



Youth Voice,
Youth Choice

Supported
Decision-
Making

CENTER ON
**YOUTH VOICE
YOUTH CHOICE**

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Center for Youth Voice, Youth Choice

- 5-year project
- WI, GA, VT, IN, MI, NJ, OR, SC, AZ, CA, TX
- To promote alternatives to guardianship

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Introduction of Panelists:

Ashley Mathy
Jennie Rojas
Junior Sotelo
George Zaske

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What is Supported Decision-Making?



A **set of strategies** that help individuals with disabilities have **more control over their life and future**. It involves family and friends' **working together** with individuals to support them in making complex decisions.

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What does Wisconsin's Supported Decision-Making law do?

- Lets a person with a disability get help making decisions without losing all their rights.
- The person is always in control of their own decisions and their Supported Decision-Making agreement.



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Why rethink Guardianship?

It simply does not do what we want it to do!

- Avoid public declaration of incompetency
- Dignity, freedom of choice
- People deal with guardian – not person
- Time and expenses – attorneys, hearings, evaluations
- Courts do not always follow law or family wishes
- Very difficult to change or end
- Attorneys and guardian ad litem may not have much training
- There are no guardian “police” and no evidence guardianships make people safer

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What Keeps People Safe?

- ✔ Caring and involved family/friends
- ✔ Community networks/connections
- ✔ Opportunities to Practice And Build Decision-Making Skills

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Having Choices is important

- Having choices means having control over your life.
- When you have choices, you feel better and have more control of your life.
- Choosing to do something means taking responsibility for your actions.

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Supported Decision-Making Agreements

- ...can be used for any decisions the person needs help with.
- ...are flexible and easily updated.



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What Supported Decision-Making agreements do NOT do.

They do not restrict a Person's rights to make any decisions.

- You are still in charge of making your own decisions

It does not give Supporters any new rights to make decisions

- The Supporter does not have the right to make the decisions for you. The Person makes all their own decisions.
- Supporters cannot sign legal documents or make any legal agreements for the person.

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A person can have someone they trust to help them make decisions. That person is called a "Supporter"

You can have more than one Supporter.



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What Does a Supporter Do?

The possible roles of the Supporter are limited to:

1. Helping the person understand their options, understand big words or complicated ideas.
2. Researching information to help you decide.
3. Helping the person understand that information.
4. Helping the person communicate their decision.



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Tell us why you use Supported Decision Making.

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How do you make decisions?

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What do you think parents worry about when their kids are about to turn 18?

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Did your teachers talk to you about guardianship and/or Supported Decision Making?

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Tell us about your experience with the actual agreement.

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Why was Supported Decision Making the right decision for you?

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What do you hope people will take away from this presentation?

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Questions?



Jennie Rojas
Fil Clissa
Junior Sotelo
Ashley Mathy
George Zaske

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Supported Decision-Making Resources

- Tool Kit, presentations, information sheets and materials for families: <http://www.wi-bpdd.org/SupportedDecision-Making/>
- Supported Decision Making Agreement form: <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms/f02377.pdf>
- Fil Clissa: Fil.Clissa@wisconsin.gov

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