Supported Decision-Making Fact Sheet

Supported Decision-Making is a method of developing decision-making skills by relying on a team of trusted individuals ("Supporters") to assist the person in collecting information, processing information, and coming to an informed decision. Supported Decision-Making can be an alternative to guardianship in that it provides a trusted and formalized environment for people who are seeking assistance with decision-making while still promoting self-determination. In contrast to guardianship, Supported Decision-Making is flexible and can change with the needs of the person to provide more opportunities for independence and autonomy.

Decision-Making as a Skill

- Decision-making is not a one size fits all model. We all make decisions differently because we are all individuals with specific desires and goals.
- We all require outside support at some point during the decision-making process. (Ex: consulting a mechanic about a car repair, consulting friends about choosing a school, consulting with your family about where to live, etc.)
- Much like any other skill, decision-making can be practiced and learned.
- If your disability makes it difficult to access certain parts of decision-making, you have the right to be accommodated.
- Guardianship strips people of their civil rights and removes them from their own decision-making process.
- Overbroad and undue guardianships are linked with decreased physical and mental health, longevity, ability to function, and reports of subjective well-being.

Additional Resources

**Maine Supported Decision-Making Coalition** – The Maine Supported Decision-Making Coalition is in the process of updating its website to include resources and tools to provide Maine’s community with information and tools on how to create and maintain a Supported Decision-Making Team. For more information, please contact Disability Rights Maine at (207) 626-2774. ([supportmydecision.org](http://supportmydecision.org))

**National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making** – The National Resource Center for Supported Decision-Making currently maintains an online center of national resources on decision-making for adults with disabilities and older adults. ([supporteddecisionmaking.org](http://supporteddecisionmaking.org))