

Disagreeing Without Making Things Worse

You can disagree and still treat someone with care. This sheet helps you explain your view and hear theirs. Use it for a safe, everyday disagreement. Write, draw, speak, or pause whenever needed.

Example: Two children want different games. One wants quiet time; the other wants to run around. They can listen, suggest taking turns, or choose separate activities.

1. What is our disagreement about?

Choose one issue, not everything that has ever gone wrong.

2. What matters to me? What do I need?

Examples: a turn, quiet, fairness, a choice, or time to finish.

3. How do I notice I need a pause?

Maybe my voice gets louder, my hands tighten, or I stop listening.

4. My pause plan: words, place, and return time

"I need a short break. Can we talk again at ___?" Ask an adult for help if needed.

If someone threatens, hurts or scares you, get to safety and tell a trusted adult. You do not have to negotiate with someone who is harming you.

Listen, explain, and choose a next step

Practise with a trusted adult first. Both people should have space to talk. Listening does not mean agreeing, and you do not have to share private information.

1. My clear message and one request

"When ___ happened, I felt ___. I would like ___. Could we ___?"

2. What I heard the other person say

"You want ___ because ___. Did I understand?" Let them correct you.

3. Two fair options we could consider

Choose together, take turns, do different things, or ask an adult to help.

4. Our next step, and what happened when we tried it

When will we review? If we still disagree, who can help us?

Success can mean speaking clearly, listening, or asking for help. You do not have to win, agree, or solve everything in one conversation.

Coach guide and references

Purpose and setup. For roughly ages 8-12, adapted to the child's development and needs. Allow 10-15 minutes per activity page, plus a short review later. These timings and age ranges are design choices. No scoring or assessment is required. Obtain caregiver consent where needed and the child's willing participation.

Facilitation. Rehearse with a low-stakes example before using a real conflict. Help children name needs without deciding who is "the difficult one." Model a calm pause and a reliable return. Give each child a turn; offer writing or drawing instead of speech. Adults must manage their own behaviour. Do not insist on eye contact, emotional disclosure, agreement or compromise about safety. Bullying and power imbalances require adult action, not equal-blame mediation.

Access and privacy. Offer drawing, talking, a scribe, extra processing time or a quiet space. Use fictional examples if preferred. Participation is voluntary. Do not display completed sheets or demand sensitive details. Explain limits of confidentiality and follow local safeguarding procedures.

Research basis and limits. UNICEF advises calm guidance and taking a pause when adults are stressed [1]. WHO recommends parenting interventions that aim to improve parent-child relationships and reduce harsh parenting [2]. These are broader parenting approaches, not trials of this pause-and-conversation worksheet. The sequence here is an original practice aid, with no guaranteed effect on conflict.

Educational note. Original coaching material for everyday skills, not medical advice, diagnosis, psychological treatment or a clinical assessment. These worksheets have not been clinically validated. Seek qualified help for persistent distress or difficulties affecting daily life. Immediate danger requires urgent local help.

Related resource. [BeyondPsychub worksheet collection](#) | [Small-actions confidence worksheet](#)

References

1. UNICEF. How to discipline your child the smart and healthy way. Accessed 12 September 2026. [Read source](#)
2. WHO (2023). Guidelines on parenting interventions to prevent maltreatment and enhance parent-child relationships with children aged 0-17 years. [Read source](#)