



SUPPORTING YOUR YOUNG PERSON WITH PEER CONFLICT

STEP 1 – CREATE TIME AND SPACE

Choose a good time to talk, when you won't be rushed and when there are few distractions (such as other family members or the TV).

Avoid talking to them at the height of their distress. It's important to be there for them, but it can be more helpful to talk about the causes of their emotions when things are feeling calmer. Suggest they take some time to relax or try one of the exercises on our worksheet '**Grounding & Breath Relaxation**' – you could try this together.

If they are not willing to talk to you try some of the strategies on our '**reconnecting with your young person**' worksheet.

STEP 2 – VALIDATE THEIR FEELINGS

Listen and allow them to talk through what has happened, without giving advice. Try to repeat back some of what they have shared so that they feel you are listening to them. Tell them it is normal to feel lots of different emotions when in conflict. Try to understand things from their point of view and acknowledge how their experience might be impacting them.

You could say “it's really understandable that you are feeling ...”

For more ideas, see the 'Validating Feelings' worksheet.

STEP 3 – ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS TO GET 'BENEATH THE SURFACE'

Ask open-ended questions that encourage them to share the situation and their feelings with you.

Open Question Examples:

“Tell me some more”

“And then?”

“How do you feel about that?”

“What do you think could help?”



STEP 4 – TALK ABOUT HOW TO COMMUNICATE WHEN IN CONFLICT

See the **‘Talking in the I’ worksheet**.

Let them know the professional and age-appropriate helplines, text lines and online chat services that are available. Young people can find it difficult to talk and might worry about upsetting their parents, so reassure them that it’s ok to talk other people too.

STEP 5 – MODELLING RESOLUTION

Try to demonstrate healthy conflict resolution in your day-to-day family life. It is very normal for family disagreements and conflict to occur - modelling how conflict can be resolved through communication can help your child normalise, understand and learn from it. If this is something you struggle with see the **‘Managing Conflict worksheet’**.

STEP 6 – FOLLOW UP

Make a plan to talk about it again at a good time for you both, or remember to bring it up again in a few days to check how things are and if the conflict has been resolved.

LIST OF WORKSHEETS:

Reconnecting with your teenager

Calming/Grounding

Validating Feelings

‘Talking in the I’

Managing conflict

