

Wonders & Worries

Professional support for children  
through a parent's illness.

We will, together.

## Peace Path - A Road to Conflict Resolution

The Peace Path is a three-step process to find common ground and resolve conflict. The goal is a healthy and restored relationship.

### Involved:

- Two parties in conflict
- One moderator (objective and not involved in the conflict - often a parent but can be a sibling or peer)

### When to Use:

Anyone can call for the Peace Path, even someone not involved in the actual conflict but affected by the conflict (i.e. parent). Nobody should be forced to participate.

If one member is unwilling to participate in the Peace Path but the point of conflict is such that some intervention is required the individual refusing to actively seek resolution potentially forfeits their voice in the resolution outcome. The idea being that if you want a say in how things turn out then you must do the work; demands are not a part of healthy relationships.

### What You Need:

A bit of space, some time and a moderator. There is a physical element to the Peace Path, particularly important for younger participants. Being in the same space helps develop healthy nonverbal communication such as looking someone in the eyes, body language that reflects attention, etc. Optionally, you can draw a path and include cutouts of shoes or feet taped to floor.

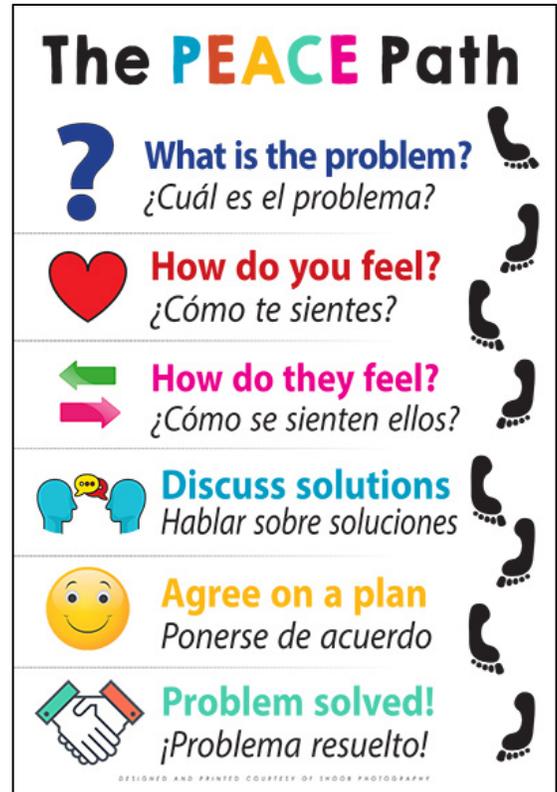
### How to Start:

The parties start three large paces from each other, then turn and face each other. Along the Peace Path, each party takes a step towards each other for each step of the path. The path is concluded when they shake hands and agree to the solution in step 3.

## The Path

### Step 1:

If the Peace Path was called by someone engaged in the conflict that person goes first. If it was called by someone outside of the conflict, the moderator selects who goes first.





Party #1 states what they see as the conflict or problem. The moderator may help clarify the conflict, summarizing it in one sentence if it becomes a tale of a series of events. Conflict resolution is more effective with phrases such as “I felt...” or “The problem is that...” Emphasize “I” statements, rather than “you” statements.

Party #2 repeats what party #1 stated as conflict, demonstrating that they heard and understand the conflict as #1 stated it. At this point they are not permitted to say they agree or disagree or argue that this is or isn't the conflict.

Moderator asks if #2 agrees that this is the conflict. #2 may or may not agree. If they do agree that this is the conflict then move on to step 2. If they do not agree, repeat step one, letting party #2 state what they see is the conflict.

If there are two different conflicts presented, agree which one will be addressed first and then follow the peace path for the different conflicts. (Often the second conflict is resolved during the first conflict peace path). Both parties must agree on the conflict before moving on to step two even if it requires repeating step one multiple times.

### Step 2:

After taking a step forward, the moderator asks #1 to propose a solution. Moderator may need to help young travelers with this step, and may intervene if parties agree to an unreasonable solution. Moderator asks #2 to repeat the solution #1 proposed.

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TIP: This method of conflict resolution works for adults too, though modified as adults won't need the footprints. When there is conflict between an adult and a child, however, modeling this complete journey communicates great respect.

Following party #1's proposal, moderator asks if this solution is acceptable to #2. If it is, the parties move on to step 3. If it is not, the moderator asks #2 to propose an alternate solution. Both parties must agree on the solution. If this step is taking a while the moderator can interject a solution proposal combining elements from both parties' proposals.

TIP: Young travelers may have difficulty seeing beyond what they want to have happen in this step and moderator intervention can help bring the two together. More mature travelers often can see how what they initially proposed is only looking out for themselves and having truly heard their fellow traveler on the path will find more of a compromise that meets both their needs.

### Step 3:

Facing each other the two parties shake hands, fist bump or hug, and agree to enact the solution immediately. The moderator reminds the two parties that failure to follow through on the agreed solution could result in a return to the Peace Path. This ends the Peace Path.