

## Six steps to helping children resolve conflicts

1. It's important to approach calmly, or you may just make the situation more heated. If you feel you can't be calm let another adult deal with the situation. If a child is physically injured you may have to deal with that before dealing with the situation.
2. It is important to acknowledge children's feelings in a conflict situation; there is a wide range of emotions; sadness to anger, frustration and being physically hurt. It starts to diffuse the situation immediately if you acknowledge the way the child is feeling. They need to learn to understand that it is alright to feel angry/sad/frustrated, that they just have to work out a way to deal with the problem.
3. You need to listen to each child. Give children whose language isn't very good time to explain or to show you.
4. It is important for the adult to restate both sides of the disagreement so that both children have another chance to hear how the other feels and to feel that what they have said is also valued.
5. Getting children to find the solution themselves is much better than giving it to them. Making a child share a toy or just say sorry, will never be the same as getting them to realise themselves that sharing and co-operating is the best way in a group situation. Children learn how to deal with social conflicts much better if they are decision makers.
6. We do have to keep an eye on the situation to see that it doesn't escalate again, after all the children are young.

### REMEMBER

1. Approach calmly
2. Acknowledge children's feelings
3. Listen to each child - giving time
4. Restate both sides of the disagreement
5. Help the children to find a solution themselves
6. Keep an eye on the situation