



CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**INSTRUCTIONS:** The ALSUP is intended for use as a discussion guide rather than as a freestanding check-list or rating scale. It should be used to identify specific lagging skills and unsolved problems that pertain to a particular child or adolescent.

If a lagging skill applies, check it off and then (before moving on to the next lagging skill) identify the specific expectations the child is having difficulty meeting in association with that lagging skill (unsolved problems). A non-exhaustive list of sample unsolved problems is shown at the bottom of the page.

LAGGING SKILLS		UNSOLVED PROBLEMS
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty handling transitions, shifting from one mindset or task to another	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty doing things in a logical sequence or prescribed order	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty persisting on challenging or tedious tasks	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor sense of time	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty maintaining focus	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty considering the likely outcomes or consequences of actions (impulsive)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty considering a range of solutions to a problem	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty expressing concerns, needs, or thoughts in words	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty managing emotional response to frustration so as to think rationally	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chronic irritability and/or anxiety significantly impede capacity for problem-solving or heighten frustration	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty seeing "grays"/concrete, literal, black & white, thinking	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty deviating from rules, routine	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty handling unpredictability, ambiguity, uncertainty, novelty	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty shifting from original idea, plan, or solution	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty taking into account situational factors that would suggest the need to adjust a plan of action	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inflexible, inaccurate interpretations/cognitive distortions or biases (e.g., "Everyone's out to get me," "Nobody likes me," "You always blame me, "It's not fair," "I'm stupid")	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty attending to or accurately interpreting social cues/ poor perception of social nuances	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty starting conversations, entering groups, connecting with people/lacking other basic social skills	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty seeking attention in appropriate ways	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty appreciating how his/her behavior is affecting others	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty empathizing with others, appreciating another person's perspective or point of view	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Difficulty appreciating how s/he is coming across or being perceived by others	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensory/motor difficulties	

### UNSOLVED PROBLEMS GUIDE:

Unsolved problems are the specific expectations a child is having difficulty meeting. Unsolved problems should be free of maladaptive behavior; free of adult theories and explanations; "split" (not "clumped"); and specific.

#### HOME EXAMPLES

- Difficulty getting out of bed in the morning in time to get to school
- Difficulty getting started on or completing homework (specify assignment)
- Difficulty ending the video game to get ready for bed at night
- Difficulty coming indoors for dinner when playing outside
- Difficulty agreeing with brother about what TV show to watch after school
- Difficulty with the feelings of seams in socks
- Difficulty brushing teeth before bedtime

#### SCHOOL EXAMPLES

- Difficulty moving from choice time to math
- Difficulty sitting next to Kyle during circle time
- Difficulty raising hand during social studies discussions
- Difficulty getting started on project on tectonic plates in geography
- Difficulty standing in line for lunch



# Collaborative & Proactive Solutions



THIS IS HOW PROBLEMS GET SOLVED

---

## ALSUP Guide

- The *Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems* (ALSUP) is best used as a *discussion guide* rather than as a free-standing checklist or rating scale.
- Meetings should be focused almost totally on identifying lagging skills and unsolved problems. It is not the goal of the meeting to try to explain *why* a child has a particular lagging skill or unsolved problem, so hypotheses and theories about *cause* are to be avoided. It is also counterproductive to have participants go into great detail about the *behaviors* that a child exhibits in response to a given unsolved problem so story telling is to be avoided as well.
- It's best to discuss each lagging skill (rather than "cherry-picking"), starting at the top
- If a lagging skill is endorsed, don't continue moving down the list of lagging skills...move *over* to identify the unsolved problems associated with the lagging skill
- An unsolved problem is an *expectation a child is having difficulty meeting in association with a particular lagging skill*
- To identify unsolved problems, begin with the stem, "Can you give some examples of expectations (Theresa) is having difficulty meeting when you think of her having (then restate the endorsed lagging skill. For example, "Can you give some examples of expectations Theresa is having difficulty meeting when you think of her having difficulty making transitions?"
- Identify as many unsolved problems as possible for each endorsed lagging skill... don't move on after identifying only one unsolved problem.
- Many lagging skills may contribute to the same unsolved problem...don't spend valuable meeting time trying to be precise about which lagging skill best accounts for a given unsolved problem.
- Don't write the same unsolved problem in more than once, even if a later lagging skills reminds you of the same unsolved problem.
- There are some important guidelines for writing unsolved problems:
  - ⇒ **They usually begin with the word *Difficulty***, and the word *Difficulty* is usually followed by a verb, for example:
    - Difficulty *getting started* on the double-digit division problems in math
    - Difficulty *completing* the map of Europe in geography
    - Difficulty *participating* in the discussions in morning meeting
    - Difficulty *moving* from choice time to math
    - Difficulty *ending* computer time to come to circle time
    - Difficulty *coming* into school in the morning
    - Difficulty *going* to the nurse for your medication before lunch

- Difficulty *walking* in the hallway between classes
- Difficulty *keeping* hands to self in the lunch line
- Difficulty *lining up* for the bus at the end of the school day
- Difficulty *sitting* next to Trevor during circle time
- Difficulty *taking turns* during class discussions in Social Studies
- Difficulty *raising* hand during class discussions in Science
- Difficulty *remaining* quiet when a classmate is sharing his or her ideas in English
- Difficulty *waiting* for his turn during the four-square game at recess
- Difficulty *putting* away the Legos after choice time
- Difficulty *retrieving* his Geography notebook from his locker before Geography class
- Difficulty *arriving* at school on time at 8:30 am

- ⇒ **Some verbs should be avoided:** accepting, appreciating, staying calm, asking for help, listening, paying attention, focusing, considering, understanding, persisting, controlling
- ⇒ **They should contain no reference to the child's *challenging* behaviors**, though reference to *expected* behaviors is fine (so you wouldn't write *Screams and swears when having difficulty completing the word problems on the math homework*...instead write *Difficulty completing the word problems on the math homework*)
- ⇒ **They should contain no adult theories** (so you wouldn't write *Difficulty writing the definitions to the spelling words in English...because his parents were recently divorced*)
- ⇒ **They should be split, not clumped** (so you wouldn't write *Difficulty raising hand* but rather *Difficulty raising hand during social studies discussions*)
- ⇒ **They should be specific**...there are two strategies to help:
  - Include details related to who, what, where, and when
  - Ask *What expectation is the child/student having difficulty meeting?*

**Focus on:**

- Who
- What
- Where
- When
- ~~Why~~

**Verbs for Unsolved Problems:**

- Getting started
- Completing
- Participating
- Moving
- Ending
- Coming
- Going
- Walking
- Keeping hands to self
- Lining up
- Sitting next to
- Taking turns
- Raising hand
- Remaining quiet
- Waiting for a turn
- Putting away
- Retrieving
- Arriving

**Verbs to Avoid for Unsolved Problems:**

- ⊗ Accepting
- ⊗ Appreciating
- ⊗ Staying calm
- ⊗ Asking for help

- ⊗ Listening
- ⊗ Paying attention
- ⊗ Focusing
- ⊗ Considering
- ⊗ Understanding
- ⊗ Persisting
- ⊗ Controlling

- Difficulty entering the classroom with materials (pencil, packet)
- Difficulty entering the school counselor office
- Difficulty preparing materials in the beginning of class
- Difficulty getting started on the warmup in math
- Difficulty getting started on the first activity in science
- Difficulty getting started on schoolwork when two or more students are having a conversation in tutor room
- Difficulty getting started on schoolwork in the tutor room after a social conflict
- Difficulty getting started with conversations with peers
- Difficulty completing schoolwork when two or more students are having a conversation in the tutor room
- Difficulty completing assignments in science when trying to get caught up
- Difficulty turning in science assignments
- Difficulty remaining quiet when he is not a part of conversation between two or more students
- Difficulty remaining quiet when a teacher gives another student a redirect
- Difficulty remaining quiet when he is eliminated from lightening during HELP recess/lunch recess
- Difficulty remaining quiet between songs in band
- Difficulty sitting next to JZ in all classes
- Difficulty sitting next to PG in the tutor room
- Difficulty sitting next to AB in the tutor room
- Difficulty sitting next to KL in Spanish class
- Difficulty sitting next to JI in science
- Difficulty moving past JZ in the hallway
- Difficulty moving past PG in the hallway
- Difficulty moving past AB in the hallway
- Difficulty moving past AC in the hallway
- Difficulty moving from the tutor room to the classroom after a social conflict
- Difficulty participating in songs during band
- Difficulty participating in whole group instruction (spending time in the tutor room or counseling office)
- Difficulty participating in a game with peers during HELP recess/lunch recess when the rules change
- Difficulty participating in physical activities with peers during HELP recess/lunch recess
- Difficulty participating in a request from a peer to stop during HELP

recess/lunch recess

- Difficulty participating in a request from a peer to stop during science or in the tutor room
- Difficulty keeping hands to self when KEW passed by with a ball
- Difficulty completing with conversations with peers
- Difficulty remaining seated during whole group instruction
- Difficulty waiting for a turn to communicate with the teacher during whole group instruction

# Assessment of Lagging Skills and Unsolved Problems (ALSUP) Check List

## Instructions:

Place a check ✓ for each item in the consistency rating scale. The scale is from 1: not at all consistent to 5: very consistent.

Provide comments or note what worked well in the comments column.

Steps in Implementing an ALSUP Meeting						Comments/What worked well
Conduct of the Meeting	Not at all Consistent					Very Consistent
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) Directs the meeting in a manner that limits theorizing, storytelling or discussion about behavior						
<b>Identification of lagging skills</b>						
2) Starts with the first lagging skill and moves down the list without “cherry-picking”						
3) Provides comprehensible descriptions of lagging skills when clarification is required						
4) Doesn’t get caught up in discussions around which lagging skills best accounts for a given unsolved problem						
5) After endorsing a lagging skill, immediately identifies the associated unsolved problems (prior to moving on to the next lagging skill)						
<b>Identification of unsolved problems associated with each lagging skill</b>						
6) Begins with the stem, “What expectations is (name of child) having difficulty meeting that spring to mind when you think of (restates endorsed lagging skill)”						
7) Identifies as many unsolved problems as possible for each endorsed lagging skill (doesn’t move on after identifying only one unsolved problem)						
8) Doesn’t write the same unsolved problem more than once, even if a later lagging skill causes participants to think of the same unsolved problem						
<b>Writing unsolved problems</b>						
9) Begins most problems with the with the word “Difficulty...”						
10) Includes no reference to the child’s challenging behaviors (reference to expected behaviors is fine)						
11) Includes no adult theories						
12) Splits problems rather than clumping them						
13) Provides specific details related to who, what, where, and when of the problems and is explicit about the expectations the child is having difficulty meeting						
14) Wording is kid friendly						



# PROBLEM SOLVING PLAN



Collaborative & Proactive Solutions  
THIS IS HOW PROBLEMS GET SOLVED

CHILD'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

UNSOLVED PROBLEM #1	UNSOLVED PROBLEM #2	UNSOLVED PROBLEM #3
↓	↓	↓
Adult taking the lead on Plan B:	Adult taking the lead on Plan B:	Adult taking the lead on Plan B:
↓	↓	↓
Kid concerns identified: (Empathy step)  DATE _____	Kid concerns identified: (Empathy step)  DATE _____	Kid concerns identified: (Empathy step)  DATE _____
↓	↓	↓
Adult concerns identified: (Define the Problem step)  DATE _____	Adult concerns identified: (Define the Problem step)  DATE _____	Adult concerns identified: (Define the Problem step)  DATE _____
↓	↓	↓
Solution agreed upon: (Invitation step)  DATE _____	Solution agreed upon: (Invitation step)  DATE _____	Solution agreed upon: (Invitation step)  DATE _____
↓	↓	↓
Problem Solved? YES? ____ DATE _____ NO? ____ COMMENT:	Problem Solved? YES? ____ DATE _____ NO? ____ COMMENT:	Problem Solved? YES? ____ DATE _____ NO? ____ COMMENT:





The goal of the Empathy Step is to gather information from the child about his/her concern or perspective on the unsolved problem you're discussing (preferably proactively). For many adults, this is the most difficult part of Plan B, as they often find that they are unsure of what to ask next. So here's a brief summary of different strategies for "drilling" for information:

## REFLECTIVE LISTENING AND CLARIFYING STATEMENTS

Reflective listening basically involves **mirroring what a child has said** and then encouraging him/her to provide additional information by saying one of the following:

- "How so?"
- "I don't quite understand"
- "I'm confused"
- "Can you say more about that?"
- "What do you mean?"

Reflective listening is your "default" drilling strategy...if you aren't sure of which strategy to use or what to say next, use this strategy.

## ASKING ABOUT THE WHO, WHAT, WHERE/WHEN OF THE UNSOLVED PROBLEM

### EXAMPLES:

- "Who was making fun of your clothes?"
- "What's getting the way of completing the science project?"
- "Where is Eddie bossing you around?"

## ASKING ABOUT WHY THE PROBLEM OCCURS UNDER SOME CONDITIONS AND NOT OTHERS

**EXAMPLE:** "You seem to be doing really well in your work group in math...but not so well in your work group in social studies...what's getting in the way in social studies?"

## ASKING THE CHILD WHAT S/HE'S THINKING IN THE MIDST OF THE UNSOLVED PROBLEM

Notice, this is different than asking the child what s/he is feeling, which doesn't usually provide much information about the child's concern or perspective on an unsolved problem.

**EXAMPLE:** "What were you thinking when Mrs. Thompson told the class to get to work on the science quiz?"

## BREAKING THE PROBLEM DOWN INTO ITS COMPONENT PARTS

**EXAMPLE:** "So writing the answers to the questions on the science quiz is hard for you...but you're not sure why. Let's think about the different parts of answering questions on the science quiz. First, you have to understand what the question is asking. Is that part hard for you? Next, you need to think of the answer to the question. Is that part hard? Next, you have to remember the answer long enough to write it down. Are you having trouble with that part? Then you have to actually do the writing. Any trouble with that part?"

## DISCREPANT OBSERVATION

This involves making an observation that differs from what the child is describing about a particular situation, and it's the riskiest (in terms of causing the child to stop talking) of all the drilling strategies.

**EXAMPLE:** "I know you're saying that you haven't been having any difficulty with Chad on the playground lately, but I recall a few times last week when you guys were having a big disagreement about the rules in the box-ball game. What do you think was going on with that?"

## TABLING (AND ASKING FOR MORE CONCERNS)

This is where you're "shelving" some concerns the child has already expressed so as to permit consideration of other concerns.

**EXAMPLE:** "So if Timmy wasn't sitting too close to you, and Robbie wasn't making noises, and the floor wasn't dirty, and the buttons in your pants weren't bothering you...is there anything else that would make it difficult for you to participate in Morning Meeting?"

## SUMMARIZING (AND ASKING FOR MORE CONCERNS)

This is where you're summarizing concerns you've already heard about and then asking if there are any other concerns that haven't yet been discussed. This is the recommended strategy to use before moving on to the Define Adult Concerns step.

**EXAMPLE:** "Let me make sure I understand all of this correctly. It's hard for you to do your social studies worksheet for homework because writing down the answers is still hard for you...and because sometimes you don't understand the question...and because Mrs. Langley hasn't yet covered the material on the worksheet. Is there anything else that's hard for you about completing the social studies worksheet for homework?"

Prepared with the assistance of Dr. Christopher Watson



# Plan B Meeting Check List



Collaborative & Proactive Solutions  
The Next Generation of Solving Problems Collaboratively

## Instructions:

Place a check ✓ for each item in the consistency rating scale. The scale is from 1: not at all consistent to 5: very consistent. Provide comments or note what worked well in the comments column.

Steps in Implementing a Plan B Meeting						Comments/What worked well
Empathy Step	Not at all Consistent		Very Consistent			
	1	2	3	4	5	
1) The Empathy step begins with an introduction, which begins with the words "I've noticed that..." and ends with the words "What's up?" In between, an unsolved problem is inserted.						
2) The unsolved problem begins with the word "difficulty" and refers to the specific expectation the child is having difficulty meeting in kid-friendly language. The unsolved problem is split (rather than clumped) and contains no adult theories, no challenging behaviors, and is as specific as possible.						
3) Sufficient and appropriate use of probing or drilling strategies						
4) Ends when the child has no additional concerns. This is established by summarizing and asking for additional concerns. (Multiple summaries are likely.)						
5) Prioritize concerns.						
<b>Define Adult Concerns Step</b>						
6) The Defining Adult Concern step begins with the words "My concern is. . ." or "The thing is. . ."						
7) Explains how the unsolved problem is affecting the child and/or how the unsolved problem is affecting others.						
8) Avoids referring to the child's behavior.						
9) Is not merely a restatement of the expectation.						
10) Prioritize concerns.						
<b>Invitation Step</b>						
11) The Invitation step begins with the words "I wonder if there is a way?"						
12) Recap the concerns of both parties: "I wonder if there's a way for us to do something about (one party's concerns) and also do something about (other party's concerns)"						
13) Gives the child the first crack at the solution.						
14) Develops solutions as a team effort.						
15) Gauges solutions by the degree to which they are realistic (both parties can do what they are agreeing to) and mutually satisfactory (the solution truly addresses the concerns of both parties).						