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## Supported Decision Making and Healthy Decisions

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# Supported Decision Making and Healthy Decisions

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NH-ME LEND  
PROGRAM



The Maine Parent Federation (MPF), is a private non-profit organization established in 1984 and located in Farmingdale, Maine.

**Mission:** The Maine Parent Federation, Inc. is a statewide organization that provides information, advocacy, education, and training to benefit families of children and adults with disabilities and special health care needs.

**How do they support families, children, and youth?** Through various grant-funded and federally-funded projects, MPF provides advocacy, peer-to-peer, parent-to-parent support staff, education and training, referrals to additional services and/or linkages to other resources for families and professionals.

**How did I support MPF as a LEND Trainee?** Using the current framework of Supported Decision Making training for families and youth, collect and review research, resources, materials, and curriculum examples to support the implementation of healthy eating and sexual development into the current training for families and youth.

## What is Supported Decision Making (SDM)?

SDM is not a legal document or contract; it is a series of relationships, practices, arrangements and agreements designed to assist an individual with a disability to make and communicate with others, decisions about their life.

- 1) Everyone has the right to make choices.
- 2) People can get assistance without giving up their right to make choices.
- 3) People often need help in understanding, making, and communicating their choices.

## When to ask for support?

- I can do this *alone*
- I can do this *with support*
- I need *someone to do this for me*



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Learn more at [iod.unh.edu/nh-me-lend](http://iod.unh.edu/nh-me-lend)

## 5-Point Decision Making: How to make a Thoughtful Decision :



Identify your goal



Ask for support



Weigh your options



Make a thoughtful decision



Consider the consequences

## Thoughtful Decision: "I want to go on a date"



Consider the consequences

Think about transportation and how you will get there. Always make sure you have a safe way to get to and from your date-make sure that someone always knows where you are going and who you will be with in case of an emergency.



Ask for Support

How much money should you spend on your date? Remember to stay within your budget and make a plan with your family or support team if you are not sure how much money you should plan to spend.



Make a thoughtful decision

When you have a plan of where to go, what to do, how much money you should spend, and how you will get there and back home, you have made a **thoughtful** decision!

## Relationships and Sexuality can be tricky to navigate at any life stage.

As a parent, caregiver, and supporter, we want our youth to:

- Understand the importance of continually developing **self-confidence** and **resilience** .
- Understand that **strong self-awareness** and **self-respect** are the foundation for all healthy relationships.
- Identify and know the **characteristics** of healthy and unhealthy **relationships**.
- **ALL** people are **sexual beings** .
- **Sexuality is inclusive** ; We **ALL** have sexual identities and orientations.
- **Gender Identity is inclusive** ; We **ALL** have gender identities and gender expressions.

## How Can We Support Young Adults in making well-informed decisions in Nutrition and Sexuality?

Remember **knowledge** is **POWER**

- Ensure that IEP goals meet the needs of a well rounded transition plan
- Curriculum about nutrition & cooking healthy food
- Teaching healthy physical boundaries
- Social/emotional goals around respectful relationships
- Developmentally appropriate sex education curriculum
- In home and community based treatment plans (ITP) can also support real life-applicable goals and situations
- Support the youth in finding their voice, Self-Determination, Confidence, and Self-Advocacy are life long skills

## Supporting Resources:

- Additional Resources available on MPF website
- [www.accessiblechef.com](http://www.accessiblechef.com)
- UCONN PPT Healthy Bodies Curriculum/study
- <https://uconnuicedd.org/wpcontent/uploads/sites/1340/2016/09/turner.pdf>
- Healthy Eating, Nutrition, and Illness (Girls Health. Gov)
- <https://www.girlshealth.gov/body/index.html>
- Unpacking barriers to healthy lifestyles from the perspective of youth with disabilities and their parents
- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10852352.2018.1386270>
- Watch SPAN 4 Part Webinar on Disability & Sexuality:
- REAL Transition Partners | SPAN Parent Advocacy Network ([spanadvocacy.org](http://spanadvocacy.org))
- MAIER: Sexuality Education Resource free to download
- Autism Resources ([umaine.edu](http://umaine.edu))
- May Institute Article - supporting parents of young adults
- <https://www.mayinstitute.org/news/acl/asd-and-dd-adult-focused/helping-a-young-adult-with-special-needs-develop-dating-skills/>
- Easter Seals Website
- <https://www.easterseals.com/explore-resources/living-with-disability/love-dating-relationships-disability.html>

