

High School Driving Case Learning Experience 25

[Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)

Grade Level Range: Middle School - Adult

To the Teacher:

This learning experience aims to help students “see” how interpersonal conflict resolution skills can be applied to successfully resolve conflicts and to facilitate understanding of those skills. These skills are complex but can be learned and mastered. In addition, prerequisite skills are needed to resolve interpersonal conflicts successfully. They include:

1. Knowing what we are feeling and why we feel that way, what we think and why, and what our needs and values are (Self-Awareness). See the [Self-Awareness Module](#) for learning experiences that facilitate the development of these skills.
2. Being an effective listener and communicating that we are listening, in order to learn and understand others (Active Listening). See [Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#) for learning experiences that facilitate the development of these skills.
3. Asking genuine inquiry questions when we don’t fully understand (Genuine Inquiry Questions). See [Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#) for learning experiences that facilitate the development of these skills.
4. Speaking in ways that will make others want to listen to us, understand us, consider what we have to say, and possibly change their behavior to help meet our needs (I Statements). See [Relationship Skills & Healthy Relationships](#) for learning experiences that facilitate the development of these skills.

Procedure/Directions:

1. Provide students with the background information below regarding the conflict Tyler is having with their mom.

Distribute a copy of the Conflict Resolution Skill Card ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)). Using the talking points below, while students follow along on the skill card, review each step for successfully resolving interpersonal conflicts, noting that these are the steps Tyler will use to resolve this conflict with their mother.

High School Driving Background Information

Tyler and their mother have been fighting over the use of the car on Friday and Saturday evenings for months. The conflict has gone nowhere, leaving them angry, frustrated, and resentful. Tyler learned how to resolve interpersonal conflicts in a health education class at school and decided to use those skills to resolve the conflict. It was very important for Tyler that the conversation go well, so they could use the car on the weekends and mend their relationship with their mother.

Tyler realized that they had contributed to the problem by yelling at their mom and calling her a bad mother, and now realized that saying things like this would only decrease the chances of her wanting to give them the car on weekends. Tyler realized that they had only thought of their own needs, not their mother's, and had been arguing about their position (I want the car) rather than their real needs. Because Tyler was arguing about their position, Mom was doing the same (you cannot use the car), and the conversation was going nowhere.

Tyler spent some time thinking about their real needs, what they wanted, and why it was important. Tyler realized they didn't want to feel so dependent on their parents and friends for rides all the time, and they wanted to be able to reciprocate by giving their friends a ride some of the time. If they had the car, it would be easier to see the person they were dating (Alex) and would not have to wait around for a ride at Alex's house. Tyler realized that they hadn't shared any of this with their Mom (as if their mother were a mind reader), and that if they explained why it was so important, maybe their Mom would be more willing to meet their needs.

Tyler also tried to figure out why their Mom was so resistant to letting them use the car on Friday and Saturday evenings. They remembered their mom saying they needed the car to run errands and that sometimes they might want to see friends, go out to dinner, or go to a movie, but Tyler wasn't listening because they were too busy trying to figure out what to say. Tyler realized they needed to better understand why their Mom didn't want them to use the car and to come up with creative solutions that would meet both of their needs.

2. After students understand the background information regarding this conflict, use the Conflict Resolution Skill Card ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) and take them through each of the skills using the following talking points (see the Conflict Resolution Skills Packet: The Skills Required to Successfully Resolve Interpersonal Conflicts Reading ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) for a complete description of these skills.

Talking Points: The Steps & Skills When Resolving Interpersonal Conflicts

Step # 1: Figure Out What the Conflict Is About, What You Hope to Accomplish by Raising the Issue, and Deciding if Raising the Issue is the Best Way To Achieve Your Goals.

Ask yourself the Step 1 Questions (see the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions: Questions To Consider Before Having a Conflict Conversation ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) before inviting them into the conversation. It would be helpful to write your answers. Whenever there is a conflict, it is usually best for you to raise the issue if possible since it gives you time to think about what you want to do, what you want to say and how, what your and the other person's needs are in the situation, and what creative solutions you see to satisfactorily resolve this conflict. In addition, writing your answers will help you avoid many of the mistakes we make during conflict conversations.

Skill # 1: Invite Them Into A Conversation

It is advisable to initiate the conversation whenever possible because you can enter it prepared. You can answer the Step 1 Questions and think about how to avoid saying or doing things that will make them feel defensive, threatened, and/or attacked. You can also determine when would be a good time to have the conversation that is best for both of you. Select a time when you think neither of you will be stressed, both of you are under no time constraints, and there are no distractions. Find a quiet place to have a conversation.

If they are aware of the conflict, especially if it is ongoing, it may be most effective to ask them to share their perspective first. By asking them to share their perspective and needs first, and by listening for understanding, asking genuine inquiry questions, and considering what they are saying, you communicate that you are interested in their perspective and needs and that you take this situation and them seriously. As a result, they will probably be more willing to listen to you, try to understand you, consider what you have to say, and possibly change their behavior to help you meet your needs.

Skill # 2: Active Listening: Whenever They Are Speaking, Listen With Curiosity: Listen/Paraphrase/Summarize to Make Sure You Understand and to Communicate that You Understand and are Considering Their Perspective and Needs.

It is impossible to work through misunderstandings and conflicts in relationships without both individuals understanding each other and their needs. We do this by listening. We want others to listen to us, understand us, consider what we are saying, and possibly change their behavior to help us meet our needs. However, if we don't listen to them, try to understand them, consider what they are saying, and consider changing our behavior to help them meet their needs, they will not listen to us, try to understand us, consider what we are saying, and possibly change their behavior. Not only is it essential to listen, but we must also communicate that we are listening and genuinely interested in understanding them. We do this by actively listening/paraphrasing/summarizing with curiosity.

Skill # 3: When You Don't Understand or Need More Information, Ask Genuine Inquiry Questions.

When we don't understand, understand completely, are confused, or need more information, it is important to ask genuine inquiry questions to help us understand. By asking genuine inquiry questions and considering what they are saying, you are communicating to them that you are interested in their perspective and needs, and taking this situation and them seriously. As a result, they will take you and your needs seriously. In addition, you need to understand them to arrive at creative solutions that will meet both of your needs.

When Listening & Asking Genuine Inquiry Questions, Avoid:

- Asking a question disguised as a statement. For example: "You aren't going to.... are you?"
- Asking a question that tries to cross-examine them or convince them. For example: "You seem to think...but surely you'd agree that you..."
- Saying "but". Saying "but" is not inquiry but analysis, and contradicting what they are saying. For example: "I understand that you...but..."
- Saying "I understand". You may not understand them, and saying this may cut them off. You demonstrate understanding by paraphrasing and summarizing.
- Bring your perspective and needs into the conversation until you fully understand them and they initially have nothing more to say.

What is most important is that you communicate that you are listening with curiosity, and really want to understand what they are saying, and that you are considering what they are saying, and that the relationship is very important to you.

Skill # 4: When You Think They Have Fully Explained Their Perspective/Concerns/ Needs and You Fully Understand, Summarize:

When we summarize with a question in our voices, we communicate that we have listened, understand them, consider what they are saying, and take them, their needs, and the situation seriously.

Skill # 5: When Speaking Use "I Statements"

To resolve conflicts successfully, it is essential that we communicate our feelings and needs effectively. "I Statements" clearly communicate what we are feeling and our needs (and why) in a nonjudgmental way that will make it easier for others to want to listen to us, try to understand us, suspend their reaction, consider what we are saying, and possibly change their behavior to help us meet our needs.

Skill # 6: If Both of You Have Different Needs, Then You Both Must Collaborate, Negotiate, and Problem Solve to Invent Solutions That Meet Each Other's Most Important Needs. State What is Most Important to You and What You are Willing to Do and/or Give Up. Negotiate for Needs, Not Positions.

When problem-solving, negotiate for needs. People often cannot resolve conflicts because they both focus on their positions instead of their needs. The difference between the two is important. A position is the stand we take in an argument or negotiation. "I want this," "I demand that," or "I'm not doing that." Needs are what we truly want, desire, or truly need. An example of position versus needs is a parent and their adolescent daughter fighting over whether the daughter can go to a party. The parents' position is that they cannot go because they don't know the new friend or their parents. The daughter's position is that she wants to go to the party. If they focus only on their respective positions, their real needs are covered up, and the daughter will not go to the party because demanding things from parents usually doesn't work. It is much more effective to negotiate and problem-solve over each other's needs versus their positions. In this situation, the parent's needs are their daughter's safety. If the daughter has a conflict conversation with her parent and shares why this party is so important to her and helps the parent identify their needs behind the position (her safety) they may be able to jointly brainstorm and find a solution that meets both of their needs: the daughter is allowed to go to the party but certain conditions must be met beforehand and during the party so that the parents are confident she will be safe.

Skill # 7: If They Do Not Initially Agree: Continue to Collaborate, Negotiate, and Problem Solve Together.

Throughout This Process, Continue To:

- Paraphrase and Summarize
- Ask Genuine Inquiry Questions
- Use "I Statements Whenever You Speak
- Collaborate, Negotiate, and Problem-Solve Together
- Be Sure to Avoid The Mistakes Outlined in Skill # 3 when asking genuine inquiry questions.

Skill # 8: Once You Reach an Agreement, Summarize What You Both Agreed To

It is essential to summarize what you both agreed to so there is no confusion in the future. Failure to summarize and check for agreement can create problems down the road. It is also essential that you live up to whatever you agree to.

Skill # 9: What To Do If You Cannot Reach an Agreement

If you cannot reach a resolution that meets both of your needs and there is no compromising, it is probably time to end the conversation and walk away. Often, conflicts cannot be resolved during a single conversation. You and/or the other person may need a break to think about what has been proposed. Even if someone does not agree with your solutions, they may consider them later and realize that you have a good point. You can decide to come back to the discussion at a later date. You may even decide on a day and time. It is important that you leave the relationship in a good place, leave the door open for future negotiation, and do not storm out. Leaving on a positive note will make it easier to continue the discussion and find a resolution that is satisfying to both of you, and maintain the quality of the relationship. Before you meet again, it may be helpful to address the other person's needs in this situation, because they might see that you are serious about meeting them and reconsider.

Skill # 10: Redirecting Conversations When Feeling Defensive, Threatened, and/or Attacked

It is suggested that this discussion be conducted at the end of the lesson (# 21). (See the [Conflict Resolution Skills Packet: The Skills Required to Successfully Resolve Interpersonal Conflicts Reading \(Conflict Resolution Skills Module\)](#) and the [Redirecting Conversations When Feeling Defensive, Threatened, or Attacked Skill Card \(Conflict Resolution Skills Module\)](#) for a complete description of what to do and say if you feel defensive, threatened, and/or attacked.

After you have discussed all of the skills, summarize the discussion by saying: You Have Been Successful in Resolving the Conflict If:

- You and the other person are satisfied with the outcome.
- The relationship is stronger, and you and the other person are better able to interact or work together.
- You and the other person like and trust each other more.
- You and the other person improved your ability to resolve future conflicts with each other.

3. End the discussion by pointing out that there is no more complex skill than being able to successfully resolve interpersonal conflicts, in part because it requires being skillful in so many other skills, including active listening, asking genuine inquiry questions, “I Statements”, summarizing, negotiating, and mutual problem-solving. Mastering the ability to resolve interpersonal conflicts successfully takes time and practice, and like any new social skill, most people go through the following stages before they become proficient.
 - Feeling self-conscious and awkward.
 - Feelings of phoniness while using it. “This isn’t me”.
 - Skilled but mechanical.
 - It becomes automatic, and we don’t even know we are doing it. We use it effectively. We have internalized it

4. After students understand the skills and the background information regarding this High School Driving Conflict, distribute and have students (individually or in groups of 3) complete the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions: Questions To Consider Before Having a Conflict Conversation ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) from Tyler’s perspective. Discuss their responses.

5. Next, role-play the High School Driving Case Role Play below in front of the class with one of your students (if possible). It will be helpful to ask a student a class or two beforehand if they are willing to role-play the situation with you, and to provide them with a copy of the conflict so they may prepare. It would be helpful if you selected someone who has experience acting. If you cannot role-play with a student, you can read Tyler’s and their mother’s parts. In this case, displaying or distributing a copy of the case to all students may be helpful.

6. Return to their answers to the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions and ask them to elaborate on the following questions now that they have more information about the conflict:
 - What are the mother’s interests—that is, her true needs, wants, hopes, and fears regarding this situation? (versus her position)? What does she want to happen?
 - What creative solutions does Tyler identify that meet their own true interests and needs, as well as their mother’s?

7. Return to the case and ask the following questions:
 - How does the mother feel about the conflict at the beginning of the conversation?
She seems frustrated that Tyler would even bring it up again after they have had the conversation, and she feels annoyed because she believes her authority is being questioned.
 - What is the mother’s position at the beginning of the conversation?
Her position is clear: She does not want Tyler to use the car and does not want to talk about it. When she agreed to talk, she said talking about it would not do any good.

8. What did Tyler do and say to overcome their mother's feelings of frustration and her position that they could not use the car?

Tyler didn't lose their temper and remained very calm.

Tyler told their mother, "It is really important to me," and I'd like to explain to you why this is so important to me, and I'd like to hear your perspective." When the mother still didn't want to talk about it Tyler said: I guess it does sound a little like I am questioning your authority. I don't mean to sound that way, because I know that whatever you say goes. I'm just trying to understand some of your concerns about my driving on Friday and Saturday nights, and I'd like you to hear some of my interests too. Maybe we can work something out that will be good for both of us."

Tyler listened and summarized their mother's needs, thus communicating to her that they understood her needs.

Tyler also acknowledged and deferred to her authority.

Tyler determined beforehand (using the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions) what their true interests and needs were and presented them in a calm, rational, and well-thought-out way using "I Statements".

9. Even after Tyler shared their feelings and needs in a calm, rational, and well-thought-out way, their mother kept to her position: ("I just don't like the idea.") How did Tyler respond that helped their mother listen to them instead of sticking to her position?

In response to their mother saying that she didn't like the idea (which doesn't explain why), Tyler responded that they wanted to understand why she didn't think it was a good idea, thus communicating to their mother that they were taking her seriously and wanted to truly understand her needs (asked a genuine inquiry question).

10. When Tyler's mother responded, "Well, for one thing, sometimes we need the car on Friday and Saturdays for errands," how did Tyler respond?

Tyler again asked a genuine inquiry question: "What kind of errands?"

11. When Tyler's mother responded: Groceries, things like that", what did Tyler do?

Tyler came up with a solution that would meet both of their needs: "Well, maybe I could do some of those errands. That would be good for both of us. I could use the car, and you wouldn't have to do as many errands.

12. When Tyler's mom shared another concern (their lack of experience driving at night) what did Tyler do?

Tyler came up with a solution that would meet both of their needs. "Maybe, in the next few days, when you need errands done, we can both go, and I'll drive. That way, I'll get some night driving experience with you in the car. Once you've seen that I'm a good driver at night, you won't worry as much."

13. Tyler's mother continued to raise concerns including wasting gas, keeping the car clean, and his overall lack of responsibility. How did Tyler respond when their mom said: "I don't know. Driving is a big responsibility. You're responsible for your life and your friends' lives. And I don't want you taking pointless trips and wasting gas. And your friends are liable to leave the car a mess."

Tyler responded by actively listening/summarizing what she said: "So you're concerned about whether I'm responsible enough. And you are worried about gas and the condition of the car?" Tyler then asked if there was anything else. Tyler communicated that they wanted to understand their mother's concerns and needs. And then Tyler offered solutions to meet their mother's needs: "I'll pay for any gas I use, and if I bring the car back in bad condition, I'll pay to get it washed"

14. Tyler's mother then raised her concern about their lack of responsibility: "But what about my feelings that you aren't always responsible? At this point, it would have been easy for Tyler to feel frustrated and defensive, but what did they say instead of displaying any frustration and responding defensively ("I am too responsible")?"

Tyler responded by actively listening and summarizing what their mother said and by asking genuine inquiry questions:

"So, you don't think I am responsible?"

"In what ways would you like me to be more responsible?"

"So, you are frustrated that I don't always do my chores in a timely manner and you would like me to do a better job of keeping my room clean?"

Tyler then decided to demonstrate responsibility and meet their mom's needs by agreeing to keep their room picked up, empty the trash, and recycle before it gets full.

15. Point out that another thing that Tyler did was to ask:

"Is there anything else you are concerned about?" By asking this genuine inquiry question, Tyler made sure all the concerns and needs were on the table so they could be addressed. By doing so, Tyler continually communicated that they were taking their mother's concerns and needs seriously, allowing them to develop creative solutions that met both of their needs.

16. Ask and discuss:

Are Tyler's mother's needs and concerns legitimate parent needs and concerns?

"Is it unreasonable for Tyler's mother to expect them to do everything they agreed to do to use the car on the weekend nights?"

17. What does Tyler do after Tyler's mother agrees ("Okay. We will give it a try")?

Tyler summarizes everything that was agreed to so there is no confusion later on:

Tyler: "Okay, so let me make sure I understand what we have agreed to. I will keep my room picked up and empty the trash and recycling bin before they get full. I will pay for all gas I use and keep the car clean; if I don't, I will pay to have it washed. When you need to run errands in the next few days, we can both go, and I'll drive to get some nighttime driving experience. Once you are satisfied that I am responsible and can drive at night, you will allow me to use the car on Friday nights when you aren't using it."

Mom: "Yes. We will give it a try. But if you go back on anything we have agreed to, the deal is off."

- Tyler then leaves the conversation on a positive note by sharing how he feels (appreciation) for how she listened and for allowing them to show her that they are responsible.

Tyler: "It's a deal, Mom. I appreciate you listening to my concerns and allowing me to show you that I am responsible. I won't let you down."

- It will be essential that Tyler do everything they agreed to or the deal is off. In addition, future attempts to negotiate for what they need will be extremely difficult if they do not live up to their agreements.

18. Point out that this was a successful win/win resolution.

- Tyler and their mom are satisfied with the outcome.
- Their relationship is stronger and they are better able to interact and work with each other.
- Tyler and their mother probably like and trust each other more.
- Tyler and their mother improved their ability to resolve future conflicts with each other.

19. Point out that this was a successful win/win resolution because Tyler was very skillful at using all the skills, more so than most people who are beginning to use the skills. Tyler's approach and attitude also contributed to the success. They communicated that they were genuinely interested (by summarizing/paraphrasing and asking genuine inquiry questions) and wanted to understand their mother's perspective, concerns, and needs. They tried to address her concerns and meet both of their needs, which was demonstrated by collaborating/negotiating/problem-solving. Their skill, approach, and attitude made it easier for their mother to want to listen to them, understand them, consider what they were asking, and eventually change her behavior.
20. Now review Skill # 10: Redirecting Conversations When Feeling Defensive, Threatened, and/or Attacked ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)).

Skill # 11: Redirecting Conversations When Feeling Defensive, Threatened, and/or Attacked

- Don't respond immediately. Take several deep breaths. Don't attack back.
- Focus on their feelings and what they are upset about, not the accusations or put-downs. Remember: anger is usually a secondary feeling (they may feel disappointed or hurt) and their feelings are legitimate even if their accusations and judgments are not. Translate their attacks into legitimate concerns.
- Summarize and ask inquiry questions – it slows things down. Say: *"So, you are angry at me because...?" "You think I...?" "What led you to that conclusion?"*
- If you need to take a break. Say: *"I am feeling attacked. I need to take a break. I want to listen to what you are saying, understand it, and consider what you are saying, but I am having trouble listening now. Can we schedule a time when we can continue this conversation?"*
- If you have done something to hurt them, apologize: *"I am sorry for...!"*

Point out that when Tyler's mother raised her concern about Tyler's lack of responsibility (*"But what about my feelings that you aren't always responsible?"*) Tyler may have felt frustrated and defensive, but instead of displaying any frustration and responding defensively ("I am responsible"), Tyler responded by actively listening and summarizing what their mother said and by asking genuine inquiry questions:

"So, you don't think I am responsible?"

"In what ways would you like me to be more responsible?"

"So, you are frustrated that I don't always do my chores on time and you would like me to do a better job of keeping my room clean?"

By actively listening and asking a genuine inquiry question, he kept the collaboration/negotiation/joint problem-solving going and was able to resolve the conflict successfully.

See the [Conflict Resolution Skills Packet: The Skills Required to Successfully Resolve Interpersonal Conflicts Packet](#) ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) and the [Redirecting Conversations When Feeling Defensive, Threatened, or Attacked Skill Card](#) (([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) for a complete description of what to do and say if you:

- feel defensive, threatened, and/or attacked,
- feel frustrated or disappointed because you believe the other person is not acting in good faith, not listening to you, and/or not considering your needs, and
- what to say if you are wrong or have said or done anything to hurt the other person.

21. Next, have students practice the skills using the *High School Driving Case. Role-Play* below. Even though they have heard the correct responses, it will still allow them to use the skills before going on to new examples. Get students into small groups and have them develop answers to the following questions. After giving them time to develop their answers, randomly call on students to role-play their responses as if you are the parent. Depending on their responses, you can summarize what they say or ask follow-up questions that will allow you to continue to role-play the situation with them beyond their initial response.

- A. How would you invite your parent into this conversation if you were Tyler?
- B. After inviting them into the conversation, what would you say if your parent responded: “If you are going to ask to borrow the car, the answer is no.”
- C. What would you say if your parent responded: “We have talked about this and the answer is no. I don’t like you questioning my authority.”
- D. What would you say if your parent reluctantly agreed to talk with you?
- E. After you share why it is important for you to be able to use the car on Friday and Saturday evenings, your parent says, “We only have one car, and sometimes we need the car on Friday and Saturday nights”. How would you respond?
- F. How would you respond if your parent said that they are concerned about your driving at night?
- G. How would you respond if your parent said: “Driving is a big responsibility. You’re responsible for your life and your friends’ lives?”.
- H. How would you respond if your parent said that driving is a big responsibility and they don’t think you are always responsible?
- I. How would you respond if your parent agreed to let you use the car on Friday and Saturday evenings when they do not need it but only if you keep your room picked up, empty the trash and recycling before it gets full, pay for gas, and if they are satisfied you can drive safely at night?

- J. How do you feel that your parent has finally agreed to let you use the car on Friday and Saturday evenings? How do you communicate that to them?

Role Playing The High School Driving Case

Materials/Readings/Skill Cards Needed For This Learning Experience

1. Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
2. Conflict Resolution Skill Card (([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
3. Conflict Resolution Skills Observation Form ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
4. Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
5. In addition, see the *Processing: Ensuring That Students Receive Feedback, Reflect On & Analyze What They Did Well & What They Need to Do To Improve* in How To Teach SES in the [How To Teach Social-Emotional Skills Module](#) for additional information about the importance of using student observers and coaches and the importance of processing after role playing.

Procedure/Directions For Role Playing, Coaching, Observing, & Giving Feedback

1. Distribute copies of the Conflict Resolution Observation Form ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)) and the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#)).
2. Review the skills and demonstrate how to use them.
3. Explain that they will be role-playing and have the opportunity to role-play as well as coach, observe, and give feedback on what they observed.
4. Review the process for completing the observation form and the process for giving feedback (on the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card). Demonstrate how to give feedback.
5. Explain that they will role-play the situation in small groups using coaches and observers. Although they have already seen the situation role-played successfully and answered questions about what contributed to Tyler's success, having them role-play it will allow them to practice conflict resolution, role-playing, coaching, observing, and giving feedback before they use these skills in the recommended follow-up learning situations.
6. Before beginning the role-play, call on students to share Tyler's and their mother's real needs and interests (questions #6 & 10 from the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions).
7. Asked for volunteers to share their scripted responses (questions # 21-24 from the Conflict Resolution Step 1 Questions).

8. Divide the class into groups of 4. One person will role-play Tyler; a second student will role-play Tyler's mother; the 3rd person will observe and complete the Observation Form; and the 4th person will coach the person role-playing if and only if they get stuck. The coach's primary role is to note what worked well, what didn't, and what, if anything, they would have done differently.
9. Each group member will have the opportunity to play the roles of Tyler, their mother, observer, and coach.
10. All students who are role-playing should use their copy of the Conflict Resolution Skill Card. Tyler; a second student will role-play Tyler's mother; the 3rd person will observe and complete the Observation Form; and the 4th person will coach the person role-playing to help them successfully use the skills.
11. Remind the groups that, when they are role-playing Tyler's mother, they should agree to a solution only if Tyler suggests creative solutions that meet both their true interests and needs.
12. The coaches are only to make suggestions if either Tyler or their mother gets stuck. Their primary role is to note what worked well, what didn't, and what they would do differently in both roles.
13. The observer completes the Observation Form for both Tyler and their mom.
14. After each role-play, the observer provides feedback using the process outlined on the Observing & Giving Feedback Skill Card, including asking Tyler and their mom what they did well and what they need to do better next time.
15. Next, they are to switch roles: Tyler role-plays their mom, and mom role-plays Tyler; the observer and coach switch roles.
16. After each role-play, repeat the process: the observer provides feedback and asks both Tyler and their mom what they did well and what they need to do to improve.
17. While small groups are role-playing, you can circulate to gather information about students' competency. When walking around, you can intervene to improve effectiveness, correct misunderstandings and misconceptions about skill use, and reinforce appropriate, competent use of the skills. You will need to decide whether to intervene with a specific group or wait and process with the entire class. The information you gather will help you determine whether you need to reteach and role-play the skill or whether a simple reminder will suffice.

18. After each group has completed all the role plays, bring the whole class back to process.
Questions include:

- What skills did you use effectively and what skills do you need to get better at or do more consistently?
- Which skills were easiest and why?
- What skills were the most difficult and why?
- What skills do they think will be easiest to use in real life, and why
- What skills will you have the most difficulty with when you use them in real life and why?
- What was it like to give feedback?
- What was it like to receive feedback?
- Was it easier or more challenging to give feedback or receive it? Why?
- What would make it easier to receive feedback?
- What would make it easier to give feedback?

Follow-Up Activities

Giving students as much practice using these skills as possible is essential. The following learning experiences provide students with additional practice:

1. High School Party Case Learning Experience ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
2. Keeping the Room Clean Case Learning Experience ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
3. Additional Conflict Resolution Role-Playing Cases Learning Experiences ([Conflict Resolution Skills Module](#))
4. The Parent Conflict Resolution Project ([Parent Conflict Resolution Project Module](#)) allows students to practice these skills in a real-life situation with a parent.

High School Driving Case Role Play 25

Conflict Resolution Skills Module

High School Driving Background Information

Tyler and their mom have been fighting over the use of the car for months. The conflict has gone nowhere, leaving both of them angry, frustrated, and resentful. Tyler learned interpersonal conflict resolution skills in his health education class and decided to use them to try to resolve the conflict with their mom. It was very important for Tyler that the conversation go well, so they could get the use of the car and mend their relationship with their mother.

Tyler: “Mom, I want to talk with you about using the car. I know this has been a source of conflict between us. I would like to come to a resolution that meets both of our needs so that we can stop fighting about it. Is now a good time for you?”

Mom: “If you are going to ask to borrow the car, the answer is no.”

Tyler: “Mom, I haven’t even asked yet. It is really important to me. I want to explain to you why this is so important to me and I’d like to hear your perspective.”

Mom: “You don’t have to ask. You can’t borrow it.”

Tyler: “I just want to talk with you about ways for me to get around on Friday and Saturday nights.

Mom: “You can just walk. And I don’t like you questioning my authority.”

Tyler: “I guess it does sound a little like I am questioning your authority. I don’t mean to sound that way, because I know that whatever you say goes. I’m just trying to understand some of your concerns about my driving on Friday and Saturday nights, and I’d like you to hear some of my interests, too. Maybe we can work something out that will be good for both of us.”

Mom: “That’s impossible! We’ve only got one car.”

Tyler: “Well, it’s worth at least talking about. Maybe we’ll come up with something. May we go into the den and talk about it?”

Mom: “It won’t do any good, but I guess so.”

Tyler: “The reason I don’t want to always have to walk is that I’d like to be able to give my friends rides sometimes. Usually, they give me a ride, and I don’t like to feel too dependent on them or you and Dad. Last Friday, Jordan picked me up and took me over to Alex’s house, but then I had to wait an hour out in front of (Alex’s) house for Jordan to pick me up to take me back home. It’s not the worst thing in the world, but that’s how I feel. I’d like to hear some of your interests and concerns also.

Mom: “So let me see if I understand. You need to get rides from your friends, and that makes you feel too dependent on them, and you’d like to be able to return the favor and give them rides sometimes?”

Tyler: “Yes.”

Mom: “I just don’t like the idea”.

Tyler: “That’s what I want to understand. I know you don’t like the idea and I’m trying to learn why.”

Mom: “Well, for one thing, sometimes we need the car on Fridays and Saturdays for errands.

Tyler: “What kind of errands?”

Mom: “Groceries, things like that.

Tyler: “Well, maybe I could do some of those errands. That would be good for both of us. I could use the car, and you’d get your errands done more easily.

Mom: “That would be nice actually. It would make weekend evenings more relaxing. But it’s not just the errands. Frankly, I’m a little concerned about your driving around at night.

Tyler: “You’re concerned about my driving at night?”

Mom: “Yes, you haven’t had any nighttime driving experience and it worries me.”

Tyler: “Well, it’s something I’m concerned about too. Maybe in the next few days, when you need errands done, we can both go, and I’ll drive. That way, I’ll get some night driving experience with you in the car. You won’t worry as much once you’ve seen that I’m a good driver at night.

Mom: “That makes sense. But we still need the car sometimes on Friday nights when we want to visit friends, go out to eat, or go to a movie.

Tyler: “Of course, on those nights you get the car. I'll be all set if I have it a couple of Fridays and Saturdays a month and my friends can get their cars sometimes.

Mom: “I don't know. Driving is a big responsibility. You're responsible for your life and your friends' lives. And I don't want you taking pointless trips and wasting gas. And your friends are liable to leave the car a mess.

Tyler: “So you're concerned about whether I'm responsible enough. And you are worried about gas and the condition of the car?”

Mom: “Yes.”

Tyler: “Is there anything else you are concerned about?”

Mom: “Isn't that enough?”

Tyler: “How about this: I'll pay for any gas I use, and if I bring the car back in bad condition, I'll pay to get it washed?”

Mom: “That sounds fair. But what about my feelings that you aren't always responsible?”

Tyler: “So you don't think I am responsible?”

Mom: “No, I don't think you are.”

Tyler: “In what ways would you like me to be more responsible?”

Mom: “I talked to you about picking up your room. It's your responsibility to take the trash and recycling out, and you don't always do that.”

Tyler: “So you are frustrated that I don't always do my chores in a timely manner, and you would like me to do a better job of keeping my room clean?”

Mom: “Yes.”

Tyler: “If it is important to you, I will keep my room picked up, and I promise the trash and recycling bins will be emptied before they get full.

Mom: “But in the past, you have just thrown things everywhere around your room.

Tyler: “That's true, but that is in the past. I am going to be more responsible from now on.”

Mom: “So, you will keep your room picked up and empty the trash and recycling before it gets full. So, I'll never have to empty the trash or recycling bin because they are full and I can't get anything else in them?”

Tyler: “Yes.”

Mom: “Okay. We will give it a try.”

Tyler: “Okay, so let me make sure I understand what we have agreed to. I will keep my room picked up, empty the trash, and the recycle bin before they get full. I will pay for all the gas I use and keep the car clean; if I don’t, I will pay to have it washed. When you need errands done in the next few days, we can both go, and I’ll drive to get nighttime driving experience. Once you are satisfied that I am responsible and can drive at night, you will allow me to use the car on Friday nights when you aren’t using it.”

Mom: “Yes. We will give it a try. But if you go back on anything we have agreed to, the deal is off.”

Tyler: “It’s a deal, Mom. I appreciate you listening to my concerns and allowing me to show you that I am responsible. I won’t let you down.”

Mom: “Okay. I hope it works.

This case is modified from a case in *Working It Out: A Handbook on Negotiation for High School Students*. Roger Fisher & Douglas Stone, The Harvard Negotiation Project.