

My Life, My Decisions: Event Planning Guide

*A plain language guide to leading supported
decision-making events and activities.*

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Words to Know

Self-determination

Making choices about your own life or being in control of your own life.

Supported decision-making (SDM)

When a person chooses one or more people to help them make and communicate life decisions. SDM is a legal agreement between a person and their chosen supporter.

Summit

A large event. The University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies called their event the *My Life, My Decisions Summit*.

Panel Discussion

When a group of people sits on a stage to talk about a topic or to share a story

Read Me First!

What is self-determination & supported decision-making?

Self-determination means making choices about your own life. Self-determination is important for everyone.

Sometimes people make choices by themselves and sometimes people make choices with the help of other people. It can be helpful to have support from trusted people in your life, especially when making big decisions, like decisions about money or healthcare.

Supported decision-making (SDM) is when a person chooses one or more people to help them make and communicate life decisions. SDM is a legal agreement between a person and their chosen supporter or supporters. People with disabilities can use SDM as a legal support option. SDM helps to make sure that people can make choices about their life. SDM helps people to be self-determined.

Even though self-determination and supported decision-making are important topics, not everybody knows about them. The *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit* was an event to teach people about self-determination and supported decision-making.

People with disabilities, parents and family members, and professionals who work with people with disabilities were invited to come to this summit. It is important for many people to have access to this information.

About the *My Life, My Decisions Summit*


The *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit* was an event held on March 7, 2024. A **summit** can be another word for a large event. The event included a panel discussion of people with disabilities. A **panel discussion** is when a group of people sits on a stage to talk about a topic or to share a story. This panel discussion also had time at the end for the audience to ask questions. After the panel discussion, the *My Life, My Decisions Summit* had activities for people to do. There were different activities that people could choose from depending upon their identities and their interests. The summit panel and activities talked about topics like self-determination and supported decision-making.

The *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit* was recorded on video. Many different resources were shared at the summit. This guide talks about the different summit resources and how you can use them during your next event.

About this event guide

This event guide has resources and examples of activities that were used at the *My Life, My Decisions Summit*. This guide also includes instructions for leading the different activities. You can choose to use some or all the activities in this guide at your next event.

You can download the resources mentioned in this guide by visiting <https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org/summit-related-resources/>

Every time you see this blue arrow in this manual  you can go to the website to download summit materials.

Quick Summit Facts

About the *My Life, My Decisions Summit*

The *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit* was a three-hour long event. This event included two main parts:

1. A panel discussion; and
2. Breakout activities.

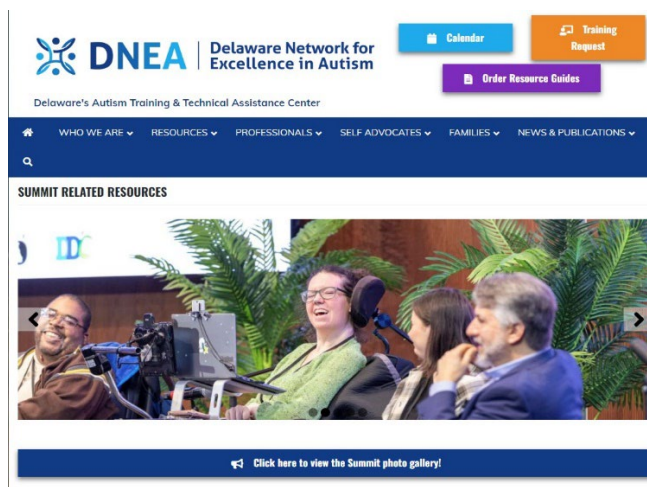
What materials do I need for these activities?

- A large screen;
- Video projector and audio equipment; and
- Printed event materials.

Event materials are available on the [My Life. My Decisions. Summit webpage](#). ↩

Visiting the *My Life, My Decisions Summit* webpage

You can find information and materials from the *My Life, My Decisions Summit* on the **Summit-Related Resources webpage**. This webpage is a place you can go to learn more about supported decision-making and to revisit information shared during this event.



Click on this link to visit the **Summit-Related Resources webpage**: <https://www.delawareautismnetwork.org/summit-related-resources/>

Materials on this webpage are organized into four groups:

- Panel discussion;
- Breakout activity for people with disabilities;
- Breakout activity for family members and caregivers; and
- Breakout activity for professionals.

You can choose to use the resource, or resources, that best fit your group. To download materials from this webpage:

1. Open a dropdown box by clicking the small blue plus sign (+) in the righthand corner.
2. Click the name of the material you want to download.
3. A pdf of the material(s) will open in a new tab.
4. Click the download icon to save the material(s) to your computer.

Part 1: Panel Discussion

About the panel discussion

The *My Life, My Decisions: A Supported Decision-Making Summit* panel discussion talked about topics such as:

- Importance of making decisions and living a self-determined life;
- Navigating challenges when making decisions; and
- What makes a good supporter.

The panel discussion recording is 1 hour 40 minutes long. You can choose to play some or all of the recording. This video includes ASL interpretation and open captioning.

A full list of panel topics and questions can be found on the [My Life. My Decisions. Summit webpage](#). ↩

My Life, My Decisions Summit Panel Discussion recording

To watch the summit recording:

1. Go to the *My Life. My Decisions. Summit-Related Resources* webpage.
2. Click on the red play button to start the panel discussion video.

Before watching this video with your group, read the **panel discussion introduction script** under the “Panel Discussion” dropdown box.

Questions and reflection

After watching the *My Life, My Decisions Summit* recording, take a few minutes to reflect with your group. You can discuss some of the big ideas shared, like self-determination and supported decision-making.

Part 2: Breakout Activities

About the summit breakout activities

After viewing the panel discussion, you can lead breakout activities with the people at your event. Activities can include:

- Breakout activity for people with disabilities;
- Breakout activity for family members and caregivers;
- Breakout activity for professionals; or
- *An activity you create on your own!*

You can choose the breakout activities that best represent the people attending your event. Materials used for these breakout activities can be found on the [My Life. My Decisions. Summit webpage](#). ↩

Steps for leading each of these breakout activities can be found under the “Breakout Activity” dropdown boxes on this webpage. Remember to read over the instruction pages before running activities with your group.

Breakout activity for people with disabilities

This breakout activity asks each person to think about how they make decisions in different areas of their life. This could include decisions about *health care, money, and personal life*.

A *self-determination planning tool* is available to go with this activity. You can download this resource from the Summit-Related Resources webpage. People can complete on their own or with support.

Breakout activity for family members and caregivers

The Summit-Related Resources webpage also has activities for family members and caregivers. This breakout activity will ask the group to think about the level of support they provide to the people in their lives. This could include areas of life like *health care, money, and personal life*.

The breakout activity for families and caregivers looks similar to the activity for people with disabilities. This is on purpose. These activities are designed to help *start a conversation* between a person with a disability and their family member or caregiver around the type of support that is needed to make decisions.

The [My Life. My Decisions. Summit webpage](#) has prompts for group discussion that you can use when leading small group mentoring activities with people with disabilities and supporters.

Breakout activity for professionals

The *Supported Decision-Making in Delaware Speaking Series* is a collection of three videos. Each video in this series is one hour long and can help professionals in your groups to learn more about supported decision-making (SDM) across different areas of life. More information on this series can be found on the Summit-Related Resource Council on

DNEA SUPPORTED-DECISION MAKING RESOURCES

TRAINING VIDEOS

These videos are part of a three-part speaking series on supported decision-making with Jonathan Martinis. Supported decision-making (SDM) is an alternative to guardianship that allows people with disabilities to get the help they may need to make choices about their life.



Supported Decision-Making: From Justice to Jenny to Justice for All

Education, Employment, and Independent Living: SDM in Spec Ed and Voc Rehab

Taking Care, Taking the Lead: Supported Decision-Making in Health Care and Life Planning

To watch the full series, visit the [My Life. My Decisions. Summit webpage](#) ↩

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- UD Office of Communications and Marketing
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