of the most powerful tools for peaceful homes and classrooms. If you aren't familiar with the information on mistaken goals, read any of the *Positive Discipline* books or manuals, or take a *Positive Discipline* workshop to learn more. This choice would only be used in classrooms or homes where teachers and parents have taught their kids about mistaken goals. Unlike many of the other choices on the Wheel of Choice, children will need the teacher's or parent's help to facilitate the use of this option.

Directions:

1. Hang the Mistaken Goal Chart in a prominent spot and ask your kids to think of a situation where they felt irritated. Point to irritated (under the column labeled "If the parent/teacher feels"). Running your finger across the chart to the last column on the right, show them the list of possible encouraging responses that they could use when they feel irritated under the heading "Parent/teacher proactive and empowering responses include. Move your finger to the to the fifth column titled "The belief behind the child's behavior is". If you feel irritated, the person you have a problem with may think, "I count (belong) only when I'm being noticed or getting special service. I'm only important when I'm keeping you busy with me."
2. Running your finger to the first column, remind your kids that the child's mistaken goal is called Undue Attention.
3. Emphasize that if a person wants to help another person change his or her irritating behavior, all they have to do is use encouraging solutions from the far right side of the chart.
4. Repeat the same exercise with each of the mistaken goals, i.e., ask for a situation where they felt angry (misguided power), hurt (revenge), or hopeless (assumed inadequacy). Go through the chart for each of these feelings as you did for undue attention.
5. Point out that if people simply react instead of understanding about discouragement and more encouraging choices, all that happens is the cycle of "misbehavior" continues.
6. Allow time for kids to color in the "Use the Mistaken Goal Chart" slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Comment:

The powerful message is that kids can change their behavior (to be encouraging), which might invite the other person to change. The mistaken goal chart gives many behavioral suggestions that invite misbehaving kids to act in a more respectful, encouraged, and empowered way.

Mistaken Goal Chart

The Child's goal is:	If the parent/ teacher feels:	And tends to react by:	And if the child's response is:	The belief behind the child's behavior is:	Coded messages	Parent/ teacher proactive and empowering responses include:
Undue Attention (to keep others busy or to get special service)	Annoyed Irritated Worried Guilty	Reminding Coaxing Doing things for the child he/she could do for him/herself	Stops temporarily, but later resumes same or another disturbing behavior	I count (belong) only when I'm being noticed or getting special service. I'm only important when I'm keeping you busy with me.	Notice Me - Involve Me Usefully	Redirect by involving child in a useful task to gain useful attention; ignore (touch without words); say what you will do, "I love you and ____." (Example: I care about you and will spend time with you later.") Avoid special service; have faith in child to deal with feelings (don't fix or rescue); plan special time; set up routines; engage child in problem-solving; use family/class meetings; set up nonverbal signals.
Misguided Power (to be boss)	Challenged Threatened Defeated	Fighting Giving in Thinking "You can't get away with it" or "I'll make you" Wanting to be right	Intensifies behavior Defiant compliance Feels he/she's won when parent/teacher is upset Passive Power	I belong only when I'm boss, in control, or proving no one can boss me. You can't make me.	Let Me Help - Give Me Choices	Redirect to positive power by asking for help; offer limited choices; don't fight and don't give in; withdraw from conflict; be firm and kind; act, don't talk; decide what you will do; let routines be the boss; leave and calm down; develop mutual respect; set a few reasonable limits; practice follow-through; use family/class meetings.
Revenge (to get even)	Hurt Disappointed Disbelieving Disgusted	Retaliating Getting even Thinking "How could you do this to me?"	Retaliates Intensifies Escalates the same behavior or chooses another weapon	I don't think I belong so I'll hurt others as I feel hurt. I can't be liked or loved.	I'm Hurting - Validate My Feelings	Acknowledge hurt feelings; avoid feeling hurt; avoid punishment and retaliation; build trust; use reflective listening; share your feelings; make amends; show you care; act, don't talk; encourage strengths; put kids in same boat; use family/class meetings.
Assumed Inadequacy (to give up and be left alone)	Despair Hopeless Helpless Inadequate	Giving up Doing for Over helping	Retreats further Passive No improvement No response	I can't belong because I'm not perfect, so I'll convince others not to expect anything of me; I am helpless and unable; it's no use trying because I won't do it right.	Don't Give Up On Me - Show Me A Small Step	Break task down to small steps; stop all criticism; encourage any positive attempt; have faith in child's abilities; focus on assets; don't pity; don't give up; set up opportunities for success; teach skills/show how, but don't do for; enjoy the child; build on his/her interests; use family/class meetings.

Put it on the Agenda

**Objective:**

To learn that not all issues can be resolved in the moment, and to teach a format for allowing students/children to know they will be heard and can get help from the whole class or family at a specific time.

Materials:

Flip Chart and Markers for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

This choice is intended for classrooms or families that are already having consistent class meetings or family meetings. Therefore, it is assumed that there is an agenda process in place. For more information, see *Positive Discipline in the Classroom*, chapters 4-5, or any of the Positive Discipline books.

Directions:

1. Point out to your kids that the existing class or family meeting format is a powerful pie piece for the Wheel of Choice. It is an opportunity to use the collective wisdom of the class or family to problem-solve in ways that one or two people may not be able to come up with on their own.

2. Practice brain-storming: Ask your students / children to name some typical problems that take place in the classroom or home, at lunch time, to and from class, or on the playground, chores, sibling fights, etc. that make it difficult to learn or play. List all the concerns on the board or paper. If they have trouble thinking of things, get them started by asking "What about fights over playground games, other students bothering you in some way, siblings to won't share or take turns, etc.?"
3. Pick one of the brainstormed problems and role-play it as follows: Pretend that two students are arguing about a playground game. One of the students says, "I'm going to put this on the agenda for our class meeting." Or, two siblings are fighting and one stops and say, "I'm going to put this on the family meeting agenda."
4. Ask the role players how they felt, what they thought, and what they planned to do when the suggestion to use the class or family meeting was made.
5. Allow time for students / children to color in the "Put in on the Agenda" slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Comment:

Some teachers and parents don't want to use class or family meetings because they say that by the time the meeting comes up, the issue is no longer a problem. That's a positive, not a negative. Often, just letting some time pass gives people a chance to calm down, cool off, or work things out with each other. If it's still a problem after that, people can solve the problem more rationally because putting it on the agenda allows time for cooling-off first.

Try Again



Objective:

To teach children that mistakes are not only okay, they are the process by which learning takes place.

Materials:

Paper and marking pens so you can keep the brainstormed list.

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Teaching kids that mistakes are wonderful opportunities to learn is not an invitation for them to make mistakes on purpose. It is an invitation for them to relax so they are less likely to make mistakes and/or to know there are valuable things to learn when they do make a mistake.

Directions:

1. Ask your children what happens when toddlers are learning to walk. Is it a mistake when they fall down? Do toddlers feel guilt and shame when they fall? What do they do when they fall? (Get up and try some more—even if they cry first.)
2. Invite your children to share mistakes they have made and what they learned from it. Start by sharing a mistake you have made and what you learned.

3. Brainstorm ways to encourage one another to try again. These ideas could be recorded on the board or a paper. If the kids get stuck, the adult could offer some suggestions: “try again”, smiles, pats on the back, constructive feedback, assurances, etc.
4. Ask for a volunteer to role-play one of the mistakes mentioned. (Be sure it is a mistake someone else made, not the volunteer’s mistake.) Ask for another volunteer to use one of the ways to encourage the first volunteer to try again.
5. After the role-play, invite the role-players to share what they were feeling and learning in the role-play.
6. Hang the brainstormed list in the room where everyone can see it and ask how many think they could use one of these suggestions when they make a mistake. Would any of these ideas help them have the courage to try again?
7. Allow time for the kids to color in the “Try Again” slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Use an “I” Message



Objective:

To help children learn to notice their feelings, give them a name, and then let people know how they are feeling by telling others instead of acting out.

Materials:

Copies of the Feeling Faces for each person

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

It is important to know what you feel and what you want without expecting anyone else to feel the same or give you what you want.

Directions:

1. Pass out copies of the attached feeling faces.
2. Ask the kids to pick a feeling that they are familiar with and share it with the class or family.
3. Have the kids repeat their feeling by saying, “I feel / felt _____.”

4. Ask for a volunteer who practice using the following formula: "I feel/ felt _____ because _____." First share some examples such as, "I felt hurt because I wasn't invited to play." "I felt scared because I didn't study for the test." "I felt mad because he took my pencil."
5. Ask the volunteer to think about what he or she would wish for in the scenario he or she shared if he or she had a magic wand.
6. Have the volunteer now share again by filling in all of these blanks: "I feel/ felt _____ because _____ and I wish _____. For example, "I felt hurt because I wasn't invited to play and I wish someone would choose me first." "I felt scared because I didn't study for the test, and I wish I had more time." "I felt mad because he took my pencil and I wish he would apologize and give it back."
7. Let the kids know that this is an "I" Message on the Wheel of Choice. It's a way to tell people how you feel so you can be heard.
8. Allow time for kids to color in the "Use an "I" Message" slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE FEELING FACES



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Work it Out Together

**Objective:**

To remind kids that they have many problem-solving skills to figure out how to work things out by talking with each other instead of always going to an adult for help

Materials:

Crayons or marking pens for coloring individual wheels of choice

Comment:

Kids can't learn what good problem-solvers they are unless they are given many opportunities to practice this skill.

Directions:

1. Tell the following story to your kids: Once I had two students who used to fight over who was first in line (or kids who fought over toys). They complained constantly that the other person was being a pest. One of the kids would say, "I'm telling teacher (or Mom)," and would then come to me to fix things. No matter how many times I tried to help, these two kids would find more things to argue about. One day, I ran out of energy and I said, "You guys can work this out together."

Go sit at that table and talk it over until you come up with a plan that works for both of you.” I don’t think they were happy with my suggestion, but they walked over to the table and sat down and started talking. Pretty soon they were laughing, and then they came to me and said, “We worked it out.” And do you know what? The rest of the day they didn’t argue or fight at all. This lasted for days, until finally my curiosity got the best of me and I asked the two, “How did you work things out?” Who can guess what they decided?

2. Ask your kids to make guesses, write them on the board or sheet of paper. Tell them that they have a lot of good ideas for working things out and that they are the same as what these old kids came up with. Suggest that the next time they think about asking an adult for help, they could try the suggestion of Work It Out Together from the Wheel of Choice.
3. Allow time for kids to color in the “Work it Out Together” slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Comment:

When you use stories to teach ideas to your kids, feel free to make up names of characters or make up imaginary students or people. Kids love stories and learn easily from them.

Ask for Help



Objective:

To teach kids to ask for help when they can't find a solution to a problem by themselves or they are feeling helpless or over-whelmed.

Materials:

Marking pens or crayons

Comment:

Let your kids know that everyone gets frustrated and makes mistakes or can't figure out how to do something. This new tool will help them ask for help before acting out.

Directions:

1. Let your kids know that they are going to be learning a new way to **ask** for help when they are having a problem in the classroom, on the playground, or at home.
2. Teach them the American Sign Language sign for "Help me." (See illustration.)

3. Have kids brainstorm times this sign might be useful. During this brainstorming time other people have come up with the following: kicking my chair, arguing, no one will play with me, I don't understand the assignment, he won't share, he called me a name.
4. In classrooms, have kids break-up into groups of three or four and role-play one or two of the brainstormed scenarios to practice the usefulness of this sign. At home, you can role-play with your kids.
5. Allow time for coloring in the "Ask for Help" slice on their individual Wheels of Choice.

Choice Mobiles

By Tammy Keces



Objective:

Students will identify their four favorite solutions from the Wheel of Choice to create a visual reminder of choices to solve problems.

Materials:

A template of a blank person and four shapes for each student, markers, crayons, string, hole puncher (several to share), either a hanger, rod, branch or paperclip to hang the mobile

Comment:

Students should be familiar with the other Wheel of Choice lessons before doing this activity. This activity helps them personalize their favorite problem-solving tools. This activity can easily be adapted for the home.

Directions:

1. Ask students to think about problems they have had recently and the most common ways they solved these problems using the Wheel of

Choice. Discuss how people have different ways to solve their problems and it is helpful to learn what works best for them.

2. Tell students they will be making a mobile to represent their four favorite ways to solve problems. Note: The problems they have may be in the classroom, at recess, or at home.
3. Demonstrate to the class how to create their mobile using the steps below.
 - a. First, color the person to look like you. Color the front of the person and then cut out the person and color the back of the person.
 - b. Next, cut out the shapes and on each shape write one solution. On one side write the solution and the other side of the shape draw a symbol to represent the solution.
 - c. Punch out the small hole at the top of each shape. For the person, punch one hole on each foot and each hand and at the top of the head.
 - d. Cut out five pieces of string per mobile. Tie each shape to the body and one string from the head to hang the mobile.
 - e. Tie the top string to a hanger, rod, branch or paperclip to hang.
4. Hang the mobiles above each student's desk or anywhere else in the room.

Note: See a photo of hanging mobiles and the mobile template on the next page.



