

**AFFECTIVE DOMAIN TARGET OBJECTIVES
BY STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT**

Infant	Toddler
Personal Identity Contentment Frustration Tolerance Perseverance	Personal Identity Identification of Feelings Appropriate Expression of Feelings Acceptance of Feelings Contentment Frustration Tolerance Perseverance Autonomy and Will Decision-Making Self-Control Self-Care Obedience Thankfulness
Preschool	School-age through Adulthood
Personal Identity Identification of Feelings Appropriate Expression of Feelings Acceptance of Feelings Contentment Frustration Tolerance Perseverance Decision-Making Self-Control Self-Care Self-Initiated Activity Active Involvement Obedience Trustworthiness Altruism Respect Responsibility Thankfulness	Personal Identity Identification of Feelings Appropriate Expression of Feelings Acceptance of Feelings Contentment Frustration Tolerance Perseverance Decision-Making Self-Control Self-Care Self-Initiated Activity Active Involvement Goal Setting Improvement through Practice Goal Achievement Obedience Trustworthiness Altruism Respect Responsibility Thankfulness

Take a moment to review the Affective Domain Target Objective Menu on the back cover of this book and take note of the four stages of children’s development. This table shows you the target objectives that are appropriate for the age of your child.

3.0 PSYCHOLOGICAL STRENGTHS AND VIRTUES

3.2 Autonomy and Will

3.2 a Decision-Making

Decision-making is:

- * selecting between two or more options.
- * evolves as a child matures and plays a significant role in their social, emotional, and cognitive development. Here's how child development defines decision-making:
- * involves problem-solving skills
- * is identifying problems or challenges, gathering information about them, generating possible solutions, and evaluating the pros and cons of each option before deciding.
- * includes the ability to assess risks and benefits.

Christ expresses it when he decides to leave home to begin his public ministry (Mt 4:16–18), chooses his disciples (Lk 5:1–11), chooses to turn water into wine (Jn 2:1–10), decides to go to Lazarus (Jn 11:15–16), and decides to be more discreet in his travels (Jn 11:53–54).

It is important because:

- * free will is a gift from God that needs to be exercised by being open to taking chances as well as growing and learning from mistakes.
- * good decision-making is a basic life skill. Autonomy is positively resolved when children are able to choose for themselves.
- * it does not matter whether we are right or wrong; we can choose for ourselves. Making choices positively impacts our sense of autonomy.
- * the quality and quantity of decision-making experiences a child has impacts the child's basic sense of autonomy.
- * the ability to make age-appropriate decisions is a critical skill needed for healthy living.
- * if we say we are Christian we are choosing to be so (Josh 24:15).

One would exhibit it by:

- * considering options and choosing one.
- * speaking aloud what one needs or wants.
- * being comfortable taking risks to make a decision.
- * discussing choices with others.
- * being proud of one's decision.
- * not worrying about being right or wrong in making a decision.
- * being pleased with oneself for making a decision.

AUTHOR'S NOTES:

Young children are continually practicing or testing their autonomy every day. They are testing their ability to own, possess, choose, and control. They are trying to find out if it is good for them to make decisions, to have control over a situation, to express their will, and to own and possess things. The quality and quantity of positive experiences they have in making choices, saying no," and "exercising their autonomy" will have a profound impact on their lives. Young

children can receive the gift of free will and will power only when adults allow them to make decisions and own, possess, and control some situations in their lives. It is important to remember that young children should own, possess, and control only areas of their lives that will not be harmful to their own safety and health or the safety and health of others (Dt 30:19–20; Is 7:15). We will teach them to make choices that are in line with God’s word. The ability to make age-appropriate decisions is a critical competence needed for healthy living.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO SUPPORT IT

1. Provide children with age-appropriate choices throughout the day. For example, ask them if they want to wear the red or blue shirt, or if they would like apples or bananas for a snack. This helps them practice decision-making in a low-pressure environment.
2. Help your child understand their choices have consequences so they can learn.
3. Guide your child through the process of finding a solution. Ask open-ended questions to help them brainstorm and make decisions to resolve the issue.
4. Establish clear boundaries and rules to help children understand the limits of their decision-making and the consequences of crossing those boundaries.
5. Provide a selection of colored objects or shapes and let your toddler decide how to sort them into groups based on color or shape.
6. Let your toddler choose a book for bedtime or story time.
7. Offer healthy snack options and ask your toddler which one they want to eat.
8. Allow your toddler to choose their outfit for the day to encourage self-expression.
9. Let your child decide what to build to encourages creativity and problem-solving.
10. Offer various art supplies and ask your child to decide what they want to create. Encourage them to explain their choices.
11. Involve your child in simple cooking tasks like choosing ingredients for a sandwich or selecting toppings for a pizza. This teaches them about food choices and basic cooking skills.
12. Take nature walks and let your child decide which trail to explore or which leaves, rocks, or flowers to collect. Discuss their choices and observations.
13. Allow your child to plan a weekend family outing or activity. They can research options, consider everyone's interests, and make a decision.
14. Play board games that involve strategy and decision-making, such as chess, checkers, or strategy board games like Settlers of Catan.
15. Encourage your child to keep a journal and write down their thoughts, feelings, and decisions they've made. This promotes self-reflection and critical thinking.
16. Solve math problems or puzzles together, giving your child the opportunity to make decisions on problem-solving strategies.
17. Start a DIY project together, like building a birdhouse or crafting a piece of furniture. Let your child take the lead in planning and making decisions.
18. Engage in discussions on age-appropriate topics and encourage your child to express their opinions and support their decisions with reasoning.
19. Plant a garden together and let your child decide which plants to grow, where to plant them, and how to care for them. This teaches responsibility and decision-making in a real-life context.
20. Give your child a small allowance and help them create a budget, allowing them to make decisions about how to spend or save their money.
21. The key is to provide opportunities for decision-making in various aspects of their lives, gradually increasing the complexity of choices as they grow and develop. Be supportive, provide guidance when needed, and celebrate their efforts and choices, whether they lead to success or learning experiences.