

**We make decisions every day,  
big and little.**



1. **Learning to make good decisions is a skill that will help you** grow up to be an independent, responsible, and happy adult.
2. **Build your decision making skills.** This will require time, patience and practice.
3. **Study which decisions get you more of what you want** (more fun, more independence, more time with friends, more control over your daily life) **and which decisions result in more of what you do not want** (arguments with parents, conflicts with peers, social drama, loss of privileges and adults telling you what to do) to help you learn to make good decisions.
4. **Learn from mistakes.** Choices always have consequences, not all are harsh. Mistakes play a very important role in life. Any mistake is an opportunity to learn how to handle a situation better the next time. It is not an opportunity for an adult to criticize. **Allow parents to stay involved in the process and model appropriate actions.**
5. **Work through the steps in decision making and make more of your own decisions.** Using the SODAS model (below) may help you remember some of these steps:
  - S** = Situation
  - O** = Options
  - D** = Disadvantages
  - A** = Advantages
  - S** = SolutionLearn more at: [http://www.pki.nebraska.edu/studentinfo/simp/mentoring\\_guide/SODAS%20Text.pdf](http://www.pki.nebraska.edu/studentinfo/simp/mentoring_guide/SODAS%20Text.pdf)
6. **Keep a decision journal** to write down and review all the decisions made during the day. This can help you evaluate how well you handled decisions and begin to learn how to do better.
7. **For more information** on building good decision making skills, go to:
  - *How to Teach Decision Making Skills to Adolescents Based on the Work of Patricia R. Lynn* 8, <http://www.barrycounty.org/YSB/Decisions.pdf>
  - Fact Sheet: *Decision Making/Problem Solving with Teens*, <http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/5000/pdf/5301.pdf>

*(Turn page over to begin steps to decision making and problem solving.)*

# Steps to decision making and problem solving



1. What is the problem that needs to be solved? (or state the problem)

---

2. Why is this a problem?

---

3. What are my desired results? (What do I want to see happen?)

---

4. **List 3 possible solutions.** (What can I do to get my desired results?) As you look at these, ask yourself:

a.) How will you feel afterwards? b.) How will others you value feel about you after this decision?

c.) Would you suggest the same solution to a friend?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Look at your first solution. List what may happen if you go with #1.

---

Look at your second solution. List what may happen if you go with #2.

---

Look at your third solution. List what may happen if you go with #3.

---

Pick from #1, #2, or #3. Which one works best for solving the problem?

---

5. Is this the best time to make this decision?

---

6. What resources do you need to carry out your choice?

---

7. Try out your chosen idea, test it. Did it solve the problem?

---

**We're here to help.** To learn more about UIC-Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at:

[dsccl.uic.edu](http://dsccl.uic.edu)

or like us on



[facebook.com/dsccl.uic.edu](https://facebook.com/dsccl.uic.edu)