

**DISABILITY
RIGHTS
ARIZONA**

Supported Decision Making Project



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Why is Self-Determination Important

- **Empowers Personal Choice.** Gives individuals control over their lives, allowing them to make decisions that reflect their own goals, values, and preferences.
- **Builds Confidence and Independence.** Supported decision-making provides a framework to make choices with guidance, increasing self-confidence and independence.
- **Enhances Quality of Life.** When individuals are empowered to make their own decisions, they experience greater satisfaction and well-being.
- **Respects Rights and Dignity.** Self-determination emphasizes the right to make personal decisions, promoting dignity and respect for each person's autonomy.
- **Encourages Growth in Self-Advocacy.** Supported decision-making fosters skills in self-advocacy, allowing individuals to communicate and advocate for their needs.
- **Strengthens Social Connections.** Choosing supporters to help in decision-making builds trusting relationships and reinforces community ties.
- **Reduces Over-Dependence on Guardianship.** Offers an alternative to full guardianship, providing support without limiting rights, and emphasizing empowerment over restriction.

SDM in a Nutshell

- Prior to SDM being signed into law, individuals and families were presented with few options.
- SDM is an alternative to guardianship, where the individual forms a team of supporters to help them in areas of their life (healthcare, finances, education).
- The individual, with supports, will assess their strengths and areas where they may need support.
- The individual will then choose supporters for those areas they need support.
- The supporter will help in accessing information, understanding content, and communicating decisions (e.g., a healthcare supporter may attend doctors' appointments, communicate with providers about symptoms, and discuss, in an accessible manner, treatment options and side effects).

Goals of the Project

Conduct trainings virtually and in-person throughout Arizona

Create easy to understand resources in plain language, ensuring accessibility and are available in other languages

Use multiple advertising strategies to reach more individuals with an emphasis on Rural Areas and underserved communities

Update presentations for specific audiences

Working with Key Stakeholders to improve and update their internal training on all support options available

Share presentation template with other organizations, including presenter talking points to empower more individuals to inform their own organizations going forward

Presentations Throughout Arizona since July 2023 – Over 1,800 Individuals Trained



14 - Trainings Conducted In-Person Have Included the Following Counties:

Maricopa
Mohave
Pima
Pinal
Santa Cruz
Yavapai



23 - Virtual Presentations



Supported Decision-Making Agreements

What is Supported Decision-Making?

Supported decision-making means a person with a disability can get help when making important life decisions. You can get assistance in areas like deciding on where to live, finding a job, pursuing education, and managing your finances. You choose a trusted family member or friend to be your supporter.

Arizona passed a supported decision-making law which can be found at <https://www.azleg.gov/viewdocument/?docName=https://www.azleg.gov/ars/14/05722.htm> in June 2023. Now, individuals in Arizona can enter into supported decision-making agreements.

Why is Supported Decision-Making Important?

Supported decision-making is an alternative to guardianship and it allows you to receive the support you need to make decisions. A guardianship arrangement can be very limiting. With supported decision-making, you keep your individual rights and your independence.

What Are Some Things Supporters Help With?

Supporters can play multiple roles. Supporters can help gather information. For example, a supporter can help gather information about classes if the individual wants to pursue education. Supporters can help explain complex concepts, like medical treatments and procedures. The supporter can help gather information on where to live or work. Supporters can help gather important documentation like applying for public assistance. The supporter can also communicate with a landlord or a social services provider for you and make sure your choices are respected.

How Can I Create a Supported Decision-Making Agreement?

You can create a supported decision-making agreement by choosing a supporter and signing an agreement. In the agreement, you can choose what types of decisions you would like help with. The agreement must be in writing. You and your supporter must sign the agreement in front of two witnesses or a notary. The agreement lasts as long as you want it to, and you can end the agreement at any time.

Where Can I Learn More?

Call The Arc of Arizona at (602) 234-2721 or visit arcarizona.org. You can also contact Disability Rights Arizona (DRAZ) at (602) 274-6287 or visit the azdisabilitylaw.org.

Creating
resources in
plain language,
including
Spanish
versions

Appointment of supporter

I _____, (Name of adult, (the "Decision-Maker")),
am of sound mind and enter into this agreement voluntarily.

My disabilities are: (describe briefly)

_____.

I choose _____ to be my
supporter.

Supporter's Address: _____

Supporter's Telephone Number: _____

Supporter's Email Address: _____

Supporter's role and limitations on that role

My supporter may help me with life decisions about each of the following which I have
marked with an "x" (check those that apply):

Yes ___ No ___ obtaining food, clothing and a place to live.

Yes ___ No ___ my physical health and health services.

Yes ___ No ___ my mental health and mental health services.

Yes ___ No ___ managing my money or property.

Yes ___ No ___ getting an education or other training.

Yes ___ No ___ choosing and maintaining my services and supports.

Yes ___ No ___ finding a job.

Yes ___ No ___ other: _____ (specify)

Yes ___ No ___ my supporters may see my private health information under the health
insurance portability and accountability Act of 1996 (P.L. 104-191) if I first choose to
provide a signed release.

Yes ___ No ___ my supporters may see my educational records under the Family
Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 United States Code Section 1232g) if I first
choose to provide a signed release.

This agreement is effective when signed and will continue until _____ (date) or until
my supporter or I end the agreement or the agreement ends by operation of law, including
the appointment of a guardian for me.

Outreach Strategies

- Radio Advertisement
- Social Media
 - Facebook – Feed, Stories and Events
 - Instagram
 - X (Formerly Twitter)
 - LinkedIn
 - TikTok
- Local Location Bulletin Boards
- Email – Direct Email and Newsletters
- Data Mining for contacts in the Education and Legal Field
- Attending, Tabling Disability Conferences in Phoenix, Tucson and Flagstaff
- Leveraging Contacts to Help Disseminate Resources and Flyers to their Membership
- Videos include ASL and available in Spanish



Continual Improvements to Presentations

- Based on participant survey feedback, we continuously update our presentations to include real-world scenarios and demonstrations on completing a Supported Decision-Making Agreement.
- We have added industry specific slides and talking points when presenting to these audiences.
- The Advisory Committee has reviewed all resources, helped create content, and participated in training sessions to provide personal perspectives.
- As the law changes, and new research/materials become available, so do our presentations. Our presentations now include information relating to voting rights consistent with recent court decisions.

Engaging with Organizations

Division of Developmental Disabilities

Adult Protective Services

Mercy Care

United Healthcare

Raising Special Kids

Care for the Caregivers

First Place

The Arc Local Chapters

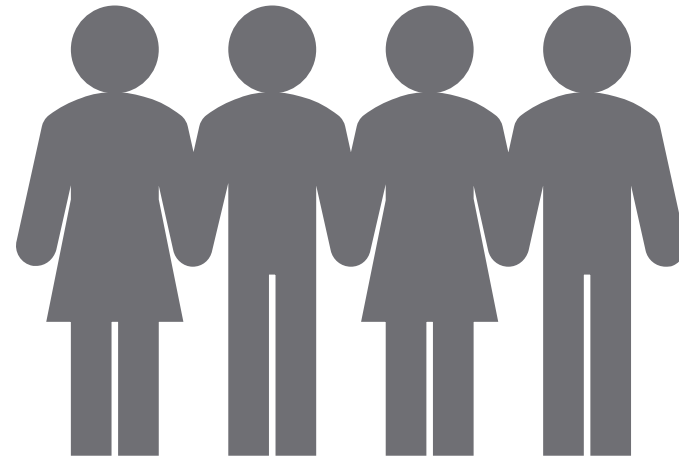
Tempe Union School District

Future Presentations Planned for: Vocational Rehabilitation,
Foundation for Blind Children, Maricopa County Superior Court

and Many More.

Empowering Others to Train on all Support Options

- Creating specific presentations based on audiences:
 - General Public
 - Educators
 - Medical Professionals
 - Legal Professionals
 - Transition Age Youth and their Families



Next Virtual Training is November 26th at 1pm

Register at <https://arcarizona.org/idd-and-18-now-what-future-planning-resources/#1692383895051-60a581ee-6f2e>

Thank you ADDPC

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