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# Eliminating Social Exclusion (EiSE)

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# Problem solving for “Fair traveling”



## Summary

- This learning unit focuses on problem solving in education contextualizing it to solve problems of families with children with behavioral disturbances when they are traveling.
- The learning unit structure includes the expected achievements.
- Contents are grouped and additional information are provided.
- Contents are labeled in order to reduce uncertainty for learners and improve the efficacy of the learning process.
- Finally, suggestions are given for the training course evaluation.



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## **Expected achievements**

This learning unit will taught parents of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder to tackle and solve problems occurring when they travel with their children.

Learners will learn how a problem-solving approach can help them to develop effective practical solutions.



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## **Travel with autism**

Traveling can be challenging for families with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The changes in routine, unpredictability, crowds, new noises and sights can all make the experience difficult for children with ASD and their families.

Accordingly it is important to choose the right destination and carefully plan the travel. One can search for the ideal destination on the web and social media. One should be sure that a place is right for the children with ASD.



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## **Travel with autism**

The first thing to check is the availability of the basic facilities for a family with children with ASD, e.g., if there is the possibility to book a hotel with a quieter area.

Once the hotel has been booked, one should start to plan the travel. Because autistic people can find change difficult, this may lead to high anxiety, meltdowns or behavior that challenges.



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## **Travel with autism**

Children should be prepared for change. Here following to manage the change difficult:

spend time with children looking at photographs in a brochure or on the holiday companies website;

compile a visual support, such as a booklet with photos, to help them remember where they are going and what it will look like when they get there;

prepare a timetable in advance, taking into consideration any obsessions, repetitive behavior or routines that children have; think about what situations they may need to understand (such as delays or unavoidable changes to travel plans).



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## **Problem-solving**

Problem-solving consists in the definition of a problem, identifying, prioritizing, and selecting alternatives for its solution. Problem-solving includes the implementation of the problem solution.

Problem-solving should ensure parents to rehearse, master, and transfer acquired knowledge by applying them to solve problems related to behavioral disturbances of their children in traveling circumstances.

In general, problem-solving can be used to define and prioritize problems, to solve complex problems solving one problem at a time, to generate alternative solutions, to select the best alternative, and to evaluate outcomes.

## Problem solving process

In order to effectively find a suitable solution to a problem, a four-step problem-solving can be adopted.

Step	Actions
Problem definition	Differentiate fact from opinion Specify underlying causes Determine in which process the problem lies Avoid trying to solve the problem without data
Alternatives identification	Include all possible alternatives Identify alternatives consistent with your goals Specify short- and long-term alternatives Seek alternatives that may solve the problem
Evaluation and selection the best alternative	Evaluate alternatives Evaluate both proven and possible outcomes Selected the best alternative
Solution implementation	Plan and implement a pilot test of the chosen alternative Establish measures and monitoring procedures Evaluate the results based on final solution



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## **Educator's strategy in problem solving**

An educator, who adopts a problem-solving approach in a parent training intervention, should ensure that the parents' problem-solving efforts are successful. The educator should support parents reviewing their problem-solving process step by step.

Parents have to agree with the solution, then the educator will help them to identify, separately, how to pursue the solution. The educator should encourage parents' discussion of the steps necessary to achieve the solution. The educator should avoid that parents attempt to solve the problem at rushed and chaotic time, discuss the problem in vague language, deal with several problems simultaneously, fail to determine if the solution actually works.



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## Problem-Solving Therapy

The Problem Solving Therapy was formulated by D’Zurilla and Goldfried, in 1971.

These authors published an article that proposed the application of problem-solving theory and research in behavior modification. Their aim was to facilitate “generalized” behavior change.

On this purpose, they conceptualized problem-solving therapy as a form of self-control training, emphasizing the importance of training the client to function as their therapist.

D'Zurilla, T. J., & Goldfried, M. R. (1971). Problem solving and behavior modification. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 78(1), 107–126.



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## **Problem-Solving Therapy**

D’Zurilla and Goldfried summarized the rationale underlying this approach as follows:

Ineffectiveness in coping with problematic situations, along with its personal and social consequences, is often a necessary and sufficient condition for an emotional or behavior disorder requiring psychological treatment; . . . general effectiveness may be most efficiently facilitated by training individuals in general procedures or skills which would allow them to deal independently with the critical problematic situations that confront them in day-to-day living. (D’Zurilla and Goldfried, 1971, p. 109)



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## **Problem-Solving Therapy**

According to D’Zurilla and Goldfried “problem solving” refers to an overt or cognitive process that makes available a variety of effective response alternatives for coping with a problem situation and increases the likelihood of selecting the most effective response available (Dobson, & Dozois, 2010).



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## Problem-Solving Therapy

D’Zurilla and Goldfried identified five overlapping stages as representative of the problem-solving process:

general orientation or set;

- problem definition and formulation;
- generation of alternatives;
- decision making;
- verification.

Training in problem solving involves teaching clients these basic skills and guiding their application in actual problem situations.



## The Basadur's problem-solving process

In defining the *simplex creative problem-solving* process, Basadur (1997) used the terms innovative thinking, creative problem solving, change making, creative thinking, creativity, and innovation fairly interchangeably.

Basadur (1998) defined an eight-steps circular process for problem solving creativity:

1. problem finding (anticipating future problems and seeking current problems);
2. fact finding;
3. problem defining;
4. generating potential solutions,
5. evaluating potential solutions;
6. action planning;
7. gaining acceptance;
8. taking action.

# The Basadur's problem-solving process

