Supported Decision Making an Alternative to Guardianship

A Self Advocates Guide to Supported Decision Making

Written/Presented By: Advocates as Leaders Self Advocacy Speakers Network Utah March 2017 Revised 2018 &2021
“MY VOICE COUNTS”

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Supported Decision Making
An Alternative to Guardianship
A Self Advocate’s Guide to Supported Decision Making

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2966490322

Additional copies of this guide can be found at www.utahDDcouncil.org
“My Voice Counts” was designed and created by the Utah Advocates as Leaders, Self Advocacy Speaker’s Network. The speakers of the network, advocates like yourself, researched and wrote this guide to help self determined people think about the ways in which their voices can be heard when making both simple and hard decisions.

This guide will give you ideas in 5 different areas of Supported Decision Making:

- Understanding Supported Decision Making as an Alternative to Guardianship
- How to Choose the Right People to Be a Part of Your Support Team
- How to Organize Your Ideas About What You Would Like to Do and What You Might Need
- How to Create Your Own Supported Decision Making Agreement
- Awareness of Legal Forms and Resources that Might Be Helpful in Your Life
Supported Decision Making
An Alternative to Guardianship

About SDM
What is Supported Decision Making?

Simply put, SDM is a way to plan your life and achieve your goals by working with a team of trusted supporters in order to make your own decisions about your future. By using your friends, family members and professionals, you will better understand the situations and choices you might face when making both simple and hard decisions. SDM promotes your ability to be self determined, have control over your own decisions and empower you to be more self-sufficient and independent.

Reaching Your Highest Potential

Supported Decision Making is not really a new idea. As a matter of fact, you have been learning about this idea for many years. Think back about the words you might have heard like self advocacy or maybe self determination. Some of you already might be running your own educational or service support meetings and others may be voicing your opinion to the people who care about you, about the things you want in your life. All of these things have an important role when using the supported decision making idea.

Supported Decision Making is all about...

♦ Self determination/Self Advocacy

♦ Showing people, that with their help, you can make good decisions that will improve the quality of your life

♦ Be willing to try new ideas and explore different possibilities

♦ Be willing to look at your own strengths and challenges when deciding on the supports that your will need in order to be successful

♦ Be willing to work with a team of supporters to achieve you goals

♦ Be willing to accept the responsibilities and consequences of the decisions you make

♦ Be willing to write your ideas down with the help of your supporters

Adapted From: Francisco, Suzanne M, and Disability Rights Advocate with Martinis, Jonathan G., Supported Decision -Making Teams: Setting the Wheels in Motion http://supporteddecisionmaking.org
A guardian is someone who can help you with making life decisions or make decision for you. They are appointed by a judge to make these decisions. There are two types of guardianship: full and partial.

**A partial (limited) guardian** can make decision, with or without your opinion or permission in **SOME** areas of your life.

**A full guardian** can make decisions, with or without your opinion or permission in **ALL** areas of your life.

**How is SDM Different than Guardianship?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Guardianship</strong></th>
<th><strong>Supported Decision Making</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A guardian can help you make life decisions or make decision for you.</td>
<td>SDM is a way to plan your life by working with a team of trusted supporters in order to make your own decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A judge decides who will be your guardian.</td>
<td>You decide who will be part of your support team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Guardian can decide about the types of supports you will need.</td>
<td>You are responsible for deciding the areas that you need help with and the type of supports your will need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Guardian accepts the responsibility and consequences of their decisions.</td>
<td>You accept the responsibility and consequences of your decisions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can you answer the following questions?

**How would you FEEL if someone wanted to become your guardian?**

__________________________

__________________________

**If someone wanted to limit your rights, what questions might you ask?**

__________________________

__________________________
Why Are My Family or Friends Talking About Guardianship?

For several reasons:

When you turn 18 years old

When you turn 18 years old in the State of Utah, it is called “the age of majority” and it means that you have the same rights and consequences as other adults. You now have the right to make decisions on your own if you wish.

Schools or doctors sometimes tell them it is necessary

Many times, school personnel or people who provide you with your health care may have some questions about your ability to make decisions about your educational goals or your health care needs. They may feel you will need support in making these decisions and recommend to your family and/or friends to become your legal guardian.

They may believe that it is the only way to help you with your money or connect you to adult supports

Many people are unaware of the options that can be used when helping you in protecting and using your money responsibly. If you need help with other areas of your life, such as connecting and maintaining adult supports, family, friends, professionals and community members can assist you with these supports, if you give verbal or written permission.

They might think there is no other legal solution to help you

In the past we never thought that people with disabilities could use the same legal documents that are available to other United State citizens. Today people with disabilities have a variety of assets that may be protected in different ways.

See if you can match the statement with the right idea.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I decide on my own goals with help from others.</td>
<td>Supported Decision Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A judge will decide who can make decisions for me.</td>
<td>Guardianship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A written agreement is created by me and the people who support me.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This could take away my right to vote, marry, drive a car or enter into a contract.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A team of people that I choose will help me make decisions.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are 2 different types: partial (limited) and full.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This idea makes me feel <strong>NOT</strong> very empowered.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will have to go to court.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s Get Going

How Do I Get Started? What Do I Do Now?

**01 STEP**
Talk with your friends, family members and the people you trust about your ability to make good decisions with their support.

**02 STEP**
Identify the areas of your life you will need support with and think about the ways your supportive team can assist you.

**03 STEP**
Identify the supportive people in your life. Who would you choose to help you and are they willing?

**04 STEP**
Create an agreement with your supported team to get started on achieving your life goals. Depending on your situation, additional legal forms may need to be explored to help protect your money, health and your personal belongings.
STEP 1  **Talk** with your friends, family members and the people you trust about your ability to make good decisions with their support.

Every Person, With or Without Disabilities, Make Decisions about Their Lives Everyday!

It is not uncommon for ALL of us to rely on others when making decisions. We might call our brother if we had a questions about fixing our cell phone or maybe our mom to ask her how to make her great spaghetti sauce. We all get advice and help from our friends and family members when making both simple and hard decisions.

**Supported Decision Making** is all about how your friends, family and even professionals can help you make good decisions but you are the one that has the final say. By having this responsibility, it will be important to show others that you are determined, responsible and capable of making decisions that will improve the quality of your life.

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SOME DECISIONS ARE EASY AND SOME DECISIONS ARE HARD!

**EASY DECISIONS**

- What do I want to wear today?
- What should I have for dinner tonight?
- Should I go to the movies with my friends or stay home and watch my favorite TV program?

**HARD DECISIONS**

- Where do I want to live?
- What goals do I want to achieve?
- Can I manage my own money?
- Where can I find supports that will help me be successful?
- If I have an important medical problem who can I trust to help me?

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**When making a decision think about these 3 important ideas:**

1. **Preferences**
   What do you like or don’t like?

2. **Values**
   What is important to you?

3. **Needs**
   What are the things you need to live as happily and as independently as possible?

---

**Name 2 simple decisions you made today**

1. 
2. 

**Name 1 HARD decision you had to make in the last 30 days**

(month)
Everybody who loves and cares about YOU wants you to be healthy and safe. If you are not able to show your supporters that your goal is to live in a safe environment, be aware of your surroundings, try not to put yourself in harm’s way and take care of your health needs, just to name a few areas of possible supports, Supported Decision Making will be a tough journey. Remember it’s about helping you make good decisions.

DON’T GO IT ALONE…thinking about and identifying the things you want, need or wish are all pretty big decisions. If you need someone to help you think about all the different areas of YOUR life, don’t be afraid to ask a trusted person to lend a hand.

People are COMPLICATED!! Each one us will have different needs at different times in our lives. The “life” areas listed below might or might not meet your particular situation. Just a place to start…….

Check the LIFE AREAS that your supporters can help you with to make good decisions.

- Being and Staying Safe
- Daily Living (Personal Care)
- Health Choice
  - Physical
  - Mental
- Home, Work and Friends
- Money/Financial
- Education and/or Training
- Transportation
- Dating/Partners
- Free Time/Social
- Caring for a child
- Pet Care

Now that you have chosen your life areas, how can your supporters help you? Check out the next few pages....
MY LIFE LIST

Check out the different “LIFE AREAS” and mark the ones that you want your supporters to help you learn or achieve. Share this “LIFE LIST” with the people who are willing to support your ideas.

Being and Staying Safe

☐ Making safe choices around my home: remember to turn off the stove, cleanliness, fire alarms, adaptive lighting or hearing devices.

☐ Making choices about the way people treat me. If I am being treated badly helping me speak up and get help.

☐ Making choices about alcohol and drugs

☐ Making choices about where I go and who I go with

☐ Other things:

Daily Living

☐ Making choices about food, getting food or preparing food

☐ Making choices about clothing, cleanliness and style

☐ Making choices about showering/bathing, brushing my teeth, combing my hair

☐ Making choices about my medications, understanding why I take them, remembering to take them and refilling them.

☐ Other things:

Education and/or Training

☐ Making choices about my goals under the Individual Education Plan (IEP)

☐ Making choices about who will come and support me with my IEP plan

☐ Making choices about higher education

☐ Making choices about learning a new skill (cooking, art, music, martial art, dance)

☐ Making choices about being involved in community classes

☐ Other things: ______________________

Money/Financial

☐ Making choices about how I can pay my bills on time and keep a budget.

☐ Making choices about how I can keep my money safe

☐ Making choices about big decisions about my money (signing a lease, getting a credit card, purchasing a home)

☐ Other things: ______________________

Most of the supporters you choose will NOT have the ability to read your mind. If you want to make your own decisions you will have to decide on the things you need and want.


Adapted from the Yukon Health and Human Services, June
THE “LIFE LIST”
Part Two

Health /Physical Health
☐ Making choices about living a healthy lifestyle: belonging to a gym or looking for a walking partner
☐ Making choices about regular visits to doctors for routine health care and maintenance
☐ Making choices about dental health
☐ Making choices about major medical care: surgeries, big injuries or illness
☐ Making choices about medical care in emergencies
☐ Making choices about my medical directives in case I wasn’t able to make my own decisions (Advance Medical Directives)
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Mental Health
☐ Making choices about finding a doctor or a therapist
☐ Making choices about medications
☐ Making choices about alternative treatments
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Dating and Partners
☐ Making choices about who I would like to
☐ Making choices about being safe on social media
☐ Making choices about sex, birth control and
☐ Making choices about marriage
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Adapted from the Yukon Health and Human Services, June 2006, Support Decision Making Agreement; Adult Protection and Decision Making, Retrieved From http://www.gov.yk.ca
THE “LIFE LIST
Part Three

Transportation
☐ Making choices about how I will get around: Bus/Trax/Train/Using my bike
☐ Making choices about the different transportation options
☐ Making choices about getting a driver’s license, understanding the responsibilities of owning a car and the cost.
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Home, Work and Friends
☐ Making choices about where I want to work
☐ Making choices about where I live and who I live with
☐ Making choices about my support services
☐ Making choices about where I go and who I go with
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Caring For a Child
☐ Making choices about the supports needed (in-home visits, parent training, daily living skills)
☐ Making choices about child care, early intervention services and counseling
☐ Making choices about accessing educational or mentoring programs
☐ Learning more about crisis intervention services and supports
☐ Learning more about public benefits that might be needed for both you and your child
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Pet Care
☐ Making choices about the type of pet I would like to own
☐ Making choices about maintaining the pet I have chosen (food, medication, veterinary services)
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Free time/Social
☐ Making choices about fun activities (going to a friend’s house, taking a vacation)
☐ Making choices about joining a social group or participating in social events
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Other Life Areas:
☐ Other things: ____________________________
☐ Other things: ____________________________
☐ Other things: ____________________________

Adapted from the Yukon Health and Human Services, June 2006, Support Decision Making Agreement; Adult Protection and Decision Making, Retrieved From http://www.gov.yk.ca
Remember how we said that we all get advice and help from our friends and family members when making both simple and hard decisions? Now it’s your turn to decide who will help you. Here are some things to think about when choosing the people to be part of your SDM Team.

**Who Should Help Me Make My Decisions?**

- Someone who is honest
- Someone who has knowledge or expertise in a specific area
- Someone who will listen to your voice and the things you would like in your life
- Someone who will follow through with their commitment
- Someone who will talk to you and not just the people around you
- Someone you can trust
- Someone who is creative and willing to explore all possibilities
- Someone who is willing to help you
- Someone who will listen to your voice and the things you would like in your life

Name the 3 things that **YOU** think are the most important to you when choosing a supportive person.

1.  
2.  
3.  
Supported Decision Making

Across

4. What comes after the present? The__________
5. I’m a self-advocate. My __________ counts
6. Things that you are trying to do or achieve.
8. I like to be treated with __________
9. What is a group of people working together called? ____________

Down

1. Don’t focus on my disabilities, focus on my ________
2. People who help me are called my __________
3. I want to make my own ________ and decisions.
4. I want to be given the ________ to make mistakes
7. To stand up for yourself, it takes courage and __________

Choices Abilities Team Respect
Future Voice Goals Strength
Supporter Freedom
Yep its true, we do all types of planning everyday. When you turned 18, you now have more choices about what you would like to plan in your life. Some of your plans will be simple, like planning for a weekend or taking a vacation and don’t really need anything in writing, but what if you needed help with your money or your health? Or what if you needed assistance with moving out on your own or getting better training so you can get a great job? These type of goals may need a written agreement between you and your supporters that you can create yourself. Supported Decision Making agreements are one, of many tools available, that you can use for planning your future. Let us show you how!

**AGREEMENTS** are a two-way street. All agreements involve 2 people who are willing to provide something to each other. Usually agreements are legally binding, that means that if either one of you do not do what you said you would do, you could take legal action against each other. A Supported Decision Making is a little different. In this agreement, you are giving your supporters the “AUTHORIZATION” to assist you in the areas of life that you need help or support in. That means that you are giving your “PERMISSION” for your supporters to point out all of your options and support you with taking the steps to accomplish your goals. Supported Decision Making agreements are in writing and will take some planning.

**PEOPLE WHO PLAN ARE MORE LIKELY TO ACCOMPLISH THE THINGS THAT MATTER THE MOST TO THEM**
REMEMBER, PLANNING HELPS WITH:

- Setting the direction of YOUR goals, priorities and needs
- Getting everyone on the same page
- Setting time limits for completion
- Being sure that all of your options and resources are explored

ANYONE can write an agreement. Sounds scary? Not really because most of you already have had some experience in writing and being a part of an agreement.

Have you ever been a part of any of these?

- An Individuals Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan?
- An Employment or Work Forces Service Plan?
- A Person Center/Directed Plan?

Getting Ready to Start Writing Your Own Supported Decision Making Agreement

BEFORE you start writing your plan,... have you done the following?
Mark the ones you have completed.

- [ ] You have thought about the things you want in your life and have chosen the things you will need help with from your supported decision making team (Life areas).
- [ ] You have chosen your support people and have shared with them the ideas behind the Supported Decision Agreement. They have agreed to assist you with accomplishing your goals.
- [ ] You have set up a time and date to meet with your Supported Decision Making team and have invited them to your meeting.
Many other states have sample agreements that can be accessed in a variety of ways. Each agreement looks a little different and you can use them in any way you feel best fits your ideas about how you want your agreement to look and work.

Check out Some of These Resource before you start writing your agreement

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

Maine SDM Coalition
Www. Support My Decision.com
Designation of Supported Decision-Making Team Form (tools)

American Civil Liberties Union/Support Decision Making
www.aclu.org/issues/disability-rights/supported-decision-making

Yukon Health and Human Services
www.gov.yk.ca/forms/forms/5000/yg5255_e.pdf

District of Columbia Schools Educational Supported Decision Making Form

Things You Will Want to Include in Your Agreement

Your Name  Address  Telephone number  Email Address

Names and contact information of the people who will be supporting you with your agreement.

A Place for the supporter to voluntarily agree to help you make decisions in the areas of life you choose.

A Place where you identify the “Life Areas” that you will need help with, in order to be healthy and safe.

A Place to talk about how the agreement can be changed.

A place for you and your supporters to sign and date the agreement.

We all have different preferences, values and needs.

We all have different abilities and challenges.

NO “ONE AGREEMENT” FITS ALL

We all have different life situations.

We all have different supports systems
SARAH’S SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING AGREEMENT

MEET SARAH

THIS IS JOHN
SARAH’S BROTHER

THIS IS SARAH’S
MOM, ROSE

THIS IS SARAH’S
BOYFRIEND, JACK

THese ARE
HER FRIENDS

SARAH’S SWIMMING FRIENDS

SARAH’S BOSS

MR JONES
SARAH’S VR COUNSELOR
Sarah started talking with her family, friends and school teachers about the areas of her life that she would like to improve. She made them aware that she wants to make her own decisions but needs some help to make some of these decisions about her life.

Sarah looked at her “life areas” and started to think about the ways her support team could assist her. Sarah believes that she will need help with decision making at school, learning more about her money and benefits and her different options for losing weight.

Sarah chose her mother Rose and her brother John, her Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Mr. Jones, her boyfriend Jack and her friends Molly and Sue to be a part of her Supported Decision Making team.

Sarah met with her supporters and created an agreement. Her supported team helped her design the agreement.
A Supported Decision Making Agreement is a way to plan my life and achieve my goals by working with a team of trusted supporters in order to make my own decisions.

My SUPPORTERS are the people who I trust to help me make decisions. My SUPPORTERS do not have my permission to make choices for me. I will make my own choices, with their support. I am the person who has the final say.

My Name __________________________ Date of Birth ________

Address __________ (City) __________ (State) __________ (Zip)

Telephone: Home ___ Cell ___

Emergency Contact: Name ___ Phone Number ___

I have decided that I will need assistance with decision making in the following “Life Areas”.

☐ Being Safe and Staying Safe

☐ Daily Living

☐ Education and Training

☐ Money and Financial

☐ Physical Health

☐ Dating & Partners

☐ Mental Health

☐ Transportation

☐ Home, Work and Friends

☐ Free Time/Social

☐ Caring for a Child

☐ Pet Care

☐ Other Life Areas ________

Why I Feel I will need support with making decisions: Need help talking to doctor. Not sure what to do with my Aunt Sally’s money and confused about my current benefits.

Also need help talking with my IEP team about my transition goals.

(Examples: need support with my IEP/Person Center Plan, need help organizing my thoughts, need help understanding my options, need help with getting people to understand what I want, need help with managing my health, need things explained in plain language.)
Meeting with My Support Team

My support people are very important to me and I want to be respectful of their time. I know that I can call them to ask questions about my goals in this agreement at anytime, but I would like to talk with my whole Supported Decision Making team:

Check one:  
- [X] Every week
- [ ] One time a month
- [ ] Two times a month
- [ ] Every Six Months
- [ ] One time a year
- [ ] Before an important meeting (IEP/Doctor/Dentist)
- [ ] I do not want my support team to meet on a regular basis.

Next Meeting Date: 3/17/17

My Supported Decision Making Team Contact Information

Name: Rose Thomas, Mom  
Contact #: (Cell/Home) 801-000-0001  
Email: None

Name: Jane Hunter, Friend  
Contact #: (Cell/Home) 801-000-0008  
Email: janehunt001@utah.gov

Name: Mr. Jones, VR Counselor  
Contact #: (Cell/Home) 801-004-0002  
Email: mr.jones003@yahoo.com

Name: John, Brother  
Contact #: (Cell/Home) 801-000-0009  
Email: john.thomas0@aol.gov

Name: Sue Bird, Friend  
Contact #: (Cell/Home) 801-001-0007  
Email: suebird00@gmail.com

Name: Jack Spratt, Boyfriend  
Contact #: (Cell/Home) 801-000-0008  
Email: None
**My Life Area: Education**

I choose the following people to support me: **My Mom Rose**

Mr. Jones    Sue, My Friend

I Need Assistance with the making the following decisions:

1. **Come with me to my IEP Meeting**
2. **Help me figure out the classes I should take.**
3. **Want to learn how to work with animals.**

My Supporter(s) will help me by:

1. **Coming to my IEP.**
2. **Explaining my options and choices for classes.**
3. **Talking with everyone about me getting a job with animals.**

I agree to do my part by helping with:

1. **Let my SDM team know when my IEP is-Date/Time.**
2. **Get a copy of my old IEP.**
3. **Give my old IEP to my SDM Team**

More Notes (if needed):

---

**Authorization/Permission Forms (If Needed):**

Yes  X  No   I am willing to sign or give permission for my supporters to help me make decisions in this life area.

**Form Name:** Authorization to Disclose Educational Info.  **Form Name:**

I Will Need Support with:

Yes  No    My supporter will explain in simple language how this form will help me:

Supporter Name: ____________

Yes  X  No    My supporter will help me get the form

Supporter Name: __ Rose __

Yes  X  No    My supporter will help me complete the form: Supporter Name: __ Rose __

Yes  No    My support will help me get the form to the people who will honor my wish:

Supporter Name: ____________

---
My Life Area: Physical Health
I choose the following people to support me: My Mom Rose 
Jane, my friend    Jack, my boyfriend

I Need Assistance with the making the following decisions:
1. I need help losing weight
2. Checking out weight loss programs
3. Talking with my Doctor about my desire to loose weight

My Supporter(s) will help me by:
1. Going to the doctor with me.
2. Explaining different weight loss options
3. Encourage me and help me make good food choices.

I agree to do my part by helping with:
1. Make an effort to lose weight.
2. Call doctor and make appointment.
3.

More Notes (if needed):

Authorization/Permission Forms (If Needed):
Yes  X No I am willing to sign or give permission for my supporters to help me make decisions in this life area.

Form Name: HIPPA release form
I Will Need Support with:
Yes  X No My supporter will explain in simple language how this form will help me:
Supporter Name: Jane
Yes  X No My supporter will help me get the form
Supporter Name: Jane
Yes  X No My supporter will help me complete the form: Supporter Name: Rose
Yes  X No My support will help me get the form to the people who will honor my wish:
Supporter Name: Rose

Form Name: _______________________
I Will Need Support with:
Yes  X No My supporter will explain in simple language how this form will help me:
Supporter Name: __________
Yes  X No My supporter will help me get the form
Supporter Name: ________
Yes  X No My supporter will help me complete the form: Supporter Name: _________
Yes  X No My support will help me get the form to the people who will honor my wish:
Supporter Name: ___________________
My Life Areas

My Life Area: Money

I choose the following people to support me: My Mom Rose
John, my brother  Mr. Jones, VR Counselor

I Need Assistance with the making the following decisions:

1. **What should I do with my Aunt Sally’s Money**
2. **Understand about my benefits-SSI and Medicaid**
3. **Can I buy a bike?**

My Supporter(s) will help me by:

1. **Find out about my benefits/call benefit specialist.**
2. **Look into different ways to set up a joint account with my mom.**
3. **Find out about an “ABLE” account.**

I agree to do my part by helping with:

1. **Finding out the cost of a bike that I would like.**

More Notes (if needed): John is going to help me contact a Benefit Specialist and talk to Social Security, Mom will help me talk with my local Bank and help me find out more about trusts or power of attorney.

**Authorization/Permission Forms (If Needed):**

Yes [x] No [ ] I am willing to sign or give permission for my supporters to help me make decisions in this life area.

**Form Name:**

I Will Need Support with:

Yes [ ] No [x] My supporter will explain in simple language how this form will help me:

Supporter Name: __________

Yes [ ] No [ ] My supporter will help me get the form

Supporter Name: __________

Yes [ ] No [ ] My supporter will help me complete the form: Supporter Name: __________

Yes [ ] No [ ] My supporter will help me get the form to the people who will honor my wish:

Supporter Name: __________
**Supporter(s) Agreement**

By signing below, I, as Sarah’s supporter, agree to voluntarily act on her behalf to achieve the goals outlined in this agreement. My job will be to provide information and options in a way that she will understand her choices, discuss the pros and cons of a decision and help her express her decision. I understand that I am a supporter and will not make any decisions but will provide guidance and knowledge. I agree to support this person’s decisions to the best of my ability, honestly, and in good faith.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rose Thomas</td>
<td>3/10/17</td>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>3/10/17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Hunter</td>
<td>3/10/17</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supporter</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue Bird</td>
<td>3/10/17</td>
<td>_______</td>
<td>_______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td></td>
<td>Supporter</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Jones</td>
<td>3/10/17</td>
<td>_______</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporter</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Self Advocate’s Agreement**

By signing below, I agree to try new ideas and explore different possibilities, to look at my own strengths and challenges, to work with my team of supporters when making decisions and to accept the responsibilities and consequences of the my decisions.

I understand that I am responsible for this agreement. I will get assistance, if needed, to keep my agreement moving in the right direction. (planning, follow through)

I understand that I can change this agreement at any time by contacting my supporter(s), crossing out the part that I disagree with on this agreement, putting my initials next to the part I crossed off and sending a copy of the new agreement to my supporter(s).

**Sarah Thomas**  
Date

---

A Supported Decision Making Agreement is a way to plan my life and achieve my goals by working with a team of trusted supporters in order to make my own decisions.

My SUPPORTERS are the people who I trust to help me make decisions

My SUPPORTERS do not have my permission to make choices for me. I will make my own choices, with their support. I am the person who has the final say.

My Name __________________________ Date of Birth __________________________

Address ______________________ (City) ______________ (State) ______ (Zip)__________

Telephone: Home_________________________ Cell __________________________

Emergency Contact: Name _________________ Phone Number ______________________

I have decided that I will need assistance with decision making in the following “Life Areas”.

☐ Being Safe and Staying Safe ☐ Daily Living
☐ Education and Training ☐ Money and Financial
☐ Physical Health ☐ Dating & Partners
☐ Mental Health ☐ Transportation
☐ Home, Work and Friends ☐ Free Time/Social
☐ Caring for a Child ☐ Pet Care
☐ Other Life Areas________

Why I Feel I will need support with making decisions: ________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

(Examples: need support with my IEP/Person Center Plan, need help organizing my thoughts, need help understanding my options, need help with getting people to understand what I want, need help with managing my health, need things explained in plain language.)
Meeting with My Support Team

My support people are very important to me and I want to be respectful of their time. I know that I can call them to ask questions about my goals in this agreement at any time, but I would like to talk with my whole Supported Decision Making team:

Check one:
- [ ] Every week
- [ ] One time month
- [ ] Two times month
- [ ] Every Six Months
- [ ] One time a year
- [ ] Before an important meeting (IEP/Doctor/Dentist)
- [ ] I do not want my support team to meet on a regular basis.

Next Meeting Date: __________

My Supported Decision Making Team Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contact #: (Cell/Home)</td>
<td>Contact #: (Cell/Home)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Email:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My Life Area: ________________
I choose the following people to support me: ________________

My Supporter(s) will help me by:
1.
2.
3.

I agree to do my part by helping with:
1.
2.
3.

More Notes (if needed): ______________________________________________________________________

Authorization/Permission Forms (If Needed):
Yes ___ No _____ I am willing to sign or give permission for my supporters to help me make decisions in this life area.

Form Name: Authorization to Disclose Educational Info.   Form Name: ____________________________
I Will Need Support with:
Yes ___ No ____ My supporter will explain in simple language how this form will help me:
Supporter Name: ________________
Yes ___ No ____ My supporter will help me get the form:
Supporter Name: ________________
Yes ___ No ____ My supporter will help me complete the form:
Supporter Name: ________________
Yes ___ No ____ My support will help me get the form to the people who will honor my wish:
Supporter Name: ________________

I Will Need Support with:
Yes ___ No ____ My supporter will explain in simple language how this form will help me:
Supporter Name: ________________
Yes ___ No ____ My supporter will help me get the form:
Supporter Name: ________________
Yes ___ No ____ My supporter will help me complete the form:
Supporter Name: ________________
Yes ___ No ____ My support will help me get the form to the people who will honor my wish:
Supporter Name: ________________
**Supporter(s) Agreement**

By signing below, I, as ________ supporter, agree to voluntarily act on her behalf to achieve the goals outlined in this agreement. My job will be to provide information and options in a way that they will understand their choices, discuss the pros and cons of a decision and help him/her express his/her decision. I understand that I am a supporter and will not make any decisions but will provide guidance and knowledge. I agree to support this person’s decisions to the best of my ability, honestly, and in good faith.

_________________  ___________  __________________  ___________
Supporter  Date  Supporter  Date

_________________  ___________  __________________  ___________
Supporter  Date  Supporter  Date

_________________  ___________  __________________  ___________
Supporter  Date  Supporter  Date

_________________  ___________  __________________  ___________
Supporter  Date  Supporter  Date

**Self Advocate’s Agreement**

By signing below, I agree to try new ideas and explore different possibilities, to look at my own strengths and challenges, to work with my team of supporters when making decisions and to accept the responsibilities and consequences of the my decisions.

I understand that I am responsible for this agreement. I will get assistance, if needed, to keep my agreement moving in the right direction. (planning, follow through)

I understand that I can change this agreement at any time by contacting my supporter(s), crossing out the part that I disagree with on this agreement, putting my initials next to the part I crossed off and sending a copy of the new agreement to my supporter(s).

_________________  ___________
Self Advocate  Date
Legal Forms and How They Might Be Helpful

It is not uncommon for us to rely on our family, friends and professionals to help us make good decisions. Some of those decisions may involve your day-to-day life or helping you get a job or a place to live but some might be more difficult that involve protecting your money, your property and your health.

What if you were not able to make good decisions anymore because you got hurt or sick or maybe just grew older?

Who would you want to help you make those decisions?

When thinking about how legal forms might be helpful in your life, it is very important that you seek assistance from one of your supporters or your Supported Decision Making team. These are difficult decisions for ALL people and it is always in your BEST interest to seek professional assistance (attorney/lawyer, tax account/money manager/medical professional) that can provide guidance and advice.

Below are some legal protections that might be helpful depending on your life situation.

- **Your Money**
  - Power of Attorney
  - Representative Payees assigned/requested by Government agencies.
  - Joint Bank Accounts
  - Trusts

- **Your Health**
  - Utah Advance Health Care Directive
  - Advance Directive, Utah State Declaration for My Mental Health Treatment
  - Health Power of Attorney

- **Education**
  - Authorization to Disclose Educational Information

- **Your House & Stuff**
  - Utah Last Will and Testament
  - Trusts
Supported Decision Making in Utah
Update 2021

PAST
Alternatives to guardianship and/or support decision making were not required by the Utah courts to be explored before granting guardianship.

TODAY
The Disability Law Center, the American Civil Liberties Union of Utah, the American Civil Liberties Union Disability Rights Program, and Latham & Watkins, LLP, in December 2018 reached a positive settlement with the State of Utah to expand and strengthen legal protections for adults with disabilities involved in guardianship proceedings.

SETTLEMENT’S IMPACT
Utah Court administrators will ensure:
1. That judges are better informed about the importance and availability of representation in guardianship proceedings.

2. That judges consider full guardianship as a last resort, while first exploring less restrictive alternatives such as powers of attorney or supported decision making.

3. That judges are aware of options to complete guardianship that maintain as much autonomy (independence) as possible.

4. Administrators will distribute these new guidelines via updated reference cards, checklists, and flow-charts to help state court judge’s complete guardianship cases.
IS SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING RIGHT FOR ME?

Take The Quick Quiz Below

Instructions: Read the questions below and put a mark in the box that best fits you

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask Yourself?</th>
<th>YES! YEP! YOU BET!</th>
<th>NO! NOPE! NEVER!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe that you can make good choices for yourself but may need some guidance and assistance from others?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you interested in exploring new possibilities?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to look at your own strengths and challenges to decide on the supports that you will need in order to be successful?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you willing to work with a team of supporters to achieve your goals?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Are you willing to take personal responsibility and accept the consequences for the choices that you make?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you interested in taking the time and effort to create a written agreement to help you and your support team achieve your goals?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Count all of the Yes’s and No’s) TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

How Did You SCORE?

If you answered YES to all of the questions, you are confident, willing to take on responsibilities and ready for

If you only answered yes to some of the questions you might be a little nervous about making decisions. Continue to talk with your friends and family about the skills needed to make good decisions.
Supported Decision Making RESOURCES

WE ENCOURAGE you and your supporters to find more information about Supported Decision Making and alternatives to guardianship by visiting these resources or seeking information from your local disability community.

National Resources

National Resource Center for Supported Decision Making
http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org/states

Autistic Self Advocacy Network: The Right to Make Choices:
International Laws and Decision Making by People with Disabilities

Supported Decision Making Teams: Setting The Wheels in Motion. By S. Francisco and J. Martinis

Working Interdisciplinary Network of Guardianship Stakeholders (WINGS)
http://www.utcourts.gov/utc/wings/

The ARC, Center for Future Planning, Supported Decision Making: What is it and What Do You Need to Know
https://futureplanning.thearc.org

Videos

Gabby’s Story  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=duyJkZ2mI0Q

Supported Decision Making in Action: Timberley and Tonya’s Story
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwnJ1nRR0Hs

Supported Decision Making Your Support, My Decision
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGJe5KyfIxM

Supported Decision Making (Canada)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZY69_BW8Y_o

Supported Decision Making (Minnesota)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0jd-J9Lozs

Jenny Hatch’s Story of Supported Decision Making
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OiAwj-ywpl4
Local Resources

Disability Law Center www.disabilitylawcenter.org
Utah Legal Services www.utahlegalservices.org
Utah Parent Center www.utahparentcenter.org

Division of Services for People with Disabilities www.dspd.utah.gov
Aging & Adult Services www.daas.utah.gov
Guardianship Associates of Utah www.guardianshiputah.org
Guardian Advocate Services, LLC (GAS) www.guardianadvocateservices.com

Utah Independent Living Centers

Salt Lake City www.uilc.org
Ability First (Provo) www.ability1stutah.org
Options for Independence (Logan) www.optionsind.org
Roads to Independence (Ogden) www.roadstoindpendance.org
Active Re-Entry (Price) www.arceil.org
Red Rock Independent Center (St. George) www.rrci.org

Utah Forms

Utah Advance Health Care Directive

HIPPA Authorization Form https://www.healthport.com/Files/Sample%20HIPAA%20Authorization%20Form.doc

Social Security Representative Payee Form https://secure.ssa.gov/poms/images/poms02/02005/GN_00502.115B-1.gif


Utah Last Will and Testament https://www.legalzoom.com/articles/utah-last-will-testament
https://eforms.com/wills/utah-last-will-and-testament-template/

Utah Declaration for Mental Health Treatment http://www.nrc-pad.org/images/stories/PDFs/utahpadform.pdf


Authorization to Release Confidential Information Under a Supported Decision Making Agreement
Sample SDM Agreements

Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities

Maine SDM Coalition www.Support My Decision.com Designation of Supported Decision-Making Team Form (tools)

American Civil Liberties Union/Support Decision Making
www.aclu.org/issues/disability-rights/supported-decision-making

Yukon Health and Human Services www.gov.yk.ca/forms/forms/5000/yg5255_e.pdf

District of Columbia Schools Educational Supported Decision Making Form
https://dcps.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/dcps/publication/
attachments/Supported%20Decision%20Making%20Form.pdf

Guide Development References

National Resource Center for Supported Decision Making
http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org/states

Autistic Self Advocacy Network: The Right to Make Choices:

Supported Decision Making Teams:

Setting The Wheels in Motion By S. Francisco and J. Martinis


Maine SDM Coalition www.Support My Decision.com Designation of Supported Decision-Making Team Form (tools)

American Civil Liberties Union/Support Decision Making
www.aclu.org/issues/disability-rights/supported-decision-making

Yukon Health and Human Services www.gov.yk.ca/forms/forms/5000/yg5255_e.pdf
Guide Development References (Cont).

Utah Guardianship Laws
http://supporteddecisionmaking.org/state-review/utah


Supported Decision Making A Call to Action, Martinis, Jonathan
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_vqF3NiTeWg


Advocates as Leaders
Self Advocacy Speakers’ Network
5296 South Commerce Drive Suite 305
Murray, Utah 84101
801-245-7353

This Project is Funded by the Utah Developmental Disabilities Council in partnership with Utah State University, Center for Persons with Disabilities