




*Teaching Self-Determination  
Skills to Students with  
Disabilities*

**KU** KANSAS UNIVERSITY CENTER  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES  

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**Life Span Institute**




Self-determination  
enables people to  
***support*** themselves to  
go after what they want  
and need

## SELF-DETERMINATION TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

“I choose where to live. I like my job. I like what I do. I have a family. I spend time with my family and friends.”

“It’s being able to advocate for myself and others too if they need it.”

“Self-determination is being able to talk about what you want in your life and set goals and dreams for yourself. You have to go do something or you won’t be anything at all.”



Being self-  
determined means  
causing things to  
happen in your life.




# Key Elements of a Definition of Self-Determination

- **Disposition**
- **Causal Agent**
- **Goal Driven**

## SKILLS ASSOCIATED WITH SELF-DETERMINATION

- Choice-making
- Decision-making
- Problem-solving
- Goal-setting and attainment
- Self-management
- Self-advocacy
- Self-awareness
- Self-knowledge



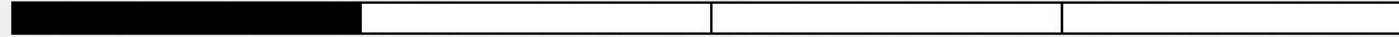
How many of you  
or people you  
know would  
benefit from  
support in one or  
more of these  
areas?

## *Self-Determination Inventory: Student Report (SDI:SR)/ Parent/Teacher Report (SDI:PTR)*

- 21 items (takes approximately 10 minutes to complete)
- Validated for adolescents with and without disabilities aged 13 to 22 in U.S. (Spanish and ASL version also available)
- Online with accessibility features:
  - ✓ In-text word definitions
  - ✓ Audio playback
  - ✓ Tablet compatibility
  - ✓ Average grade reading level: 2.8

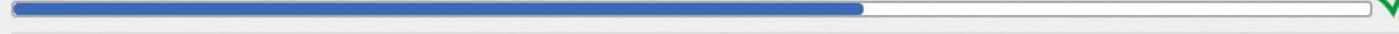
## Student Survey

Amount of the survey you've completed:



I have what it takes to reach my goals. ▶

Disagree



Agree ✓

I think of more than one way to solve a problem. ▶

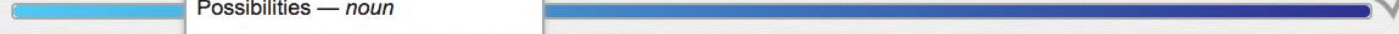
Disagree



Agree ✓

I consider many possibilities when I make plans for my future. ▶

Disagree

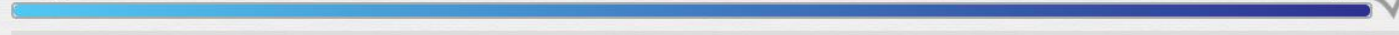


Agree ✓

Possibilities — noun  
a. Something that might happen

I know what I do best. ▶

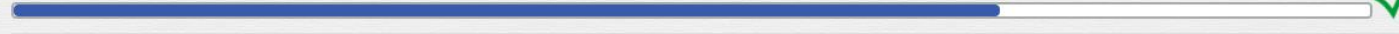
Disagree



Agree ✓

I plan weekend activities I like to do. ▶

Disagree



Agree ✓

I keep trying even after I get something wrong. ▶

Disagree



Agree ✓

I set my own goals. ▶

Disagree



Agree ✓



# STUDENT AND PARENT/TEACHER REPORT GUIDE

**SELF-DETERMINATION.ORG**

Self-Determination  
Self-Report (SDI)  
Student Report Guide

**KU BEACH CENTER ON DISABILITY**  
Life Span Institute

**Essential Characteristics of Self-Determined Action**

- Volitional Action**
  - Autonomy
  - Self-Initiation
- Agentic Action**
  - Pathways Thinking
  - Self-Direction
  - Self-Regulation
- Action-Control Beliefs**
  - Control-Expectancy
  - Psychological Empowerment
  - Self-Realization

**Volitional Action**  
Making intentional, conscious choices based on one's preferences and values.

Teaching and creating opportunities in choice-making, decision-making, setting, problem solving, and planning skills enables volitional action.

**Autonomy**  
**Definition:** Acting based on one's preferences, interests and abilities without undue outside influence.  
**Example:** You identify and choose what clubs to be a part of at school based on what you are most interested in and what will support you in achieving your goals in life.

**Self-Initiation**  
**Definition:** Initiating action to achieve a goal, using past experiences to guide you.  
**Example:** You seek information about joining a hiking club because you have gone hiking in the past and really liked it.

**Websites Useful for Supporting Student Self-Determination**

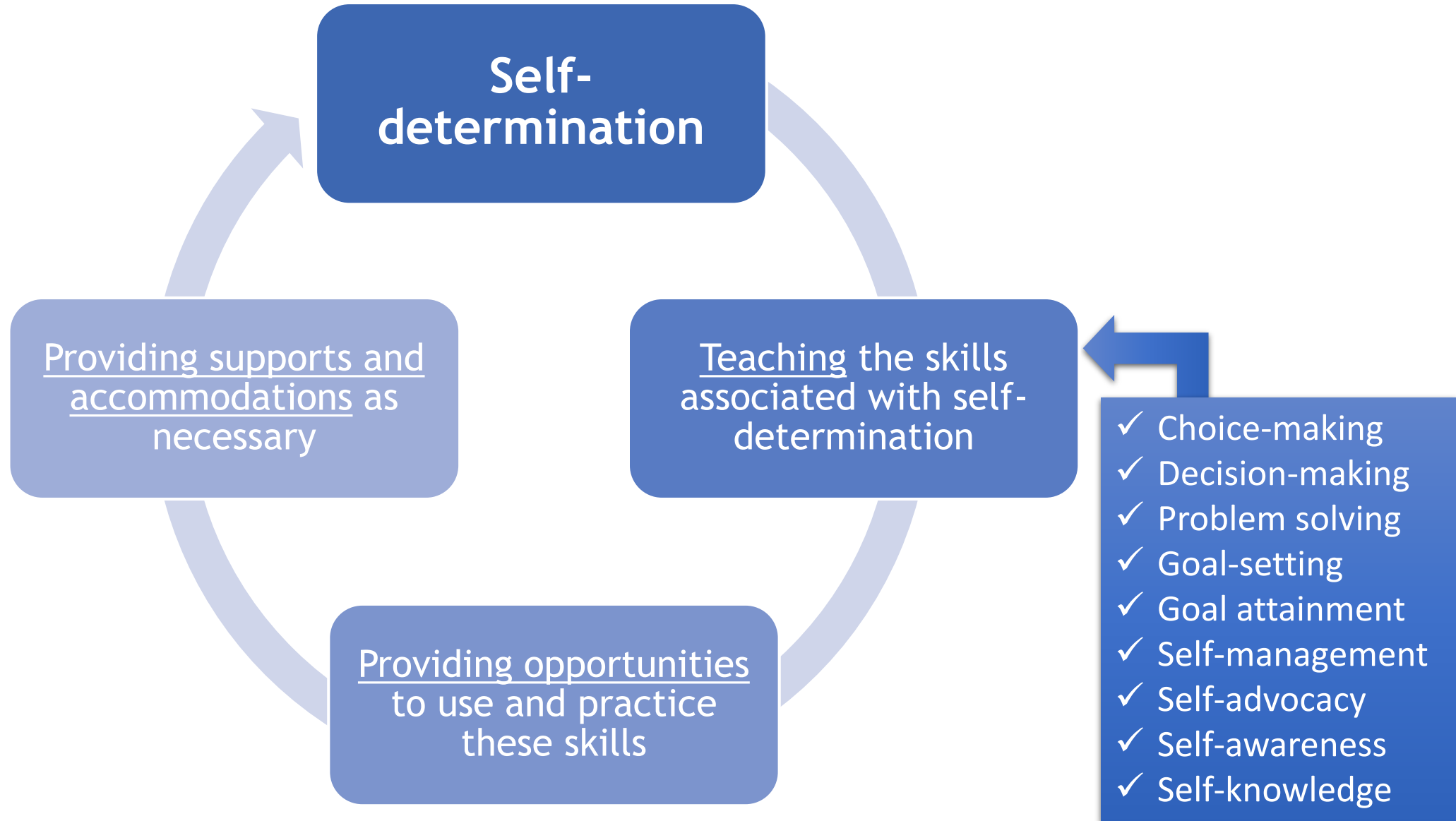
**Beach Center on Disability**

The Beach Center on Disability is a research center at the University of Kansas that supports individuals with disabilities, their families, service providers, researchers, and policy makers through research, information distribution and training. Topics useful to educators on self-determination and access to the general education curriculum may be found in the *Real Stories and Tips* and *Books, Manuals and Reports* sections of this website.

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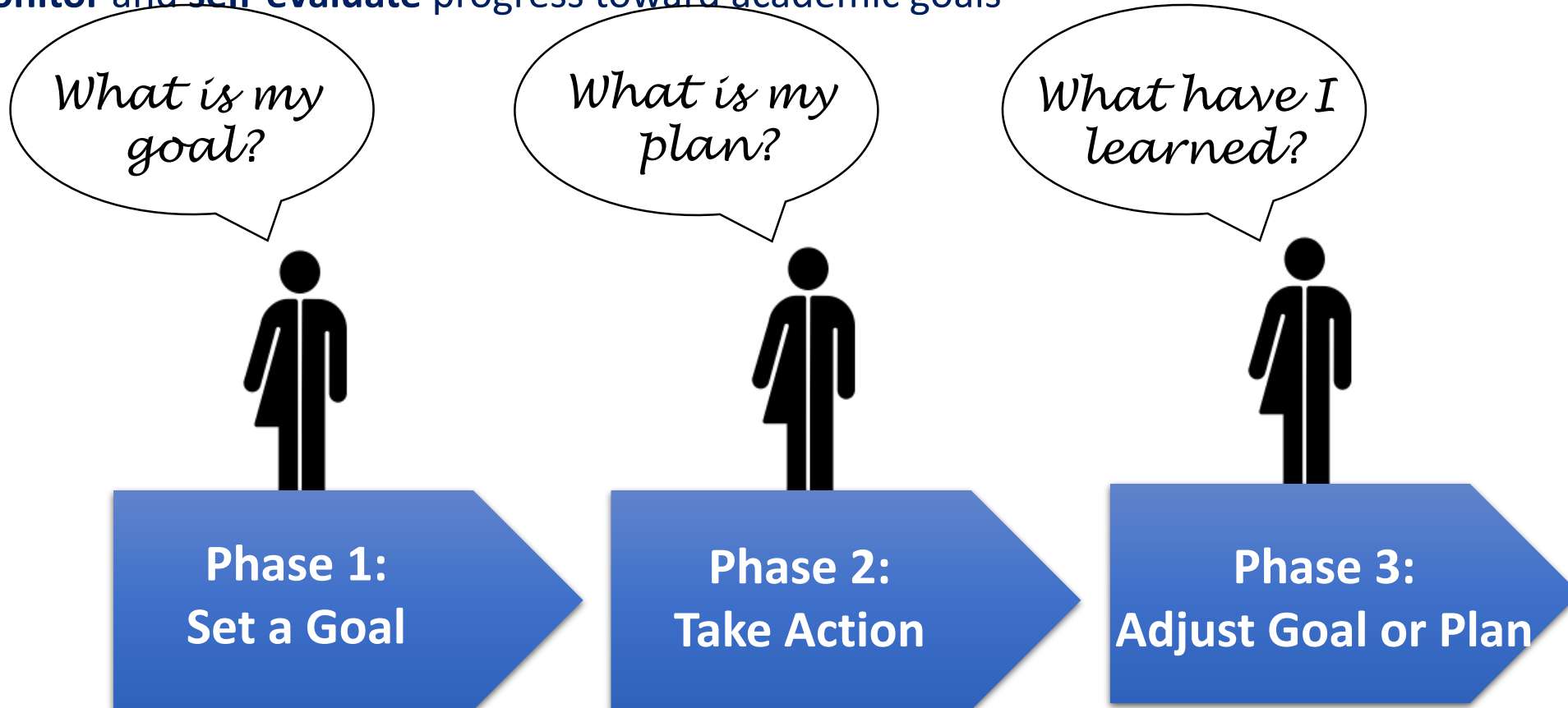
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# SELF-DETERMINATION IN PRACTICE



Teach students to use a problem solving, goal-setting strategy to:

- Make **choices** and **decisions**
- Develop action **plans** for academic goals
- **Self-monitor** and **self-evaluate** progress toward academic goals



# Where to Use the SDLMI?

- ...in **variety of settings**, for **variety of goal areas**
  - General education classroom
  - Community settings (e.g., community center)
  - At home
- Use model for class assignment or project, transition planning, or supports planning
- Support self-selected **goals and action plans**



- Phrased in “first-person voice”
- Follow a sequence so that the student sets a goal by the end of Phase 1
- Some students will need supports (pictures, technology, peers)

### Phase 1 Student Questions

1. What do I want to learn?

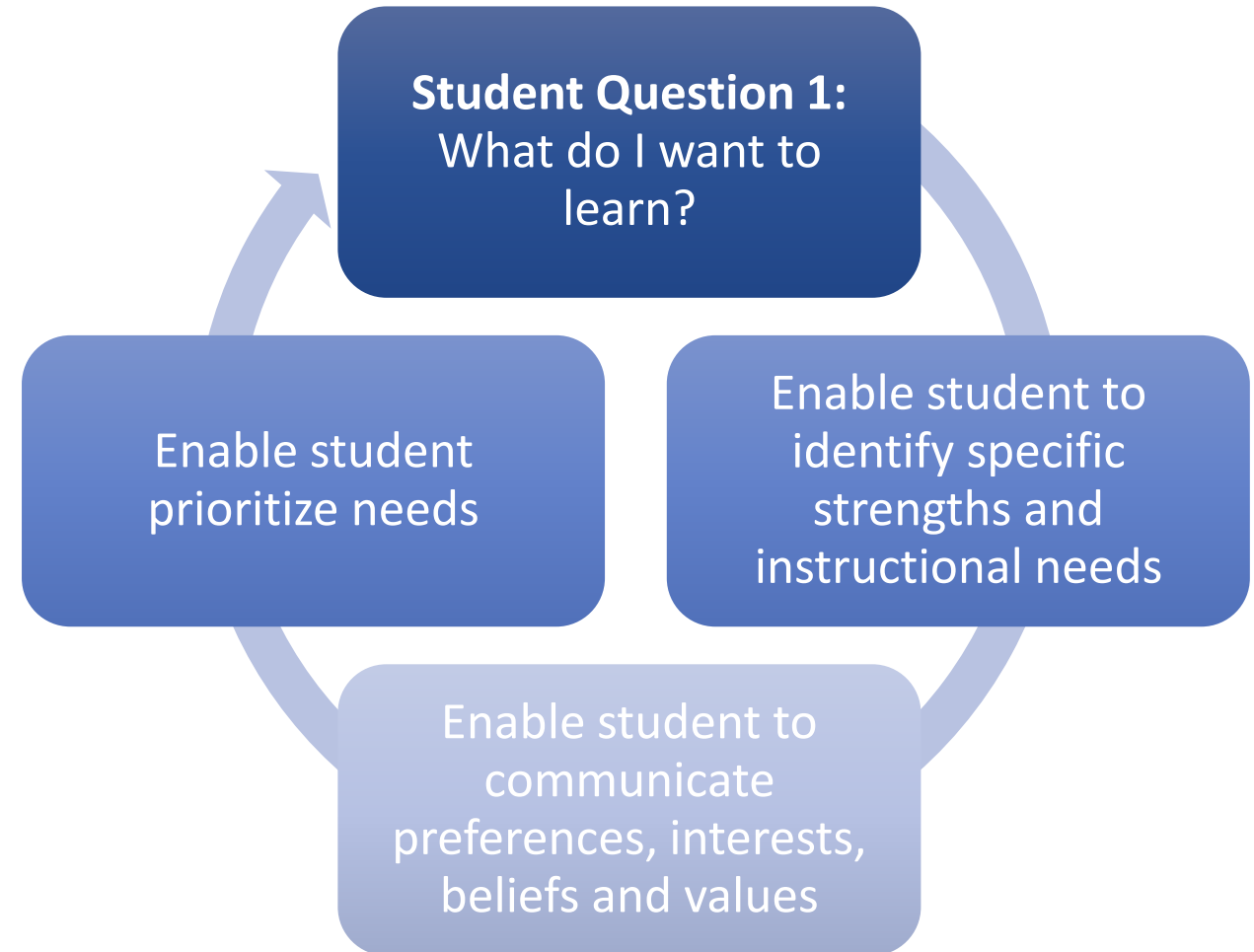
2. What do I know about it now?

3. What must change for me to learn what I don't know?

4. What can I do to make this happen?

## PHASE 1 TEACHER OBJECTIVES

- Specific Teacher Objectives are linked to each Student Question
- Serve as a “Road Map” for teacher to enable student to answer Student Questions to ultimately set a goal by the end of the Phase
- Teachers should meet each objective before the student starts the next Student Question



# SDLMI TEACHER'S GUIDE

## The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction

### Teacher's Guide

Suggested Citation:  
Shogren, K. A., Wehmeyer, M. L., Burke, K. M., & Palmer, S. B. (2017). The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction Teacher's Guide. Lawrence, KS: Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities. For more information, visit [self-determination.org](http://self-determination.org) or email [selfdetermination@ku.edu](mailto:selfdetermination@ku.edu)

### The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction

## Tips for Working through the Phases

<b>STUDENT VOICE</b>	Support the student to answer the Student Questions. Keep the focus on the student and his/her part in the process.
<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Remember this process is always a conversation and not simply a matter of responding to a question and writing the answer.
<b>SUPPORTS</b>	Refer to the Teacher Objectives and Educational Supports (see p. 19) for possible, support students to use student-directed educational supports such as reinforcement, choice making, etc.).
<b>PRACTICE</b>	Students should initially practice moving through the Student Questions to a goal that can be completed in a short period of time (2-4 weeks) and then continue to use the SDLMI to set more complex goals over time.
<b>MOTIVATION</b>	Following the initial "practice" goal, work on one goal in a high priority area that the student finds it easier to focus, be more productive, and have more experience using the model. The goal should be one that the student can complete with guidance from the teacher.
<b>CYCLE</b>	The model supports the student in cycling through goal setting, planning, acting, and evaluating. Rather than a straight-line, the journey a student takes through the stages of the model as he/she determines the best action plan.
<b>ADAPTATION</b>	When the student self-evaluates progress toward the goal, they may define a more complex or more narrowly focused goal. This goal may be a crucial part of the process.
<b>ENCOURAGEMENT</b>	When students are evaluating progress they have made, focus on success and emphasize that revising goals is a part of the process and not an indication of failure.

### The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction

## Appendix Educational Supports

Antecedent-cue regulation strategy		
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Teaching Tips</b>
An action taken to alter conditions before a target behavior so as to influence the probability of its occurrence. This can be a picture, symbol, or word that reminds individuals to engage in a target behavior. A variety of prompts are used in this way by people in everyday life.	A post-it note on the back door to remind yourself of an early dental appointment.	The prompt must be visible to the student and upon by the student not just assigned.
Assertiveness training		
<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Teaching Tips</b>
This concept of assertiveness is between aggressiveness and neutrality or passivity. It is supporting students to express their positive and negative feelings appropriately; to initiate and terminate conversations when needed, and to say "no" if that is what they truly wish to say.	A student goes for pizza in a restaurant. The counter person asks, "Do you want a slice of pizza with everything on it and says, 'You and the person has already begun to heat a piece that is not the one likely to be selected by the student. A person displaying assertive behavior would say, 'No, I wanted the one with pepperoni, not that one.' while a person who is not assertive would pay for the pizza and attempt to eat it.	Powers and colleagues (1996) suggest a three-step strategy that a student might employ: 1) look others in the eye, 2) speak calmly and firmly, and 3) if they disagree, repeat what you want and explain your reasoning.

### The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction: Student Questions – Phase 1 – Set a Goal

Name Amy Date 9-29  
(Date Phase 1 Began)

School XXXXXXXXXX






What is my goal? 🎯 Let's try to identify something that you want to learn or improve on.

📝 Please answer the questions below.

- 1. What do I want to learn or improve on?**  
I would like to go to a day care and take a class working with babies, so I can learn more about them and how to take care of them.
- 2. What do I know about it now?**  
You have to change their diapers, feed them bottles, and change their clothes if they make a mess. The places that care for babies are hospitals or day care centers.
- 3. What must change for me to learn what I don't know?**  
I could take infant classes at the college or the recreation center. I could get a book on infants from the library. I could even volunteer at a hospital or day care center.
- 4. What can I do to make this happen?**  
I will call the college or day care center to sign up for classes so I can learn more about babies.

🎯 I have listed a specific, measurable activity for student question 4. This is my goal, the activity I will be working on during Phase 2 and Phase 3.

End of Phase 1 ➡ Go on to Phase 2

## STUDENT REFLECTIONS ON THE SDLMI

“I know I’m going to reach my goal because I’m trying.”

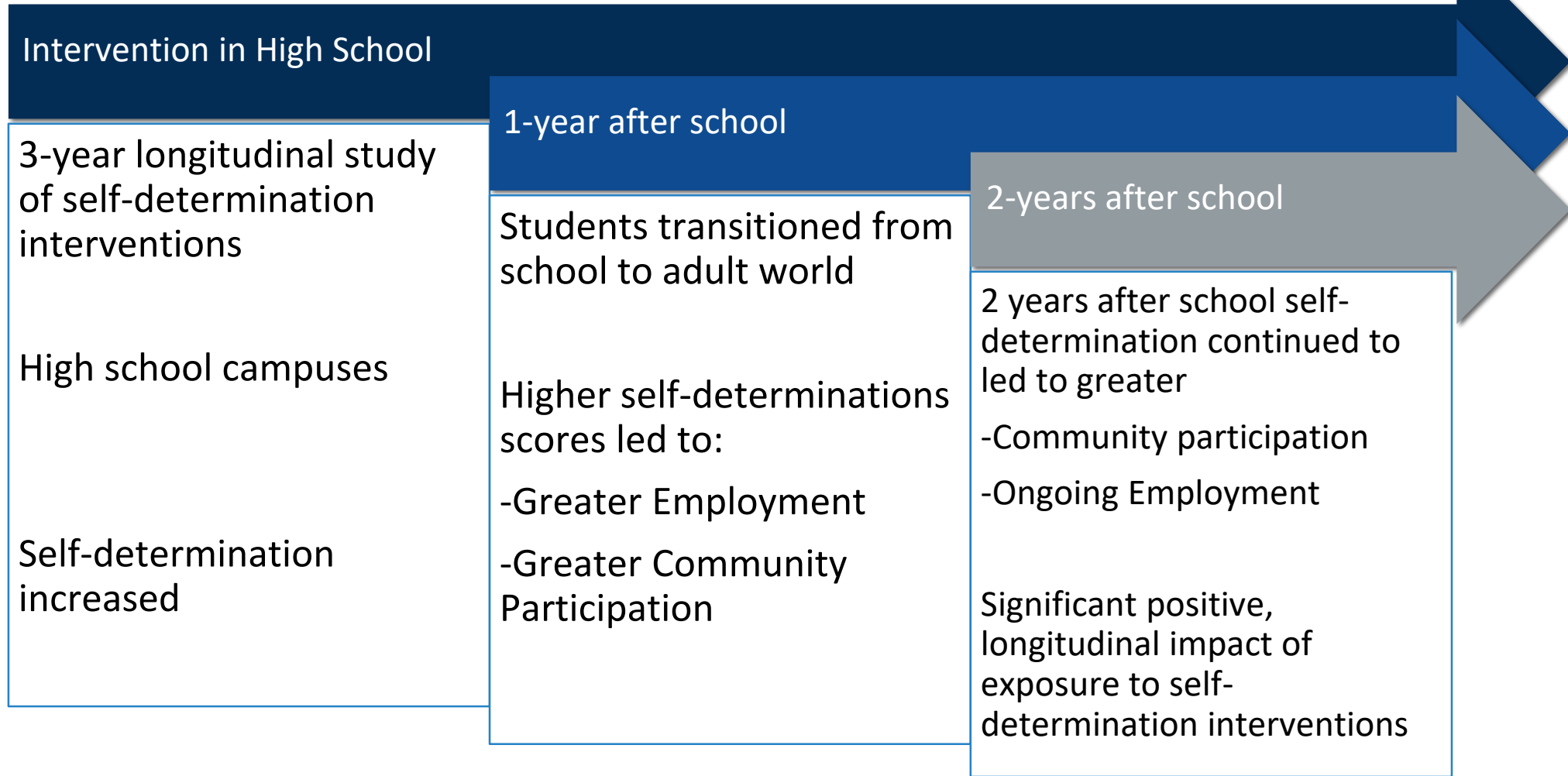
“I would do this again. It helped me.”

“I made progress on my goal because I tried to.”



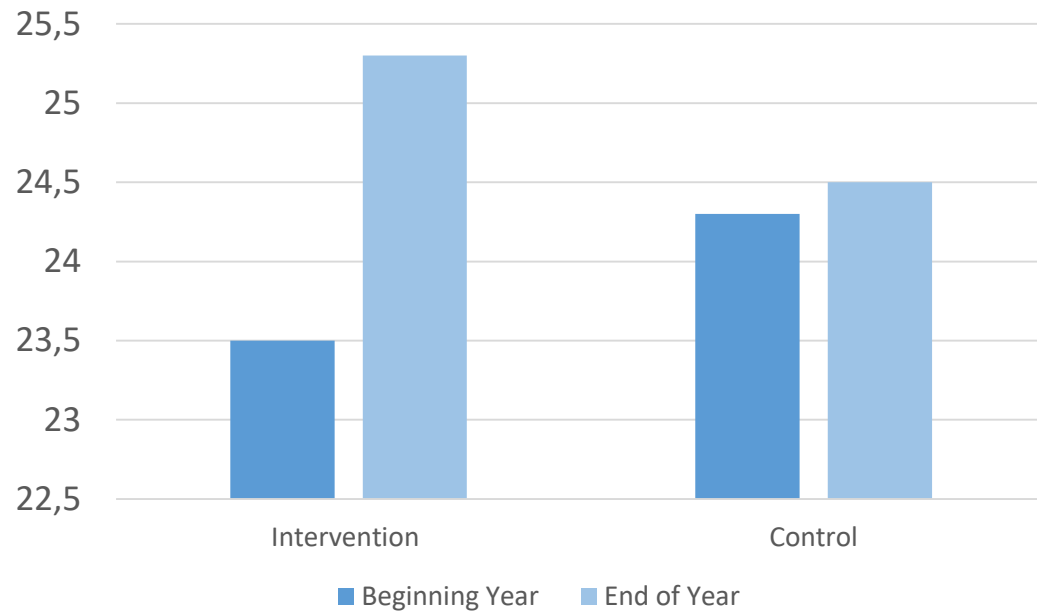


# SELF-DETERMINATION AND POSITIVE OUTCOMES

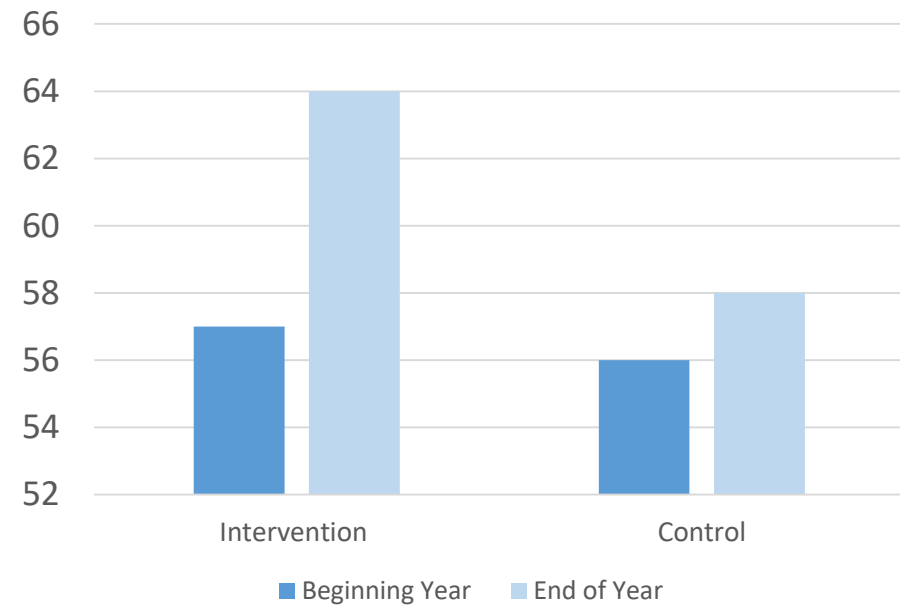


# SDLMI - Impact on Teacher Perceptions

### Teacher Perceptions of Student Capacity for SD



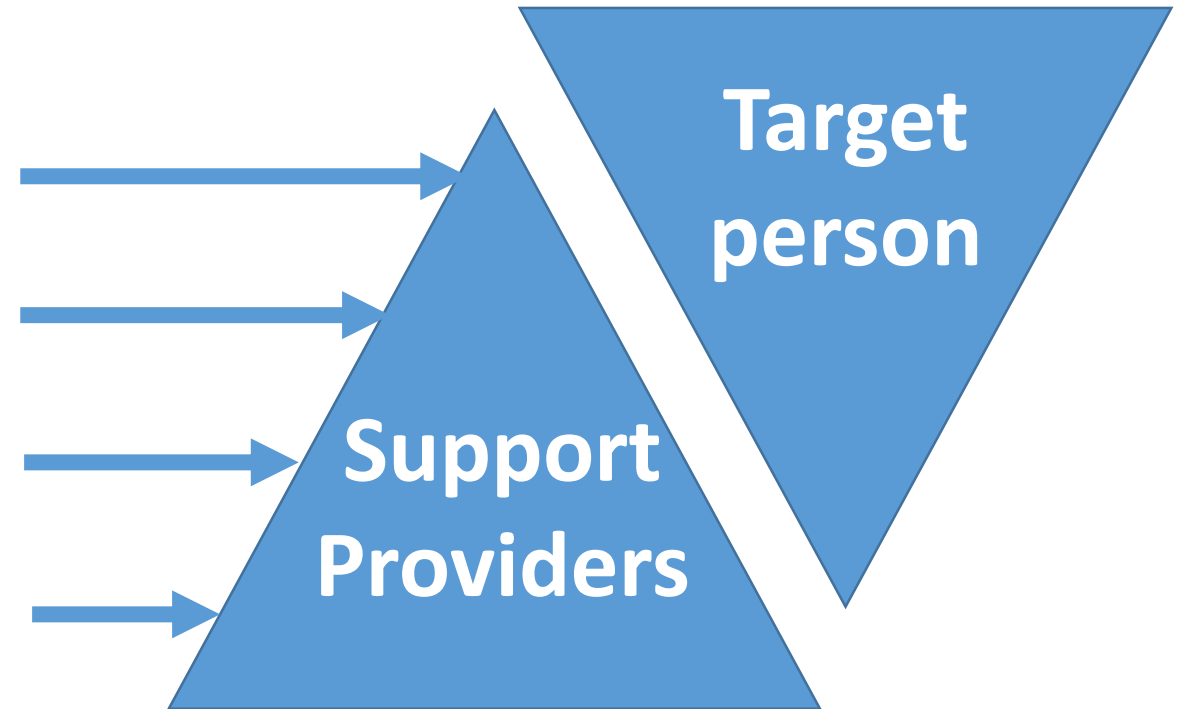
### Teacher Perceptions of Student Opportunity for SD



(Shogren, et al., 2014)

## Building Self-Determination

- Build a partnership
- Establish high expectations
- Give opportunities to fail in a safe environment
- Develop and provide supports





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**Thank you!**

*This presentation was created by the Kansas University Center on Developmental Disabilities.*

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