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100 Ways to Use Supported Decision Making (SDM)

1. Supported Decision Making in Employment

- Use an authorization or Power of Attorney so your supporters can meet with your VR counselor with you to discuss services
- Make a Dream Board to help show your counselors and support team the kind of job and life you want
- Ask people you trust to help you find and explore education and training that can help you meet your work goals
- Make sure VR counselors give you "informed choice," and fully explain all of your choices for providers and services
- Create VR goals that will help you improve your decision making on and off the job
- Ask for accommodations at work so you can succeed at your job
- Find an ally at your job who you can reach out to if you need help or advice
- Contact your local ADA center for help identifying job accommodations
- Use an app to help keep you on task at work and remind you complete jobs
- Write your job goals into your Person Centered Plan and keep the team focused on meeting those goals with you
- Work with your supporters to tell your employer how you learn best and how you best receive constructive criticism
- Hang up checklists or photos of successful work to keep you on track

2. Supported Decision Making in Relationships

- Identify and take developmentally appropriate sexual education classes
- Work with a counselor to help process and express your feelings
- Take someone you trust with you to help you feel comfortable when you meet new people
- Use diagrams when talking about your body and sex
- Take social skills classes to build your interpersonal skills
- Make a list of the qualities that are important to you in friends and partners and check to see if your friends and partners measure up
- Ask people you trust to help you find groups where you can meet people who share your interests
- Watch movies or read books that have good friends and relationships in them to help you learn how they can be
- Ask someone you trust to talk with you informally about your body, relationships, and safety
- Practice communicating "No" and "I don't like that" so you'll be able to say it if you feel unsafe or threatened

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- Work with your friends to set up ways to communicate how you feel

3. Supported Decision Making in Housing

- Use an authorization or Power of Attorney so someone can help you sign a lease and be notified of landlord contacts
- Tell your landlord about the best way to communicate with you
- Ask someone you trust to help you meet your neighbors
- Work with a supporter to make a budget, buy furniture/supplies
- Ask your team to include goals and supports in your Person Centered Plan that will help you move into your own place
- Work with a supporter to ask for housing accommodations
- Ask people you trust to help you set up utilities (like power)
- Work with a Community Housing Guide to help you find housing you like
- Work with a supporter to write a "housing resume" to show you will be a good tenant
- Ask for help identifying and hiring your staff
- Work with supporters to create "to do" lists for taking care of your place
- Have a loved one stay with you on your first night(s)
- Have a supporter join you on housing appointments

4. Supported Decision Making in Medical Care

- Use an authorization or Power of Attorney so people can come with you to the doctor and help you make medical decisions
- Sign a HIPAA release form so your doctors and health care providers can talk to your supporters
- Use a chart of the body in the doctor's office to describe your health issues
- Ask for the doctor to use "plain language"
- Request that any recommendations be put in writing so you can research them later

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- Work with supporters to write down questions before appointments so you remember what to ask the doctor
- Ask for a consultation with the pharmacist to get more time to talk about medications and interactions
- Write an Advanced Directive to make sure people know what you want for the future
- Find someone with medical expertise who can help you work through choices and decisions
- Ask to record doctors appointments (audio or video) if you want to go through them later to remember all that happened
- Put a card in your wallet you can show any medical professional to tell who you want contacted in an emergency

5. Supported Decision Making in Money Management

- Ask someone who is good with money to help you make a budget
- Use a Power of Attorney to allow supporters to help you set up and manage bank accounts, help with spending and saving, and be contacted about financial issues
- Use a Representative Payee to help you manage your Social Security benefits
- Work with a financial advisor to make plans for the future and manage your accounts
- Set up a Special Needs Trust to manage your income and protect your benefits
- Set up an ABLE Account to manage your income and protect your benefits
- Ask your bank to set up your account so there are two signatures needed for checks
- Ask your bank to set a maximum debit/withdraw amount
- Use an app to help you track how much you spend each day and what you spend money on
- Ask for money management goals and supports in your Person Centered Plan
- Ask for budgeting and money management goals in your IEP and IPE

6. Supported Decision Making in Education

- Attend and lead your IEP meetings
- Ask for IEP drafts to be sent to you in advance so you can prepare
- Take a team of people you choose to your meetings to support you
- Ask for "I statement" IEP goals to help you develop skills
- Put in goals about independent living and SDM in your IEP
- Ensure that people who will help with employment and life after school come to transition IEPs
- Ask a friend you trust at school to attend your IEP and support you

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- Use a Special Education Power of Attorney to ensure your supporters are notified about meetings, news, and can help you make decisions
- In higher education, contact the school's disability counselor, disclose your disability, and get help (if needed) asking for accommodations
- Make a Dream Board to help your IEP team understand your hopes and dreams for the future and make sure your goals and services will help you achieve them
- Take your IEP home and review it with someone you trust before you sign it

7. Supported Decision Making in Life's Little Details

- Talk with a supporter about what matters to you and what you want then contact an attorney to write wills, Powers of Attorney, Advanced Health Directives, and other life documents
- Set up an app to help remind you of daily "to dos" and appointments
- Work with supporters to set up a plan to keep you safe and practice communicating with police
- Put a card with your name and a number to call for help in your wallet and practice giving it out to police and other first responders
- Put an "autism" or "ID" indicator on your state ID
- Work with your counselor and support team to help you identify your strengths and dreams, as well as challenges where they can help
- Work with supporters to find and sign up for public benefits
- Ask a friend to help you find and attend a place of worship with you and start making connections there
- Use an ally to help you find a place to volunteer
- Work with your team to research fun things to do and help you plan to get there
- Ask people to call and visit you regularly and talk about how you're doing and any support you need

8. Supported Decision Making in Transportation

- Work with supporters to help you learn public transportation schedules and use public transportation
- Ask a supporter to take some trips with you so you can practice problem solving while traveling
- Use an App to help you track where you are and how to call for help
- Put a card in your wallet with the name and number of who to call if you need help and practice using it
- Work with your counselors and support team to include travel training goal in your IEP, IPE, and PCP
- Identify taxi, Uber, Lyft, or other drivers you like and contact them directly to help you set up rides
- When you set up appointments, ask how to travel there on public transit

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- Make a map on paper or on your phone and label places you go often
- Have someone you trust ride Metro Access with you
- Have someone you trust ride Logisticare with you

9. Supported Decision Making in Contracts

- Ask someone you trust to go over contracts with you before you sign
- Use a Power of Attorney to authorize someone to review and sign contracts with you
- Ask for time to review contracts before signing them
- If you have a Power of Attorney, make sure that people know about it, especially people who ask you to sign documents
- Work with your supporters to adapt contracts using pictures, different words, and stories so you understand all the choices
- Ask people who give you documents to sign to explain what the documents mean and what they will do for you
- Ask to keep a copy of any document you sign
- Ask for contracts and other documents to be written in plain language
- Always have your supporters' contact information with you and ask that contracts and other documents be sent to them. That way, you can review documents with your supporters before signing