

Using the teaching tool

The Personal Finance Teaching Tool is a guide to help educators identify teaching techniques and learning strategies to address the three building blocks for developing lifelong personal finance decision-making skills.

In the center of the tool, review the building blocks, and evaluate your students' current development. Determine a focus for your lessons and classroom activities. Review the teaching techniques and learning strategies then select appropriate resources.



The CFPB Personal Finance Teaching Tool identifies the components to empowering young people to make positive financial decisions – these components form the building blocks for lifelong learning and responsible financial decision-making.

Where can I find the building blocks on the tool?

The innermost layer of the wheel contains the three building blocks of youth financial capability: executive function, financial skills and decision-making and financial habits and norms. The building blocks divide the wheel into thirds. Each section (third) identifies teaching techniques and learning strategies for developing that building block.

Executive Function section

Use the teaching techniques of cooperative learning, personalized instruction, and simulation to develop executive function. Suggested learning strategies are self-directed exploration, intergenerational programs, puzzles and quiet games, planning activities, storytelling, pretend play, and songs and movement games.

Financial Habits & Norms section

Use the teaching techniques of simulation, blended learning, and gamification, with specific learning strategies to help students develop their own positive financial habits and norms. These strategies include employment, financial simulations, entrepreneurship programs, and the use of financial products (such as bank-in-school programs).

Financial Knowledge & Decision Making Skills section

Use teaching techniques that include simulation, direct instruction, personalized instruction, project-based learning, and competency-based instruction to help students develop their financial knowledge and decision-making skills. Appropriate learning strategies include one-on-one group financial coaching, mentoring and guidance; real-world case studies that can build mental guideposts; and financial simulations.

This teaching tool can serve as a quick reference guide for connecting students of all ages with the teaching techniques and learning strategies that create responsible adults who can achieve financial well-being.