



# METS NEWS

## Parent Edition

July 2000, Volume 6, Issue 2

### Solving Problems For Your Children

Adapted with permission from Abnaki Leader Update

Parents don't want their children to fail, so we step in to help them out, sometimes way too early for their own good. The latest research shows that kids who are allowed to develop their own problem-solving abilities benefit in surprising ways. The children are happier and don't whine and complain as much as other kids because they know they have the power and tools to turn situations around on their own.

They feel great about themselves because being able to solve problems boosts their self-confidence. Children who are problem-solvers are budding leaders. A child who learns to solve small problems today will have the know-how to tackle bigger ones tomorrow.

Here are some ideas to help your child become problem-solvers:

✍ Count to ten or however long it takes you to remember not to jump in and solve problems for your child. If you always jump in, the kids may feel that somebody else is always going to be there to solve problems for them.

✍ Know the magic question to ask. "What are you going to do about it?" When you ask kids this question you are communicating to them "I believe you can solve your own problems. You are bright and capable, and I have faith in you."

✍ Give kids some "bad" ideas when they're stuck for a solution. Giving them ideas you know they won't like will prompt them to brainstorm. That way you don't risk solving the problem for them but you get them thinking of alternatives.

✍ Accept their decisions – good or bad. Sometimes kids won't choose the best solutions or solve problems successfully, but don't worry. Even when they mess up trying to solve problems, it is good for them. How? By living with the consequences of their decisions they learn valuable lessons from their mistakes. And that will ultimately make them even better problem-solvers for life.

### Must See Web Sites!

#### *Financial Aid*

[www.finaid.org/](http://www.finaid.org/)

The best place to start your search for financial aid whether it be information on types of aid or scholarships. Best place for links to other good sites.

#### *Budget and Money Management*

[www.stretcher.com](http://www.stretcher.com)

Can't figure out how to go to school and still have money to live on? This site gives dollar saving ideas on everything. Live better for less!

#### *Consumer Protection*

[www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer.htm](http://www.ftc.gov/ftc/consumer.htm)

Having trouble with collections, debt management or other credit related issues? This site gives all the ins and outs of how to cope.

This publication is dedicated to Rebecca Salsbury, The Traveler. Rebecca's two year tenure at METS was a delightful experience for all her coworkers. She made us stretch and grow at every encounter.

To quote Oliver Wendell Holmes "A mind, once stretched by an idea, never regains it's original dimension."

Rebecca, we will never be the same. Thank you for the database and everything else you brought to the program.



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## What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up?

By Mike Farr, The JIST of IT, April 2000

When we were kids, people would often ask “What do you want to be when you grow up?” If you think about it, this was our first experience in career self-assessment and planning. My response was “a doctor” since that seemed like a good job to me as a kid.

Oddly enough I never actually became a doctor of the medical variety – though I did waste 2.5 years of perfectly good college time in pre-Med. You see, no one made it clear to me that to become a doctor, you had to devote yourself totally to that pursuit for many years, 60 to 80 hours a week. I just didn’t want to be a doctor badly enough, it turned out.

In retrospect, the question that SHOULD have been asked of me as a child was, “What do you want to do NEXT, careerwise?” At one point my answer was “doctor,” but at another, it was “something else.” Both answers were equally valid. The first kept me in college for a few years and the second allowed me to explore the unknown.

Admittedly, the “What do you want to do next?” question is shorter term. But it leads to a more concrete response that is easier to act on. It also has important advantages over the more traditional “...rest of you life” career decision-making question.

Asking what you want to do next allows you to be more creative and less rigid, more likely to follow your heart.

If you know you can change your mind, it frees you up to try things. You know you can always get practical later, can quit or fail, and get back up to try again.

It’s more likely to get you started in a good direction. Too many people put off things like going to college because the long-term goal seems so unachievable. Instead, take a course just for the heck of it, and see where it goes. You may find yourself a doctor before you know it!

P.S. As a practical matter, you can ask the “next” question to yourself or anyone exploring career, education, and training of life options. Try it. Doing so will often unleash creative thinking and unblock the many reasons for not doing what we really want to do with our careers and our lives.

### Maine Educational Talent Search

[www.ume.maine.edu/~mets](http://www.ume.maine.edu/~mets)

A visit often site for all METS students and families.

This site links to agencies, METS publications, and photos of METS students on trips!

The Maine Educational Talent Search Program is one of over 300 Talent Search Programs located throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. Operating in the State of Maine since 1977, the METS program will serve approximately 950 individuals in their educational and career-planning endeavors during 2000. You may leave a message for METS project staff at 1-800-540-0493.

Talent Search Programs are funded through the U.S. Department of Education. The grant award for 1999-2000 is \$401,153. The Department of Education is also the funding source for Educational Opportunity Centers, Upward Bound, Student Support Services, and McNair Scholars Programs. These TRIO programs all target low-income, first-generation college youth and adults.

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