100 Ways to Use Supported Decision Making (SDM)

1. Supported Decision Making in Employment

- Use an authorization or Power of Attorney so your supporters can meet with your VR counselor with you to discuss services
- Make a Dream Board to help show your counselors and support team the kind of job and life you want
- Ask people you trust to help you find and explore education and training that can help you meet your work goals
- Make sure VR counselors give you "informed choice," and fully explain all of your choices for providers and services
- Create VR goals that will help you improve your decision making on and off the job
- Ask for accommodations at work so you can succeed at your job
- Find an ally at your job who you can reach out to if you need help or advice
- Contact your local ADA center for help identifying job accommodations
- Use an app to help keep you on task at work and remind you complete jobs
- Write your job goals into your Person Centered Plan and keep the team focused on meeting those goals with you
- Work with your supporters to tell your employer how you learn best and how you best receive constructive criticism
- Hang up checklists or photos of successful work to keep you on track

2. Supported Decision Making in Relationships

- Identify and take developmentally appropriate sexual education classes
- Work with a counselor to help process and express your feelings
- Take someone you trust with you to help you feel comfortable when you meet new people
- Use diagrams when talking about your body and sex
- Take social skills classes to build your interpersonal skills
- Make a list of the qualities that are important to you in friends and partners and check to see if your friends and partners measure up
- Ask people you trust to help you find groups where you can meet people who share your interests
- Watch movies or read books that have good friends and relationships in them to help you learn how they can be
- Ask someone you trust to talk with you informally about your body, relationships, and safety
- Practice communicating "No" and "I don't like that" so you'll be able to say it if you feel unsafe or threatened

Updated Fall 2019
3. Supported Decision Making in Housing

- Use an authorization or Power of Attorney so someone can help you sign a lease and be notified of landlord contacts
- Tell your landlord about the best way to communicate with you
- Ask someone you trust to help you meet your neighbors
- Work with a supporter to make a budget, buy furniture/supplies
- Ask your team to include goals and supports in your Person Centered Plan that will help you move into your own place
- Work with a supporter to ask for housing accommodations
- Ask people you trust to help you set up utilities (like power)
- Work with a Community Housing Guide to help you find housing you like
- Work with a supporter to write a "housing resume" to show you will be a good tenant
- Ask for help identifying and hiring your staff
- Work with supporters to create "to do" lists for taking care of your place
- Have a loved one stay with you on your first night(s)
- Have a supporter join you on housing appointments

4. Supported Decision Making in Medical Care

- Use an authorization or Power of Attorney so people can come with you to the doctor and help you make medical decisions
- Sign a HIPAA release form so your doctors and health care providers can talk to your supporters
- Use a chart of the body in the doctor's office to describe your health issues
- Ask for the doctor to use "plain language"
- Request that any recommendations be put in writing so you can research them later

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5. Supported Decision Making in Money Management

- Ask someone who is good with money to help you make a budget
- Use a Power of Attorney to allow supporters to help you set up and manage bank accounts, help with spending and saving, and be contacted about financial issues
- Use a Representative Payee to help you manage your Social Security benefits
- Work with a financial advisor to make plans for the future and manage your accounts
- Set up a Special Needs Trust to manage your income and protect your benefits
- Set up an ABLE Account to manage your income and protect your benefits
- Ask your bank to set up your account so there are two signatures needed for checks
- Ask your bank to set a maximum debit/withdraw amount
- Use an app to help you track how much you spend each day and what you spend money on
- Ask for money management goals and supports in your Person Centered Plan
- Ask for budgeting and money management goals in your IEP and IPE

6. Supported Decision Making in Education

- Attend and lead your IEP meetings
- Ask for IEP drafts to be sent to you in advance so you can prepare
- Take a team of people you choose to your meetings to support you
- Ask for "I statement" IEP goals to help you develop skills
- Put in goals about independent living and SDM in your IEP
- Ensure that people who will help with employment and life after school come to transition IEPs
- Ask a friend you trust at school to attend your IEP and support you

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74% of the funding for this product was provided by the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities under the federal Developmental Disabilities and Bill of Rights Act. For more information on the Board, please contact: Virginia Board for People with Disabilities, 1100 Bank Street, 7th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219, (800) 846-4464, or visit the Board’s website.

- Use a Special Education Power of Attorney to ensure your supporters are notified about meetings, news, and can help you make decisions
- In higher education, contact the school’s disability counselor, disclose your disability, and get help (if needed) asking for accommodations
- Make a Dream Board to help your IEP team understand your hopes and dreams for the future and make sure your goals and services will help you achieve them
- Take your IEP home and review it with someone you trust before you sign it

7. Supported Decision Making in Life’s Little Details

- Talk with a supporter about what matters to you and what you want then contact an attorney to write wills, Powers of Attorney, Advanced Health Directives, and other life documents
- Set up an app to help remind you of daily "to dos" and appointments
- Work with supporters to set up a plan to keep you safe and practice communicating with police
- Put a card with your name and a number to call for help in your wallet and practice giving it out to police and other first responders
- Put an "autism" or "ID" indicator on your state ID
- Work with your counselor and support team to help you identify your strengths and dreams, as well as challenges where they can help
- Work with supporters to find and sign up for public benefits
- Ask a friend to help you find and attend a place of worship with you and start making connections there
- Use an ally to help you find a place to volunteer
- Work with your team to research fun things to do and help you plan to get there
- Ask people to call and visit you regularly and talk about how you’re doing and any support you need

8. Supported Decision Making in Transportation

- Work with supporters to help you learn public transportation schedules and use public transportation
- Ask a supporter to take some trips with you so you can practice problem solving while traveling
- Use an App to help you track where you are and how to call for help
- Put a card in your wallet with the name and number of who to call if you need help and practice using it
- Work with your counselors and support team to include travel training goal sin your IEP, IPE, and PCP
- Identify taxi, Uber, Lyft, or other drivers you like and contact them directly to help you set up rides
- When you set up appointments, ask how to travel there on public transit

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- Make a map on paper or on your phone and label places you go often
- Have someone you trust ride Metro Access with you
- Have someone you trust ride Logisticare with you

9. Supported Decision Making in Contracts

- Ask someone you trust to go over contracts with you before you sign
- Use a Power of Attorney to authorize someone to review and sign contracts with you
- Ask for time to review contracts before signing them
- If you have a Power of Attorney, make sure that people know about it, especially people who ask you to sign documents
- Work with your supporters to adapt contracts using pictures, different words, and stories so you understand all the choices
- Ask people who give you documents to sign to explain what the documents mean and what they will do for you
- Ask to keep a copy of any document you sign
- Ask for contracts and other documents to be written in plain language
- Always have your supporters’ contact information with you and ask that contracts and other documents be sent to them. That way, you can review documents with your supporters before signing