

1-800-870-7746

Maine Parent Federation

...Because Every Family Matters



Supported Decision Making

Exploring Alternatives To Guardianship

In response, MPF is...

Providing outreach, education, & trainings to families, providers, & schools

Assisting families to draft a Supported Decision Making Plan

Assisting families to include SDM in school IEP Transition Plans as well as working with medical providers within an SDM plan.

Implementing SDM assistance into our Family Support Navigator Program (MPF's peer to peer)

Developing informational booklets as well as brochures

Terms to Know



Guardianship

A legal process by which a court takes away the right & power of an individual to make decisions and enter into a legal relationship because they are deemed incapacitated.



Supported Decision Making

A person with a disability makes their own decisions by using support networks to help understand the issues & choices, ask questions in language they understand, & communicate their own decision to others.



Releases

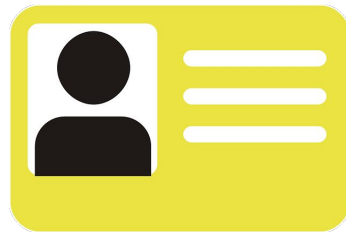
An agreement between the provider & the individual receiving services to allow the provider to release and/or communicate with a third party.

Terms to Know



Power of Attorney

A person knowingly and voluntarily signs a legal document that identifies someone they trust to act for them.



Representative Payee

The Social Security Administration appoints someone to manage a person's Social Security benefit.



Advance Health Care Directives

A person has a family member or natural support who can make health care decisions which the person cannot make, even with support.

3 Principles of Supported Decision Making



1. Everyone has the right to make choices.

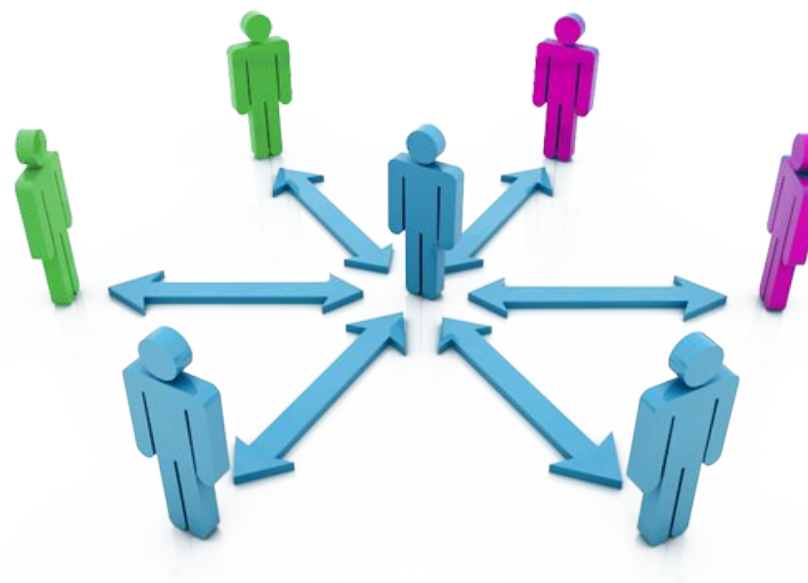
2. People can get assistance without giving up the right to make choices.



3. People will often need help in understanding, making, & communicating their choices.

A Glimpse of SDM in Practice

- SDM promotes independence by providing support but not making decisions on behalf of the individual.
- SDM is flexible and can change as needs change.
- A plan may be written in a Supported Decision Making Agreement is not a legal document.
- It is best to have a team of supporters so the duties are shared among multiple people; however support can be provided one on one or within a team.





Role of the Supporter

Recognize and give respect to the person being supported as the *decision maker*.

Provide information and resources but do **NOT** make decisions for the individual.

Commit to the role for at least a year.

Contribute useful information in a particular area in which they have expertise (i.e. finances).

Guardianship vs. Supported Decision Making

Guardianship	Supported Decision Making
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Protective device	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presumes capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restrictive by design – an individual's powers, rights, & authority are transferred to a surrogate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acknowledges other practical & legal options that can address challenges & needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Should be used only as a last resort	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Asks: what does an individual need in order to be supported in making decisions?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most restrictive	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Least restrictive alternative