

Insights for
School Leadership Teams

Developing Self-Determination

For students with intellectual disability



A dense forest of green trees with a central text overlay. The text is "Acknowledgement of Country" in a bold, dark blue font, centered within a semi-transparent white rectangular box. The background is a lush, green forest with many trees and branches visible.

Acknowledgement of Country

Today's Presentation

Intro: The 5Ws

1

What is the issue and why is it important

2

Practices

Available school-based practices to support self-determination development for students with intellectual disability

3

Principles

Important insights for implementation based on existing research

5

Takeaways

What are the key points to learn from

4

Problems

Issues and areas for development in current research in this area.

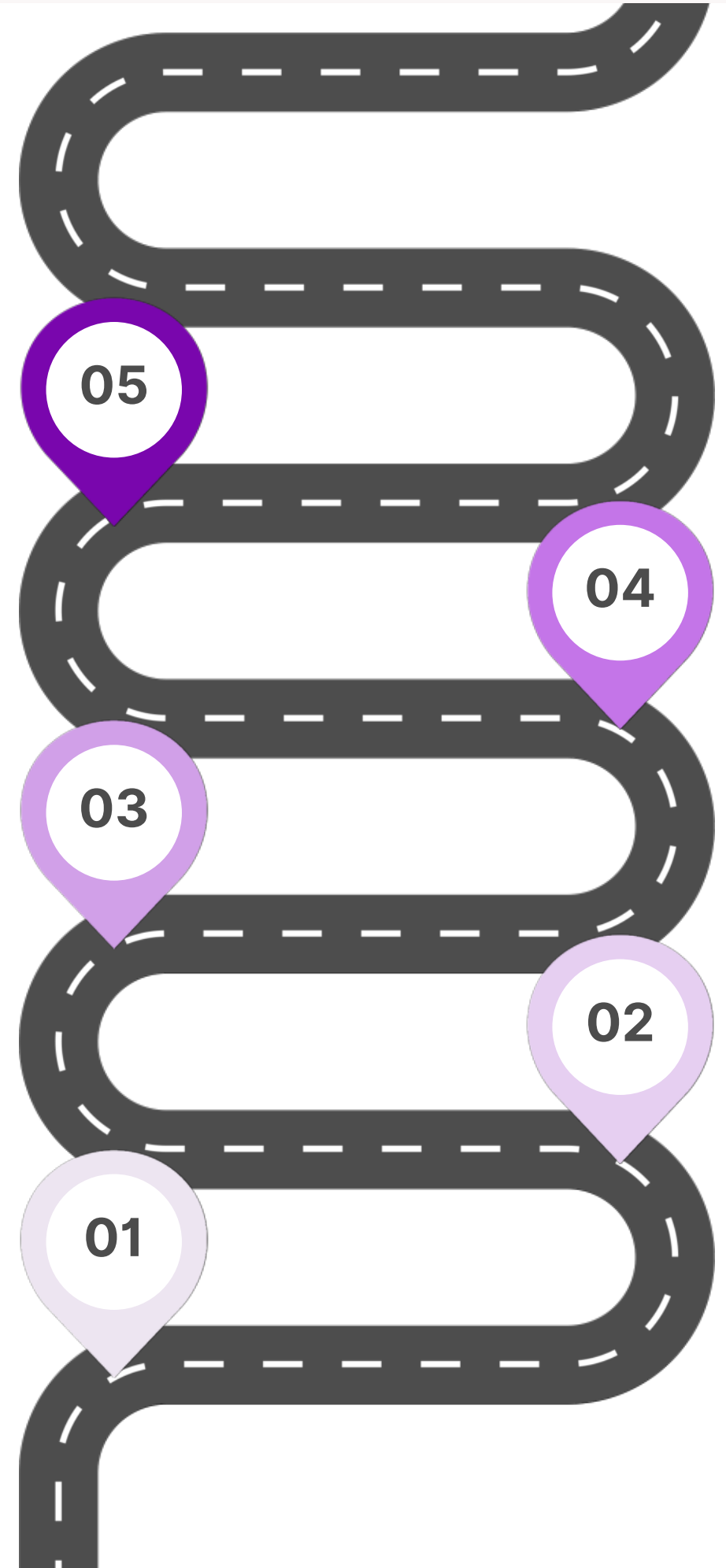
05

04

03

02

01



Introduction:

The 5 Ws

+
How

Who

Students with intellectual disability



What

Self-determination

- “Being the causal agent in one’s life”
- Shaping the self and life one desires



Where

- Primary schools
- Middle schools
- High schools



When

Across students’ school journeys



Why

Benefits for:

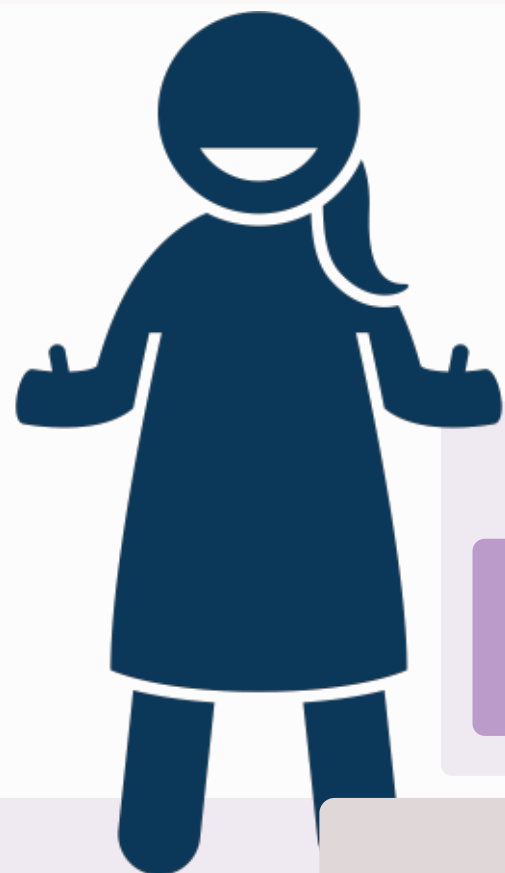
- Academics
- Emotional and behavioural regulation
- Resilience
- Social Inclusion
- Transition
- Health and quality of life



How

- Key practices, strategies, and interventions in this presentation
- Adjustments and personalisation
- Student-led planning cycles





What is Self-Determination?



Causal Agency

Essential Characteristics

Action-Control Beliefs

Volitional and Agentic Action

Control Expectancy

Agency Beliefs

Pathways Thinking

Causality Beliefs

Self-Direction

Self-Initiation

Self-Realisation

Self-Regulation

Empowerment

Autonomy

Functional Model Characteristics

Self-Advocacy

Planning

Choice Making

Self-Knowledge

Goal Setting and Attainment

Self-Monitoring and Self-Management

Self-Awareness

Associated Skills

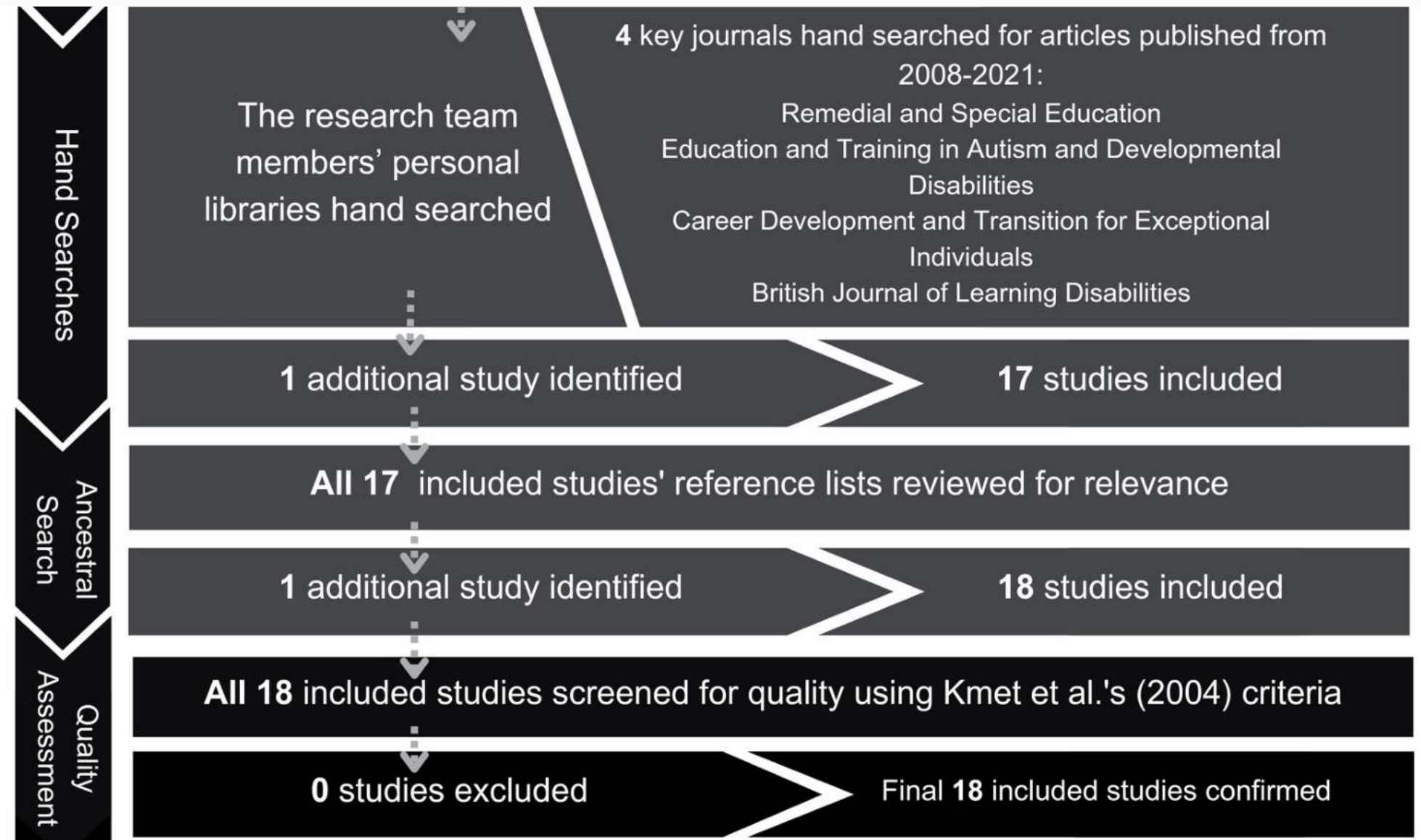
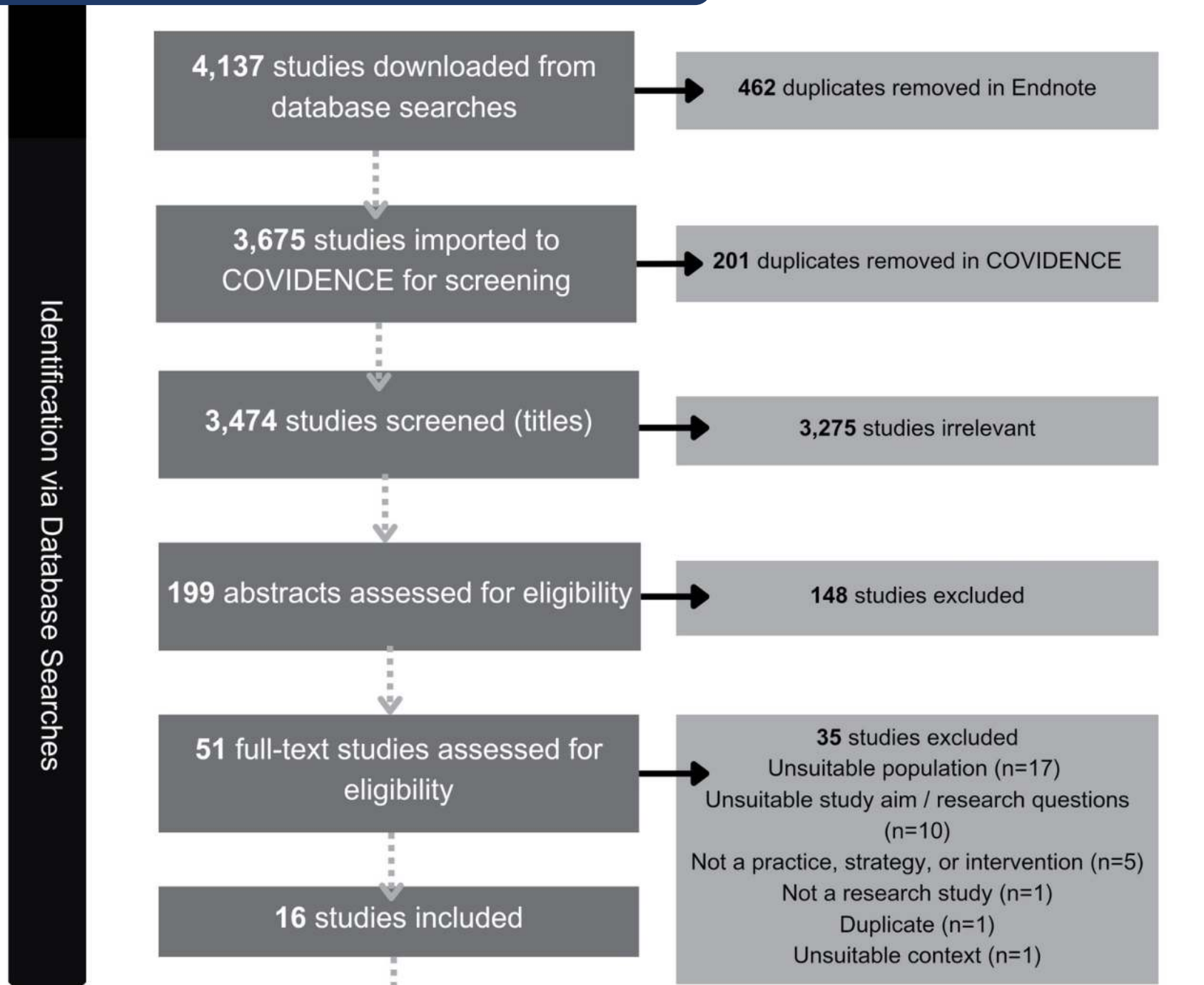
Decision Making

Additional Constructs



Our Team

The Latest Research



Practices



11 practices

A total of 11 practices were found in the review. Four practices (including all materials) were freely available online.



Assessment Materials

A variety of assessment materials are available to assess student self-determination. These are discussed, including strengths and limitations.



Younger Students

Some options include adaptations for primary school-aged students. This is an area where further attention to self-determination development is needed.



Transition and Planning

Many practices incorporate post-school transition and ongoing personalised learning and support planning actions.

The SDLMI

**Set a
Goal**

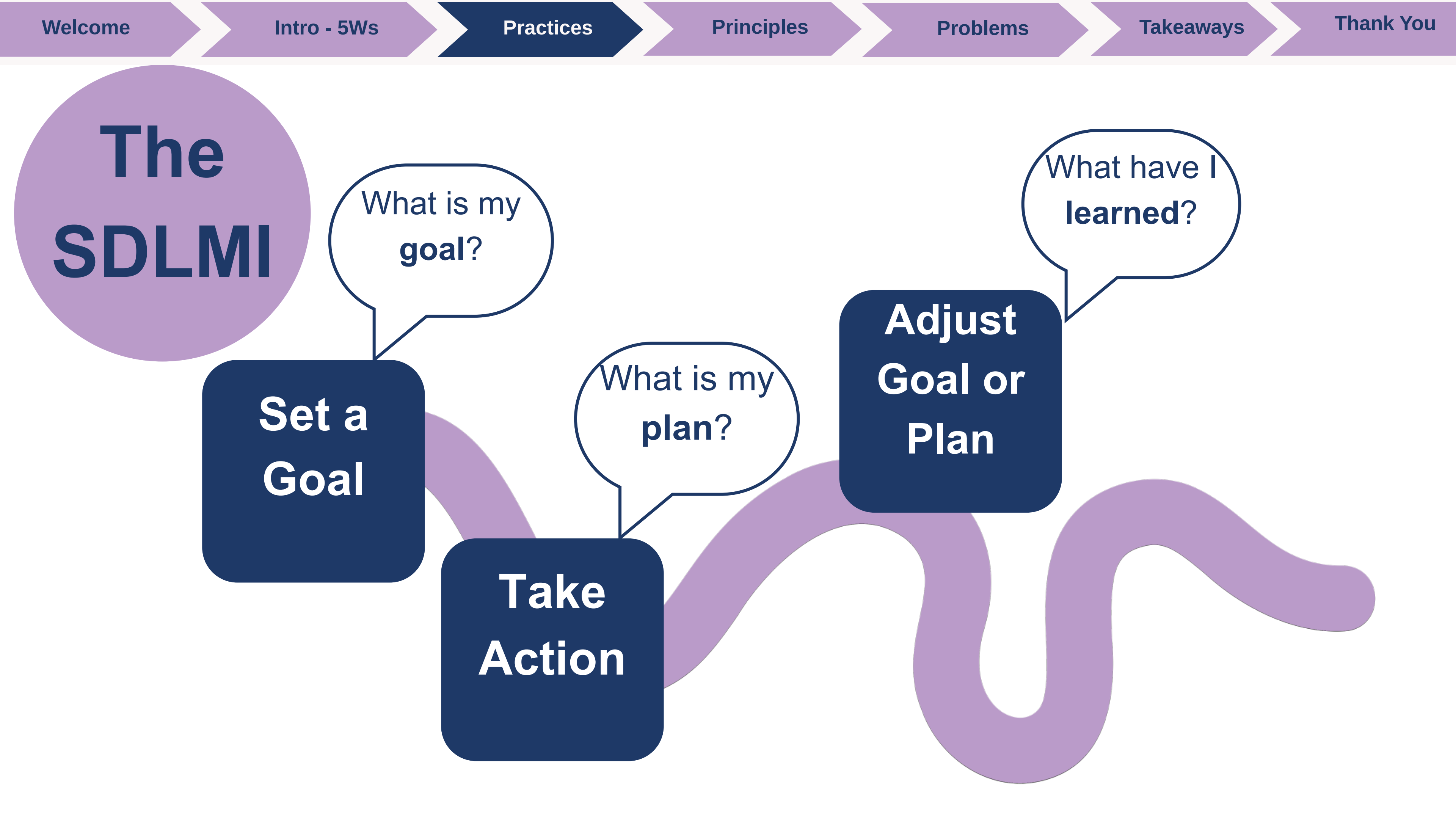
What is my
goal?

**Take
Action**

What is my
plan?

**Adjust
Goal or
Plan**

What have I
learned?



The SDLMI

Ingredients



Student
Questions



Teacher
Objectives



Educational
Supports

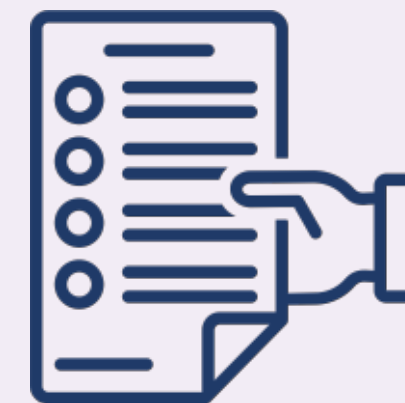
Materials



Teacher
Guide



Student
Forms



Teacher
Materials

The SDLMI



- Extensively researched
- Intended for use with students with/out disability
- Integrates into academic curriculum.
- Resources for scaled up implementation (e.g, coaching model, evaluation tools)
- Emerging research addressing cultural and linguistic diversity alongside disability
- Flexible length of implementation (3 months - annual cycles in research)

- Only research in the US
- Limited research with younger students with intellectual disability
- Cost and availability of implementation resources

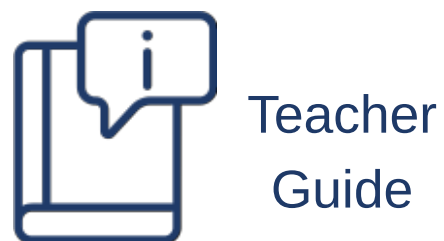
Materials



Student Workbook



Student Reader



Teacher Guide



Digital Options

Whose Future is it Anyway? (WFA)

Sections

Getting to Know You

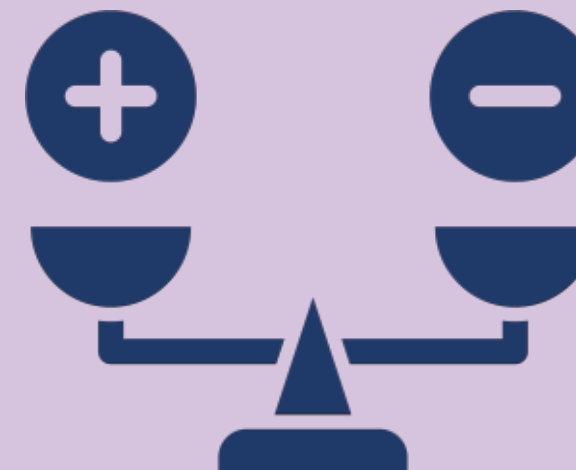
Making Decisions

How to Get What You Need

Goals, Objectives, and the Future

Communicating

Thank You, Honorable Chairperson



- Freely available online
- Designed to focus on individual education planning participation
- Designed to be more accessible (e.g., simpler language and broken down concepts)
- Designed for students 14-21 years old

- Fewer studies focus on students with intellectual disability
- Only research in the US
- Not for primary school
- Focus on US transition and individual education planning context, including specific policy and legislation
- Some transition information may not apply to an Australian context

Materials



Student Diary /
Workbook



Curriculum
Strategy Booklet



Health Advocacy in
Schools DVD

Ask Health Diary

Diary Sections

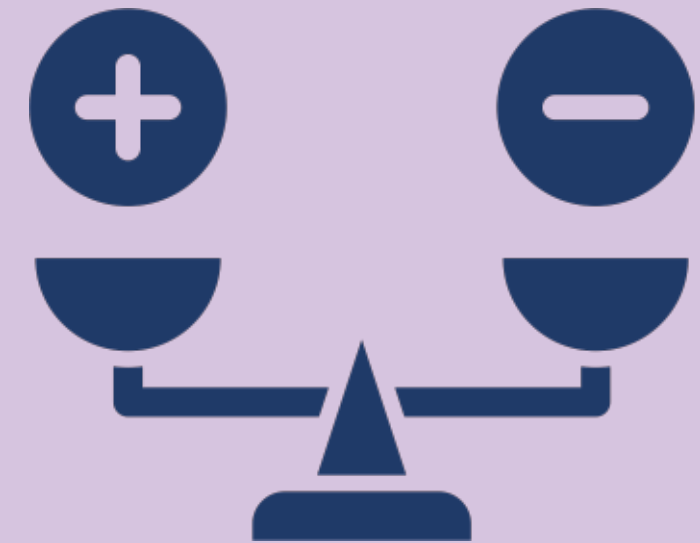
All About Me was the most consistently accessible and engaging section.

All About Me

**Health
Advocacy Tips**

For the Doctor

**Medical
Records**



- Hard copy available for free
- Designed in Australia for an Australian context
- Research conducted in Australian schools
- Designed for collaboration and partnership with families
- Transition ready: Adolescent and adult versions of the resource available.
- Health advocacy is an important topic for people with intellectual disability
- Links with PDHPE goals
- Impacts across life spheres
- Flexible implementation timeline

- Hard copy only
- Limited research
- Designed for adolescents and older. Not tested with students under 10 years.
- Some parts of the diary were more accessible than others
- May not be accessible students with more significant intellectual disability

Materials



Student Workbook



Lesson Plans and Slides



Worksheets



Online Videos for Each Strand

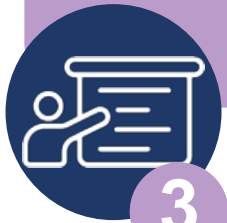


Teacher Guidance Materials

ChoiceMaker Curriculum

Strands

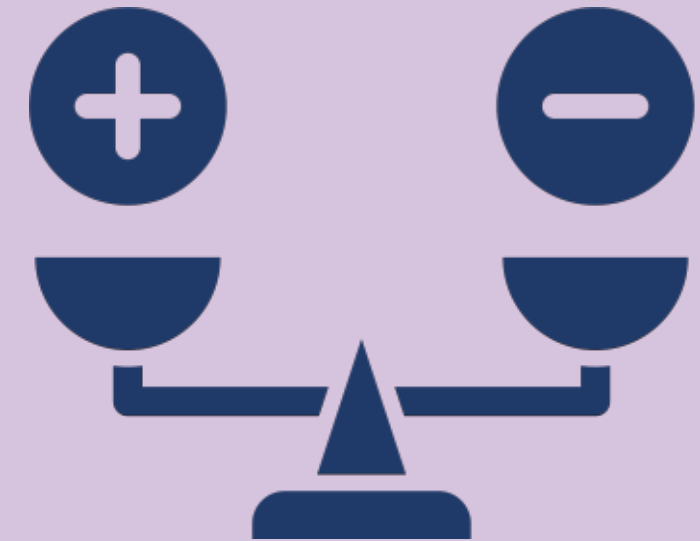
Choosing Goals



Expressing Goals



Taking Action



- No cost for materials
- Multimedia may be more engaging for students than print only
- Videos include student actors
- Some materials adapted for primary school students, though not tested by research

- Video content has some US references
- Videos are a bit dated
- No research for primary school version

Materials



Worksheets and Handouts



Lesson Plans and Mini-Resources

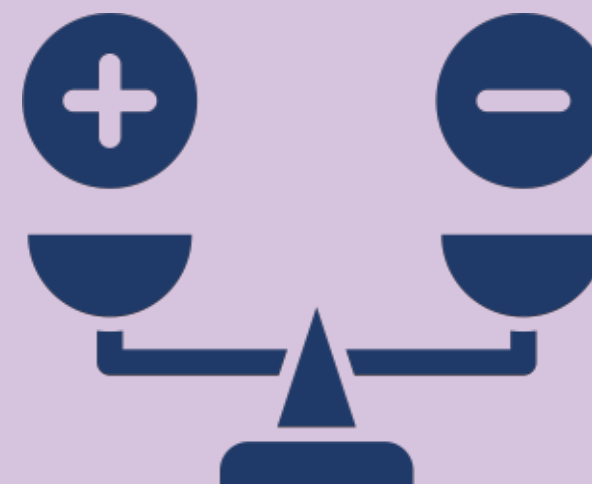


Custom Assessments



Lesson Presentations (editable!)

ME! Curriculum



Units

Getting Started

Understanding My Rights and Responsibilities

Advocating for My Needs in High School

Learning About Special Education

Improving My Communication Skills

Advocating for My Needs After High School

Understanding My IEP

Increasing My Self-Awareness

Developing My Resources

Assessing My Progress and Portfolio

- Available online
- Engaging digital format
- Potential for generalisation to other contexts
- Mid to Upper Primary and High School Versions

- Research only conducted in US context
- Some lesson content not Australia specific (e.g., policy and legislation)
- Limited research

Stakeholders



Students with Disability



Workplace Coaches



Families



Internship Personnel and Trainers



School Staff



Main Components

Immersive Internship

Agentic Student IEP Contributions

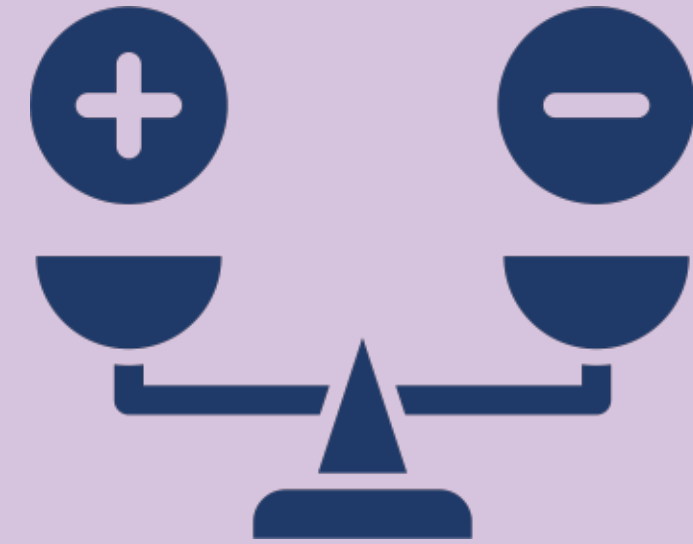
Employability and Work Skills Training

Job Coaching and Mentorship

Peer Support

Classroom, Community and Workplace-Based Training

Advisors and Career Services



- Industry-led (rather than school-led)
- Transition focused
- Integrated internship
- Develops employability, job retention, social and communication, emotional regulation and everyday living skills
- Collaborative and multi-context
- Year-long implementation cycle
- Incorporates individual education planning cycles

- No materials available
- Not researched in Australia
- Not for primary school
- Complex program requiring a license
- Only one current location in Brisbane
- Final high school years only

Stakeholders



Students with Disability



Tertiary Student Mentors

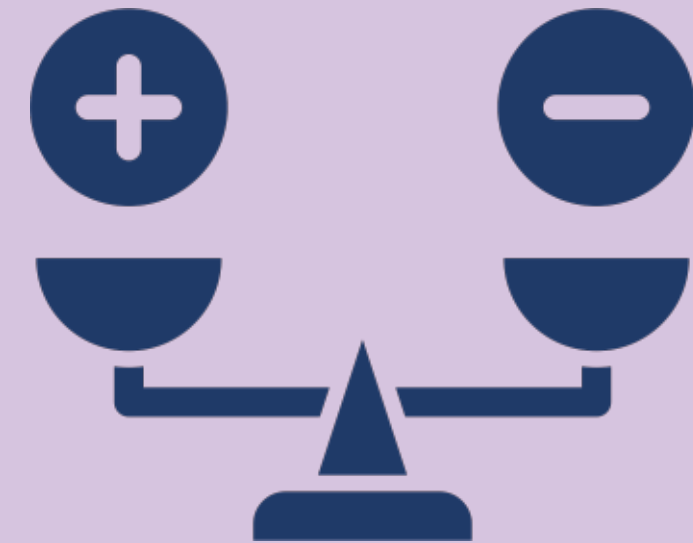


Tertiary Institution Personnel



School Staff

Inclusive Concurrent Enrolment



Main Components

Peer Mentorship

Student-Led IEP Meetings

Educational Coaching

Self-Determination Role Models

Travel Training and Safety Awareness

Motivational Interviewing

Internship

Risk and Personal Responsibility

Advisors and Career Services

- Very localised and individualised
- Transition focused
- Uni 2 Beyond style program (e.g., auditing, social, mentorship) for high school students
- Collaborative and multi-context
- Flexible, long-term implementation

- No materials available
- Not available or researched in Australia
- Not for primary school
- Resource intensive / complex
- Not explicitly available in Australia
- Final high school years only

Other Practices

Unavailable Online / in
Australia

Science Inquiry and Problem Solving Checklist

Chinese Idiom Self-Determination Curriculum

Goal Setting and Presentation Lessons

Choice Making Lessons

Available Assessment Measures

Self-Determination Inventory

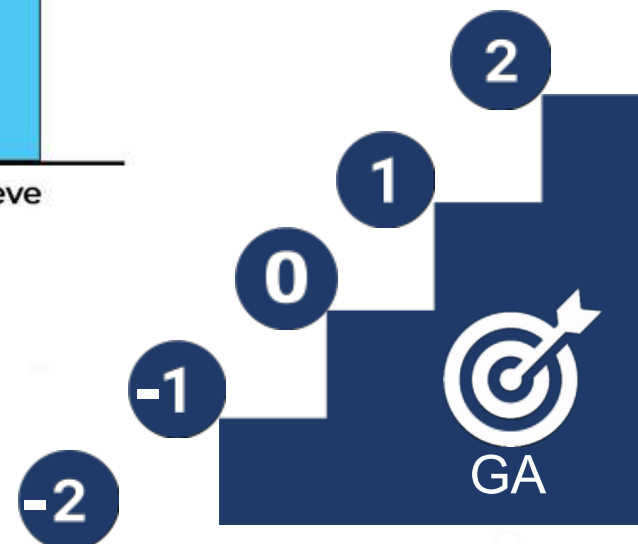
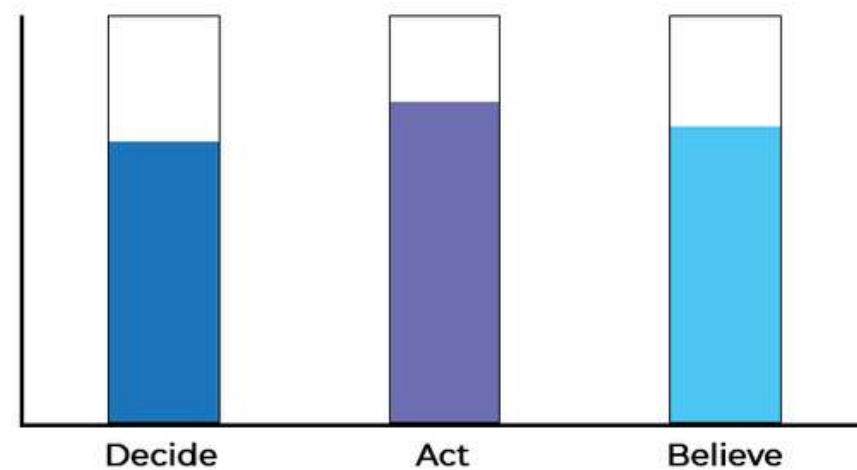
Student

Parent

Teacher



MY SELF-DETERMINATION INVENTORY



ARC's Self-Determination Scale

AIR Self-Determination Scale

ChoiceMaker Assessment

Goal Attainment Scale (GAS)

ME! Assessments



ARC and AIR Scales

Student

Parent

Teacher



ME! Assessments



SD Inventory

Stakeholders



Students with Disability

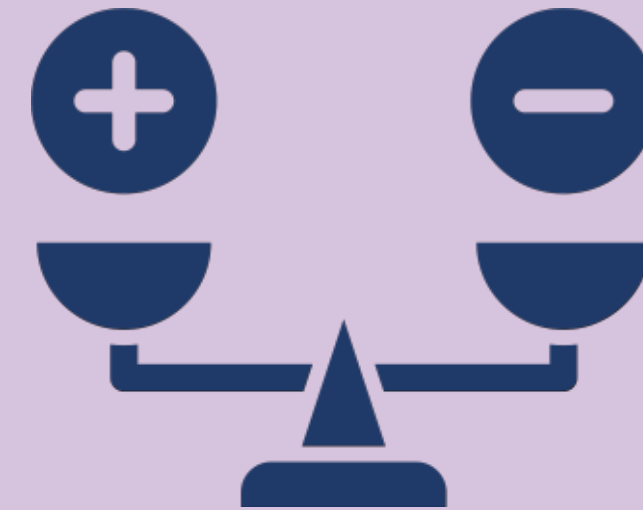


Parents / Carers



Teachers

Self-Determination Assessment



Key Issues

Accessibility and Higher Support Needs

Teacher Training

Younger Students

Validation in Australia

Volitional Action Focus

Proxy Report Issues

Relationality

Teacher Workload

Scales and Technology

Cultural Relevance and Responsiveness

- Several options available including shorter and digital survey options
- Aligned with disability and education focused functional definitions of self-determination
- Underpinned by positive psychology principles
- Some assessments directly aligned to practices / interventions
- The SDI is validated in several languages

- SDI does require a login for a more systematic large-scale assessment program
- Limited validity for students under 13 years
- Accessibility issues for students with more significant intellectual disability
- Many questions can be tiring for students, and not all are applicable to an Australian context
- Individual assessment adjustment may be time-consuming
- Issues with existing prejudice/beliefs from proxies

Principles



Personalisation and Adjustments



Autonomy-Supportive Environment



Subject-Integrated Vs Separate Program



Think Long-Term and Multi-Context



Multiple Assessment Points

Student-Led



**Student-Led Personalised Educational
and Transition Planning Systems**



Staff and Supporter Attitudes



Implementation Fidelity



Cultural Relevance and Responsiveness



Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration



Key Issues



Accessibility and Higher Support Needs



Younger Students



Volitional Action Focus



Relationality



Assessment Scales

Teacher Training



Validity in / Adaptations for Australia



Proxy Report Issues



Teacher Workload



Cultural Relevance and Responsiveness



Technological Advances



Implementation Fidelity

The research support for practices only applies for when practices are implemented as designed. It is helpful to conduct regular formative fidelity assessments.



Student Voice

Student voice and agency in choosing and adjusting practices is an opportunity to support student autonomy and self-determination.



Student-Led Planning

Student leadership in meetings about personalised learning and support plans and planning school transitions (e.g., to post-school life) feature in many self-determination interventions.



Whole School

Some practices, like the SDLMI, are designed for use with students with and without disability.



Suitability

Some current practices are suitable for mid-upper primary school students. Few are found to adequately meet the needs of students with more significant intellectual disability.



Australian Adaptation

Many available intervention resources are US-specific and require adaptation to a current Australian context.



Key Takeaways



Adjustments

Making adjustments for students' needs is encouraged within most implementation fidelity designs.



Teacher Support

Plan for teacher training and ongoing coaching, and time for evaluation and tracking. Excessive teacher workload may impact results.



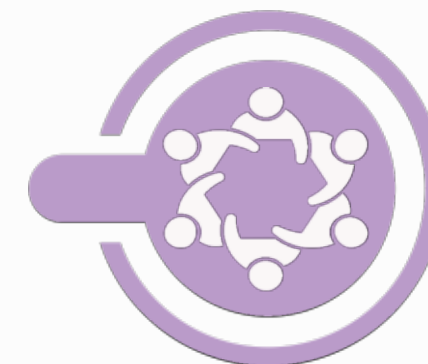
Contexts

Research underscores the importance of self-determination across life domains. Many practices involved practicing skills in different authentic contexts.



Collaboration

Some practices incorporate various stakeholders outside the school. Intentional coordination of collaboration with clear expectations is key.



Thank You

Good Luck With Your Self-Determination Journey!