CRITICAL THINKING & PROBLEM SOLVING
Parent Resource

GRADES
6 – 8

What is critical thinking and problem solving?

Critical thinking and problem solving means gathering information to think through and determine the best solution.

As your child gets older, he or she will need to continue developing critical thinking and problem solving skills to be successful in school and life. He or she can use these skills to make responsible choices, accomplish goals and maintain positive relationships through effective communication, collaboration and conflict resolution.

In grades six through eight, children begin:

✓ Becoming more independent.

✓ Identifying the importance of pursuing goals as a group.

✓ Analyzing information to form and share opinions.

Below are ways you can help your child learn, practice and demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills:

DEVELOP A PLAN OF ACTION

Discuss with your child why it is important to remain focused on solutions until a problem is solved. Develop a plan of action or consider different options that result in acceptable outcomes to help solve a problem.

DISCUSS HOW CRITICAL THINKING CAN BE USED

Discuss ways that critical thinking can be used to pursue common goals as a team or group. When trying to decide on the goals, have your child look at the advantages, disadvantages and potential solutions.

SKILLS TO CONSIDER PRACTICING WITH YOUR CHILD:

Identifying a goal as a family and ways to work together to achieve this goal.

Making a pros and cons list to consider various outcomes when faced with a new challenge or situation.

DINNER TABLE CONVERSATION STARTER

In school, students learn about the scientific method. Explain to your child how, like a scientist, he or she can generate hypotheses to problem solve. How could the scientific method (observation, hypothesis, prediction, experiment and analyze data) help your child solve everyday challenges?

WORKING WITH YOUR CHILD TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL THINKING AND PROBLEM SOLVING WILL HELP HIM OR HER TO BECOME CONFIDENT, INDEPENDENT AND SUCCESSFUL.

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