

# **Collaborative and Proactive Solutions (CPS)**

*A collaborative partnership* between adults and kids and to engage kids in solving the problems that affect their lives



Created by DR. ROSS GREENE

- the CPS model is non-punitive and non-adversarial
- decreases the likelihood of conflict
- enhances relationships
- improves communication
- helps kids and adults learn and display the skills on the more positive side of human nature: empathy, appreciating how one's behavior is affecting others, resolving disagreements in ways that do not involve conflict, taking another's perspective, and honesty.

*Kids do well if they  
can!*

Why are challenging  
kids challenging?

Because they're ***lacking the  
skills*** NOT to be challenging

*Doing well is always  
preferable to not doing well  
(but only if a kid has the  
skills to do well in the first  
place)*

# When are challenging kids challenging?

- When the demands or expectations being placed upon them exceed the skills that they have
- An important goal is to identify the skills a challenging kid is lacking (ALSUP)
- An even more important goal is to identify the specific conditions or situations in which a challenging behavior is occurring

## **Plan A:**

**If we solve Problems unilaterally, through imposition of adult will, then we'll only increase the likelihood of challenging episodes and we won't solve any problems durably.**

- Similar to Authoritarian belief that kids should follow the rules without exception: Adult makes the rules and enforce the consequences with little regard for a child's opinion.

## **Plan C: is like Permissive Parenting (or Guiding):**

They're quite forgiving and they adopt an attitude of "kids will be kids."

They often encourage children to talk with them about their problems, but don't put much effort into finding out about why things are challenging.

- Not exactly neglectful but loose on structure, guidance, and EMPATHY

**PLAN B!!**



# Empathy step

- – involves gathering information so as to achieve the clearest understanding of the kid's concern or perspective about a given unsolved problem.

# Define the Problem

- involves entering the adult concern or perspective on the same unsolved problem into consideration.

# Invitation step-

- involves having the adult and child brainstorm solutions so as to arrive at a plan of action that is *both realistic and mutually satisfactory*...in other words,  
a solution that addresses both concerns and that both parties can actually do.

# **The ALSUP: Theory and Practice**

Nora and amy, EAA-SC 2017

**"Kids with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges lack important thinking skills" = Kids do well when they CAN.**

- “Kids do well if they WANT to do well”
  - -if a kid isn't doing well, we assume they do not want to do well
  - -adults may then see their role as making kid want to do well
  - -adults then use rewards to make a kid want to do well or punishments to make a kid not want to do poorly
  - Plan A

**Radically Different Philosophies**

- Kids who are not doing well lack the specific skillset to do well in that circumstance
- Kids already know what the behavioral/social/emotional expectations are, and wish they could do well
- We can assume that kids are motivated, know right from wrong, and have already been punished enough
- The ALSUP helps us take the most important and first step in helping collaboratively: by understanding what the kid's lagging skills are, and what those lagging skills lead to in the form of unsolved problems

**“Kids do well if they can” =  
growth mindset**

- Knowing a child's lagging skill sets helps us understand why their behavior is challenging in certain circumstances, to anticipate future conditions likely to result in challenging behaviors, and to work collaboratively with the child to teach specific skills.
- NOT knowing or understanding a child's lagging skill sets results in not understanding when/why challenging behaviors emerge, not being able to predict future conditions likely to result in challenging behaviors, not being able to teach specific skills, and continued frustration/poor relationship with the child.

**Why we need to understand lagging skills**



Lucky kids:

Cry

Whine

Withdraw

Pout

Distract

Forget

Unlucky Kids:

Swear

Run Away

Throw

Hurt Others/Selves

Break Things

Rage

**Challenging Behaviors Occur When the Expectations  
of the Moment in the Environment Exceed the  
Skillset of the Child Who Cannot Respond Adaptively**

"They just want attention"

"They are being manipulative"

"They aren't motivated/don't care"

"They just want their own way"

"They have parents who do not discipline them"

"They have a mental illness/sensory difficulty"

"Their older sibling was the same way"

"They have too much screen time"

"Their diet."

**Using the ALSUP to understand why some children have challenging behaviors results in a radical departure from "old" ways of understanding :**

No diagnoses are used!

Kids do not need a diagnosis, or a special educational designation, to have lagging skills that result in unsolved problems!

The list of 24+ lagging skills include executive functioning skills, emotional regulation skills, and social/relational skills

“When lagging skills are invoked as explanations for a kid’s behavior, the door to helping swings wide open.”

**The ALSUP: The Lagging Skills**

## **ALSUP Executive Functioning skills**

Difficulty handling transitions

Difficulty doing things in a logical sequence

Difficulty persisting in difficult/challenging tasks

Poor sense of time

Difficulty maintaining focus

Difficulty considering likely outcomes or consequences of actions

Difficulty considering a range of solutions to problems

Difficulty expressing needs/thoughts/concerns in words

Difficulty understanding what is being said

Difficulty seeing the "grays"

Difficulty shifting from original idea or plan of action

Difficulty managing emotional response to frustration  
so as to think rationally

Chronic irritability/anxiety impede problem  
solving/increase frustration

Difficulty handling unpredictability

Inflexible/inaccurate interpretations/cognitive  
distortions

Difficulty attending to social cues/poor perception  
social nuances

Difficulty starting conversations/entering groups

Difficulty seeking attention appropriately

Difficulty appreciating how one's behavior affects  
others

Difficulty empathizing with others

Difficulty seeing how one comes across to others

**ALSUP Social/Emotional skills**

#1: The UP does not mention the challenging behaviors

#2: The UP does not include an adult theory (any adult theories!) about why the UP is happening!!

#3: Better to "split" challenging behaviors into UP than to "clump". Lagging skills are the WHY of challenging behaviors, Unsolved Problems are the WHEN of challenging behaviors.

#4: The UP should be as specific as possible!



**Time to Practice an ALSUP  
Together!**

# **Plan B: Defining the Adult's Concerns**

Nora-n-Amy  
EAA Summer Conference 2017



## **The ALSUP and the Empathy Step Help Us Know if Our Concerns are Reasonable!**

Because sometimes our expectations are, and sometimes not so much....



## **CPS is collaborative**

- Children often don't understand the "why" of our expectations
- Explicit practice for the child in active listening
- In order to work collaboratively, after gathering information in the empathy step, children need to our concerns and perspective

## **Plan B is a process**

- Because most children are used to "Plan A", if we start with our concerns, they tune out. Sounds too much like Plan A.
- If we don't insert our Adult concerns, like all people, children will try to move from Empathy Step to Solutions

## **Purpose of Defining the Adult's Concerns**

- Like all human beings, we want to focus right away on solutions!
- We often have an informal list of expectations that children should or should not do, but we may not understand WHY we have these expectations, because we've never thought about it!
- Sometimes we have our own list of Unsolved Problems, and the Empathy Step can sometimes cause strong emotions that make it hard to think clearly—another good reason to sketch out Plan B conversations ahead of time!
- Even if we are having feelings, we can remind ourselves that Helpers help, Helpers have thick skins, and Helpers keep going even when the going gets rough!

## Why Sometimes Defining Our Concerns Isn't Easy



[www.livesinthebalance.org](http://www.livesinthebalance.org)

**From The Man Himself....**

- How the unsolved problem affects the child
- How the unsolved problem affects other people

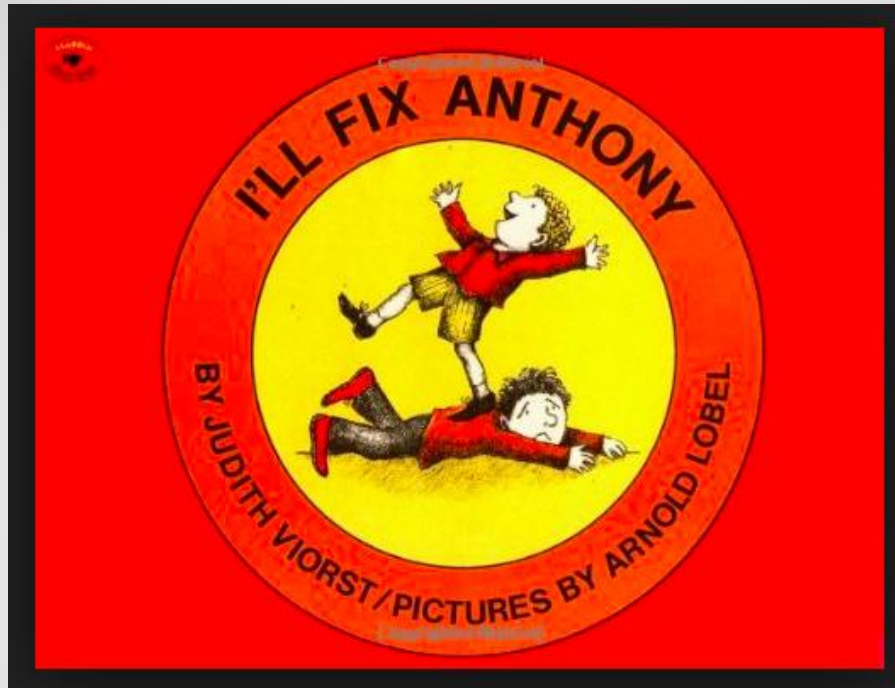
- How the unsolved problem affects learning

**Three Boiled Down Essences of Adult Concerns!**

- “Well, the thing is.....”

- “My concern is....”

**Two Ways to Lead Into the Adult's Concerns: For the Script Lovers!**



**Let's Practice (or Role Play) Adult Concerns About Anthony!**