

# A BRILLIANT ME IN ACTION ONE PAGE GUIDE TO...

## COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING (CPS)\*

\*This guide refers to the Think:Kids Approach (Dr Stuart Ablon) which is based on Collaborative Proactive Solutions (Lives in the Balance Approach) of Dr Ross Greene (the originator of CPS). They fell out over IP rights **BUT both approaches share the same core philosophy and method.**

The core belief behind CPS is **'Kids do well if they can'**. When they struggle it is usually because:

- Lagging skills (not lack of motivation)
- Unsolved problems (not deliberate defiance)

### WHAT?

It's about recognising that the child **'can't'** rather than **'won't'**

CPS aims to shift focus from behaviour (control, consequences) to understanding what's needed and finding ways for adults & children to work together to strengthen skills and problem solve. This process is used with recurring and predictable issues the child faces (e.g. coping with transitions / change) and is a structured conversation:

**Step 1** - The adult tries to understand what's happening for the child

**Step 2** - The adult explains their worry about what is happening

**Step 3** - The adult and child think of a plan to try and solve it together

### WHY?

#### Research shows that CPS:

- Reduces challenging behaviour
- Builds regulation and flexibility
- Improves adult-child relationships
- Develops executive functioning
- Increases pupil voice and agency

#### CPS:

- Is trauma-informed
- Builds regulation and flexibility
- Improves adult-child relationships
- Develops executive functioning
- Increases pupil voice and agency

### IN PRIMARY SEL?

#### CPS strongly supports SEL in the classroom:

- **Self-awareness** – child reflects on difficulty
- **Self-management** – builds regulation and flexibility
- **Social awareness** – considers adult perspective
- **Relationship skills** – collaborative dialogue
- **Responsible decision making** – shared problem solving leading to positive choices

### FIND OUT MORE

#### Collaborative Problem Solving (Stuart Ablon)

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

Ablon, S. 'Changeable' (2018)

#### Collaborative Proactive Solutions (Ross Greene)

<https://livesinthebalance.org>

Greene, R.W. 'Lost at School' (2014)

### HOW CASEL AND THINK:KIDS CPS OVERLAP



[See THINK:KIDS Thinking Skills Guide](#)

### SEE ALSO

- Executive Functioning
- Bruce Perry's 3Rs
- Neuroplasticity