

Working Together

A Guide to Positive
Problem Solving for
Schools, Families,
and Communities



Healthy Child
Manitoba



Manitoba

Putting children and families first

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About this guide

Parents, educators, and community members share the same goal: to give students the best education possible. We can all work together to make school an open and caring place.

In Manitoba, we are committed to the following philosophy of inclusion as our guiding principle:

Inclusion is a way of thinking and acting that allows every individual to feel accepted, valued, and safe. An inclusive community consciously evolves to meet the changing needs of its members. Through recognition and support, an inclusive community provides meaningful involvement and equal access to the benefits of citizenship.

In Manitoba, we embrace inclusion as a means of enhancing the well-being of every member of the community. By working together, we strengthen our capacity to provide the foundation for a richer future for all of us.

This pamphlet is a brief overview of the information available in the handbook *Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem Solving for Schools, Families, and Communities* available online at <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/specedu/documents.html>.

How are positive relationships built?

Positive relationships are formed when families and schools work together. Everyone has valuable information to share. Parents know their children better than anyone. Educators are professionals with extensive training and experience. Everyone's contribution is valuable.

Suggestions for building positive relationships

- Build trust by getting to know each other.
- Communicate often.
- Communicate clearly and listen carefully to the other person.
- Try to solve problems where and when they occur, so they don't grow into bigger problems later.

What can I do when my child has a problem with school?

In Manitoba schools, it is our goal that each student feels welcomed, valued, and included. We all work together to make our schools safe, positive, and respectful places for each child to learn. There are times, however, when we may have different ideas about the way things could be done, and concerns could arise.

If you or your child is having a problem with school, it is important that we work together to solve it as quickly and fairly as possible. When we solve our problems in a respectful, friendly, and co-operative way, we set positive examples for children. We also work toward building good, strong relationships among home, school, and community.

What do I do first?

The most important thing to do when you or your child is having a problem at school is to talk with the person who is most directly involved and most likely to be able to solve it with you.



Whom should I call?

Speak with the teacher first.

- If the problem has not been resolved, speak with the principal.
- If the problem still has not been resolved, find out if there is anyone else you could contact in your school division. (The school should have contact lists and information.)
- If the problem still has not been resolved, speak with the superintendent.
- If the problem still has not been resolved, contact the Board of Trustees. Your elected school trustees can assist you with this process.

We all work together to make our schools safe, positive, and respectful places for each child to learn.



A problem-solving process

1. Decide whether the issue is worth pursuing.
2. Meet with the person most directly involved with the issue.
3. Ask the person to describe how he or she sees the situation.
4. Describe the situation as you see it.
5. Summarize the issues that need to be resolved.
6. Discuss one issue at a time.
7. Brainstorm possible options for each issue.
8. Generate solution(s) that work for everyone.
9. Put the solution(s) in writing.
10. Set a date to discuss how the solutions are working.

Where do I get more information?

Please contact your school if you have questions, or ask to see a copy of the handbook *Working Together: A Guide to Positive Problem Solving for Schools, Families, and Communities*. A copy may be obtained from the Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth website at <http://www.edu.gov.mb.ca/ks4/spcedu/documents.html>.

Organizations

- Manitoba Association of School Superintendents
- Manitoba Association of School Trustees
- Student Services Administrators Association of Manitoba
- Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth
- Manitoba Association of Parent Councils
- Manitoba Teachers' Society
- Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre



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