

## Decision Making

Key stage 1

Key stage 2

### Learning Intention:

- To be able to demonstrate simple decision making strategies.
- To know that there are consequences for every decision.

### Learning Outcome:

- To recognise that choices require decisions.
- To be able to consider different possibilities.
- To demonstrate effective decision-making skills.

### Teacher Introduction:

Start by saying: Everybody needs to make decisions, all through their life. We decide about all sorts of things, some of which are more important than others. We will be thinking about how to make good decisions, and we will have a chance to practice making them while we are in our safe and friendly classroom.

This will be good learning for when we are making real decisions later on.

### Resources:

- Choice Cards.
- Traffic Light Cards.
- Scenario work sheets (activity 2).

### Activity 1:

Ask the children what the word 'decision' means. A useful definition is "a choice we make after considering several options and thinking about what we want to do."

Ask the children for examples of the decisions they have made that day. Scribe a list and arrive at a total number of decisions the class has already made.

Go through each decision one at a time, and ask if the child made it:

- **alone** – I decided to have toast because mum was busy and I didn't want to ask her to open me a new box of cereal
- **with someone else** – I decided to have toast because mum said we only had one sort of cereal left

• **in circumstances that mean it was not really a decision** - I had toast because we had run out of everything else

Explore which decisions needed help, and why this was the case.

Discuss how some decisions are easier to make than others.

**Also useful for: UE, CF, RR, MW**

**Activity 2:**

Put the children into small groups and give each group a scenario worksheet:

Scenario	What are your choices?	What is your final decision?
You are playing at your friend's house. You want to watch a DVD but your friend wants to go outside.		
You are at your aunt's house with your 9 year old cousin. You get a headache. Your aunt is not at home but your cousin says he knows where the Cal-pol is kept and offers to give you some.		
You bump into another child and make them spill paint all over the floor. The teacher didn't see this happen. She tells the other child off and says it's their fault so they will have to stay in at playtime to clear up.		
You are invited to your friend's house for his dad's birthday party. You find a full can of beer that someone has opened and then left. Your friend dares you to drink it.		
You leave your favourite jacket in the dining room at school. When you go back to get it, the jacket has gone.		

Alternatively give each group just one scenario. Ask them to work through the situation(s), listing their possible choices and what their final decision has been. Feedback to the class and discuss whether it was easy or difficult to make this decision.

Explore the various pressures that may have influenced their decision; for instance, they may know it's not safe to take medicine without an adult but this can be a hard rule to keep if their headache is really bad.

Read out the following list and ask the children to put their hand up if they think each factor could influence a decision they have to make. Discuss the ways in which this can happen. Ask them if they can think of anything else that may affect their thinking. Add these suggestions to the list and put it on the wall.

My likes and dislikes	What my friends say	What I see other children doing	What I see on TV or the Internet
What my religion or culture says	What my parents or carers say	My health	School rules

**Also useful for: UE, CF, RR, MW**

**Activity 3:**

Take the choice cards and show them to the children. Place one card on the right of the room and another on the left. (Note: the card template below shows the options in related pairs, such as making a healthy or unhealthy food choice. Teachers may wish to use these pairings or to create their own cards that meet the needs and characteristics of their school).

Ask the children which choice they prefer (eg fruit or crisps). Ask them to go and stand by the card that shows their choice. If they are not sure they can stand in the middle. Tell them to be honest; for

instance they don't have to pretend they would choose the healthy option if their genuine preference is for something else.

Ask the children to describe their decision-making process. If only a few children choose one option, ask how they feel about not being in the majority.

Have a piece of fruit	Eat a bag of crisps
Play Minecraft	Play outside
Read a book	Watch a DVD
Make a sandwich	Buy some chips
Do my homework	Go out to see my friend
Have a shower	Have a quick wash

#### **Activity 4:**

Discuss with the children that all choices have consequences. Ask them what this word means and ensure they understand it correctly (the result or effect of an action or decision).

Read out the following scenario:

*'Sonja and Adam are playing in the garden when Adam sees a man he does not know. The man has been watching them, but now he comes over and offers to take the children to the shop to buy them some sweets.'*

#### **Hold up the RED traffic light card (meaning Stop - Decision to be made.)**

What choices do Sonja and Adam have? Make a list on the board of all the choices the class suggests, even when these may not be sensible or safe (such as go with the man and get the sweets).

#### **Hold up the ORANGE traffic light card (meaning Discussion Time.)**

Divide the children into groups. Ask each group to discuss one of the options listed, and ask to write down the possible consequences of that choice. Ask each group to feedback on the consequences they have identified. Split the list of options into positive and negative choices.

#### **Hold up the GREEN traffic light card (meaning Final Choice, decision to be made).**

Ask the children to vote (by show of hands) for the choice they consider to be the best option. As each option is voted on, allow the children to explain their choice.

Highlight the winning option and discuss why this was the best decision for Sonja and Adam to make. Ensure that the positive consequences of this decision are explored. If the children choose an unsafe option, help them to explore why this is not appropriate and what they should do instead.

**Also useful for: UE, CF, RR, MW**

#### **Plenary:**

Remind the children what they have learnt:

- What decisions are.
- We all make lots of decisions every day.
- Some decisions are more important than others.
- Some decisions are easy and others are hard.
- Not everybody will make the same decision as you, based on the same situation.
- We can use the traffic light system to remind us to 1) stop, knowing there is a decision to be made, 2) talk and think and 3) make our final decision.

**Debriefing activity:**

Ask the children to think of the best decision they have made that day. Scribe a few examples, and explore what made these good decisions.

Remind the children of the skills they have used to make these decisions. Ask them to think quietly for a moment about these skills and the good choices that they have made, then close the lesson.

**Differentiation for SEND:**

Children on the autistic spectrum may struggle with concepts such as peer pressure or wanting to please their friends. Children with ADHD may have poor impulse control. For both groups the use of thinking and discussion time is helpful and teachers may wish to foreground this in the activities.