

HOW I DECIDE

Decision-Making Skills in K-12 Education Catalyzing the Field

The Problem

The limited attention schools currently pay to decision-making skills does not adequately prepare students for the challenges of life in the 21st century, including being able to:

Set wise personal goals and pursue them effectively.

Be productive when bombarded with distractions from our phones, computers, TVs, and gaming systems.

Maintain physical health, emotional wellbeing, and a good financial standing when advertising and social pressures encourage us to behave in ways against our best interest.

Honor core principals of equity, honesty, and respect.

Form reasonable beliefs about political and social issues when we're under assault from media tactics.

Regulate our emotions so we communicate clearly and civilly in person and through electronic media.

Engage rationally with uncertainty in the world and the future.

What How I Decide has done so far:

We've spent four years creating, distributing, and marketing our own programs which cover mindfulness, habit formation, how to structure major decisions, and making better predictions.



How we're changing:

How I Decide wants to accelerate the awareness and adoption of strategies to improve youth decision skills, so we want to build the field: now we are focusing on identifying, coordinating, and amplifying the efforts of others including academic researchers, educators, policy makers, funders, and influencers who are working on solving the problem.



Who Can Help

Academic Researchers •
Educators • Policy Makers •
Instructional Content &
Platform Developers •
Thought Leaders • Funders

What We Need to Do

We need to identify, support, and facilitate the translation of lessons learned from basic and applied research about decision making into effective learning experiences that become a core part of every school's mission and every student's experience.

What would a strong field look like?

- Standards of codified practices
- A knowledge base built on credible research
- Leadership and grassroots support that advances the field
- Sufficient funding and supportive policies

"The Strong Field Framework" (2009)

Build the Field of K-12 Decision-Making Skills with

HOW I DECIDE

If I am...	How I Decide may be able to unite me with...
<p>An Academic Researcher (Cognitive Psychology, Educational Psychology, Behavioral Economics, Neuroscience)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for studies involving K-12 students and developing measurement tools • Conferences where I can present my findings • PR to promote my work to mainstream audiences • Research partners in complementary fields • Education partners in K-12 school systems
<p>An Educator (Classroom Teacher, Administrators)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New instructional materials that promote decision-making skills • Training and support for instructional materials • Platforms for collaborating with teachers at other schools who are trying similar new approaches • Assessments to evaluate new instructional approaches
<p>An Instructional Content Developer (Textbook Writer, Online Course Developer, Game Developer, Decision Tool Developer, Museum Staff)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Access to schools where I can test my materials • Partnerships with researchers who can validate my program(s) • Guidance on educational standards and endorsements • PR to promote my work to a wider audience
<p>A Policy Maker (Standards Organizations, Catalyst in Related Fields, Related Associations and Societies, Evaluators)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences where I can present my ideas and learn from academic researchers and practitioners • Help to develop the decision-making skills component of my organization's standards • Representatives from organizations focused on decision-making skills who want to develop standards and gain approval from the government
<p>A Thought Leader (Mainstream Press, Bloggers, Journals and Specialty Press, Popular Authors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audiences interested in my ideas • Instructional designers who can develop curriculum materials based on my work • Academic researchers who can conduct studies to test the long-term impacts of my ideas • PR to promote my message to the general public
<p>A Funder (Government Grantors, Nonprofits, Family Foundations, Individual Donors)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vetted projects that align with the causes I want to support. • Guidance regarding research, promising opportunities, and valid measures • Conferences where I can learn from practitioners and researchers

How our collaboration on introducing decision-making skills into K-12 education can benefit society:

Improved physical health
Decreased anxiety and depression
Increased savings and less debt

Increased productivity
Improved educational policy making
More informed and productive political discourse

For more information or to connect with How I Decide contact Dr. Sweeney at

Joe@HowIDecide.org