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# Supported Decision Making:

## Facts and Resources for Families

### NHDOE FACT

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101 Pleasant Street, Concord, New Hampshire 03301 – (603) 271-3741 – [www.education.nh.gov](http://www.education.nh.gov)

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Senate Bill 134, effective January 1, 2022, recognizes Supported Decision Making as an alternative to guardianship for adults with disabilities. It authorizes Supported Decision Making as a legal option for adults with disabilities who seek assistance in making life decisions but choose to retain all of their legal rights.

- **If adult guardianship is being discussed by the IEP team** with a student and the student's family, the team shall also inform the student and family of the availability of supported decision making as an alternative to guardianship.
- Supported decision making is a life planning tool and describes the process by which most individuals make decisions - by consulting with friends, family, social services, community organizations, and and/or other sources of support to weigh the pros and cons of a decision, review potential outcomes, and finally make a choice.
- Supported decision making empowers the person with a disability to make decisions about their own life with the aid of one or more trusted supporters.
- The person with disabilities chooses people they trust to help them understand, make, and communicate decisions. These trusted people are called "supporters" and may include trusted friends, relatives, neighbors, co-workers, providers, volunteers, or community members.
- Supported decision making requires a supported decision making agreement where the student with disabilities legally designates which supporters will help them make which decisions.
- The IEP team shall make available resources to assist in establishing a supported decision-making agreement. If a supported decision-making agreement is executed, the IEP team shall abide by decisions made by the student pursuant to the supported decision-making agreement.

Resources to assist students and families with guardianship, supported decision making or other options:

- NH Family Voices, [Home - New Hampshire Family Voices \(nhfv.org\)](http://nhfv.org)
- Parent Information Center, [Parent Information Center of NH – Supporting families of children with disabilities and special health care needs and the professionals that support them \(picnh.org\)](http://picnh.org)

Additional resources:

- Disabilities Rights Center – NH, [New Hampshire's Leading Disability Advocates for 40 Years - DRC NH](http://drcnh.org)
- The National Resource Center for Supported Decision Making, [Supported Decision-Making News | Supported Decision Making](http://supportdecisionmaking.org)