

A Research Agenda for Decision Education:

Teaching Decision-Making and Evaluating the Results

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Abstract

The Alliance for Decision Education has developed a Research Agenda to guide future studies on improving child and adolescent decision-making and to extend existing research on adults. The framework for the agenda postulates that students' decision knowledge, skills, and dispositions affect the quality of their decisions, which influence numerous outcomes of short- and long-term significance. Future research efforts in the following key research areas—**developing validated measures, benchmarking decision-making abilities, conducting effective interventions, and assessing impact on life outcomes**—can drive learning opportunities for students and promote improvements at every level of the framework.

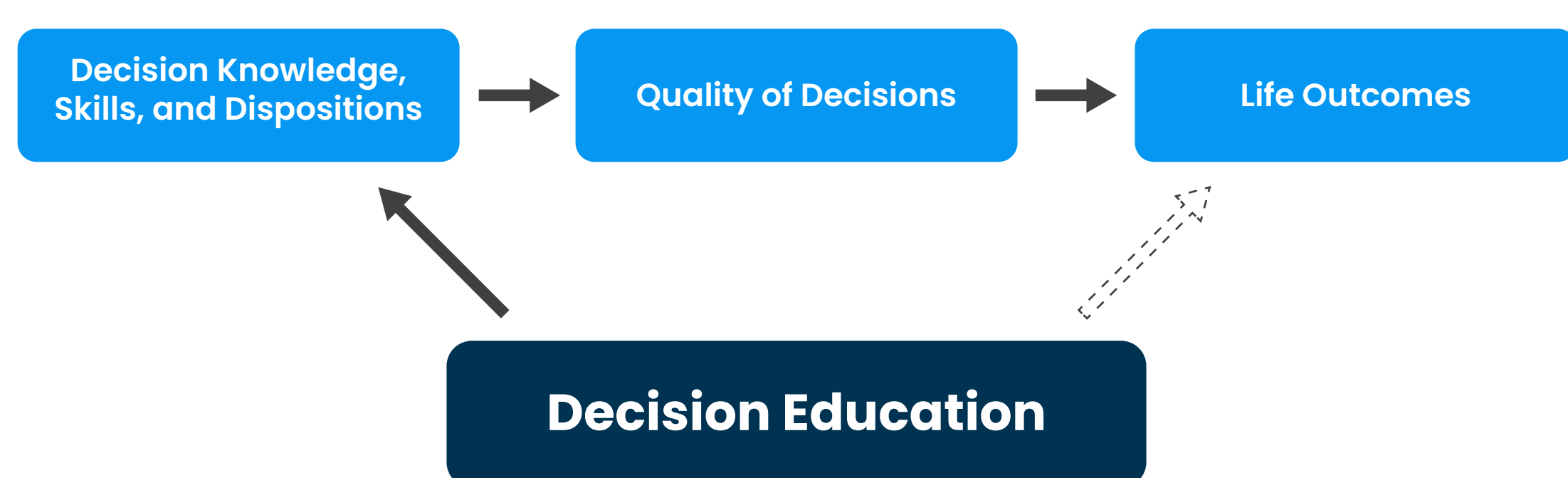


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for Decision Education

Method

In order to develop the framework for the Decision Education Research Agenda, the Alliance for Decision Education hosted a convening of expert scholars on judgment and decision-making.

Convening participants discussed:

- Existing findings that informed their work on judgment and decision-making
- Ongoing research questions
- Substantial gaps and challenges that have hindered progress in Decision Education research

Key Research Area 1:

Determine and develop relevant measurement tools

- Current measures include: Youth Decision-Making Competence (YDMC; Parker & Fischhoff, 2005), Proactive Decision-Making Scale (PDM; Siebert & Kunz, 2016), and the Assessment of Rational Thinking For Youth (ART-Y; Toplak & Stanovich, Under Review), among others
- *Future research opportunities:* developing a comprehensive portfolio of validated measures of Decision Education knowledge, skills, and dispositions

Key Research Area 2:

Benchmark decision-making knowledge, skills, and dispositions

- Differences in cognitive ability and style, environmental factors such as peer influence, family life, and SES, and developmental stages influence decision-making (e.g., Icenogle & Cauffman, 2021; Jacobs & Klaczynski, 2002; Parker & Fischhoff, 2005; Reyna & Farley, 2006; Tversky & Kahneman, 1974)
- *Future research opportunities:* exploring decision-making across individuals, developmental stages, and situations

Discussion

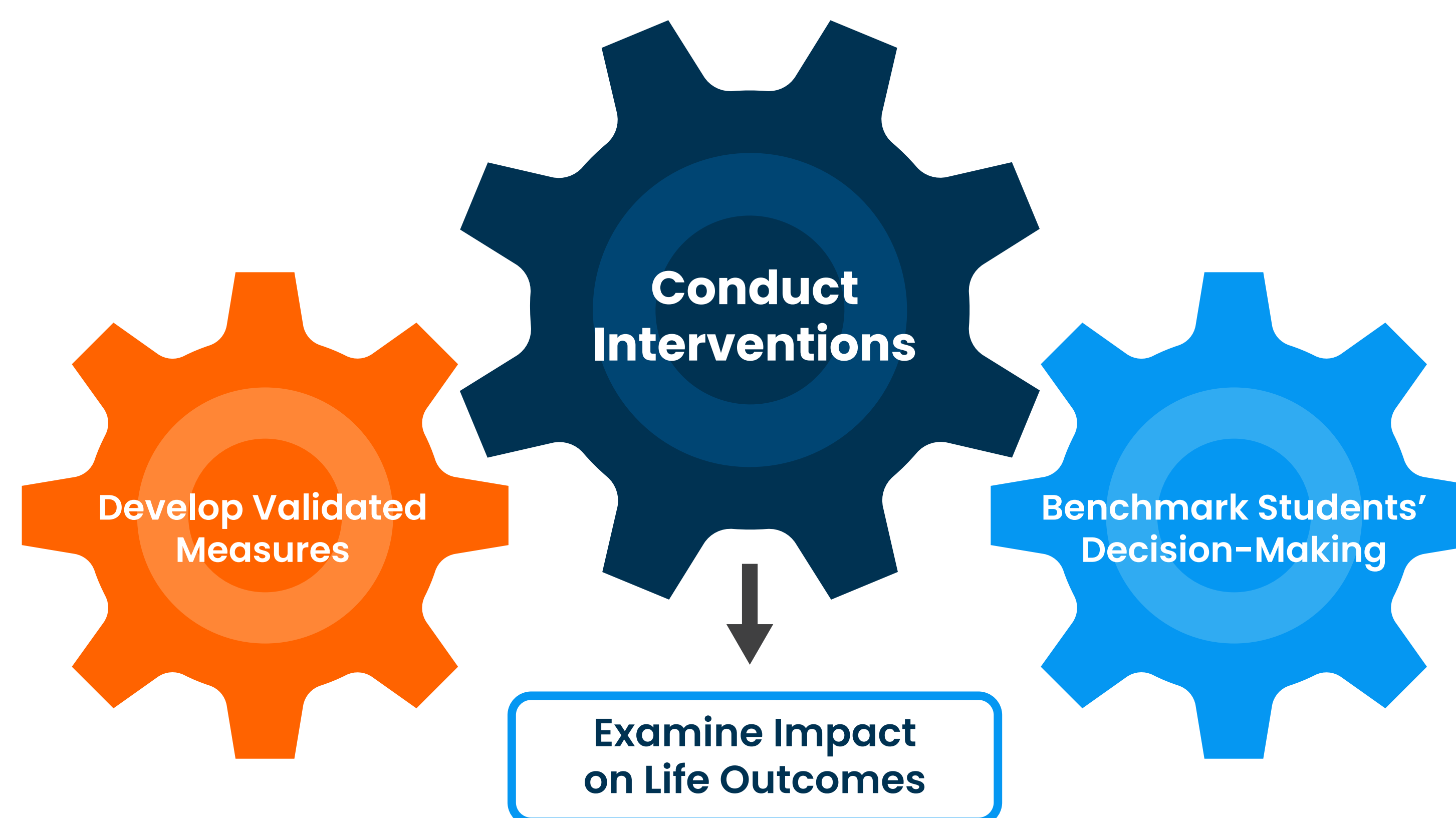
The goal of the Decision Education Research Agenda is to highlight research needs and guide researchers as they generate ideas and findings that advance the field. The agenda aims to inspire studies that evaluate the effectiveness of Decision Education, improving decision-making and, ultimately, individual and societal outcomes. Taken together, progress in these research areas is critical for supporting policymaking, driving adoption, and improving instructional experiences in K-12 education.

About the Alliance

The Alliance for Decision Education is a nonprofit organization leading the growing call to have Decision Education taught in schools across the country. We are grounded in the understanding that better decisions lead to better lives and a better society. Our mission is to improve lives by empowering students with essential skills and dispositions for making better decisions.

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Key Research Area 3:

Conduct effective interventions on Decision Education

- Existing research has endorsed the efficacy of training programs interventions for improved decision-making (e.g., Howse et al., 2003; Jacobson et al., 2012; and Siebert et al., 2022)
- *Future research opportunities:* identifying which features of interventions are most fruitful for promoting student learning, transference beyond the classroom, and long-term improvements in decision-making (Milkman et al., 2009)

Key Research Area 4:

Examine the effect of Decision Education on life outcomes

- Teaching decision-making may improve outcomes in significant domains: academic, behavioral, social, financial, career, and mental and physical health (e.g., Baron & Brown, 1991; Bentivegna et al., 2022; Peters, 2017; Weller et al., 2015)
- *Future research opportunities:* examining the impact of Decision Education on outcomes, especially through longitudinal studies



Scan here to view the full-length Decision Education Research Agenda