

## What are the principles behind Supported Decision-Making (SDM)?

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**Inclusive:** All people should have the chance to be full and equal members of their community. This is true no matter their age or ability.

**Individualized:** SDM should be flexible and made to meet individual needs.

**Person-Centered:** SDM should be driven by the person who wants supports. That person should choose their own supporters and types of support.

**Advice Only:** SDM helps a person make a choice – it does not replace their choice. Support is advice, and a person can take it or leave it.

## Supported Decision-Making

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Improving health and self-determination by helping people to make their own decisions



Created by the Missouri Consortium for Supported Decision-Making

### To learn more about Supported Decision-Making in Missouri:

- <https://mofamilytofamily.org>
- [www.supporteddecisionmaking.org](http://www.supporteddecisionmaking.org)
- <https://www.lifecoursetools.com/lifecourse-e-library/exploring-the-life-domains/supported-decision-making/>

## What is Supported Decision-Making?

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**Supported Decision-Making, or SDM,** means choosing a network of supporters. The supporters can help guide decisions and find information to make those decisions.

**You are using supported decision-making by seeking advice from a:**

- friend
- financial advisor
- family member
- lawyer
- mechanic
- or anyone else!

## Who should be using Supported Decision-Making?

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Everyone! Supported Decision-Making is especially helpful for anyone who has difficulty making decisions on their own. But SDM is not limited by age or ability. We can all use a little help sometimes.

## An Alternative to Guardianship...

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Many people in Missouri are placed under something called a “guardianship.” This is when their family, friends, or medical providers believe they cannot make their own decisions. Sometimes, making decisions is tough!

In Missouri, SDM can be an alternative to guardianship. It helps people to make their own decisions with support from friends, family, and professionals. These people are called “supporters.”



## ...Or a Tool Within Guardianship

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With the help of their supporters, people with guardians can safely make choices. They can also build their skills for making decisions.

When people make their own choices, they are using “self-determination.” Research shows that when people have self-determination, they are more likely to be:

- employed
- independent
- living in their communities
- happy about their quality of life<sup>1</sup>

In other words – making your own decisions makes you happier and healthier!

<sup>1</sup> Shogren, Karrie A. et al. *Supported Decision-Making: Theory, Research, and Practice to Enhance Self-Determination and Quality of Life*. Cambridge, 2019 (page 8).

## Everyone makes decisions. Everyone asks questions.

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Here are some decisions you might want supporters to help you with:

### Money management

- Where should I bank?
- Who knows my passwords?

### Healthcare

- Do I want to go back to that clinic?
- What dentist do I see?

### Employment

- Will this employer be helpful with my schedule?
- Do they provide benefits?

### Relationships

- Does this person understand that no means no?
- Can I depend on you to listen?

### Community living

- Where is the best place to eat for lunch?
- Is this business accessible?

### Personal safety

- Should I report what just happened?
- Did I remember to check my smoke alarm?