

SELF-DETERMINATION & SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING

Any person in Wisconsin over the age of 18 is legally an adult, and is presumed to be able to manage his or her own financial affairs, choose where to live, consent to medical treatment, vote, make contracts, marry, and exercise his or her own legal rights as an adult. This presumption **does not** change because a person has a disability.



Self-Determination refers to an individual having control over all aspects of his or her life and exercising basic rights of citizenship, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

When Denied Self-Determination:

- Feel Helpless, Hopeless and Self-Critical
- Experience low self-esteem, passivity and feelings of inadequacy and incompetency, decreasing their ability to function

Benefits of Self-Determination:

- Healthier
- More independent
- More well-adjusted
- Better able to recognize and resist abuse
- Less likely to be abused
- Improved psychological health
- Better quality of life
- More community integration

Supported Decision Making is an alternative to guardianship through which people use friends, family members and professionals to help them understand situations and choices they face, so that they make their own decisions without the "need" for guardianship. (Blanch & Martinis, 2015)

Supported Decision Making Options

- Power of Attorney for Health Care
- Financial Power of Attorney
- Conservatorship
- Living Will
- Representative Payee
- Joint Account
- Trusts