



VERMONT

AGENCY OF EDUCATION

Supported Decision Making and Transition Planning

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Today

- We will review what supported decision making is.
- We will look at the draft guidance coming out from AOE.
- We will look at best practice examples of how to incorporate decision making skill development into the postsecondary transition plan in the IEP.

What is Supported Decision Making?

Supported decision-making (SDM) is the process of empowering individuals with disabilities to make decisions as an alternative to guardianship when they reach the age of majority.

Rationale for SDM

When students with developmental disabilities reach the age of majority, parents sometimes choose to apply for guardianship. Sometimes these guardianships are unnecessary and result in a loss of rights and decision-making authority for the person with the disability.

Vermont has long been a state where least restrictive environment (LRE) is the goal in the education setting, but what about life after high school? SDM carries forward this concept of LRE as it relates to decision making and access to long after high school.

Building decision making skills the IEP

The IEP team should remember that goals centered on decision-making do not involve merely one skill. Self-determination, choice-making, problem-solving, self-awareness, communication, self-regulation, goal-setting, self-advocacy and leadership all comprise the formation of decision-making skills that lead to independence. With the attainment of appropriate decision-making skills, student performance increases as well as the likelihood of attaining positive post-school outcomes.

Let's look at the upcoming
guidance coming from AOE

Sample Template for SDM

Examples of decision-making skills that can be implemented into the IEP with goals *Remember to use SMART goal format

- Demonstrate procedures for preventing conflict, communicating positively and resolving differences.
- Differentiate between positive and negative behaviors.
- Identify positive verbal and nonverbal skills.
- Identify causes and consequences of conflict among students.
- Apply decision-making skills that relate to the protection and promotion of individual well-being.
- Recognize how choices can affect well-being.
- Describe key elements of the decision-making process.
- Demonstrate basic skills of refusal.
- Describe times/situations when refusal skills are needed.
- Analyze the impact of peer pressure on decision making.
- Apply a decision-making process to address personal issues and problems.
- Demonstrate refusal and conflict resolution skills to develop and maintain healthy relationships with family, peers and others in a socially acceptable manner.
- Identify how to make a good decision/choice.
- Examine choices available in order to make a good choice/decision.
- Identify the positive and negative consequences of making a decision.

Example goals in the IEP for William, 11th grader

Independent Living Postsecondary Goal: Upon graduation from high school William will have a supported decision making arrangement and be the decider.

Independent Living annual IEP goals:

By June 1, 2023 William will be able to articulate the positive and negative consequences of making a decision. William will show evidence of this via a writing piece.

By June 1, 2023 William will be able to describe in writing 5 situations when refusal skills are needed.

Transition Services:

Decision Making skill building activities, activities that build self-determination, problem-solving, self-awareness, communication, self-regulation, goal-setting and self-advocacy

Activities to practice and develop decision making skills

[Decision Making Worksheet](#)

[Decision Making- Rate Yourself activity](#)

[Decision Making and Integrity](#)

[Comparing and Contrasting activity for decision making](#)

[Weighing my choices worksheet](#)

[Decision Making Scenario cards](#)

Graduation Readiness Tool

Vermont Graduation Readiness Tool

Non-Regulatory Resource for IEP Teams

Student engagement in the transition planning process has been identified as a predictor of success after high school. Instructions: IEP team members should award 0 - 2 points for each component. Note some sections may be not applicable (N/A) for a student.

| | Student Name: | Points 0-2 | Points 0-2 |
|---|---|----------------------|--------------------|
| | | Graduation Readiness | Student Engagement |
| 1 | Student has met or will meet local general education requirements for graduation | | |
| 2 | Student has an attendance rate that meets the graduation requirements of the school | | |
| 3 | Student access to Transition Services via their IEP began at age 16 | | |
| 4 | Post-secondary transition plan in the IEP meets the 8 elements of Indicator 13 | | |
| 5 | The Summary of Performance is complete or a plan is in place to have it completed prior to the student graduating | | |
| 6 | If the student has a para-educator, the team is considering ways to fade para-educator support in order to increase student independence | | |
| 7 | If the student has a developmental disability, the team is working with the local developmental services agency to start the intake process | | |
| 8 | If appropriate, the transition plan calls for work experiences and access to them is provided | | |

Summary of Performance

Don't forget about the
Summary of Performance for
students who are graduating
this year.

Final Discussion and Closing

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