Ethical Problem Solving Model

Model Step	Notes
Define the problem: Describe the situation and determine if an ethical dilemma/trespass exists	
Ecological lens: Consider all factors that are relevant, looking at the contextual and cultural, as well as personal biases; Consult with school personnel that may have insight into the contextual factors of involved parties	
Consider school psychology and other legal, ethical, & policy guidelines: NASP Principles for Professional Ethics, relevant federal and state statutes, school district policies, state regulations (MUSER 101). What is the school psychologist legally/ethically obligated to do in this situation? What are others obligated to do?	
Consult with colleagues, supervisors, etc.: Other school psychologists, colleagues, or others who are knowledgeable of contextual variables (including community leaders, teachers, outside professionals), respecting privacy and confidentiality	
Identify the rights, responsibilities and welfare of all parties involved: Identify the responsibilities of everyone involved in the situation, identify the rights for each member involved and assess/consider the welfare of each member involved - this could include family members, staff, the child, etc. Possibly different ethical standards of other professionals.	
Determine courses of actions and consequences: Create a list of alternative solutions and assess short-term, ongoing, and long-term potential consequences of each alternative solution, including the psychological, social, and economic costs (cost/benefit analysis)	
Make a decision to follow a plan of action; Monitor the outcome; Follow-up as needed Identify and implement a course of action and accept the consequences; Monitor outcomes/follow-up as needed	

Guidelines for Peer Supporters

- Be familiar with the NASP ethical problem solving model before engaging in peer support. A brief version of the model is provided on this worksheet and additional tips/information from NASP can be found here: https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/NASP_Ethical_Problem_Solving_Worksheet.pdf
- Be willing to informally process the following with a peer: the presenting problem, any underlying contributing factors, steps already taken, ideas for next steps.
- Listen and respond objectively/neutrally.
- If needed, determine whether the case is beyond the scope of peer support, or beyond your scope of your personal/professional competence. If so, contact the Ethics & Civility Committee Chair for re-referral or refer the Support Seeker to an appropriate organization (e.g., the executive board, NASP, the individual's administrative team, etc.)
- If sharing past experiences, maintain confidentiality for all parties. Emphasize that the peer may not experience the same results even if they implement your same strategy due to contextual and other circumstances.

Guidelines for Peer Support Seekers

- Ensure information being shared protects the privacy of those involved.
- Be open to differing perspectives in understanding and/or defining the issue.
- Be familiar with the NASP ethical problem solving model before engaging in peer support. A brief version of the model is provided on this worksheet and additional tips/information from NASP can be found here: https://www.nasponline.org/Documents/Standards%20and%20Certification/Standards/NASP_Ethical_Problem_Solving_Worksheet.pdf
- Document notes from the session if needed (the reverse of this sheet can be used for note-taking). Ideally, the Support Seeker will have used this note sheet to consolidate their thoughts prior to the session.

Suggested Steps for a Peer Support Interaction

1. The Peer Support Seeker contacts the Peer Support Colleague.
2. The team selects a mutually agreeable time to meet either by phone or video conference (budget 1 hour) . Refrain from discussing the ethical dilemma in email to protect confidentiality. Use a personal email if possible to arrange for the meeting.
3. During the first meeting, discuss how confidentiality will apply. Assign pseudonyms, provide identifiers for roles and responsibilities, avoid providing school names, and discuss where or with whom information will be shared.
4. After reviewing confidentiality guidelines, the Support Seeker provides a BRIEF (e.g. 10 minute or less) summary of the dilemma including all individuals involved and steps that have been taken.
5. Peer Support Colleague and Peer Support Seeker use the ethical problem solving model worksheet to work through the scenario (Support Seeker takes notes as needed on the worksheet).
6. Peer Support Colleague provides objective feedback on the presenting problem, any underlying contributing factors, steps already taken, ideas for next steps. Support Seeker clarifies information as necessary and participates actively in the discussion.
7. Peer Support Seeker makes the ultimate decision on how to proceed.
8. At the conclusion of the meeting, peers check in with each other about how the process went (e.g., How did this go for you? Is there anything that you would change?). Both will be asked to complete an anonymous MASP survey on the process.
9. Peer Support Seeker will reach out to Peer Supporter for additional support if needed. Peer Support Seeker will monitor the situation and take further action (e.g., seek additional support, contact another organization) if necessary.