

To the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Planning Council:

Southwest Institute for Families and Children, and its partner organizations Arizona Center for Disability Law and The Arc of Arizona, would like to apply for a fourth year of funding for the Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project. Over the last three years we have had great success in introducing supported decision-making to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, their families and caregivers, as well as relevant stakeholders such as social service providers, medical, and legal professionals.

As supported decision-making is a new idea in Arizona, we have worked hard to create a real movement towards allowing people with disabilities to live in a least restrictive environment that allows them to keep their rights while receiving the support they need to live independent lives. To that end, we have created curriculums, training videos, as well as training courses that have taken place both in person as well as online. This has created a strong base to really push forward supported decision-making in Arizona.

In this final year of the grant, the SDM partners have been working hard to push forward the idea of supported decision-making. Because of the ongoing pandemic, we have been forced to provide trainings online to all people interested in supported decision-making. Fortunately, there has been no shortage of opportunities to spread the word of supported decision-making. Between the months of January through May 2021, we conducted three scheduled presentations of our own. Below is a chart with the number of total participants who attended our presentations.

Total number of participants	People with disabilities	parents or caregivers of people with disabilities	Participants without disabilities	Type of disability of family member	Family members with disabilities over the age of 18	Service providers attending training	Service providers with family members with disabilities
18	0	10	10	3 mental health,	4	9	3

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Besides our scheduled presentations, we also were invited to give presentations on our own. Between the months of January through May, we conducted a total of 10 presentations. Because we did not schedule the presentations nor register participants, we do not have the number of type of people who attended each presentation. With that said, we can give you the total number participants in each presentation. Below is a chart with the name of the presentation as well as the total number of participants.

Pima community of practice	East Valley community of practice	House Judiciary Committee	Senate Judiciary committee	United Health presentation
19 participants	22 participants	17 participants	11 participants	30 participants
Partners in leadership	Idea conference (February)	Idea conference (March)	American Indian disability Summit	Washington DC class
26 participants	15 participants	20 participants	35 participants	10 participants

Aside from providing trainings online, the SDM partners have been working hard on getting legislation passed through the Arizona state legislature to recognize supported decision-making as a less restrictive alternative to legal guardianship. This has been an ongoing process for the last three years and has been supported by both Republicans and Democrats in the legislature. Last year, the bill was cosponsored by Republican John Allen

and Democrat Jennifer Longdon. While the bill did pass by an almost unanimous House of Representatives, the bill did not pass in the Senate because the legislature ended their session early due to the beginning of the pandemic. This year, we once again introduced the bill and received even better support in both the House of Representatives and the Senate Judiciary committee. However, we fell short by one vote.

Supported decision-making continues to be a viable option for people with disabilities even without the legislation. People can choose to develop their own supported decision-making agreements because they do not need to be filed with the courts or recognized by a judge. The purpose of the bill however, was to have it legally recognized as a less restrictive alternative so that people who choose to use supported decision-making agreements would not encounter opposition from service providers. We will continue to push for legislation on supported decision-making, but because it did not pass this year, does not mean that we must stop our work. In fact, it pushes us harder to educate people about supported decision-making so that the public accepts it as an important alternative to legal guardianship.

With that said, we are now entering our final order of our Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project. We are continuing to provide online trainings about supported decision-making to the public. Online trainings continue to be successful but we would like to go back to doing in person trainings. We are closely monitoring the situation as far as the pandemic is concerned to determine if we will be able to conduct in person trainings this year. We certainly do not want to put anyone's life in danger but we believe that in person trainings provide us with a greater ability to connect with the public and truly gauge how well they understand the concept of supported decision-making.

Furthermore, we are continuing to assess our options for having supported decision-making legislation passed in next year's legislative session. We continue to have talks with Representative Longdon to strategize for the upcoming year. This includes addressing any issues legislators may have had with the bill as well as finding bipartisan sponsorship for future legislation.

While we have had great success in the last three years implementing the Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project, we believe that our work is not

over. We can continue to promote supported decision-making in Arizona to make sure it becomes the first option people consider before considering legal guardianship. To do so, we put forward these suggestions as to what we would like to do in year four of supported decision-making.

1. We would like to continue to do trainings geared towards stakeholder groups such as social service providers, state agencies, educators, and legal and medical professionals. Supported decision-making continues to be a topic of interest among all relevant stakeholders. Our presentations will help relevant stakeholders understand how supported decision-making works in their profession and how they can best support people with disabilities and their families who may be interested in creating their own supported decision-making agreements. This is a key component to accepting supported decision-making in Arizona as many people with disabilities and their caregivers turn to these professionals for advice and education. Presentations will continue to be about two hours long with an expectation to do presentations in person and online as the pandemic seems to be subsiding.
2. We would like to begin a supported decision-making agreement development program. Over the next year, we will be hosting five separate training programs. Each program will last about two months. Programs will have up to five individuals with disabilities as well as their families and caregivers. In each program, participants will attend classes that talk about one specific section of the supported decision-making curriculum. At the end of each class, participants will be given homework based on what they have learned. Classes will build upon each other with the goal of completing the program with fully developed supported decision-making agreements in place.
3. We will provide direct technical assistance to families and caregivers who have participated in the SDM program and are developing their own supported decision-making agreements. Through the technical assistance program, participants will be able to continue to receive the support they need to implement their own supported decision-making agreements.

4. As HB 2538 did not pass, we would like to continue to try to have a supported decision-making bill passed by the legislature. We believe that there is bipartisan support for supported decision-making legislation. This year it seems as though we were caught in the crossfire of partisan politics and missed our opportunity to pass through the legislature. We would like to continue to work with state legislators to address any issues they may have with the bill and have it once again considered by the legislature.

The Supported Decision-Making Pilot Project has been a successful project despite our setbacks due to the pandemic. There is still much to do as we continue to educate the public about our less restrictive alternative to guardianship. Hopefully, we can continue to do our work to ensure people disabilities are able to keep the rights while receiving the support they need to live independently. If you choose to continue funding our project, we believe that we can provide the above-mentioned program services for the continued funding of \$60,000 a year.