Lesson Ten
Decision Making for Nutrition and Physical Activity

Objectives

After participating in this lesson students will

• Learn about decision-making skills and how to use them to resist negative influences on their choices about nutrition and physical activity.
• Use the Decision-Making Process to think through a problem.
• Track progress on their healthy eating and physical activity goals.

Time

50 minutes            Prep Time: 15 minutes

Activities

10.1 Review and Plan for the Day          3 minutes
10.2 Decision-Making Skills             27 minutes
10.3 Tracking Progress                  10 minutes
10.4 Closure                           10 minutes

Key Terms

• Decision Making
• Alternatives
• Impulsive

Materials

❑ Steps to Decision Making chart
❑ Decision Example Cards (Activity Sheet 10.2a)
❑ Decision-Making Process (Information Sheet 10.2)
❑ Decision Making (Activity Sheets 10.2b-d)
❑ Tracking My Progress (Activity Sheet 10.3)

Teacher Preparation

• Write Plan for the Day and Objectives on chart paper or board.
• Create Steps to Decision Making chart. Below the title, list the steps in making a decision, leaving space for Example Cards. (See Activity 10.2.)
• Copy and cut apart Decision Example Cards (Activity Sheet 10.2a).
• Make copies of Decision-Making Process (Information Sheet 10.2), 1 for each student, and place in portfolios.
• Make copies of Decision Making (Activity Sheets 10.2b-d), 1 for each pair of students.
• Make copies of Tracking My Progress (Activity Sheet 10.3), 1 for each student, and place in portfolios.

### 10.1 Review and Plan for the Day 3 minutes

**Materials:** Plan for the Day and Objectives

Write the Plan for the Day and Objectives on the board before class, listing all of the activities students will be doing.

Plan for the Day:
- Decision-Making Skills
- Tracking Progress
- Closure

Review the previous class. Ask students what are some of the choices they have around healthy eating and physical activity. Ask them what factors are important to them when choosing what to eat.

Explain that today they will take what they’ve learned about influences and choices around eating and exercise and learn some decision-making skills.

Review the Objectives with students.

### 10.2 Decision-Making Skills 27 minutes

**Materials:** Steps to Decision Making chart, Decision Example Cards (Activity Sheet 10.2a), Decision-Making Process (Information Sheet 10.2), Decision Making (Activity Sheets 10.2b-d)

Write the phrase “Influences on Choices to Make Decisions” on the board. Read the phrase and then remind students that influences (such as family, society, friends and media) can be both helpful and not helpful in achieving goals or living a healthy life. Based on those influences and choices, at some point we make a decision to act or to not act.

Sometimes when we make a decision, it’s an impulsive (inclined to act in haste rather than thought) decision. Explain what “impulsive” means. Then ask students when it might be OK to make an impulsive decision (i.e. when the consequences of that decision are minor). Document their answers on the board or chart paper. Tell students that sometimes the consequences of our actions are profound; so it’s good to have the skills to make sound and thoughtful decisions.
Tell students that every time they eat something or decide to do physical activity, they are making a decision. Explain that they will now learn a decision making (the mental process of reaching a decision) process. They will learn the steps that are laid out on the Steps to Decision Making chart and use them to make a decision around healthy eating or physical activity. Show students the Decision-Making Process information sheet in their portfolios. Tell them to follow along using this information sheet as you discuss the steps.

Give the following example using the Steps to Decision Making chart and the Decision Example Cards. As each of the steps is introduced, add the Example Card to the chart:

1. Define the Issue: Need to go to soccer practice, but feel tired and unmotivated and want to watch a TV program.

2. Influences: Tired, want to watch TV, have to get to the practice on my own, coach and teammates are expecting me, enjoy the practice usually, nice day, what will people think if I don’t show up. (Note: Clarify with the students which influences are helpful and which are not helpful.)

3. Alternatives (all of the options in a given circumstance): Call up a teammate to give me a ride, watch part of the show and be late for the practice, catch the bus instead of riding my bike, record the TV show.

4. Look at both sides (pros and cons): Pros—I know I will feel good once I get there, it’s a nice day for being outside, and I’m a part of a team. Cons—I will get a call from my coach asking why I wasn’t there, my parents will want to know why I didn’t go, I might not get to play in the game if I don’t attend practice.

5. Decide and Act: Think about my alternatives: I’ll call my teammate to get a ride and I’ll record the show. That way I can follow through on my responsibility as a team member and I get to watch the show I want to see.

6. Evaluate: In hindsight there are things to think about. Specifically: How did my decision turn out? What was the payoff in my decision? Was I satisfied with the decision? Was I proud of my choice? Would I make the same choice again?

Once finished with this demonstration, explain that students will now use this process on an issue dealing with physical activity, nutrition or peer pressure. Tell students they will be working in pairs. Have them find someone to work with or designate partners. Once they are in pairs, hand out one of the Decision Making activity sheets to each pair. If there are more than 6 students in class that day, equally disperse the three different issues: physical activity, nutrition and peer pressure.
Review the activity sheet with students and explain that they are to choose one of the issues described at the top of the sheet. Then they will write answers for each of the decision-making steps.

Walk around and help students as needed. If students can’t think of an answer to one of the steps, use the following sample answers for each of the issues to help guide them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Activity</th>
<th>Nutrition</th>
<th>Peer Pressure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex. 1</td>
<td>Ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influences</td>
<td>Friends on the team</td>
<td>How far the walk is</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex. 1</td>
<td>Ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Want to be thinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternatives</td>
<td>Could just go for practices</td>
<td>Could go once or twice a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex. 1</td>
<td>Ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research side-effects</td>
<td>Always eat one meal a day at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits/Consequences</td>
<td>Social contact</td>
<td>Exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ex. 3</td>
<td>Ex. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Could be bad for body</td>
<td>Save money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Could get in trouble</td>
<td>Will learn new things</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After they complete the activity, have a couple of students volunteer to read through their decision-making process.

**10.3 Tracking Progress**

**Materials:** Tracking My Progress (Activity Sheet 10.3)

Remind students of the goals they wrote for themselves a week or so ago. Tell them that once a week the class will be looking at how they each did on achieving their goals.

- Refer students to the Tracking My Progress activity sheet in their portfolios. Have them write in their goals for both healthy eating and physical activity.
- Then have them fill out the rest of the form, choosing one of their goals to focus on.

Ask students to share with a partner how they did on their goal this past week. What were the challenges? What did they do to meet their goal? How did they feel about working toward their goal?

**10.4 Closure**

Have students take one of the challenges they identified on the Tracking My Progress activity sheet and apply the decision-making process to it. Walk around and make sure students are on task and help them with ideas where needed.
Resources

Decision-Making Process:
  *Holt Health*, page 25. Published by Holt, Rinehart, Winston (Harcourt Brace & Co.).
  *Tribes*, page 138. Published by Center Source Systems, LLC.
  *Therapeutic Recreation for Chemical Dependency: Adolescents and Adults: Programming and Activities*, pages 172-173. Published by American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance.

*HealthSmart High School, Nutrition & Physical Activity*, Lesson 2, Activity 2: Tracking My Progress worksheet, modified by All4You2! curriculum, Lesson 12, Activity 3.
1. **Define the Issue**: What is the issue I need to make a decision about? (Need to go to soccer practice, but feel tired and unmotivated and want to watch a TV program.)

2. **Influences**: Who or what is influencing my decision? Are they helping or hindering? (Tired, want to watch TV, have to get to the practice on my own, coach and teammates are expecting me, enjoy the practice usually, nice day, what will people think if I don’t show up.)

3. **Alternatives**: What are all my possibilities? (Call up a teammate to give me a ride, watch part of the show and be late for the practice, catch the bus instead of riding my bike, record the TV show.)

4. **Look at both sides (pros and cons)**: What are the benefits and consequences of my choices? (I know I will feel good once I get there, it’s a nice day for being outside, I’m a part of a team. I will get a call from my coach asking why I wasn’t there, my parents will want to know why I didn’t go, I might not get to play in the game if I don’t attend practice.)

5. **Decide and Act**: What is the most responsible choice I can make? (Think about my alternatives. I’ll call my teammate to get a ride and I’ll record the show. That way I can follow through on my responsibility as a team member and I get to watch the show I want to see.)

6. **Evaluate**: In hindsight there are things to think about. Specifically: How did my decision turn out? What was the payoff in my decision? Was I satisfied with the decision? Was I proud of my choice? Would I make the same choice again?
Decision Example Cards

1. Need to go to soccer practice, but feel tired and unmotivated and want to watch a TV program.

2. Tired, want to watch TV, have to get to the practice on my own, coach and teammates are expecting me, enjoy the practice usually, nice day, what will people think if I don’t show up.

3. Call a teammate to give me a ride, watch part of the show and be late for the practice, catch the bus instead of riding my bike, record the TV show.
4. I know I will feel good once I get there, it’s a nice day for being outside, I’m a part of a team.

I will get a call from my coach asking why I wasn’t there, my parents will want to know why I didn’t go, I might not get to play in the game if I don’t attend practice.

5. Think about my alternatives: I’ll call my teammate to get a ride and I’ll record the show. That way I can follow through on my responsibility as a team member and I get to watch the show I want to see.
6. In hindsight there are things to think about. Specifically: How did my decision turn out? What was the payoff in my decision? Was I satisfied with the decision? Was I proud of my choice? Would I make the same choice again?
Decision Making—Physical Activity

Choose and circle one of the following situations:

**Example 1:** You’ve been asked to play on a sports team and are trying to decide if you want to play or not.

**Example 2:** You want to get some more exercise on a regular basis so you are thinking about walking to school.

**Example 3:** You’re trying to decide if you should spend your money on buying a bicycle to get around on and for exercise.

Now use the decision-making process to come to a decision on the chosen situation.

**Influences:** (Who/what influences you in making this decision?)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Alternatives:** (What are all of your possibilities?)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Look at both sides:** (What are the benefits and consequences of your decision?)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Decide and Act:** What is the most responsible choice you can make?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Decision Making—Healthy Eating

Choose and circle one of the following situations:

**Example 1:** You’re at a fast-food restaurant trying to decide whether you should get the healthier food choice or more fattening option.

**Example 2:** You’ve heard of people using diets pills to lose weight. You want to lose weight, so you are considering taking diet pills.

**Example 3:** You’re thinking about eating all of your meals at home instead of buying food at restaurants.

Now use the decision-making process to come to a decision on the chosen situation.

**Influences:** (Who/what influences you in making this decision?)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Alternatives:** (What are all of your possibilities?)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Look at both sides:** (What are the benefits and consequences of your decision?)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

**Decide and Act:** What is the most responsible choice you can make?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Decision Making—Peer Pressure

Choose and circle one of the following situations:

Example 1: Some friends of yours are thinking about skipping school for the day. You’re trying to decide if you want to skip school as well.

Example 2: A friend of yours wants to take an art class after school and she really wants you to take the class too. You’re trying to decide if that’s what you want to do.

Example 3: You have a friend who wants you to go on a blind date with a friend of his. You’re trying to decide if that’s what you want to do.

Now use the decision making process to come to a decision on the chosen situation.

Influences: (Who/what influences you in making this decision?)
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Alternatives: (What are all of your possibilities?)
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Look at both sides: (What are the benefits and consequences of your decision?)
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________

Decide and Act: What is the most responsible choice you can make?
_____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________
# Tracking My Progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My <strong>healthy eating</strong> goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My <strong>physical activity</strong> goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

## Date: __________

### What I did to meet my goal:

- ___________________________
- ___________________________
- ___________________________
- ___________________________
- ___________________________
- ___________________________

### What I learned this week:

**Benefits** I enjoyed this week: ___________________________

**Challenges** I had: ___________________________

Possible ways to *deal with challenges* if they come up again: ___________________________

What am I going to do toward my goal *next week*: ___________________________

Who could *help* me with my goal if I need support: ___________________________

---

Adapted with permission from *Health Smart* High School.