

# Supported Decision-Making: Real-Life Example

Supported decision-making (SDM) is a way for adults to get help from other people to make choices and decisions for themselves. You must be an adult (over age 18) to use supported decision-making. You can use supported decision-making with or without a written agreement.

Here's how supported decision-making can help someone like Kate, and how she goes about making important decisions in her life:

## Meet Kate:

- **Who is Kate?** Kate is 18 years old and has an intellectual and developmental disability. She uses words to communicate and is currently in high school. She will complete her schooling with a Certificate of Completion when she turns 21.



## Areas Kate Wants to Make Decisions In:

1. **Education:** Kate needs to make decisions about her future educational goals and plans. This includes choosing classes, exploring post-school options, and deciding how to use her educational resources effectively.
  - **Why this is important:** Making informed decisions about her education will help Kate reach her career goals and gain the skills she needs for her future.
2. **Money Management:** Kate wants to learn how to manage her money, including budgeting and saving. She needs support in understanding financial concepts and making choices about spending and saving.
  - **Why this is important:** Learning to manage money is crucial for Kate's independence and helps her make informed decisions about her financial future.
3. **Healthy Living:** Kate aims to make decisions about her diet and health. She needs guidance on how to make healthy food choices and maintain a balanced diet.
  - **Why this is important:** A healthy diet supports Kate's overall well-being and helps her stay active and focused.



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## Steps Kate Took:

### Step 1: Identifying Support Needs

- Kate started discussing with her supporters the areas in her life where she wanted to improve. She expressed her desire to make her own decisions with some help.

### Step 2: Assessing Support

- Kate and her team looked at the areas she needed support in and discussed how they could assist her. For instance, they talked about how her job coach could help with career planning, and her family could help with budgeting and healthy eating.

### Step 3: Choosing the Support Team

- Kate selected a diverse group of people to be part of her support team. Her team includes her mother, her brother, her teacher, her job coach, and a close friend. Each person brings different skills and perspectives to support her in making decisions.

### Step 4: Creating and Sharing the Agreement

- Kate and her team worked together to create a supported decision-making agreement. This agreement outlines how each supporter will help Kate with her decisions. Kate shared this agreement with her school and doctor to ensure everyone was aware of her support plan.
- Keep in mind that Kate can make decisions without her supporters. She decides what decisions she needs help from other people to make.

## Examples of How Support Can Help:

- **Education:** Her teacher might help Kate explore different educational programs or vocational training.
- **Money Management:** Her job coach could provide resources or tools to help her understand budgeting.
- **Healthy Living:** Her family could work with her to plan healthy meals and set up a routine for physical activity.

By following these steps, Kate is able to make informed decisions with the support she needs to achieve her goals and live the life she wants.

For more information, contact PPMD by visiting our [website](#) or calling (410)768-9100.