



**learn &
play**

Theme

Problem solving

ISBE Learning Standards for Social/Emotional Learning:

- The child will consider ethical, safety, and societal factors in making decisions. (3A)
- The child will apply decision-making skills to deal responsibly with daily academic and social situations. (3B)

Activity: Over the Line

Items Needed

- White board or large piece of paper with markers
- Roll of masking tape
- Three, wadded-up pieces of paper with normal weight (only one is needed; the additional two are for backup)

Activity Prep:

1. Before starting the activity, have the following steps written on a white board or hanging up on a large piece of paper that the entire group can reference under the heading *How to Solve a Problem*:
 - A. Identify the problem.
 - B. Think about solutions.
 - C. Consider if the solutions would be safe, fair, or respect the feelings of others.
 - D. Try the best solution, and then try another if that does not work.
2. Place two, parallel, long, masking tape lines on the floor in the area where children will be seated as a group. The tape lines should be one foot apart from each other.
3. Discuss ideas using the problem-solving steps and let children try to do it. Talk about why planning and considering factors ahead of time before you do something makes sense. Use examples of other tasks, such as constructing a building and why it is important to plan ahead of time. Discuss what could go wrong if people do not plan buildings or activities in advance.

Activity:

1. Invite children to sit on one side of the tape lines.
2. Place a wadded-up piece of normal-weighted paper parallel to both lines, near to the group of children. Tell the children that the goal is to move it past the two tape lines without using their bodies. (The children will eventually realize that the only way to move the wadded paper is to blow it across the two lines.)

Considerations/ Modifications/ Extension Activities:

- For more adventurous children, have the children strategize in groups before coming together as a larger group.
- As an extension activity, consider bringing in guests that design things (engineer, architect, etc.) to speak to the group to reinforce the lesson. Encourage guests to use the problem-solving steps listed above when describing their own jobs.