

Responsible Decision-Making Handout 5b: SEL Lesson Planning Tool – Sample Indicators and Teaching Strategies

**Responsible Decision-Making** is the ability to make respectful choices about personal behavior and social interactions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms, the realistic evaluation of consequences of various actions, and the well-being of self and others.

**Sub-Competency 1:**

Student will be able to develop, implement, and model effective problem-solving and critical thinking skills

**Sample Indicators/Learning Objectives:**

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| **Early Elementary** | **Late Elementary** | **Middle School** | **High School** |
| * With adult support, recognize that there are choices in how to respond to situations. * With adult support, identify problems and goals. * With adult support, identify positive choices. | * With adult support, understand that there are steps to positive decision-making. (e.g., stop, calm down, identify the problem, consider the alternatives, make a choice, try it out, reflect and evaluate). * Develop alternate solutions to problems and predict possible outcomes. | * Identify and apply the steps of systematic decision-making. * Be able to brainstorm and begin to evaluate strategies for avoiding risky behavior (e.g., substance abuse, violence, anti-social behavior, truancy, risky sexual behavior). | * Identify and apply the steps of systematic decision-making. * Evaluate strategies for avoiding risky behavior in different situations. * Evaluate external influences on one’s decision-making — both positive and negative (e.g., media, peers, and cultural norms). |

## **Sample Teaching Strategies:**

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| **Early Elementary** | **Late Elementary** | **Middle School** | **High School** |
| * Read stories and discuss the problem and the goal of the character in the story. * Discuss the choice a character faced. * Discuss how the character chose. * Discuss the consequences of the decision. * Students will identify classroom rules and will learn that choices have consequences, which can be good or bad, and that rules help keep us safe. | * With adult support, students will participate in creating classroom rules, which will include model behavior for the classroom. * Students will identify problems and approaches for solving them, based on stories in literature or history. * Have students complete a graphic organizer, where they complete an anticipatory decision-making process for a character entering a difficult situation. | * Students will practice identifying risky behavior in stories, videos, or the news, and then discuss ways to avoid the situation or escape it if they find themselves in it. * Students will complete a systematic decision flowchart for a problem presented to them. * Have students engage in “think aloud” as they read a book and try to predict a character’s next step. | * Students will practice identifying risky behavior in stories, videos, or the news and then discuss ways to avoid the situation or escape it if they find themselves in it. * Students will complete a life map in which they will predict different outcomes based on different sets of postsecondary choices. * Have students role-play quickly and without elaboration how they would say “no” in different situations, with the teacher making offers quickly (e.g., Do you want to skip class? Can I borrow your homework? I don’t have permission, but do you want to go for a ride with me in my dad’s new car?). |

## **Sub-Competency 2:**

Student will be able to identify the consequences associated with one’s actions in order to make constructive choices

**Sample Indicators/Learning Objectives:**

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| **Early Elementary** | **Late Elementary** | **Middle School** | **High School** |
| * With support from teachers, can discuss simple cause and effect. * Can make simple choices about activities without adult support. * Can make more complicated choices with adult support. * Identify personal goals and align one’s decision-making to achieve one’s goals. * Help students predict possible outcomes to behavioral choices in simple terms (e.g., “If I throw rocks on the playground, I may hurt someone.”). | * With adult support, can recognize the impact of one’s choices or decisions on others (family, friends, and adults) through concrete examples. * Identify goals, generate alternative responses, and evaluate consequences for a range of academic and social situations. | * Recognize the impact of one’s decisions and actions on others (family, friends, and adults) through concrete and hypothetical examples. * With encouragement from adults, can utilize a decision-making model to provide rationale for a decision. | * Identify helpful questions to ask when determining consequences of one’s decisions. * Can independently utilize a decision-making model to provide rationale for a decision. |

## **Sample Teaching Strategies:**

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| **Early Elementary** | **Late Elementary** | **Middle School** | **High School** |
| * Students will work on a group project (e.g., a simple community service activity) that leads to a group celebration. * The teacher will read a book and have students identify the problem, goals, and consequences of the characters in the book. * Students will explain some negative consequences if you make poor choices at school. | * Students will develop individualized action plans to develop positive behavior. * Students will create thought webs detailing different choices a character can make and the consequences of those choices. | * Students will look to the news or personal stories for situations where a family member’s choices affected a family positively or negatively. * Students will evaluate the ramifications of decisions they make. How do these decisions affect them, their family, and their peers? * Students will complete a decision-making model graphic organizer to determine which activity they want to participate in during a school event. * Students will identify the steps in the decision-making model and walk through it, with scenarios from history or literature. | * Students will create “what if” scenarios based on possible decisions for their future. * Students will complete a decision-making model graphic organizer to determine which elective they want to participate in during the following semester. * Students will identify the steps in the decision-making model and walk through it, with scenarios from history or literature. |

## **Sub-Competency 3:**

Student will be able to evaluate personal, ethical, safety, and civic impact of decisions.

**Sample Indicators/Learning Objectives:**

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| **Early Elementary** | **Late Elementary** | **Middle School** | **High School** |
| * With adult support, explain why unprovoked acts that hurt others are wrong. * With adult support, explain the importance of standing up for someone. | * Identify social norms (e.g., waiting patiently in line, speaking respectfully when asking for help) and safety considerations (e.g., walk rather than run in the hall, stay away from the edge of a cliff) that guide behavior. * Demonstrate the ability to respect the rights of self and others. | * Explain how to respond with empathy when making decisions in real life and on the internet. | * Demonstrate personal responsibility in making ethical decisions. * Recognize ethical, safety, and societal factors when making decisions. * Evaluate how external influences (e.g. media, peer, cultural norms) affect decision-making. |

**Sample Teaching Strategies:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Early Elementary** | **Late Elementary** | **Middle School** | **High School** |
| * Students will role-play scenarios that show ways peers can be hurt by words and actions (not physically). * Students will read stories of conflict and identify feelings and ways they could help. * Students will practice being “upstanders” in different situations. | * Students will explain the rules of a classroom game and the teacher will act out why the rules are important and what could happen if the rules were not followed. * Students will describe how a character in a text didn’t respect personal boundaries and the consequences that followed. * Students will practice taking turns and asking for things politely when there are limited resources. | * Use discussions in literature and social studies as opportunities to identify and discuss when characters or historical figures made ethical decisions. * Have students reinforce their definition of empathy through academics, movies, and the Internet. * Use discussions in literature and social studies as opportunities to identify and discuss when characters or historical figures demonstrated empathy. * Discuss how and when we can show empathy. * Students will share real-life examples; discuss and debate these decisions and their consequences. * Talk with students about safety on the Internet and cyberbullying; discuss consequences and what positive actions we can take. | * Students will make a visual map of a decision they made, what the outcome was, and potential areas for improvement. * Students will review some current event articles and detail the potential impact(s) of a decision made. * Students will journal (or write an essay) about a time they needed to make a difficult decision that they are either proud of or wish they had made a different choice. |

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