



# *Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report Guide*

**KU** KANSAS UNIVERSITY CENTER  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES

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Life Span Institute

## SELF-DETERMINATION INVENTORY STUDENT REPORT GUIDE

### What is this guide?

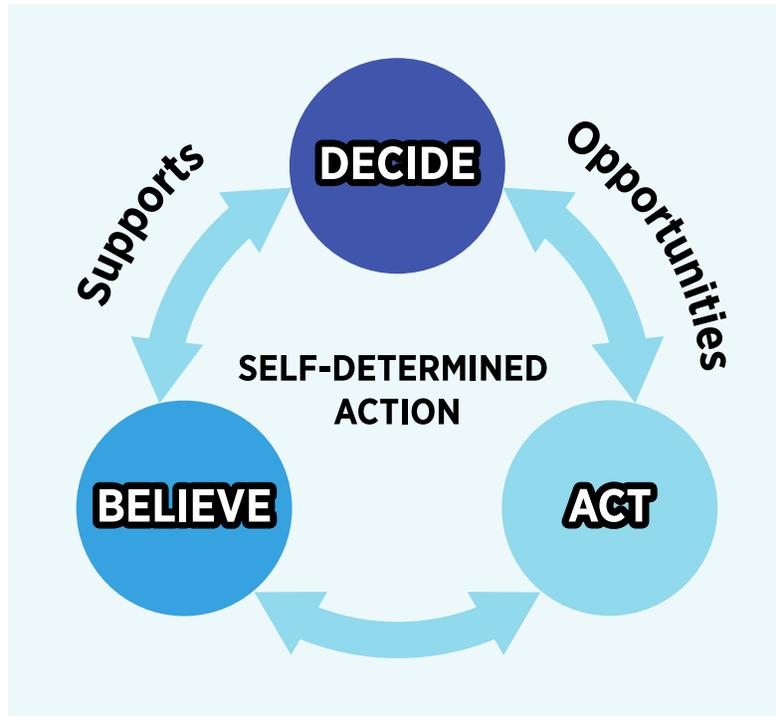
- If you are reading this, you have probably completed the Self-Determination Inventory (if you haven't, you can click [here](#), to take it. This guide will tell you more about what your score on the Self-Determination Inventory means and how you can use it in your life.
- We are excited you want to learn more about self-determination! A first step in becoming the person you want to be is learning more about self-determination and what it means in your life.
- This guide will tell you about:
  - Self-determination
  - Ways to increase your self-determination abilities (like setting goals, making plans, deciding how you feel about your progress)
  - Ways others can support you in building self-determination

### What is Self-Determination?

- Self-determination is about *acting* or *causing* things to happen in your life, with the right amount of support from others.
- As you become more self-determined, you develop more ideas about what you want and how you can go after it.
- You also know how to change your goals over time, especially as you learn more and get input from other people who are important to you.
- Self-determined people are “problem-solvers” because they figure out how to reach goals at school, home, work, and the community – even if they run into problems.
- There are big words that are used to describe the actions you take when you are self-determined but here's an easy way to remember:
  - Volitional Action or **DECIDE what to do (set a goal)**.
  - Agentive Action or **ACT to move closer to your goal**.
  - Action-Control Beliefs or **BELIEVE you can achieve your goal**.
- As you grow in your self-determination, there are actions you will learn more about and find opportunities to practice in different places, like school, work, home, and the community. This guide can help you do that!



## Self-Determined Actions



- I use my strengths and areas of need to identify goals.
- I choose goals based on my vision for future.



- I work to solve problems as I move towards my goals.
- I think about different pathways to get around barriers to my goals.



- I feel empowered to take action toward my goals.
- I know I can do things and be supported as I work towards my goals.

## Skills Associated with Self-Determination

Icon	Skill	Description
	Choice making	Picking from two or more options based on what you need or want to move you closer to your goals
	Decision making	Finding different options and weighing the pros and cons to choose the best one based on your goals
	Problem solving	Identifying and evaluating possible ways to overcome a barrier you encounter as you work towards a goal
	Goal setting and attainment	Creating a plan and taking steps to achieve the goals you set for yourself
	Planning	Thinking about the steps you need to take to reach a specific goal and figuring out the best way to take steps forward
	Self-management	Figuring out how to pay attention to what you are doing so you can decide if your actions are moving you closer to your goals, and making adjustments as you need to so that you can take the actions you want
	Self-advocacy	Speaking up for yourself based on your needs, rights, and goals
	Self-awareness	Learning about yourself and your needs, dreams, and goals
	Self-knowledge	Developing more and more understanding of what your dreams are, how others can support you in achieving them, and how to build a long-term vision for the future.

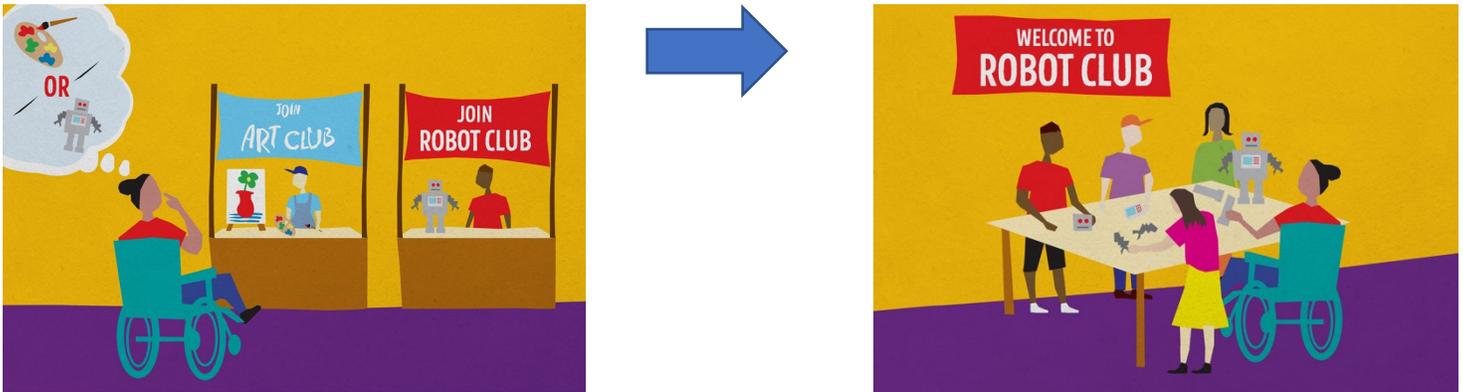
Remember, self-determination:

- looks different for everyone and changes over time.
- is about knowing your strengths and your growth opportunities, and sometimes being self-determined might be asking others for ideas and supports.

The following pages will tell you more about self-determined actions – **DECIDE, ACT, BELIEVE**

## DECIDE (Volitional Action)

Here is an example of what DECIDING may look like:



Imagine you attend a Club Fair at your high school to learn about the clubs you could join. After taking a look at the many different options, you choose to find out more about Art Club and Robot Club, including what kind of activities are offered and when each club meets. You like listening to drawing and building robots. After considering the pros and cons of joining each club, you decide the activities offered through Robot Club might help you decide what you want to do after high school. On Club Day the following week, you make plans for someone to pick you up later from school so you can attend the first meeting of the Robot Club!

### How is this DECIDING?

- In this example, you were interested in joining a club, but you needed more information before you could DECIDE which club was the one best fit for you!
- Identifying **what you know** and **what must change for you to learn what you don't know** are important activities to complete in the process of setting a goal.

### What Can I Do?

- ✓ **DECIDE** on what your *goal(s)* based on your preferences, interests, strengths, and needs!
- ✓ **DECIDE** what must change for you to learn what you don't know.
  - Do you need to change something about yourself or change something about the environment around you?
- ✓ **DECIDE** which of your needs is most important to work on first!

**What does it look like to DECIDE ...**

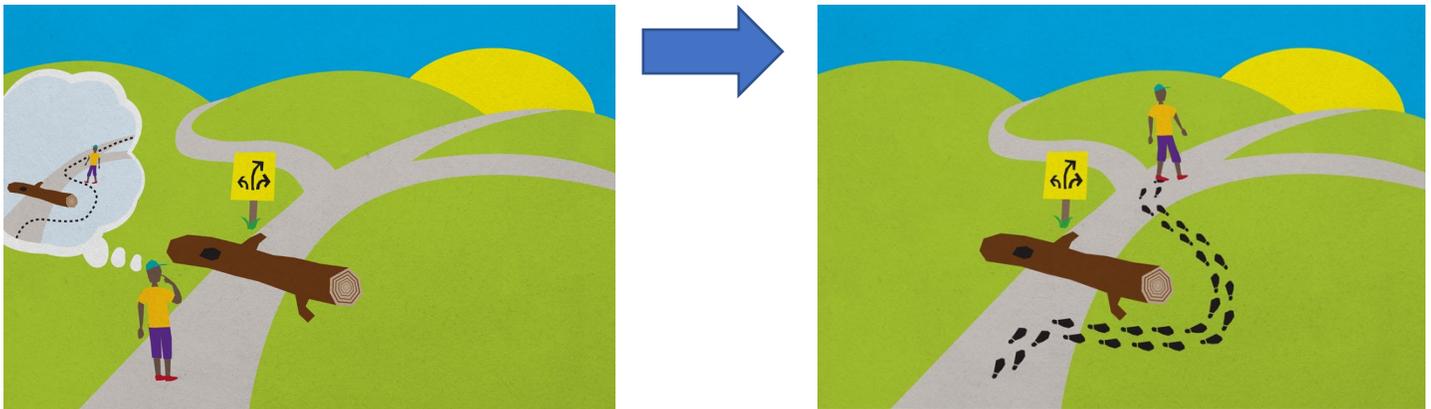
<b>At School?</b>	<b>At Work?</b>	<b>At Home?</b>	<b>In the Community?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with your teachers to pick classes that will provide you with skills you need later in life.</li> <li>• Ask your teachers to support you identify the resources you need to complete an assignment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with your supervisor to decide on a goal for tasks you are working on.</li> <li>• Ask a co-worker to show you how they do a new task you haven't done before.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your family what is most useful around the house and choose a chore to do to help out.</li> <li>• Talk with family members to plan when you should go to bed to make sure you get enough sleep.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify fun or new places you would like to go with family and friends.</li> <li>• Talk to others about what supports might be helpful for you in adulthood.</li> </ul>

**How Can Others (like Teachers, Family Members) Support Me (you can share this list with these people!) ...**

<b>At School?</b>	<b>At Work?</b>	<b>At Home?</b>	<b>In the Community?</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with you to create opportunities to make choices.</li> <li>• Support you to participate in planning meetings and in small group assignments with peers in class.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with you to set goals related to job tasks to build more skills.</li> <li>• Talk with you about career pathways.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about what goals look like around the house.</li> <li>• Support you to identify things that are going well and ways that you can grow.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with you to find community activities and volunteer opportunities.</li> <li>• Support you in figuring out how to manage appointments you need to schedule, such as the doctor, dentist, or counselor</li> </ul>

## ACT (Agentic Action)

Here is an example of what ACTING may look like:



Imagine you have always wanted to see the sunset. You decide to take a walk to the perfect location to watch. On the way there, you encounter a huge tree branch across your path. You think about what you can do to keep going on the best path to get to the perfect spot to see your first sunset. Although you could have given up and turned around, you know if you did this you could not achieve your goal of seeing a sunset. You think about what you can do to get around this barrier and decide you will simply have to go around the barrier on the path!

### How is this ACTING?

- In this example, you identified the tree branch as a barrier and decided you needed to ACT by going around it, so you could reach your goal of seeing the sun set.
- Identifying **what could keep you from taking action** and **what you can do to remove any barriers** are important activities to complete in the process of developing and implementing an action plan to reach your goal.

### What Can I Do?

- ✓ **ACT** by directly facing challenges and opportunities you encounter while working toward your goal(s).
- ✓ **ACT** to ask others for strategies to overcome *barriers*!
- ✓ **ACT** by creating a plan to reach your goal(s) and deciding how you will self-monitor your progress and get feedback from key people in your life.

### What does it look like to ACT ...

At School?	At Work?	At Home?	In the Community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm challenges you may have in your classes and who can help with those challenges.</li> <li>• Ask your teacher or friends what works for them to overcome barriers at school and think about ways you might use their ideas to overcome your own barriers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about how you will communicate to your supervisor when you don't understand what you are supposed to do.</li> <li>• Consider how you could use your phone to keep track of what you need to do and when it should be finished.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come up with ideas on how you will remind yourself when chores need to be completed (like a sticky note or checklist).</li> <li>• Ask your family to help with creating a family schedule and goals that you can all monitor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make a plan to evaluate what you need to learn to do in order to request supports in the community.</li> <li>• Get examples from teachers and friends of how you can use a calendar to keep track of all your appointments.</li> </ul>

### How Can Others (like Teachers, Family Members) Support Me...

At School?	At Work?	At Home?	In the Community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to you about what you can do when something goes wrong so you can learn from mistakes.</li> <li>• Support you to understand how you can advocate for your rights, and work toward goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with you to come up with a plan to monitor when things get completed</li> <li>• Ask you about how to support you to use strategies like self-scheduling when completing tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use, as a family, visual reminders of chores and the plan for getting them done.</li> <li>• Collaborate to create family goals such as planning a vacation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With support, identify and practice how you will share things about yourself like your preferences, interests, strengths, and needs.</li> <li>• Make a plan for learning to use public transportation.</li> </ul>

## BELIEVE (Action-Control Beliefs)

Here is an example of what BELIEVING may look like:

It's the first day of school, and you are so excited! As you listen to one of your instructors talk about what it will take to be successful in their class, you imagine the feeling of accomplishment you will have when you graduate. As the day goes on, you realize there are some areas, like writing a complete paragraph, where you are going to need some support. You ask your instructor where you might get some extra help, and they refer you to a wonderful tutor. On graduation day, you think back on all you have learned and accomplished. You are one step closer to reaching your goal.



### How is this BELIEVING?

- In this example, you identified what you needed to learn (writing a complete paragraph) and the supports that could help you with this need (a tutor), and on graduation day, you recognize that your actions have led to reaching your goal. This tells you important things about what you need in the future to be successful in meeting your next goal!
- Identifying **what you have learned** and **if you learned what you wanted to know** are important activities when evaluating if you reached your goal.

### What Can I Do?

- ✓ **BELIEVE** that you can use your skills and the resources (people, supports) around you to reach a goal.
- ✓ **BELIEVE** that you have what it takes to reach your goals when you try.
- ✓ **BELIEVE** that you can monitor your actions to determine if you have reached your goal.

### What does it look like to BELIEVE ...

At School?	At Work?	At Home?	In the Community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing you can be successful in your classes with the supports you need.</li> <li>• Using what you know about your personal strengths to join sports and clubs you enjoy.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning what supports you need to reach your goals (like getting to work on time or completing tasks accurately) and taking steps to access those supports.</li> <li>• Working hard to follow the steps you've set to reach your goal and recognizing that your actions have helped you become more efficient and a great employee!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating yourself for taking steps toward your goal (like using a checklist to know what chores you need to complete).</li> <li>• Recognizing that your relationships and networks are important to reaching your goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Figuring out how you can keep growing in your goal setting skills and what you want to do different in the future.</li> <li>• Talking about the actions you've taken with people you trust to understand your personal strengths and needs and how they influence your goals.</li> </ul>

**How Can Others (like Teachers, Family Members) Support Me (you can share this list with these people!) ...**

At School?	At Work?	At Home?	In the Community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with you about the actions that helped you reach your goals</li> <li>• Support you to understand what worked and what you may need to do differently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on how your problem solving helped you make progress toward your goals.</li> <li>• Support you in thinking about the future; how are your future goals influenced by what you have learned?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about ways you can support family goals and collaborate to plan action steps.</li> <li>• Encourage you to continue to follow the steps you've planned to follow to reach your goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help you to identify your strengths and apply them to increase your involvement in and access to your community.</li> <li>• Support you to self-evaluate steps you've taken to access services.</li> </ul>

**Next Steps:**

1. Celebrate the work you have already done to grow and make things happen in your life!
2. Share this guide with key people who can support you.
3. Plan together to identify the supports you need to set goals and take action as you grow in your self-determination abilities.