

Lewis and Clark College
Graduate School of Education and Counseling
Summer 2021

SPSY 590

Collaborative Problem Solving



“Kids do well if they can”

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1 Semester Credit

Thursdays 9:00 am - 12:00 PM, May 13 - June 10, 2021

General Course Information

Required Class Text

Ablon, J. Stuart; Pollastri, Alisha R. The School Discipline Fix: Changing Behavior Using The Collaborative Problem Solving Approach. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2018.

Course Description

What is Collaborative Problem Solving? The core philosophy of the **Think:Kids** Collaborative Problem Solving Approach is that "kids do well if they can." If they can't, the adults - caregivers, teachers, providers - need to understand what is getting in their way in order to find a way to help. Although this idea does not seem earth shattering, it is a significant departure from conventional thinking of "kids do well if they want to."

When adults view challenging behavior through the lens of "kids do well if they want to," behavior is often seen as a choice and the youth is then provided with interventions to try to "motivate" the youth to do better. What transpires with the most challenging youth is a cycle of providing ineffective interventions that teaches the youth that he or she is not trying hard enough, when in fact, he or she is most likely trying harder than other kids who do not have similar difficulties.

Collaborative Problem Solving has a different explanation: Children with challenging behavior lack crucial cognitive thinking skills in the areas of frustration tolerance, adaptability/flexibility, and problem solving. Or they have difficulty applying these skills when most needed. The model effectively identifies what skills a child is lacking and trains/teaches these skills through a collaborative process in increments the child can handle developmentally. This collaborative process helps the adults who interact with the child to pursue expectations, reduce challenging behavior, teach skills, and gather information with an empathetic rather than punitive stance. Ultimately the opportunity to restore / build healthy relationships with loved ones and other caregivers sets the stage for resilience and success in the face of challenges that remain.

Course Goals and Objectives:

- 1) Learn why traditional approaches to understanding and intervening with challenging behaviors are limited and ineffective.
- 2) Develop an understanding of why the philosophy of “kids do well if they can,” provides a neuroscientifically based understanding of challenging behaviors that guides effective interventions.
- 3) Learn how to complete an assessment process that identifies challenging behaviors, lagging skills, and problems to be solved; and creates a framework for providing interventions and support for individuals.
- 3) Learn the three options for responding to unmet expectations.
- 4) Develop skills to engage in Collaborative Problem Solving conversations with others in order to: develop skills and build confidence, create helping relationships, reduce challenging behaviors, pursue high priority expectations, and solve chronic problems durably.
- 5) Gain understanding of how the Collaborative Problem Solving approach mimics healthy neurological development and why it is considered “trauma informed care.”

Assignments and Expectations

Class Participation

In order to create a positive learning environment, students will be expected to be actively engaged in class sessions and discussions. Demonstrating active listening skills, asking questions, and contributing to discussions and role plays is important to achieving this goal.

Weekly Reflection

At the end of each week, students will be asked to complete a survey and answer questions which will allow reflection on the material taught in class and application of the information to personal practice and/or life experiences.

Tier 1 Workbook

Throughout the class, a workbook will be used to complete learning activities and reflect on concepts taught in the class. Workbooks will be saved and then shared with the instructor by the last in-person class session.

CPSY Department Attendance Policy

Class attendance is expected and required. Any missed class time will be made up by completing extra assignments designed by the instructor. Missing more than ten percent of class time may result in failure to complete the class. This would be 4.5 hours of a 45 hour class (3 credits), 3.0 hours for a 30 hour class (2 credits) or 1.5 hours for a 15 hour class (1 credit.) In case of extreme hardship and also at the discretion of the instructor, a grade of incomplete may be given for an assignment or the entire course. In such cases, the work to be submitted in order to remove

the incomplete must be documented appropriately and stated deadlines met. Students are expected to be on time to class and tardiness may be seen as an absence that requires make-up work.

Disability Services Statement

If you have a disability that may impact your academic performance, you may request accommodations by submitting documentation to the Student Support Services Office in the Albany Quadrangle (503-768-7192). After you have submitted documentation and filled out paperwork there for the current semester requesting accommodations, staff in that office will notify me of the accommodations for which you are eligible.

Course grading summary

Class Participation	25 points
Weekly Reflection (5 x 10)	50 points
Workbook (due 6/10)	25 points
	100 points total

Overall course grading:

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79 (a grade of C or lower is a non-passing grade)

	To Complete Before the Class Session Asynchronous	Weekly Activities & Media Synchronous
Wk. 1 5/13	<p>Topics: Skill vs Will Behavior as a Learning Disability</p> <p>Read “The School Discipline Fix” Ch. 1, 2, 4</p> <p>Workbook Activities to complete: Personal Case Study Reflection (page 6) Read Alex Case Study (Pages 7 and 8) List Behaviors and Responses (page 9) Alex Personal Reflection (page 10) Self-Reflection on Lagging Skills (12-13)</p> <p>Watch: “Backwards Bicycle Video” “Motivation” Lagging Skills Presentation</p> <p>Reflection: Complete Class 1 Reflection (Due 5/16)</p>	<p>Introductions Syllabus review Summary of key learning topics Review/Discussion of workbook activities</p>

<p>Wk. 2 5/20</p>	<p>Topic: Assessment and Planning</p> <p>Read School Discipline Fix Ch. 3 & 5 Teacher Beliefs</p> <p>Workbook Activities: List of Challenging Behaviors (p. 14) Hypothesizing Lagging Skills (p. 19)</p> <p>Watch: Dead-end Explanations Dear Teacher Assessment Overview Plans A, B, C description Plan BVeggies</p> <p>Reflection: Complete Class 2 Reflection (Due 5/23)</p>	<p>Concepts : Identifying Problems to be Solved Assessing Thinking Skills using the CPS-APT Goals of Intervention Three Plans</p> <p>In Class Activities: Dead-End Explanations Discussion Model Alex Problems to be Solved and Lagging Skills (page 15 and 18)</p> <p>Plan A or Expectation Starting a Conversation with Youth</p>
<p>Wk. 3 5/27</p>	<p>Topic: Planning and Plan B</p> <p>Read School Discipline Fix Ch. 6</p> <p>Workbook Activities: Personal Case Study List of Problems to be Solved (16) Personal Case Study Lagging Skills (20) The Three List Scramble (22) Plan A or expectation (23) <i>Do after watcher Planning Video</i> Planning for Alex’s Problem List - Home (26) Planning your child’s problem list (27) Starting Plan B (28)</p> <p>Watch: Planning for Alex Intervention: Empathize Ingredient Empathize Ingredient - Shower Video Empathize Ingredient - Bedtime</p>	<p>Concepts: Planning and Prioritizing Empathize Ingredient</p> <p>Activity: Expectations Activity and Discussion Three List Scramble Discussion Plan A or Expectation Discussion Listening with Tenacity Practice Empathize Ingredient</p>

	<p>Reflection: Complete Class 3 Reflection (due 5/30)</p>	
<p>Wk. 4 6/3</p>	<p>Topic: Plan B Plan B: Share and Collaborate Ingredients Skills Training and Neurobiology</p> <p>Read School Discipline Fix Ch. 7, 8, 9, 14</p> <p>Workbook Shower Video: Identifying the adult concern (p 31) Personal Case Study Adult Concern (p 32) Inviting the Child to Brainstorm Solutions (p 33)</p> <p>Watch Share and Collaborate Ingredients How Plan B Teaches Skills Chess Video (school) Brushing Teeth (parent) Science (school/private practice)</p> <p>Reflection: Complete Class 4 Reflection (due 6/6)</p>	<p>Activities: Practice Plan B Organizer Plan B Practice and Role Plays</p>
<p>Wk. 5 6/10</p>	<p>Topic Different types of Plan B Implementation in Systems Research Outcomes</p> <p>Workbook Moving Forward with CPS (p 36)</p> <p>Read School Discipline Fix Ch. 11, 12, 13, 15</p> <p>Watch Types of CPS/Plan B Group Plan B Video</p> <p>Reflection: Complete Class 5 Reflection (due 6/13)</p>	<p>Activities: Plan B Practice Next Steps with CPS Spontaneous Practice Emergency Practice</p>

