72 Problems and solutions

A Problems in general

A number of adjectives are used with ***problem***: a **minor** problem (= small; OPP **major**), a **growing** problem (= getting bigger all the time), an **urgent** problem (= needs attention now) and an **insoluble** problem (= cannot be solved).

There are also many verbs that are commonly used with ***problem***:

If problems **arise**, they start to exist.
If you **raise** a problem, you mention it so that people can discuss it or deal with it.
If you **address** a problem, you start to think about how to solve it.
If you **confront** a problem or difficult situation, you deal with it. SYN **face (up to) sth**
If you **tackle** a problem, you make a big effort to deal with it.
If you **resolve** a problem, you find a solution to it. SYN **solve**
If you **overcome** a problem, you succeed in dealing with a problem that has prevented you from achieving something.
If you **exaggerate** a problem, you make it seem bigger than it is.
If a problem **escalates**, it gets bigger or worse. SYN **grow**
If problems **multiply**, they increase very much in number.

1 Replace the underlined word(s) with a single word that keeps the same meaning.

1 Anxiety about weight is <u>increasing</u> among teenage girls. .....
2 She's had to <u>face up to</u> her fear of flying. .....
3 How did the problem <u>first occur</u>? .....
4 Our problems have <u>more than doubled</u> since last year. .....
5 Funding has become an <u>impossible</u> problem. .....
6 Unemployment is a problem, but we mustn't <u>make it seem bigger than</u> it <u>is</u>. .....
7 Can we easily <u>find a solution to</u> plastic recycling? .....
8 They've been <u>making a big effort to solve</u> the problem of knife crime for years. .....

2 Complete the dialogues with a single word.

1 Have they made the problem worse? ~ Yes, it has been ..... for months .
2 Is he aware of the problem? ~ No, but he'll have to ..... it soon.
3 Is it an ..... problem? ~ No, we can deal with it later.
4 Have they discussed finance? ~ Yes, I ..... it at the last meeting.
5 Has she ..... her shyness? ~ Yes, and the difference is amazing.
6 Have they solved the problem? ~ No, but they're working hard to ..... it.
7 It's an ..... problem, isn't it? ~ It seems to be: we just don't know what to do.
8 Are they ..... the problem? ~ Yes, I think they're making a real effort.
9 Is it a major issue? ~ No, it's just a ..... problem, really.
10 Do we need to deal with it now? ~ Yes, otherwise it could ..... .

3 ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY **Are these things problems in your country? If so, which adjectives and verbs above might describe the problem, and what is the government doing about them? Write your answers, or talk to another student.**

litter on the streets	graffiti on walls	increasing household rubbish
pollution in town centres	parking in town centres	bullying in schools

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B Teenage problems and solutions

How parents can tackle teenage problems

1 Teenagers are never satisfied with their appearance, and this can be very **damaging** for their **self-esteem**. Don't **play down** these worries, even if they seem **insignificant** to you. Explain that others don't notice the details that we notice in ourselves.

2 Some teenagers can **accept** failure, while others let it **get them down**. Help your teen to **keep things in perspective**. Explain that everyone has **setbacks** in life, and **reassure** them that you **'re behind** them 100%, **regardless of** what happens.

3 Some teenagers – boys especially – find it difficult to identify and **articulate** how they feel. Keep **channels of communication** open at all times and respect their ideas.

GLOSSARY

damaging	having a bad effect on sb/sth **damage** *v*
self-esteem	the way you feel about yourself: ***have high/low self-esteem***
play sth down	try to make sth seem less important than it really is OPP **take sth seriously**
insignificant	not big enough to be considered important OPP **significant**; **significance** *n*
accept	continue in a difficult situation: ***accept the fact that ...***
get sb down	If sth **gets you down**, it makes you feel sad or depressed.
perspective	the ability to think about problems and decisions without exaggerating their importance: ***keep sth/things in perspective***
setback	a problem that delays or prevents progress
reassure	say or do sth that makes sb less worried
be behind sb/sth	give your support to sb/sth
regardless of sth	without being affected or influenced by sth
articulate *formal*	express your thoughts clearly in words **articulate** *adj* (Listen to the different pronunciation of the verb and adjective on the APP.)
channel	a system or method for sending or obtaining information: ***a channel of communication***

4 Complete the sentences.

1 His poor exam results have not been good for his self-_____.
2 It's upsetting, but she mustn't let it _____ her _____.
3 She's clever and can _____ her ideas very clearly.
4 His mother will support him _____ of what he does, because she loves him.
5 Bullying is not an _____ issue; it's a serious problem.
6 Parents must ensure there is an open _____ of communication with their kids.
7 Some boys cannot _____ the fact that they're not good enough to be professional footballers.
8 I'm always telling my son to work harder, but he doesn't take me _____.
9 Air pollution is very _____ to people's health.
10 The government is not optimistic, and is _____ any hopes of a settlement.

5 Complete the conversation with a suitable word or phrase.

A: One of the teachers told Carrie that she wasn't good enough to study medicine at university, and it has really **(1)** _____ her confidence.
B: I'm sure it has. And Carrie tends to let things **(2)** _____ her _____, doesn't she?
A: Yes. And when you're her age, it's difficult to keep things in **(3)** _____.
B: I guess so. But I'm sure her mother has supported her.
A: Oh yes, she has. She's been right **(4)** _____ her all along, and is constantly **(5)** _____ her that everything will be OK. But it's been a **(6)** _____ for her.
B: And is there any **(7)** _____ in what the teacher is saying? Do you think he's right?
A: Possibly. But Carrie is clever and very **(8)** _____. There are plenty of things she could do where good communication is important.

6 ABOUT YOU **Have you experienced any of the teenage problems above, either as a teenager yourself or as a parent? What other problems do teenagers often have, and how should parents respond? Write your answers, or talk to another student.**

_____

_____

TEST YOURSELF

LIVEWORKSHEETS