

## Purpose of the Lesson

The purpose of this lesson is to provide students with effective communication strategies and equip students with the skills to make healthy decisions. Students will practice decision-making using **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** and effective communication skills in scenarios that include making the healthy choice to avoid dangerous situations. Students will identify possible consequences from making unhealthy choices and gain confidence with how to handle these situations through skill practice and class discussion.

## National Health Education Standards

### Standard 4: Interpersonal Communication

*Performance Indicator 4.8.2: Demonstrate the use of effective verbal and nonverbal communication to avoid drug use.*

*Performance Indicator 4.8.3: Demonstrate the use of effective strategies to avoid riding in a motor vehicle with a driver under the influence of drugs.*

### Standard 5: Decision Making

*Performance Indicator 5.8.7: Choose a healthy alternative when making a decision related to other drug use.*

## Healthy Behavior Outcome (HBO)

*Make healthy decisions regarding drug use.*

## Lesson Objectives

*Students will be able to:*

Objective	Assessment
1. Identify the negative social, physical and psychological impact of substance abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decision-Making Practice; Scenario Practice Sheet</li></ul>
2. Identify appropriate and inappropriate reasons why a person would use a drug.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decision-Making Practice; Scenario Practice Sheet</li></ul>
3. Identify consequences associated with dangerous behaviors associated with substance abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bell Ringer Question</li></ul>
4. Apply the STOP, THINK, CHOOSE decision-making model to make healthy choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Decision-Making Practice</li></ul>

**Time:** 45 - 55 minutes

# HOPE

Health and Opioid  
Prevention Education

8th GRADE  
LESSON 3

Effective Communication to  
Facilitate Healthy Choices

## Materials

*Assessments and Worksheet*

- **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** Decision-Making Notes (*Attachment 1*); Decision-Making Practice Scenarios (*Attachment 2a, 2b, and 2c*); Teacher Key for Decision-Making Practice Scenarios (*Attachment 3a, 3b, and 3c*), Decision-Making Rubric for Scenarios 1–3 (*Attachment 4*), Scenario Practice Sheets (*Attachment 5a, 5b, and 5c*), Scenario Answer Sheets (*Attachment 6a, 6b, and 6c*).

## References

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/drugged-driving>

## Introduction

Today we are going to review the **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** decision-making model and apply this model to different scenarios. You will identify possible consequences associated with substance abuse and use effective communication to make healthy decisions.

## Teaching Steps

### Activity 1: Bell Ringer Question

- Pick a dangerous situation associated with substance abuse. For example, using prescription drugs recreationally, riding in a car with an impaired driver, injecting drugs, etc. What are the possible consequences for this dangerous behavior?
  - **Possible Answers:** impairment, death, loss of relationship, disease transmission, etc.
- To avoid these consequences, we must make healthy decisions. Today we'll practice making healthy choices using **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE**.

### Activity 2: STOP, THINK, CHOOSE

- **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** Decision-Making Model:
  - **Step 1:** Introduce **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** model. Why it is important?
  - **Step 2:** Distribute the **STOP, THINK, CHOOSE** notes (*Attachment 1*) and review each step.
  - **Step 3:** Complete the first scenario together as a class.
    - Distribute the *Decision-Making Practice* (*Attachment 2*) and have students apply the STOP, THINK, CHOOSE decision-making model by answering the questions for each scenario.
  - **Step 4:** Students can work individually or with a partner on the next two scenarios. (*Attachments 2b and 2c*)
  - **Step 5:** Debrief final two scenario answers as a class.
- Debrief Scenarios: *See Teacher Key* (*Attachment 3*)

### Activity 3: Getting Help and Effective Communication

- *In this activity, you will recognize the need to get help and apply effective communication skills to receive the help that is needed.*
- *The scenarios you practiced had you respond to a substance abuse situation on your own, but sometimes we need help making difficult decisions or when we have something heavy on our mind. It is important for your safety, and success in life, to reach out to a trusted adult when you are faced with a situation that could have many possible outcomes. When life becomes stressful, we need to reach out to others before the weight we are carrying becomes too much.*
- *What can happen if we ignore the fact that we need help from others?*
  - **Possible Student Answers:** Stress, anxiety, depression, poor choices, struggle in school, poor relationships with others, abuse drugs, struggle in sports, etc.
- *What people, or other resources, could we reach out to when we need help?*
  - **Possible Student Answers:** Parents/Guardians, teachers, school nurse, counselor, clergy, local health clinic, coach, neighbor, extended family, hot line, Boys & Girls Club, family doctor, etc.
- *How can you ask for help?*
  - **Possible Student Answers:** Be clear; ask for guidance to help solve the problem.
  - Who, or what resources, can you use to help in these situations?
- Discuss as a class, coping strategies or healthy alternatives in these challenging situations.

### Lesson Summary

Today you learned the steps in the decision-making process and practiced how to ask for help to make a healthy choices.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**STOP, THINK, CHOOSE  
DECISION-MAKING NOTES****STOP**

- What's happening? Assess the situation.
  - I am faced with a problem that needs a decision. Defining the problem helps to process through the decision that needs to be made to solve the problem.

**THINK**

- What are the options?
  - There can be multiple options; brainstorm options.
- What are the advantages (pros or benefits) for each option?
- What are the disadvantages (cons) for each option?
- Does this option fit with my values?
  - What is important to me?
  - What will I sacrifice if I make this decision?
- How would my loved ones feel about this option?
  - Family, friends, coaches, teachers, etc.
- Will this decision impact me for better or worse?
  - Is it going to solve the problem or make things worse?

**CHOOSE**

- What is the BEST option? Why?





## STOP, THINK, CHOOSE DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE

Directions: Answer the STOP, THINK, CHOOSE questions for each scenario.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scenario 1

A couple of “cool kids” ask you to skip school after second period. They say, “You won’t get caught and it will be a lot of fun. We have an awesome batch of smack and you have to try it!” You are nervous, but this is your chance to hang out with the popular kids.

**STOP: WHAT’S HAPPENING? ASSESS THE SITUATION.**

**THINK: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?**

OPTION 1:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others::
	Disadvantages:	
OPTION 2:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others::
	Disadvantages:	
OPTION 3:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others::
	Disadvantages:	

### After finishing your table:

1. Write a **V** next to the option(s) that would fit with your values.
2. Draw a **HEART** next to the options your loved ones would approve of.
3. Draw a **SMILEY FACE** next to the healthy choices
4. **CIRCLE** the option that is your decision.



## STOP, THINK, CHOOSE DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE

Directions: Answer the STOP, THINK, CHOOSE questions for each scenario.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scenario 2

Your mom has not been herself lately and you are concerned. You went into her room to talk with her, but instead you see her injecting something into her arm. You freeze and don't know what to do.

**STOP: WHAT'S HAPPENING? ASSESS THE SITUATION.**

**THINK: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?**

OPTION 1:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others:
	Disadvantages:	
OPTION 2:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others:
	Disadvantages:	
OPTION 3:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others:
	Disadvantages:	

### After finishing your table:

1. Write a **V** next to the option(s) that would fit with your values.
2. Draw a **HEART** next to the options your loved ones would approve of.
3. Draw a **SMILEY FACE** next to the healthy choices
4. **CIRCLE** the option that is your decision.

## STOP, THINK, CHOOSE DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE



Directions: Answer the STOP, THINK, CHOOSE questions for each scenario.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scenario 3

You are stressed out with everything going on in your life: School, sports, and a new babysitting job on the weekends. You are tired and feel as though you cannot keep up with all your responsibilities. You talk to your friend and they offer you some of their brother's Addys (Adderall). You have a decision to make.

**STOP: WHAT'S HAPPENING? ASSESS THE SITUATION.**

**THINK: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?**

OPTION 1:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others:
	Disadvantages:	
OPTION 2:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others:
	Disadvantages:	
OPTION 3:	Advantages:	Possible outcomes to self and others:
	Disadvantages:	

### After finishing your table:

1. Write a **V** next to the option(s) that would fit with your values.
2. Draw a **HEART** next to the options your loved ones would approve of.
3. Draw a **SMILEY FACE** next to the healthy choices
4. **CIRCLE** the option that is your decision.

## TEACHER KEY FOR DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE

### Scenario 1

#### STOP: WHAT'S HAPPENING? ASSESS THE SITUATION.

Pressure from popular kids to skip school and use *smack*.

#### THINK: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

<b>Option 1: Tell them, "No thanks. I'm good."</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> You stay safe.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> Social life will be compromised and the kids might be annoyed/mad.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> They may not talk to you anymore.	
<b>Option 2: Skip school, but don't use any drugs.</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> "Cool kids" will let you hang with them.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> Possible trouble with the school and the law. Family will be disappointed. Risk of being kicked off sports team and eliminated from school clubs. This could risk opportunities in the future. Could still be pressured to use drugs.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> Risk of getting in trouble and still can be guilty by association even if you did not use or touch the drugs.	
<b>Option 3: Make an excuse: "I have a meeting to get extra help in math today."</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> Takes the pressure off you from going.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> Possibility of being asked again in the future.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> It only delays the situation; they could ask again in the future. This could be a good time to distance yourself from this group of peers.	



## TEACHER KEY FOR DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE

### Scenario 2

**STOP: WHAT’S HAPPENING? ASSESS THE SITUATION.**

An adult in your family is possibly abusing drugs.

**THINK: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?**

<b>Option 1: Tell another family member or trusted adult about what you saw.</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> You get the help you need from a trusted adult to help your family member and you get the help needed.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> You get the help you need from a trusted adult to help your family member and you get the help needed.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> The family member might be mad that other family members know about her addiction.	
<b>Option 2: Angrily confront your family member and call 911 for help.</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> They get the help they need right away.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> Confrontation can lead to negative consequences such as arguments, safety of you and the other person, or lead to another crisis.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> They might be upset authorities were called.	
<b>Option 3: Ignore what you saw and hope they get better on their own.</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> Don’t put effort toward the problem.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> The family member doesn’t get the help they need. There could be additional negative consequences to the family member, yourself and others around you.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> The addiction continues.	

**TEACHER KEY FOR  
DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE****Scenario 3****STOP: WHAT'S HAPPENING? ASSESS THE SITUATION.**

You are offered Adderall by a friend; it is not your prescription.

**THINK: WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?**

<b>Option 1: Take the Adderall</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> You have a temporary surge of energy, but you could also feel other unhealthy side effects.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> Addiction.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> Can be the start of an addiction or any other consequences of drug misuse including your physical, social and emotional health.	
<b>Option 2: Find healthier ways to handle stress: read a book, listen to music, more rest, eliminate extra activities, etc.</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> You stay safe.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> You may have to limit some activities in your schedule.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> You will have to put in effort to find healthy strategies to handle stress.	
<b>Option 3: Tell your friend, "No thank you. I don't want to take that stuff. That is dangerous and can make my stress even worse!"</b>	<b>Advantages:</b> You stay safe.	<b>Possible outcomes to self and others:</b> You stay safe.
	<b>Disadvantages:</b> Your friend may be annoyed with you; they were trying to help. May strain the friendship temporarily.	

**DECISION-MAKING PRACTICE RUBRIC**

Objective	3	2	1
<b>THINK: Options</b>	Describes at least two realistic and possible options for the scenario	Identifies two options for this scenario.	Describes only one or no appropriate options for the decision.
<b>Advantages (Pros)</b>	Describes in detail the multiple advantages and disadvantages for each option.	Identifies at least one advantages and one disadvantage for each option.	Does not identify any appropriate advantage or disadvantage of either option.
<b>Consequences</b>	Describes two or more consequences with detail or information for each option	List a consequence of choosing each option.	Does not identify an appropriate consequence for either option.
<b>Decision</b>	Identifies a decision that is the best opportunity to have a positive impact on health.	Identifies a decision to be made that has the potential to have a positive impact on health.	Does not identify their decision.
<b>Actions and Communication</b>	Shares specific statements and/or describes specific actions that align with the decision, align with the characteristics of effective refusal skills and will lead to a healthy outcome for self and others.	Shares specific statements and/or describes actions that will lead to a healthy outcome for the individual.	Does not share appropriate statements or actions that would lead to a positive outcome for the individual or other members in the scenario.

## ASKING FOR HELP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scenario 1

*Directions:* Each scenario will require help from either a person or community resource. Read each scenario and answer the questions after each one.

You just started your sports season. Practices are from 7:00-9:30 at night and you have challenging AP and honors courses. Your schedule has been challenging to keep up with your homework load, but you love playing the sport you have played since you were young. You are staying up late, exhausted during the day, and now your performance on the court and in the classroom is being impacted in a negative way. **You have decided to get some help.**

1. Why is help needed in this situation?

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2. Identify resources (people or places) that can support you to make healthy choices. List at least 3.

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3. Pick one resource. Write out what you would say to ask for help.

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## ASKING FOR HELP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scenario 2

*Directions:* Each scenario will require help from either a person or community resource. Read each scenario and answer the questions after each one.

You just moved and are starting the year at a new high school. You are very anxious about the first day of school. **You want to meet people, but don't know where to begin.**

1. Why is help needed in this situation?

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2. Identify resources (people or places) that can support you to make healthy choices. List at least 3.

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3. Pick one resource. Write out what you would say to ask for help.

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## ASKING FOR HELP

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Scenario 3

*Directions:* Each scenario will require help from either a person or community resource. Read each scenario and answer the questions after each one.

You just found out that your parents are getting a divorce. You have a lot of feelings inside, but you keep them repressed. You are nervous about how your life will change. **Everything is happening so fast and you are very overwhelmed.**

1. Why is help needed in this situation?

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2. Identify resources (people or places) that can support you to make healthy choices. List at least 3.

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3. Pick one resource. Write out what you would say to ask for help.

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## ASKING FOR HELP ANSWER KEY

### Scenario 1

You just started your sports season. Practices are from 7:00-9:30 at night and you have challenging AP and honors courses. Your schedule has been challenging to keep up with your homework load, but you love playing the sport you have played since you were young. You are staying up late, exhausted during the day, and now your performance on the court and in the classroom is being impacted in a negative way. **You have decided to get some help.**

1. Why is help needed in this situation?

*Help is needed in this situation because of the additional time commitment to your sports season along with your difficult homework load. The demands from these obligations are starting to impact your daily tasks in a negative way (your health due to lack of sleep, academic struggles, and poor athletic performance).*

2. Identify resources (people or places) that can support you to make healthy choices. List at least 3.

*Possible resources include: Coaches, teachers, parents, tutoring groups, school counselor, school nurse, athletic trainer, family doctor, etc.*

3. Pick one resource. Write out what you would say to ask for help.

*Items in this response may include: Asking when it is a convenient time to talk to the trusted adult; being clear about what you need help with; and asking for guidance to solve your problem. It is also good to talk to and use more than one resource.*

*Here is an example:*

*Coach: "Excuse me coach, is this a good time I could talk with you? I am struggling with a couple courses and my grades are starting to slip. Do you have any advice that could help me? I really want to do well on the court and in the classroom."*

## ASKING FOR HELP ANSWER KEY

### Scenario 2

You just moved and are starting the year at a new high school. You are very anxious about the first day of school. **You want to meet people, but don't know where to begin.**

1. Why is help needed in this situation?

*Help is needed in this situation because you are a new student going to a different high school and you do not know anyone. You need help getting involved in school activities so you can meet others.*

2. Identify resources (people or places) that can support you to make healthy choices. List at least 3.

*Possible resources include: Athletic director, school counselor, school club advisor, parents, youth group, school principal, neighborhood peers, etc.*

3. Pick one resource. Write out what you would say to ask for help.

*Items in this response may include: Asking when it is a convenient time to talk to the trusted adult; being clear about what you need help with; and asking for guidance to solve your problem. It is also good to talk to and use more than one resource.*

*Here is an example:*

*School Counselor: "Excuse me Mr./ Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, is this a good time I could talk with you? I am very anxious for the first day of school and would like some help meeting new people. Do you have any ideas that could help me meet other students before the first day of school?"*



## ASKING FOR HELP ANSWER KEY

### Scenario 3

You just found out that your parents are getting a divorce. You have a lot of feelings inside, but you keep them repressed. You are nervous about how your life will change. **Everything is happening so fast and you are very overwhelmed.**

1. Why is help needed in this situation?

*Help is needed in this situation because you just found out that your parents are getting a divorce and you have many feelings that you don't know how to handle. You need help with all the changes the divorce will have in your life.*

2. Identify resources (people or places) that can support you to make healthy choices. List at least 3.

*Possible resources include: Parents, family doctor, school counselor, teachers, coach, clergy, community resource for individual/group/family counseling, etc.*

3. Pick one resource. Write out what you would say to ask for help.

*Items in this response may include: Asking when it is a convenient time to talk to the trusted adult; being clear about what you need help with; and asking for guidance to solve your problem. It is also good to talk to and use more than one resource.*

*Here is an example:*

*Teacher: "Excuse me Mr./ Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, is this a good time I could talk with you? I have been very overwhelmed lately because I just found out that my parents are getting a divorce. I have a lot of feelings inside and I don't know what to do. Can you help me?"*