

The Pivotal Role of Parents for Problem Solvers

Why are our students' parents so important to our Future Problem Solving students? Outside of the obvious reasons such as car pool drivers, snack providers, and cheerleaders, our students need constant intellectual support from home. Parents can bring this support to their Problem Solving students, and so much more! Here are some ways that parents can become more involved in supporting their students in their Future Problem Solving endeavors.

Global Issues Problem Solvers, Scenario Writers, and Scenario Performers



These students compete on a specific list of topics throughout the year. Parents can assist their children by researching these topics, brainstorming potential challenges and solutions related to these issues, and by increasing the students' flexible thinking by discussing a variety of categories using the topic. (We recommend you become familiar with the category list the students use in competition). It can be very beneficial to the students to have family discussions or debates on these topics to help the kids think about these topics from a variety of global perspectives. Parents can also provide a unique perspective to the changes that have occurred about the topics during the lifetimes of their parents and themselves. This allows their children to extrapolate historical information for a better understanding of what the future may hold in change in the next 20 to 30 years. In addition, parents can assist by helping their students in finding research articles, TV programs, or online video links to build the students' knowledge based on the topics. Another good way to provide assistance is to locate prospective guest speakers for the kids on the specified topic. These guest speakers can give live or online presentations that would boost the students' understanding of the current subject.

Community Problem Solvers

Community Problem Solving students must find and/or identify the community issue they want to attempt to solve. Parents can assist these problem solvers by brainstorming potential local community issues, inviting prospective speakers to meet with the CmPS team, and discussing with the students the possible Pros and Cons of the community topics the students are considering. Once the students have selected a topic, parents can help to motivate the students by encouraging the students to utilize critical thinking in analyzing ways the students might solve the issues in unique and creative ways. Ultimately, the work and ideas should come from the students, but healthy discussions and debates are always beneficial!



Another key role parents can play in supporting their Problem Solving student is through financial support. Parents can donate to the Problem Solving team or the local affiliate program, and by finding potential donors for travel and events. Parents can also serve as coaches, evaluators, or volunteers at competitions. Many local affiliates offer training for coaches and evaluators and would be thrilled to add more parent involvement as coaches and evaluators. In addition, becoming a coach or evaluator will also increase the parents' knowledge about the FPS process, the power of the program, while bringing an additional layer of support to their Problem Solving student.

Finally, parents can encourage their student's creativity and curiosity. In FPS there is no one "correct" answer, so the students are taught to think of unique and innovative ways to solve issues. One way

parents might help with this is through asking open ended questions of their child about the issues. Having the students reflect on their work, examining both successes and failures can also increase the students' creative and critical thinking skills. Parents should attempt to make the learning and practice fun! Having family game and puzzle nights with funny and creative games can not only strengthen the family's together time but can also aide in the students' abilities to "think outside the box." Overall, a parent's role for a Future Problem Solver is vital! It has been said that it takes a village to teach a child. Parents are the heart of that village. We appreciate each parent's willingness to contribute to their student's success, and encourage you to keep up the great work!



"Parent involvement in education is like the frosting on a cupcake, it makes it complete and oh so sweet."
~unknown~

Cultural Corner – Aotearoa - New Zealand

In October 2023 Aotearoa- New Zealand (NZ) celebrated their 30th National Finals. It was great to have the kids back onsite again after 3 years of virtual National Finals. The onsite 3 day finals have always been held at the same camp and follow a similar format, albeit updated, that was established in 1993. The NZ programme was initially part of the Australasian programme, becoming its own affiliate in 1994. In 2022 it was the 4th largest FPSPI affiliate.

The 2023 finals were the end of an era with the acknowledgement of 33 years of service to New Zealand Future Problem Solving from our awesome and amazing National Director, Robyn Boswell. In 2009 Robyn was awarded the Queens Service Medal in the National Queen's Birthday Honours for her services to Future Problem Solving. Robyn has recently retired from her role as National Director for New Zealand.



In 1990, booklets were posted to the USA for evaluation; no online facilities in those days and it took weeks to get results. Now we can mark our students' work and have it back to them in the shake of a lamb's tail. Isn't it fantastic that FPSPI has moved into a new era where all affiliates can mark booklets from around the world within hours of booklet submission.



IC2023

We were so proud of one of our coaches, Glenis Martin, who had teams that placed 1st in both the Junior and Middle division of the team GIPS competition. An amazing feat!

Some things you might not know about Aotearoa-New Zealand

- Aotearoa is the Māori-language name for New Zealand and the common translation is Land of the Long White Cloud.
- NZ has 3 official languages – Te reo Māori, English and NZ Sign Language.
- NZ often called a ‘small country’, is actually bigger than the UK, although the population is only about 5 million.
- We have 3 main islands – The North Island (Te Ika-a-Māui), the South Island (Te Waipounamu) and Stewart Island (Rakiura).
- New Zealand firsts in the world –
 - Gave the vote to women in 1893
 - Won the first Rugby World cup (*go All Blacks – yay!*)
 - Had the first transgender member of parliament
 - Beatrice Tinsley (NZer) first woman to be appointed as Professor of Astronomy at Yale University
 - Sir Edmund Hillary (NZer) and Tensing Norgay conquered Mt Everest.
 - Ernst Rutherford (NZer) split the atom and was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.
 - Elizabeth Yates (NZer) became first female Mayor in the British Empire.
 - Is the birthplace of the commercial bungee jump
- NZ is often known as the adventure capital of the world and attracts thousands of visitors to explore our beautiful landscapes and take part in our challenging adventures.

