



# Problem-Solving Scenarios

## Guidelines for Conversations with Children

### Strategies to Use

#### Find Out What the Children Think

Without judgment, find out what the children are feeling and thinking and how they make sense of the situation. Pay attention to their ideas and think about issues of acceptance, belonging, and membership that are a part of the situation.

#### Tell the Truth

Clarify misinformation as factually and simply as you can. Give children accurate information. Check in to see what they understand.

#### State the Justice Issue

State the justice issues. Help children think about what is kind, unkind, or hurtful. Help children identify ways to accept, include, and support others.

#### Speak Your Values

Use language such as “In our program”..., “In our classroom”..., or reference expectations that are aligned with values about how others are treated.

#### Guide the Problem-Solving Process

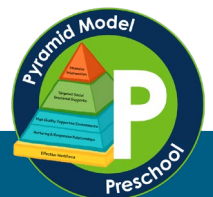
1. What is the problem?
2. What are some solutions? Can you think of alternative solutions?
3. What would happen if?
4. Give it a try!

#### Scenario #1

Three girls are in the dramatic play area. They pretend to cook, feed a doll in a highchair, and go to the store. Evan, a boy, enters the area and opens the toy cabinet where dishes and play food items are. One of the girls pushes him away and says, “You can’t be here. Only girls can play house.” Evan pushes back and throws one of the toy dishes on the floor. He shouts, “That’s not fair. I want to play here too.”

#### Scenario #2

Matt, a child with a disability who is physically smaller than the other children, is with a group of children who are organizing to play “family.” Matt says that he wants to be the Dad. Another child says, “You



have to be the baby.” Matt begins to cry and says, “I don’t want to be the baby, you always make me be the baby, and it is not fair.” A child says to him, “then you can’t play with us.” Matt comes to get you to help and says that the children are not being fair.

### Scenario #3

Two children are working on a floor puzzle and begin talking about how they will put the pieces together. Amaya comes over and watches and then begins to assist. One of the children says, “Amaya! No. We don’t want you to play with us.” Amaya begins crying. When you move to the group to see what happened, the children say “We don’t understand Amaya. She can’t help because she doesn’t speak English. We don’t want her to help us.”

