



# THINK DIFFERENTLY

A Trauma-Informed Approach for  
Parenting, Teaching, Treating and

Think:Kids  
RETHINKING CHALLENGING KIDS

## Helping the Behaviorally Challenging Child

### Questions & Answers: Why Collaborative Problem Solving®(CPS)?

#### WHAT IS COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING®(CPS) ... IN A NUTSHELL

- A unique, evidence-based, trauma-informed, skill-building, inclusive approach for understanding and working with children, adolescents, and young adults that is strength-based and neurobiologically grounded. This relational approach is effective with individuals who are neurodiverse, trauma impacted and/or experiencing mental health challenges, as well as with typically developing children.
- An approach designed to work across a wide variety of settings:
  - Education, Therapeutic, Residential Settings
  - Home, Childcare, Foster Care
- A way to operationalize trauma-informed care on a large scale (i.e., system-wide, state-wide) through the framework of a common philosophy and language used in a structured relational process.

#### WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM TRAININGS IN COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING®(CPS)

- Educators: Administrators, General Education Teachers, Special Education Staff, Counselors, Support Staff, School Psychologists, Aides, Classified Staff, Volunteers
- Childcare Providers, Foster Parents and Agency Staff
- Juvenile Justice Staff, Law Enforcement & Other Public Safety Officers
- Mental Health Service Providers, Medical Providers
- Parents, Grandparents, Family Members, Household Support

#### WHAT IS TO BE GAINED BY LEARNING COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING®(CPS)

- Pursuit of high priority expectations
- Reduction of challenging behaviors
- Solving problems in a durable manner
- Building skills
- Preserving and/or building a helping relationship

#### WHAT IS THE PREMISE OF COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING®(CPS)

- Challenging behavior is best understood as a by-product of skills that need to be built - rather than, for example, as attention-seeking, manipulation, limit-testing or a sign of poor motivation.
- Challenging behaviors are best addressed by teaching skills that need to be built – rather than persisting in the use of reward and punishment systems that have proven unsuccessful thus far – how do we know it is unsuccessful? - because it is used on the same individuals over and over resulting in a need for more intensive intervention.
- While challenging behaviors can look common across populations of children, the thinking skills that set the stage for the challenging behavior are unique to each individual. This requires the ability to properly assess each individual in the areas of frustration tolerance, flexibility, regulation, executive function, and social abilities key to making progress in solving the problems that are created by the behaviors.
- Proper assessment and planning are key to identifying the skills that need to be built collaboratively using the process known in Collaborative Problem Solving as “Plan B”, which integrates not only skill-building, but all of the components that have been shown to be sound practice for trauma-informed, inclusive, skill-building care: rhythm, empathy, and co-regulation throughout the adult/child communication process.

## SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF TRAINING AND EFFORT?

### WHAT MAKES COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING®(CPS) WORTH THE INVESTMENT.

- Neuroscience research supports the use of Collaborative Problem Solving: Dr. Bruce Perry (a leading neuroscientist who studies brain impacts of childhood trauma) among others, like Dr. Stephen Porges, indicate that numerous aspects of the Collaborative Problem Solving process provide the components that are critical for the brain to develop new neurological pathways. The new pathways become the new “default template” required to re-build maladaptive, challenging behaviors with new, more adaptive behaviors.
- Far less time, effort and agony are expended learning and implementing Collaborative Problem Solving than any of the following:
  - Imposing adult will in the face of resistance time and time again
  - Coming up with more and more elaborate systems of rewards and punishments
  - Revisiting the same issues over and over with little to no skill development from oversimplifying the cause of the challenging behaviors
- Collaborative Problem Solving offers outcomes that are rarely, if ever, accomplished by conventional forms of responding to challenging behaviors. Collaborative Problem Solving data and research show it:
  - Proactively solves problems in a durable manner
  - Helps to collaboratively blow on the embers of strengths & skill building with the child/individual
  - Preserves and/or builds a helping relationship while solving unsolved problems

### WHAT KIND OF TRAINING IS AVAILABLE AT HBCC? HOW DO I GET TRAINING FOR MY SCHOOL/AGENCY/FAMILY?

- **HBCC holds the following in Tustin or can schedule at your agency/school/organization**
  - **Parent Classes & Support** on-going: weeknights, weekdays and Saturdays, or at your convenience
  - **Educator/Clinician Trainings** on-going: weeknights and weekdays or at your agency/school/organization
    - **Introductory Overview** – ongoing 2-hour Overview Introduction to understanding the Collaborative Problem Solving model
    - **Essential Foundation, Level 1 Training** – a 16-hour training, complete with video modeling, role-playing, a case study, and training that equips participants with a solid understanding of the model including: in-depth exposure to assessment, planning and intervention components; practice identifying triggers and unmet expectation and specific skills deficits, as well as troubleshooting
- **The following training courses are taught exclusively by Think:Kids staff**
  - **Advanced Concepts, Level 2** – a 16-hour training, this training is for those who want to gain a higher level of proficiency, and be able to support others within their agency, organization, or school, including: implementation in the most difficult situations, teaching the model to others, addressing common resistance, gaining buy-in and addressing issues such as leadership/communication structures.
  - **Certification in Collaborative Problem Solving®(CPS)** - a 12-week cohort for those who want to become certified experts in the fidelity of the CPS/TK model to utilize implementation in the most difficult situations. Once Certified in CPS, you join the T:K Certified community, will be able to display your CPS/TK Certification seal as part of your personal credential, receive ongoing training and support from T:K with access to resources and materials where you will be formally recognized as an expert in CPS/TK.
  - **Certified Trainer in Collaborative Problem Solving®(CPS)** - this level of training is for those who want to teach the model to others in schools, agencies, and facilities organizations in an equitable and inclusive manner. You will be able to display the Certified Trainer in CPS/TK seal as part of your personal credential. This is the best track to pursue for schools and organizations who want to instill CPS/TK into your program's culture in a sustainable way.
- **The Collaborative Problem Solving®(CPS) approach** is owned and developed by Think:Kids(T:K), a program based in the Department of Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital(MGH) in Boston, Massachusetts. Those CPS Certified receive ongoing supervision from T:K and are independent of MGH.

Those in SoCal wanting more info about CPS trainings, contact:

**Helping the Behaviorally Challenging Child(HBCC)**

714-695-1057

[info@hbcc.us](mailto:info@hbcc.us)

[www.hbcc.us](http://www.hbcc.us)

Other areas please reach out to Think:Kids directly at MGH @ [www.thinkkids.org](http://www.thinkkids.org)