



# DECISION MAKING

## Cool and Calm - Core Messages



### TEACHER NOTES

Helping students identify and understand specific ways they can develop effective Decision Making skills supports their growth and confidence. When students need to relax, refocus, or recoup a steady emotional state, listening to the “Core Messages: Decision Making” recording can provide that opportunity.

Once students are confident about using the recording independently, they can be encouraged to help visitors and new classmates become familiar with it.



**DURATION:** 5 minutes (individual use)

**GOALS:** [Teacher and Student Goals](#)

### MATERIALS:

- Core Messages: Decision Making Recording 1 or Recording 2 (Found under Decision Making, Individual in Evo)
- Listening equipment for individual student use
- Optional: Paper copy of [student script \(p.5-6\)](#)
- Optional: Blank paper with crayons and/or colored pencils

### PRE-TEACHING

This is a beneficial exercise for the class as a whole, so first experiencing it all together or in small groups can make this activity even more accessible when individual students go to a quiet area, put on headphones, and listen to the recording.



**MAIN POINT:** Introduce Core Messages recordings (3 minutes)

- Introduce the purpose of this activity. Include both the process (highlighting the benefits of a short, relaxing focusing activity) and the content (pointing out that the text of the recording is based on the DESSA Decision Making skills).



# DECISION MAKING

## GUIDING LANGUAGE

When we're upset or excited and want to calm ourselves, or when we're tired and want to rejuvenate, it can be helpful to take a few minutes to sit quietly and listen to a relaxing recording. It's also helpful to have a peaceful way to remind ourselves about the Decision Making skills that we're all working to strengthen.

We're going to listen this first time together as a group. Then we'll add this recording to (explain location and procedure for student use in your setting).

Choose (or invite students to choose) whether to listen to Recording 1 (female) or Recording 2 (male).

Sit in a way that's comfortable and that also helps you feel grounded. You may want to be in your chair with your feet on the ground or sitting with your back against a wall. You may wish to close your eyes to help you listen more fully, or you might want to rest your eyes on a spot on the floor or a wall, to help you focus. There's no particular way you need to sit, as long as you are comfortable and can relax and concentrate on the words we'll be hearing. If you'd like, you may draw while you're listening.

 **MAIN POINT:** Experiencing Decision Making: Core Messages (5 minutes)

- Play the Decision Making: Core Messages recording and listen to it with your students.

## GUIDING LANGUAGE

Decision Making Recording Script (p.5-6)

**MAIN POINT:** Reflection and closure (for group experience) (2 minutes)

- When the recording ends, invite a short, private reflection, followed by sharing from the group.

## GUIDING LANGUAGE

Take a moment to think about what we just listened to. What ideas really stood out for you? What was important for you, that you want to remember? Give students a moment to think and then invite students to share.



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## INDIVIDUAL STUDENT USE



### MAIN POINT

This activity works well as a stand-alone experience. If you are debriefing privately with a student who listened on his/her own, consider having a printed copy of the script as a basis for the conversation. Invite the student to point out skills in the text that they would like to pay attention to developing. Make an action plan for how you can support their growth.



### EXTENSION: Team Building

Once your group members have become very familiar with the content of the recordings through personal use, vary the ways in which they hear and/or participate in sharing the Core Messages.

- Provide copies of the Core Message text to partners, who take turns reading to each other, with a check-in at the end related to content or goals.
- Have students highlight sections of the Core messages text that are especially meaningful to them, and then share with you or a partner.
- Project the Core Messages text on an interactive board or screen, and use as a choral reading.



# DECISION MAKING

*Decision Making: A child's approach to problem solving that involves learning from others and from their own previous experiences, using their values to guide their action, and accepting responsibility for their decisions.*

**My students are able to:**

- Reflect on their abilities to build skills needed for effective decision making
- Reflect on positively stated goals related to decision making

**I am aware of my individual students' abilities to:**

- Receive affirming statements related to decision making
- Connect the Core Messages language to their own actions and intentions

**The environment I create supports my students' growth related to:**

- Developing their abilities to notice and act on times when they feel the need for a settling or refocusing activity
- Developing increased confidence in demonstrating pro-social decision making

**STUDENT:** Decision Making goals and demonstrated behaviors

**Students will:**

- Become increasingly aware of specific factors that affect decision making
- Become increasingly independent in making healthy, thoughtful decisions
- Become increasingly effective in being able to relax and rejuvenate in order to be better prepared to learn (self-management)

**DESSA DECISION MAKING INDICATORS**

I can: (Highlighted indicators are directly addressed in this lesson.)

Follow the example of a positive role model
Accept responsibility for what I did
Show good judgment
Seek advice
Learn from experience
Follow the advice of a trusted adult
Show the ability to decide between right and wrong
Use available resources (people or objects) to solve a problem



# DECISION MAKING

***I am responsible for my decisions, so I pause to remember what matters most to me, and then I do the right thing.***

I do my best to make choices based on what's most important to my life, now and in my future.  
I take time to calm myself and to think about what truly matters most to me.

What I feel affects what I think,  
And what I think affects how I feel.  
And they both affect what I DO.  
I can gain control over my feelings and thoughts.  
I have the power to pause  
and to take time to breathe  
and center into my core,  
that strong, calm part of me.  
I have the power to pause  
and to be really thoughtful  
about what matters most to me in my life.  
I use my power to help me make good decisions all day long.  
And when I ACT, my choices help me create the life I want to have.  
My actions show what's important to me!

I keep my body healthy and avoid things that could harm me.  
When I am around people who are making choices that I don't think are right, even when it's my friends, I say no and choose something else to do.  
I know that it's much better to say no in the first place, than to have to deal with the difficulties that come from making harmful choices.  
I take care of my "one and only body" the best I can!

I remember to pause and think about what's right and wrong,  
to think about the consequences of my actions,  
and what is healthy and right for my life,  
and then I make good choices and do the right thing, even when it's hard.

I know that I am responsible for my own actions.  
I can try to influence others to make good choices  
but I know that we are each responsible for our own actions.  
I can do something that's hard in the moment,  
because I know that what I do now can affect me for a long time.  
And that what I do today makes a difference to my tomorrows.



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It's important to have healthy ways to handle hard feelings  
and healthy ways to celebrate good times!  
I take great care of myself, because I am worth taking care of.

Everyone makes mistakes.  
When I do something wrong, I own up to it.  
Because I am building a strong core,  
I can accept responsibility for what I did.  
I think about what I wish I had done differently, and what went wrong,  
so I can learn from my experience,  
and I make a plan for what I will do differently in the future.

I ask for advice from people who have my best interest at heart,  
to help me with my problems and confusions,  
and with my dreams, ideas and plans.  
I try to learn from their experiences and their choices.  
I try to consider others' ideas, especially those that are different from mine.  
It can be very helpful to listen to people I trust who don't agree with me, and who see things differently  
than I do. That helps me to think things through from different viewpoints, so that I can make my best  
decisions.  
And it helps me become more confident in my beliefs and values.

Every day, I get stronger at making good choices that help me grow into the best person I can be.

***I am responsible for my decisions, so I pause to remember what matters most to me,  
and then I do the right thing.***