The Help Ladder

TOPIC: Independence, problem-solving, knowing when to ask for help

AGE: About 9 to 16

SETTING: Home, classroom, afterschool

Independence does not mean "do everything yourself.""

It means judging what you can handle, what you need, and when someone else should get involved.

1 Read a Challenge

"You forgot about a project that is due tomorrow.""

"You're having a conflict with a friend.""

"You've read the directions three times and still don't understand.""

2 Pick Your Rung

MORE SUPPORT

5 **I need an adult to step in.**

4 **I need someone to work through this with me.**

3 **I need advice.**

2 **I need information.**

1 **I can try something myself.**

ON MY OWN

Then answer

What makes this situation belong on that rung?

Different rungs? Good.

Two players may pick different rungs. Each one explains why.

⚠ **Safety first:** if you feel unsafe, are being harassed, or are threatened, go straight to rung 5.

Learning goal **Assess** → **Attempt** → **Seek the right support** → **Act**

Inspired by: Lee, A. M. I. (n.d.). *What is self-advocacy?* Understood. https://www.understood.org/en/articles/the-importance-of-self-advocacy

Stefanakos, V. S. (n.d.). *What to do when your teen resists your help*. Understood. https://www.understood.org/en/articles/what-to-do-when-your-teen-resists-your-help

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THE HELP LADDER

Scenario Cards

Cut on the dashed lines. Circle the rung you would pick, then write why. Rungs: 1 Try myself · 2 Information · 3 Advice · 4 Work through it together · 5 Adult steps in

Lost homework

You finished your homework but can't find it, and it's due first period.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Friendship disagreement

You and a close friend argued, and now you're not talking.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Feeling excluded

Your group keeps making plans without you.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Failing a class

Your grade dropped to failing, and the quarter ends in three weeks.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Harassing message

Someone keeps sending you mean messages after you asked them to stop.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Transportation problem

Your ride to practice fell through, and you need to be there in an hour.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Confusing application

You're filling out a summer program application and don't understand one section.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Unsafe situation

You're somewhere that doesn't feel safe, and you want to leave.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Team conflict

Two teammates keep arguing, and it's affecting the whole team.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Missed deadline

You missed an assignment deadline and aren't sure you can still turn it in.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Online rumor

A rumor about you is spreading in a group chat.

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

Your own challenge

_____

_____

RUNG 1 2 3 4 5

WHY? _____

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