

# Supported Decision Making

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# The Arc's Position

Regardless of their guardianship status, all individuals with I/DD should be afforded opportunities to participate to the maximum extent possible in making and executing decisions about themselves. Guardians should engage individuals in the decision-making process, ensuring that their preferences and desires are known, considered, and achieved to the fullest extent possible.

– From The Arc's Autonomy, Decision-Making Supports and Guardianship Position Statement

# Supported Decision Making, We All Do It!!

Think about everyday choices you make

- Changing jobs
- Moving
- What to have for dinner



# Why Supported Decision Making Matters

- Moving away from a paternalistic and medical model of disability;
- Empowerment vs. Substitution
- Natural way to grow a circle of support



# Presuming Competence

## **pre·sume com·pe·tence**

pri'zōm/ 'kämpetens/

To presume competence is to acknowledge that all individuals have the ability to learn, to communicate, to participate in their own way. It means that we provide opportunities by creating accessible & inclusive spaces.

To presume competence is to respect the value of human diversity.

Not presuming competence is to actively harm.



# False Security

“Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or it is nothing.”

-Helen Keller



# Dignity of Risk

- The concept that acknowledges that risk is a natural part of life that helps all people learn and develop.
- The freedom to make mistakes, to make decisions for ourselves, even if others believe that that choices could be in error.