

## DECISION-MAKING SKILLS OUTLINE

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LESSON 6	MORE ABOUT CONSEQUENCES
LESSON 7	REVIEW STEPS

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This curriculum can be used with children and adolescents. Some material may need to be modified for a particular group. You can supplement the curriculum with worksheets or activities from other Decision Making curriculum.

## DECISION-MAKING SKILLS SESSION ONE-INTRODUCTION

**Objective:** Participants will be introduced to the concepts and the steps of making decisions or choices.

**Supplies:**

- Newspaper clipping with local movie listings, enough copies for all participants
- Board or flip-chart and markers
- Handout (for each person, and to display during all sessions)

**1. Introduction Activity**

- Ask: What does it mean to make a decision? (Give everyone an opportunity to respond, even if it's not accurate.)
- Discussion: Making a decision means to choose between one or more things. How many decisions do you think most people make everyday? (Give everyone an opportunity to respond.) Did you know that people make almost 17,000 decisions everyday?
- Ask the group to list the decisions they made just today (write on board/flip-chart as many as possible, stopping at 10). Add these, if group doesn't mention them:
  - What to eat for breakfast and lunch
  - What socks to wear
  - Where to sit at lunch, on the bus, in this room
  - Who to talk to during lunch or between classes
  - Which pencil or pen to use in class
  - Whether or not to answer the teacher when she asked questions
  - Whether or not to bring your books/supplies to school

**2. Let's Decide On a Movie**

- Pass out copies of the movie listings to each consumer. Say: Let's pretend we're going to the movies this Saturday. We need to decide which movie to go see. First, we have some restrictions. We have to go between 12:00 pm and 5:00 pm. And the movie can only be rated G, PG, or PG-13 (don't use PG-13 if kids in the group are under 13.)

- Give the group the chance to name the movies they want to see, within the guidelines – list on the board. Say: Now you have to narrow the list because we can only see one movie.
    - What are your choices? (The movies on the board)
    - What are some good things or bad things about these movies? (Pros and cons)
    - Which would be the best choice? Lead them to narrow the list based on things like: already seen the movie, good/bad reviews, don't like the actor, etc. Allow the group to discuss until they come to a decision. Remind them this is only "pretend"; there is no winner or loser.
  
  - Once they have decided which movie they want to see, ask: "Now that you've decided which movie you want to see, what would you do?" Go see the movie, if we were really going to go.
3. Review the Decision-Making Process (handouts)
- a. Identify the problem or the decision that needs to be made. Why do you have to make a decision about this?
  - b. What's your goal? What do you want to happen?
  - c. Think about your choices/options/alternatives.
  - d. Choose the best choice. List pros and cons of each one. What good or bad things can happen with each possible choice?
  - e. Make your choice and carry it out. Do it. Making a decision and then not acting on your decision is the same as not making a decision.
  - f. Accept the responsibility and consequences for making your decision.
  - g. Think about your choice. Evaluate your results –did what you decided turn out okay? Would you do something different next time?

## STEPS TO MAKING A DECISION



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7. Review your results –did it turn out okay? Would you do something different next time?

6. Accept the responsibility and consequences.

5. Make your choice and carry it out. (Do it.)

4. Choose the best choice. List pros and cons of each one. What good or bad things can happen with each?

3. Think about your choices/ options/alternatives.

2. What's your goal? What do you want to happen?

1. Identify the problem. Why do you have to make a decision?

DECISION-MAKING SKILLS  
SESSION TWO – WHO YOU GONNA CALL?

Objective: Participants will determine positive resources to assist in decision-making.

Supplies:

- Coin (real or fake, with a head side and tail side)
- Straws or toothpicks (one shorter than the other)
- Empty Coke and Dr. Pepper cans (or other soft drink)
- Board or flip-chart
- Clip-art images
- Handout – “Decisions”

1. Introduction Activity:

Say, “Sometimes it’s easy to make a decision. If you know you like Coke better than Dr. Pepper, it’s easy to choose what to drink. What happens if both choices are equally good?

Suppose I like Coke and Dr. Pepper the same, and I’m not sure which one I want, how could I decide? (Give opportunity for responses.)

Have each group member use one of these examples of ways to decide:

- Flip a coin – heads for Coke, tails for Dr. Pepper
- Draw straws – shortest straw for Coke, longest for D.P.
- “Eenie, meenie, minie, moe”

2. Discuss: What happens if you have a more difficult decision to make, and the result is more important?

Activity: Display the clip-art images, or similar pictures on the board, ask: “Who would you ask to help you make a decision about:

- Whether you should try out for football?
- Which new outfit you should buy?
- What medicine you should take?
- Learning to play an instrument?
- What to cook for dinner?
- What classes to take next year in High School?

- Which kind of car is better?

Discuss: Why would you ask these people to help you make your decision? (Because they know more about it than I do.)

Say: Getting help from other people when you're trying to make a big decision is important. When other people know more than we do about something, it helps to get their ideas. Of course, it's still up to you to make the decision, but thinking about their opinion can be helpful.

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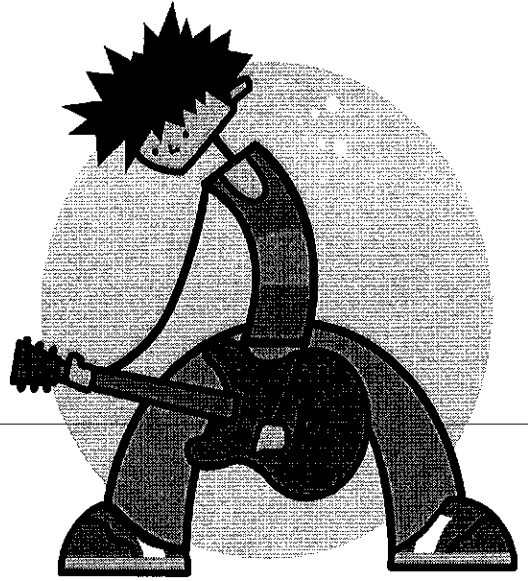
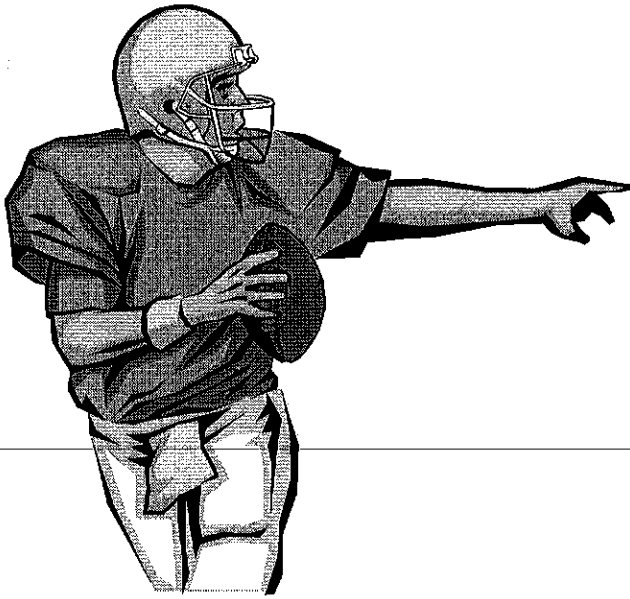
You can run into problems though, if you get advice or opinions about your decisions from the wrong people. What could happen if you asked the guitar player about cars? Or your teacher about buying new clothes?

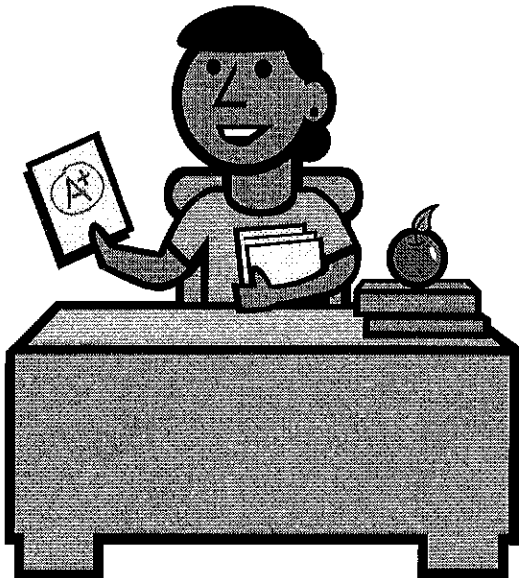
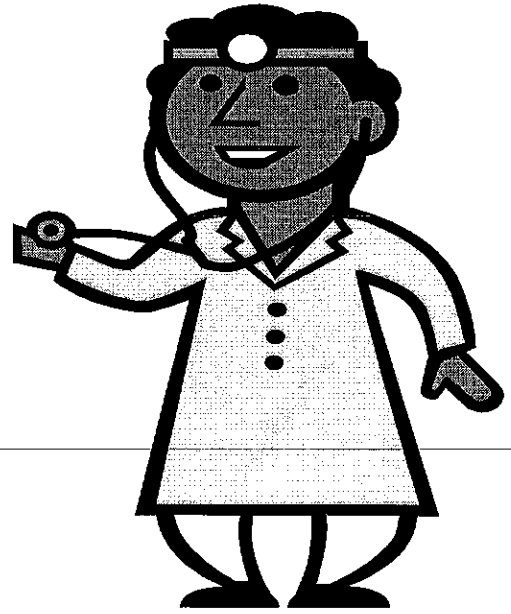
3. Activity: "Decisions" Worksheet

Use the "Decisions" worksheet to lead discussion. Present each problem and ask the group what kind of advice they might get from each type of person. (You can pick and choose, not using each possible person for each problem.)

Then ask for each problem, "What would be the **best** thing to do? What would **you** do?"

Option: Ask for problems the group may have encountered during the last week that required them to make a choice. Use those as examples instead of the ones listed on the worksheet.







## DECISIONS

When you are faced with a difficult decision, it is usually best to look at different options before you take action. Below are some situations that a teen could face. The decision made can effect the teen for a very long time. Read each problem and think about the advice that each person listed would probably give you. Then tell what you would decide to do.

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**PROBLEM 1:** You are at Wal-Mart with a friend and he dares you to steal some batteries for a CD player.

**PROBLEM 2:** Someone teases you and makes you look like a fool in front of others, then dares you to fight. You know that fighting at school results in an automatic recommendation for expulsion.

**PROBLEM 3:** You are one of the "cool crowd", but your boyfriend/girlfriend is not. The "cool crowd" is putting pressure on you to date someone else.

**PROBLEM 4:** Your friends have been enjoying "doing acid" (taking LSD) and they want you to join them "tripping" tomorrow.

**PROBLEM 5:** Your boyfriend/girlfriend is putting pressure on you to have sex.

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WHAT WOULD YOUR BEST FRIEND TELL YOU TO DO?

WHAT WOULD YOUR WORST ENEMY TELL YOU TO DO?

WHAT WOULD YOUR PARENTS TELL YOU TO DO?

WHAT WOULD THE OTHER KIDS AT SCHOOL TELL YOU TO DO?

WHAT WOULD YOUR RELIGIOUS LEADER TELL YOU TO DO?

WHAT WOULD YOUR TEACHER TELL YOU TO DO?

WHAT WOULD A POLICE OFFICER TELL YOU TO DO?

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WHAT WOULD BE THE BEST THING TO DO?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

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DECISION-MAKING SKILLS  
SESSION THREE – RESPONSIBLE DECISIONS

Objective: Participants will examine what makes a responsible decision.

Supplies:

- Board/flip-chart and markers
  - Handouts - "Personal Decision-Making Guidelines"
  - "Steps to Making a Decision" – posted
  - Handout – "If You Want To..."
- 

1. Intro Activity:

- Have group sit in a circle. Going around the circle, starting with the group leader, have everyone tell one thing that they had to make a decision about this week. Encourage each person to respond, prompting with some suggestions, skipping and coming back to the person if needed.

2. Guidelines for Responsible Decisions

- Ask: "What is a 'responsible' decision?" Have them brainstorm a list of words and phrases that describe responsible decisions. Write all answers on the board, even if they aren't exactly responsible.
- Distribute the handout, "Personal Decision-Making Guidelines". Read the handout together then ask the following questions:
  - How does this list compare with ours? (You can now erase or mark through those things on the board that are totally irresponsible.)
  - Do any of these guidelines seem more or less important than the others?
  - Which of these guidelines have you used before?
  - Where do these guidelines fit in the decision-making steps? (Refer to "Steps to Making a Decision" – guidelines are used at steps 5 and 7.)
  - Why do you think the handout specifies "personal" decisions? Would these questions be different if a group was making the decision? How would they be different?

3. Activity: "If You Want To..." Handout

- Distribute the handout to each participant. Have them follow along as you read.
  - Ask after each section, "Which is the more responsible decision?" Allow participants to respond to what they would do, especially if it is different than the choices. Give praise for appropriate responses.
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## PERSONAL DECISION-MAKING GUIDELINES

These are standards to use to determine whether a personal decision is responsible.

1. Is this legal or is it against the law?
2. Is this acceptable here or is it against the rules?

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3. Is it moral? Is it a decent thing to do? Is it against my beliefs and values or the teachings of my religion?
4. Will I feel good about it afterwards or will I feel sorry afterwards?
5. Is it safe or is it dangerous?
6. How would I feel if someone did this to me?

## IF YOU WANT TO...

Life often offers many choices and many possible ways to deal with difficult situations. Review the following contrasting responses, and think about what you would probably do. If none of the given responses fit you, add your own.

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***If you want to shock and amaze people:***

***you could:***

Do self-destructive things like use drugs/alcohol, do things to hurt yourself, take risks with sexual behavior.

Take physical risks like doing dangerous stunts.

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***or you could:***

Be an outstanding athlete.

Make good grades.

Be known as a kind and considerate person.

Have a good sense of humor.

Have an interesting style.

***What would you do?***

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***If you want to stand up to authority figures:***

***you could:***

Curse them out.

Threaten them physically.

Do things to hurt them.

Damage their property.

***or you could:***

Be respectful when you tell them your side.

Enlist other adults, like parents, teachers, or the school counselor to be on your side.

Accept what has happened and move on.

***What would you do?***

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***If you want to deal effectively with a bully:***

***you could:***

Beat him up yourself.

Get your friends to help beat him up.

Get revenge in a sneaky way.

***or you could:***

Enlist the advice and assistance of trustworthy adults, like parents, teachers, or the school counselor.

Stay in a group of friends, since bullies don't usually like to threaten crowds.

Try to avoid the bully.

***What would you do?***

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***If you want a job that will pay enough for you to live comfortably:***

***you could:***

Sell drugs

Rob banks

Steal from others

***or you could:***

Work hard in school.

Get additional training like college, technical school, or vocational school.

Be a hard worker.

**What would you do?**

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*If you want revenge on someone who has mistreated you:*

*you could:*

Beat them up or get someone else to beat them up.

Play nasty jokes on them.

Spread rumors about them.

*or you could:*

Try to work it out.

File legal charges if that person has done something criminal to you (like assault).

Be comfortable knowing that even if you do nothing, they will get what they deserve someday.

Try to forgive and forget.

**What would you do?**

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Responses to difficult situations often seem to be a choice between a positive action and a negative action. What type of response do you tend to use?

positive       negative

What kind of changes do you need to make?

DECISION MAKING SKILLS  
SESSION FOUR – LET’S MAKE A DECISION!

Objective: Participants will practice making a decision, reviewing the steps from Session One.

Supplies:

- Handouts – “Steps to Making a Decision” and “ Personal Decision-Making Guidelines” – posted
  - Board or flip-chart and markers
  - Index cards with “Decision Required” scenarios on them; divide into 2 stacks – easy and challenging
- 
1. Review: Display handout, or draw it on the board, without the steps written out. Ask participants to remember the steps to making a decision. As they call out what they remember, fill in the blanks, even if not in order. Review the correct steps in order for the group.
  2. Let’s Make a Decision!
    - Say: Today we’re going to practice making decisions, following the steps listed. We’ll start with an easy decision. Ask for a volunteer to choose a card from the easy stack.
    - Following the “Steps”, lead the group to a decision. Write on the board as you go along. Ideas to get the group involved: specifically ask each one for input, have someone else write on the board, allow silly brainstorming (within reason). Don’t forget to evaluate at the end.
    - Practice 1 – 2 easy decisions, and then move to a challenging one.
    - Say: Now let’s try a little harder one. Have a volunteer choose a card from the challenging stack. Follow the decision-making steps as before. For these decisions, you may need to refer to the “Guidelines” handout.
    - Practice 1 – 2 challenging decisions.

DECISION REQUIRED

What will you eat for dinner?

DECISION REQUIRED

Where will you go on a trip?

DECISION REQUIRED

Which shoes will you buy?

DECISION REQUIRED

Which CD will you buy?  
(You only have enough money for one.)

DECISION REQUIRED

You see a \$20 bill fall out of someone's purse. What do you do?

DECISION REQUIRED

You've been invited to a party where there will be drugs and alcohol. What do you do?



DECISION REQUIRED

Your friends ask you to the movies but you won't be home until after midnight and you have a big test tomorrow. What do you do?

DECISION REQUIRED

You need \$25 for a field trip in 3 weeks. How do you get the money?

DECISION REQUIRED

You're going to paint your room. What color do you choose?

DECISION REQUIRED

Your mother is expecting you to watch your little brother/sister after school. Your friends ask you to go to the ballgame.

DECISION REQUIRED

Your friend asks you to skip school today and go to the mall. You've already been to detention twice.

DECISION REQUIRED

Which movie do you rent?

# STEPS TO MAKING A DECISION



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DECISION-MAKING SKILLS  
SESSION FIVE: CONSEQUENCES –  
THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

Objective: Participants will explore potential consequences of their decisions.

Supplies:

- Games
  - Pens or pencils
- 

1. Say: “We’ve all been told many times to think before you act. What you’re really being told is to take time to think about the consequences of your decision before you choose. This takes practice. We’ve already learned that we make up to 17,000 decisions everyday. Well, each decision has a consequence – that means 17,000 consequences! Some consequences are good, some are bad, and some don’t really matter too much at all.

Ask the group to name some good, bad, and unimportant consequences. Possibilities:

- Turn in a lost wallet and get a reward (good)
- Lie to your parents and get grounded (bad)
- Choose fried chicken for dinner instead of tacos (unimportant/doesn’t really matter)

Say: There are 2 famous sayings about consequences: “Good choices, good things happen; bad choices, bad things happen.” (Dr. Ryder) “For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.” (Isaac Newton)

2. Say: We’re going to play a game that will show you how your decisions, or the decisions of others, have consequences. Activity: Play one of the following games to demonstrate that every decision/choice/action has a consequence.
  - “Consequences” – need game sheets & writing utensils. Play enough rounds so that everyone has participated sufficiently.

- “Choose” game – (Lake Charles has this game for 2-6 people. You may not have enough time to complete the game, but you can decide to stop after a given point as in the instructions.)
- “The Game of Life” (You may not have enough time to complete the game, but you can decide to stop after a given point.)

Discussion points as the game is played: point out what kinds of consequences will result because of the decisions made.

Direct the participants to think before acting. If they make a “wrong” move and there is a negative result, discuss what they could have done differently, or will do on their next turn.

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## Welcome to Consequences !

### The Fun starts here !

**Consequences is a games for groups of 5 or more people, suitable for families with children or for children but not much fun for adults to play amongst themselves. Starts at about age six.**

**What to do now:**

Simple ! Print off this page once, print one copy of the next page for each person playing. Take a moment to read this page and that's it! You're ready to play!

**Getting Ready:**

Each player will need a pen to write with and one of the sheets of paper that you have just printed off.

**How to play:**

Each player begins by writing down a man's name in the top box on their sheet (not allowing other players to see what they have written). Then everyone folds their paper over to the dotted line under the box and passes the paper to the left. Next everyone writes something in the second box, then folds the paper over the box and passes it on. All the boxes have instructions on the left telling you what to write. This continues until the final box is completed and the paper is passed on one more time. Players then take turns to unfold and read out their papers.

There is no scoring, the game revolves around the entertainment provided by the stories that emerge from the papers.

Man's  
Name:

----- fold here before passing on -----

Woman's  
Name:

met

----- fold here before passing on -----

Place  
Name:

at

----- fold here before passing on -----

Write a  
comment  
here:

He said to her:

----- fold here before passing on -----

Write a  
comment  
here:

She said to him:

----- fold here before passing on -----

Write an  
outcome  
here:

And the consequence was:

----- pass on to be opened up and read out -----

Come and discover lots more fun and games at [www.freeboardgames.com](http://www.freeboardgames.com) !!

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DECISION-MAKING SKILLS  
SESSION SIX: MORE ABOUT CONSEQUENCES

Objective: Participants will explore potential long-term effects of their decisions.

Supplies:

- Handouts – Pay Now/Pay Later World (different versions for children and adolescents)
- Pens/pencils
- “There Was An Old Lady” poem/song – for younger children
- “For Want of a Nail” poem – for older children/adolescents
- Board/flip-chart and markers (Optional)

1. Say: When you face a decision, you automatically think about the immediate result – what will happen right now. But it is a lot tougher to think about the long-term consequences – what will happen in the future as a result of your decisions, or your actions. For example, driving home drunk after a party is less of a hassle than getting a cab or walking home. But, you’re taking a terrible risk that you could injure or even kill yourself or someone else.

2. Activity: Pay Now/Pay Later Handout  
Say: On your worksheet are different kinds of behaviors that you can decide to do and the possible results. Let’s go through the first set together. Review the first one that has already been completed.

Read each set of decisions out loud, and then give the participants an opportunity to write down their answers. OR have them call out their answers to work together as a group on possible consequences for the actions.

3. Activity: YOUNGER GROUP: remind them of the poem/song, “There Was An Old Lady”. Read the poem to them. Discuss how each decision the lady made affected the next decision, etc., until she made a decision that killed her. She only did what she did to fix something, but didn’t think of how it would

affect her later. Her thought process was shortsighted – “Oh, I can get rid of the fly because spiders eat flies. That didn’t work, so if birds eat spiders, I can swallow a bird, etc.” (Remind them that this is a fictional story, but that it illustrates the sequence of events that can happen when we don’t think ahead.)

Allow the group to discuss how the old lady could have solved her problem without leading to death.

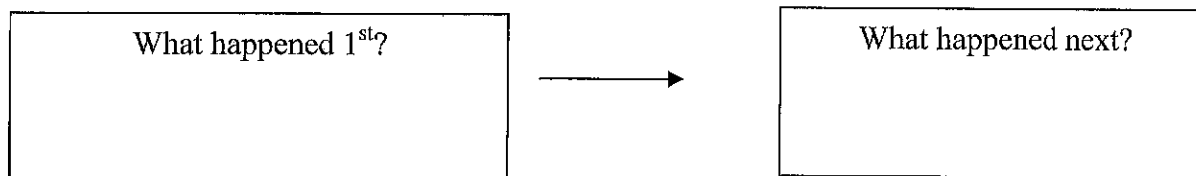
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Activity: OLDER GROUP: Read the poem, “For Want of a Nail”. Discuss: In this poem, the word “want” really means to lack, to not have. So because there was a nail missing, the horseshoe was lost. Because the horseshoe was lost, the horse could not be ridden. Because there was no horse, the rider or soldier could not go to battle. Because the soldier couldn’t go to battle, the kingdom was lost. This happened all because there wasn’t a nail for the horseshoe.

Discuss: The blacksmith who was shoeing the horse probably thought, “I need to get this done so the horse will be ready for battle. It’s just one nail, there are 3 others, it will be okay.” His decision led to other events that caused the kingdom to fall. This is a fictional story, but it illustrates how one decision, without any thought to what could happen, did affect other people and other events.

OPTION: For both of these activities, you can develop a flow chart on the board, so the group can visualize the chain of events as a result of decisions. Have the group call out what happens next and you write on the board. You can use one of the examples below, or your own design:

What happened 1<sup>st</sup>? → What happened next? →





## There Was An Old Lady

There was an old lady who swallowed a fly  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly – perhaps she'll die!  
There was an old lady who swallowed a spider,  
That wriggled and wiggled and tiggled insider her;  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly – perhaps she'll die!  
There was an old lady who swallowed a bird;  
How absurd to swallow a bird.  
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly – perhaps she'll die!  
There was an old lady who swallowed a cat;  
Fancy that – to swallow a cat!  
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,  
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly – perhaps she'll die!  
There was an old lady who swallowed a dog;  
What a hog, to swallow a dog;  
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,  
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,  
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly – perhaps she'll die!  
There was an old lady who swallowed a cow,  
I don't know how she swallowed a cow;  
She swallowed the cow to catch the dog,  
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat,  
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird,  
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider,  
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly;  
I don't know why she swallowed a fly – perhaps she'll die!  
There was an old lady who swallowed a horse...  
She's dead, of course!



6

For want of  
a nail  
the shoe was  
lost.  
For want of a  
shoe  
the horse  
was lost.  
For want of a  
horse  
the rider was  
lost.  
For want of a  
rider  
the battle  
was lost.  
For want of a  
battle  
the kingdom  
was lost.  
And all for the  
want  
of a  
horseshoe  
nail.

## DECISION-MAKING SKILLS SESSION SEVEN: REVIEW STEPS

**Objective:** Participants will review and practice the steps to decision-making.

**Supplies:**

- Handout – “Steps to Making a Decision”
- Footprint cutouts (Optional-make copies to use in step #1)
- Board and markers

1. Point out the handout and review the steps to making a decision. To increase participation, you might have the group line up, then actually take a step forward each time you say the steps. Or have footprint cutouts to place on the board, table, or floor so they can see the process.
2. Say: Today, we’re going to practice the different steps of making a decision. Each person will have the opportunity to be involved. I want you to give me some situations that you know about where you have already had to make a decision, or are getting ready to make a decision. Write the situations on the board.

Allow for several ideas, but pick only those that would make for a good role-play situation. If none are given, suggest something like how to spend your money; what friends to hang around with; what to do this weekend; whether to go to a movie or stay home and study.

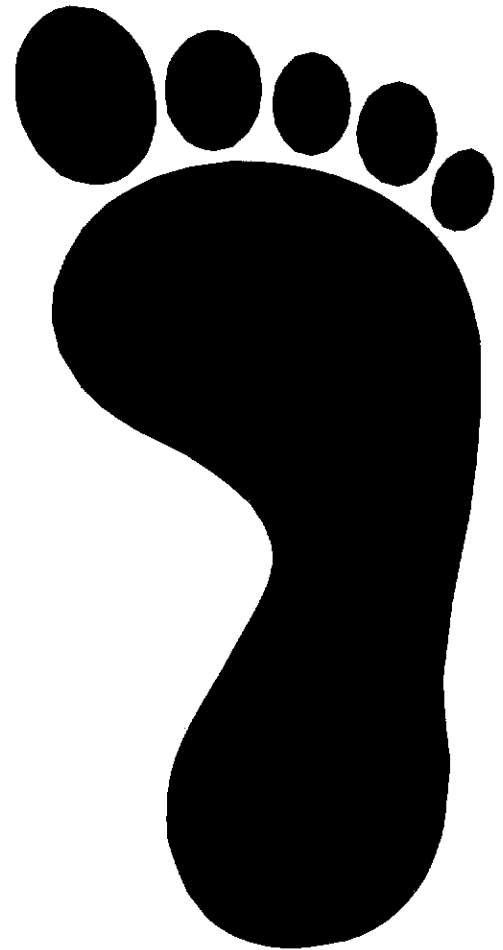
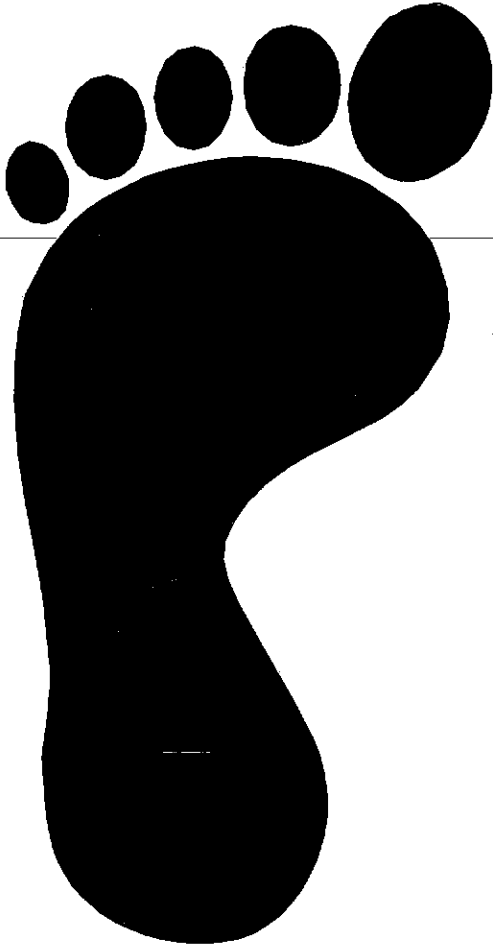
3. Begin with one situation at a time. Ask for volunteers to role-play. Guide them through the decision-making process, referring back to the handout, until they have reached a decision, and then evaluated the possible results. Encourage each consumer to role-play. Continue until everyone has had the opportunity.

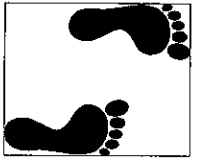
Have the group assist by prompting the one doing the role-play to follow the steps. The group can also give suggestions

on choices/options, as well as helping the actor to see possible results.

4. After all the role-play situations are finished, be prepared to give each consumer some kind of certificate, token, and/or prize for participating in the lessons. A sample certificate is included with this lesson plan.
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FOOTPRINT CUTOUTS – Optional, Step #1





*Certificate of Participation*  
*Steps to Making a Decision Class*



*awarded to:*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_

*Signed*

\_\_\_\_\_