**FIX THE PROBLEM!**

A Social and Emotional Problem Solving Game by Joel Shaul, LCSW

The *Fix My Problem* kit is designed to help children on the autism spectrum to explore some social and emotional issues by having them try to “fix” the problems of 40 troubled young people. I designed the materials for children with ASD’s but they will work with other children as well if you sort through and use various characters and narratives selectively.

The kit contains these components for you to print out, cut out or display on your computer:

1. **40 cards** depicting young people with various problems
2. **The same 40 cards on PowerPoint file and PDF in case you prefer to display them on a computer or tablet**
3. **Brief, engaging first person descriptions** of the 40 young people with problems (for the adult to read aloud)
4. **Play money** to encourage the players to try to “fix the problems” and relate the situations to their own issues

Joel Shaul provides professional trainings to educators, mental health professionals and SLP’s. To learn more: http://bit.ly/YxFn13
Introduction and Directions for the Adult Leader

How to use these materials:

1. You, the leader, are to enact, in first person, the various characters. You start by reading the narrative, and then you should “fill in the blanks” and expand the description as you see fit. Use sufficient expression and dramatic flair to maintain interest and attention.

   Show the picture of the character while you are giving your description, either by holding the picture card in front of you, displaying it on your computer screen via PowerPoint file provided, or projecting it on a screen or Smart Board.

2. While remaining in character, get kids to learn about your problem and give you advice. You will notice that some of the scenarios are designed to lure children into giving “wrong” answers initially as part of the learning process.

3. I encourage you to print out lots of the token money to use in this activity. This will really encourage participation.

   There are two kinds of game money:

   a. One Dollar Money: Give this out for “good” answers, questions and feedback, and for speaking in a collaborative manner with the other players.

   b. Five Dollar Money: Give this out reward children who are able to describe times in their own lives when they have experienced problems similar to the particular problem being presented.

   Allow players to ask for your suggestions on which characters might have problems similar to their own. Some children will notice that they are similar to the characters. Other children will need your help. Then, you give children the money tokens when they accept your suggestions.

   Obviously, the main point of the whole activity is to get the players to acknowledge some of their own problems and earn the Five Dollar tokens.

   • Don’t encourage the players to point out the problems of other children.

   • Many of the scenarios are difficult to “fix” and may have many possible interpretations and solutions.

Note: The characters are grouped in very approximate categories with lots of overlap:

1 to 9 (up through “Jerome”): Social communication skills
10 to 18: (up through “Tom”): Isolation
19 to 35: Relationships
36 to 40: Emotions

*The emoticon images used in this kit were made by Freepik.com*
**How to play:**

Hi, I'm Todd!

The grown-up with you will describe a lot of different kids, each with a different problem.

Try your best to FIX THE PROBLEM by giving your own ideas and advice!

Hi, I'm Carla!

You might often notice that some of the kids have problems kind of like your own!

When this happens, *speak up*, and let the other players know about how you can fix your *own* problem!
EARN THIS GAME MONEY

...when you give ideas and advice that REALLY HELP!
...when you REALLY LISTEN to other people’s ideas!

EARN EVEN BETTER GAME MONEY

...when you tell about a time YOU had a problem like this!
...when you tell about how you might be able to work on this problem!
Tell about when you had a problem like this.

In Carla we trust.