



## Making Choices

This activity supports pupils to explore different scenarios and make choices for themselves about what they would do in those situations. Since it provides useful practice at making decisions in difficult circumstances, **teachers could use the suggested scenarios once a week, intentionally** for the duration of this Learning Unit

Once teachers and pupils are familiar with the strategy it can be used responsively, as real situations arise, to help pupils develop ways of resolving issues on their own using the structure in the example lesson plan.

**The aim of these sessions is for pupils to think about and come to their own decisions, not to just reiterate the 'right answer' for the teacher.**

All thoughts and ideas should be accepted without comment - **Accepting pupil's negative reactions without comment is important.** Often bravado will lead to negative statements which are designed to challenge the teacher/adult – so be prepared to accept all suggestions by perhaps using a non-committal phrase such as 'You might do that'.

The sessions can be run in small groups or as a whole class with small group discussions. In some cases a small group can provide the safe and secure environment in which to discuss feelings and develop new skills. It would be advisable, once teachers have decided on a structure, to keep it constant from week to week. In order for any group to be successful, they need to contain good role models so pupils can learn from one another. It is also important that there is a balanced gender mix and the pupils are of similar age.

## Running the sessions with a whole class

The sessions are intended to be short, sharp and enjoyable. It is recommended that to support effective discussion and problem solving amongst the pupils that the class teacher has the support of learning support assistants. In Classroom and Teaching Resources - the **Making Choices Guide** there is an example lesson plan and a simple lesson structure which could be used as a basic structure for all the sessions. Whole class sessions will need approximately 50-60 minutes. Small group sessions should last between 30-40 minutes.

The aim of the sessions is for pupils to discuss a range of options in any given scenario which will then provide the opportunity for them to explore the consequences of their suggested options and their associated feelings and beliefs. **Teachers should not be seeking the 'right answer' to any particular scenario or problem presented to the group and should avoid making any judgemental statements.** At the end of the sessions there could be an opportunity for the teacher to ask pupils to raise their hands if they have made a choice as to what they personally would do in the given circumstances and possibly explain their thinking rather than state their chosen option. **There are no right answers.**