

# 3 MINUTE WEBINARS: GUARDIANSHIP MYTHS

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VIRGINIA BOARD FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, 1100 BANK STREET,  
7TH FLOOR, RICHMOND, VA 23219, (800) 846- 4464, OR VISIT THE  
BOARD'S



# I HAVE TO BECOME GUARDIAN



- Parents are never mandated to get guardianship when their child turns 18
- There are loads of alternatives to guardianship, like Supported Decision Making, that are free or low cost AND protect the rights of the person with a disability

# ALL PEOPLE WITH DD NEED GUARDIANS



- The overwhelming majority of people with DD don't need a guardian, but we all need help making decisions
- People need guardians only when all less restrictive options have been explored and will not work

# IF I'M NOT GUARDIAN, NO ONE WILL TALK TO ME



- Powers of Attorney or a signed consent to exchange information to allow anyone in the room who the person with a disability wants there
- POAs can be totally customized to detail who should be involved and how they are to be included

# GUARDIANS PREVENT ABUSE



- Just having a guardian does nothing to prevent abuse, but having an active support network who communicates does. A Supported Decision Making team can fill this role.
- People who have greater self-determination (e.g., are empowered to make their own choices) are less likely to be abused or exploited

# IT WON'T HURT TO PUT GUARDIANSHIP IN PLACE



- Guardianship is expensive and restricts rights, which can limit life options and self-determination
- Once a guardian is in place, someone always needs to be in that role, so future guardians are critical. It can be difficult and expensive to undo guardianship.

# IF I'M GUARDIAN, MY CHILD CANNOT BE ARRESTED



- Guardianship provides no protections against arrest or incarceration
- Guardians are given no special rights to speak or advocate at criminal hearings

# PEOPLE WITH GUARDIANS CAN'T BE FINANCIALLY ABUSED

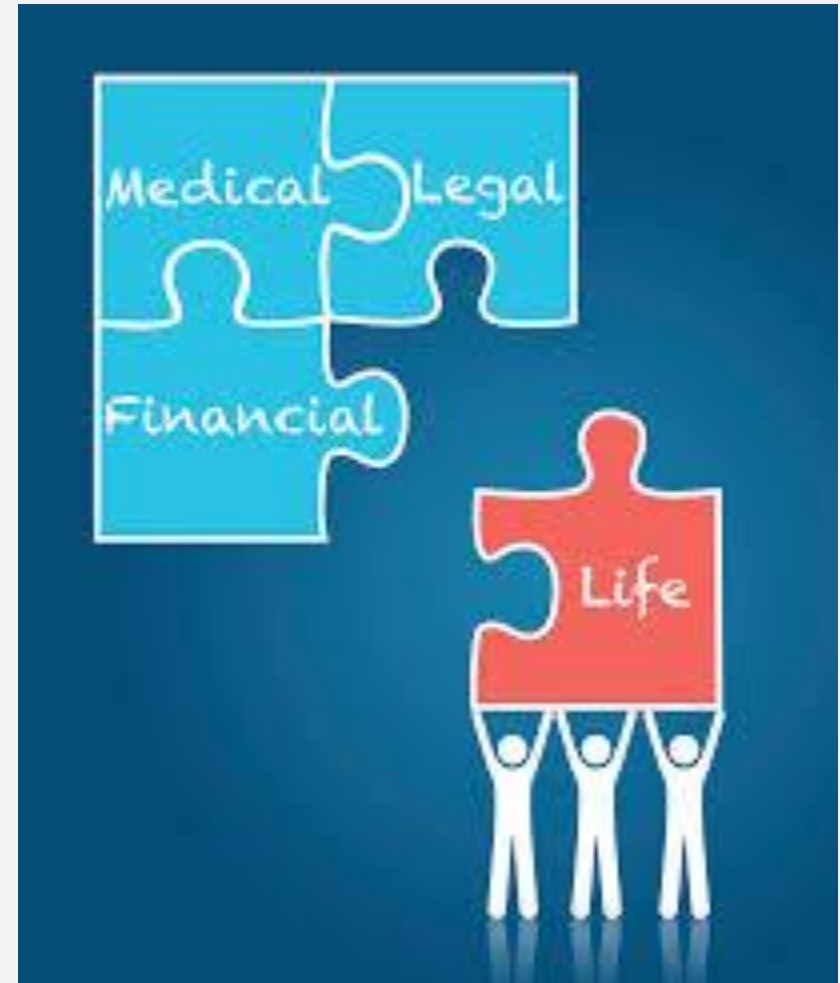


- If money is taken away in a scam, guardianship does nothing to bring it back
- Low cost tools like POAs, Special Needs Trusts, and ABLE Accounts can protect money and assets without removing rights



# SDM RESOURCES

- The Arc of Northern Virginia
  - <https://thearcofnova.org/programs-services/sdm>
- National Resource Center for Supported Decision Making
  - <http://supporteddecisionmaking.org/>
- Center for Public Representation
  - <https://supporteddecisions.org/>



# LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ARC OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA

- Visit us online at <https://thearcofnova.org/>
- Ask us a question at <https://thearcofnova.org/answers/>
- Find our Transition POINTS guides and tool kits at <https://thearcofnova.org/programs/transition/>
  - Early Intervention
  - Special Education
  - Securing a Future
  - Entering the World of Work
  - Finding a Home
  - Aging with a Disability