

## Problem Solving Worksheet

Use this worksheet to guide you through steps, which will assist you to break down an identified problem into manageable chunks, to thoughtfully weigh up and choose the best solution available at the current time.

### Step 1: Define the Problem

If you need to choose from a number of problems, ask yourself, 'Which one is bothering me the most? Is there one problem that I really need to deal with, before the others? Is one of the problems getting worse?'. Write down the problem clearly, including:

- How often the problem happens
- Who is involved (e.g., specific people, communities, services or organisations)
- How does the problem make me feel?

After you've written down and defined the problem, take some time to ask yourself the following questions:

- Is the problem happening to me/is it between me and someone else?      yes / no
- Is the problem happening to someone else      yes / no
- Is the problem happening between two or more people?      yes / no

If you circled 'yes' to the first question, then this is likely to be a good problem for you to work on. If you circled 'yes' to one or both of the last two questions, this may not be a problem that you can fix – it may be for someone else to work on.

**Step 2: Set the Goal & Brainstorm All Possible Solutions**

First, clearly write what you hope will happen by targeting this problem. Ask yourself:

- What would I like to see happen or change?
- What is my end goal or desire? (if you think the goal might be too big or complex, write down one short-term goal you can work on first)

Next, write down as many ideas, options or solutions that you can think of that might help you solve the problem and reach your desire or goal. Think of as many solutions as possible – aim for a list of at least 10. Be as creative as you can!



**Step 4: Action Plan**

Identify practical and specific ways to work towards the solution I have chosen. In your plan, consider:

- The specific action(s) I need to take
- Where and what location will the action(s) take place
- Who else needs to be informed and involved?
- Who else can help support me to take these actions?
- The review date by which I will try to achieve each action listed

**Step 5: Review Progress**

Once you have engaged in your action plan, ask yourself:

- Has the problem been solved? Partly solved? Not solved? Do I need to brainstorm more possible solutions to add to my list?
- What worked and what didn't? Does my Action Plan need to be modified? Are more steps required?

If not solved, return to an earlier step, modify your Action Plan and give it another go. If the problem has been solved, congratulations! Consider applying these Problem Solving steps to another problem(s).

