

Supported Decision Making
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Session Description:

The decision-making presentation features a discussion about what this alternative to Guardianship entails. The content comes from the American Civil Liberties Union. First, the choice making and important skills of choice making are discussed. Next, the levels of support and how we view support of people with disabilities when making decisions is examined. Various areas for assessing supported decision making are explored using examples and experiences. Finally, the presentation ends with a description of the roles that supporters can play and a discussion about what characteristics are important for a supporter.

Learning Objectives:

1. Define Supported Decision Making.
2. Review life areas related to Supported Decision Making as detailed by the American Civil Liberties Union.
3. Discuss how to assess abilities of individuals in the life areas related to Supported Decision Making.

Daniel Ekman completed the New Mexico LEND Program as a Self-Advocate Fellow in 2016. He graduated with Honors with an MA Special Education from the University of New Mexico and won the 2013 Outstanding Student with a Disability Award from the Southwest Conference on Disability. He also received the 2011 Bob Thomas Award for Disability Advocacy from The Arc of New Mexico and the 2017 Liz Thomson Award from Partners in Policymaking.

Vashad Frink is the Marilyn Martinez Jobs Program Participants at the DDC and was a team leader for the Advocacy Leadership Academy. He was born in Hollywood, California and grew up in Eagle Rock, California (just west of Pasadena). He was born with autism and didn't speak until he was six years old. The hardships he endured growing up in California and New Mexico, including severe physical and mental bullying, ultimately led him to drop out of school. But he persevered, went back to high school online and received his high school diploma. He became stronger and more optimistic, converting his challenges into ambition and action. His goal is to become an entrepreneur, own a business and advocate for those who can't advocate for themselves. He is also a poet, and has published a book of poetry titled *Prose and Life*.

Lindsay Sloan was born and raised in the northwest suburbs of Chicago, where she spent her childhood with her parents, her older brother Luke and a menagerie of animals. She graduated from Colorado Christian University in 2009 with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a minor in Biblical Studies. Lindsay moved to Albuquerque in June, 2010, and quickly began volunteering with a cross-disability advocacy group for youth, helping to create a disability awareness curriculum geared toward kindergarten through 5th grade students. Her knowledge and drive to be a more effective advocate grew after graduating from Partners in Policymaking in 2012, where she focused on helping to align New Mexico state legislation regarding service animals with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Lindsay has worked at the DDC's Center for Self-Advocacy Program since 2015, first as an Advocate Trainer, and now as the Outreach Coordinator. "I have always had a heart and passion for social justice and for helping marginalized people find their voices. I feel very blessed that I can use that heart and passion to affect change within my own community."