

Whaimana
Support My Decisions



Whaimana – Support My Decisions:

Why is Supported Decision-Making important?

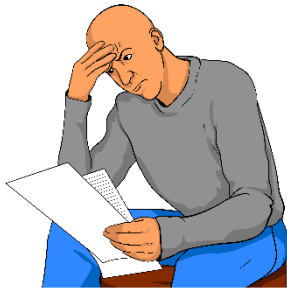


Published: June 2026

Before you start



This is a long document.



It can be hard for some people to read a document this long.



Some things you can do to make it easier are:

- read it a few pages at a time
- set aside some quiet time to look at it
- have someone read it with you to support you to understand it.



What is in here

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About this Easy Read



This Easy Read is about the website
**Whaimana – Support My
Decisions.**



Whaimana – Support My Decisions
is a website that shares things about
supported decision-making like:

- information
- **resources.**

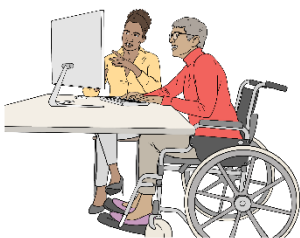


Supported decision-making is a
way to:

- support people to make choices
about their own lives

with

- the support of the people they
choose.





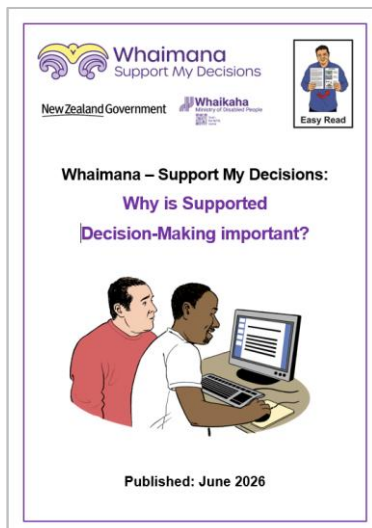
Here **resources** are things to assist people with supported decision-making like having information from different organisations.



Whaimana – Support My Decisions is called **Whaimana** for short in this Easy Read.

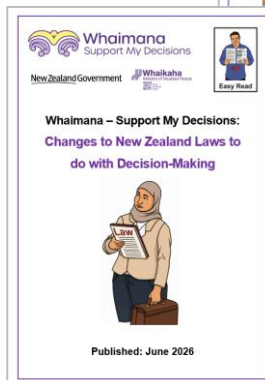
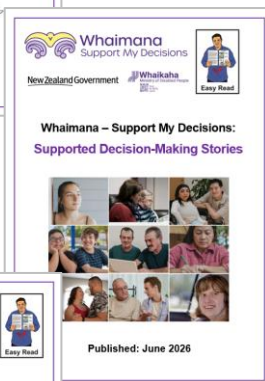
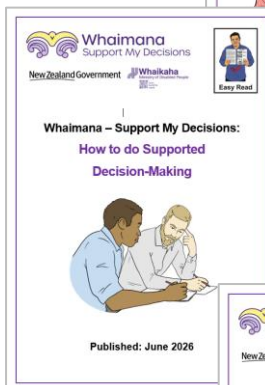
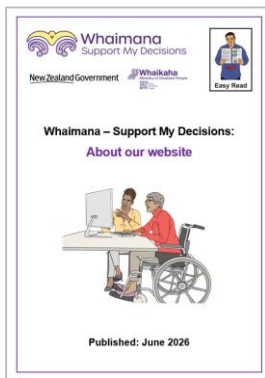


In this document the people who make decisions are called **decision-makers**.



This Easy Read is called:

Whaimana – Support My Decisions: Why is Supported Decision-Making Important?



There are 5 other Easy Reads about what is on the Whaimana website:

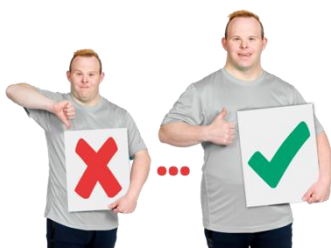
- About our website
- What is Supported Decision-Making?
- How to do Supported Decision-Making
- Supported Decision-Making Stories
- Changes to New Zealand Laws to do with Decision-Making.



You can visit the Whaimana **website** at:

www.supportmydecisions.nz

The Whaimana website has been made by the **Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha**.



The **Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha** works to make change for disabled people to make their lives better.



The Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha makes things better for disabled people by working with:



- the Government
- the community
- businesses.



When you see the words **we / us / our** in this document they mean the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.

Making your own decisions is important



All decisions we make are important even if they are:

- big

or

- small.



Empowering choices

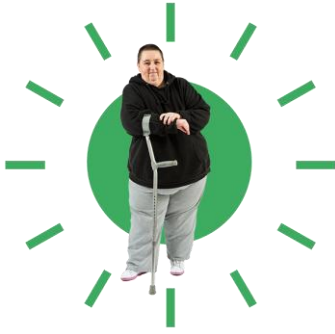


Empowering choices means giving someone the power to make their own decisions.

Supported decision-making supports people to:

- take more control of their lives
- learn how to make decisions better.





Supported decision-making also supports people to:

- get support that is made just for them
- take control of their lives
- learn how to make decisions better
- take part more in their:
 - community
 - work
 - social life
- feel:
 - **respected**
 - understood.





Here being **respected** means that people are seen as important for:

- who they are
- what they can do.



Supported decision-making also supports people to make **informed decisions**.



Making an **informed decision** means:

- carefully thinking things through
- having all the important information you need before making a choice.





Honouring rights

Here **honouring** means:

- protecting human rights
- making sure everyone gets their human rights.

Human rights are things that the **law** says every person should:

- have
- be able to do.

Rights are things like:

- having a safe place to live
- getting the healthcare you need.



A **law** is a rule made by the Government that everyone must follow.



Human rights are for everyone no matter:

- where you live
- what your background is.



Supported decision-making is a human right.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities



The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is a law lots of countries have agreed to.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is also called the **UN Disability Convention**.

It can also be called the **UNCRPD**.



It says what governments must do to make sure disabled people get the same rights as everybody else.



The UN Disability Convention says disabled people have the right to get the support they need to make their own decisions.



What does the word disability mean in the UN Disability Convention?

The UN Disability Convention covers people with:

- physical impairments like when someone finds it hard to move
- **mental distress**
- intellectual impairments like having a learning disability
- sensory impairments like being blind.





Mental distress is when a person is finding things very hard with their mental health.



The UN Disability Convention says that people experience disability when:



- they do not get the support they need to do everyday things in an easy way

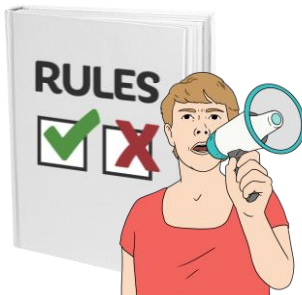
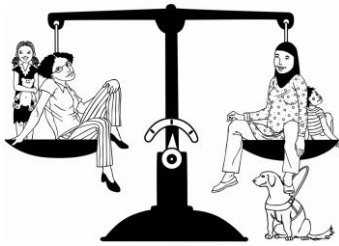


- society does not make the changes needed to support them to take part in community life.



What does the UN Disability Convention say about supported decision-making?

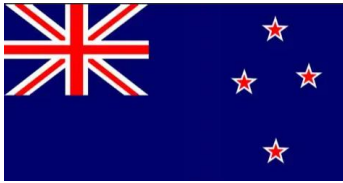
Article 12 of the UN Disability Convention says:



- disabled people have the same right to make their own decisions as everyone else
- disabled people should have the support they need to make decisions
- there should be rules in place when a person needs someone else to speak for them.



Here an **article** is a section / part of a document.



Aotearoa New Zealand has agreed to follow the UN Disability Convention.



This means all New Zealanders have the right to get the support they need to make decisions.



Read an Easy Read version of the UN Disability Convention by United Nations Enable at this **website**:

<https://tinyurl.com/UNCRPDER>

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi



Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi is an important agreement between:

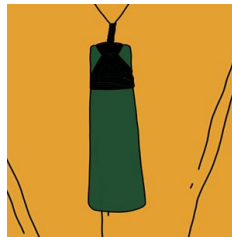
- Māori

and

- the Crown.

The purpose of Te Tiriti is to:

- protect Māori:
 - rights
 - **taonga**
- keep **peace and order**
- set up government.



Taonga means treasures such as:

- land / rivers
- te reo Māori / Māori language
- objects like
pounamu / greenstone
- places Māori have grown food for
many years
- spiritual ideas
- ways of life.

Peace and order means to follow
laws / rules.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of
Waitangi is called **Te Tiriti** in this
document.



The **values** of **te ao Māori** are in Te Tiriti like how Māori are supported:

- by following Te Tiriti
- to make choices about their own lives.



Here **values** are important beliefs Māori hold.



Te ao Māori is about how Māori view / think about:

- the world
- their place in the world / how they connect to it.



Supported decision-making is 1 way to support what Te Tiriti says.



What does Te Tiriti say?

Te Tiriti is the main statement / document for human rights in Aotearoa New Zealand.



Te Tiriti guides relationships between:

- the Government
- and
- Māori.



There are three main articles in Te Tiriti.



Article 1 is about **kāwanatanga** / governance.



Kāwanatanga is about Māori having a say in how the country is run.



Article 1 says the Government should make sure Māori are a part of decision-making.



Article 2 is about **tinorangatanga** / **self determination**.



Tino rangatiratanga / **self determination** is when Māori have choice / control over their lives.



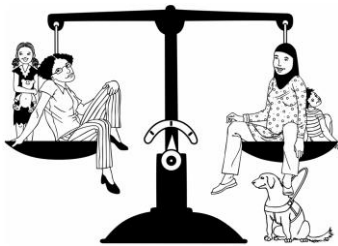
Māori as a group of people have:

- rights
- responsibilities / things they need to do.

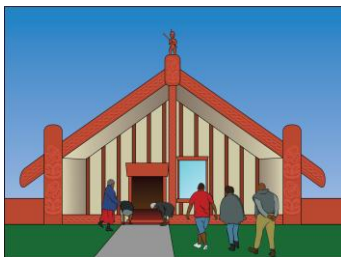


Māori should be able to protect Māori things like their:

- resources like whenua / land
- knowledge
- language
- other taonga.

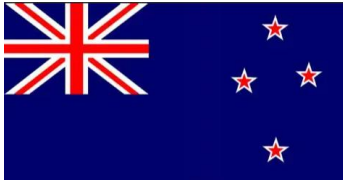


Article 3 is about **rite tahi** / equality.



Rite tahi is about Māori having:

- the same rights as everyone else
- support to protect Māori interests / things important to Māori.



All New Zealand **citizens** have equal / the same rights.



A **New Zealand citizen** is someone who can get a New Zealand passport.

Many New Zealand citizens are born in New Zealand.

Some people who come to live in New Zealand from overseas also become New Zealand citizens.



Government should work to make sure Māori have the same:

- opportunities
- **outcomes.**





Here **outcomes** are about Māori having good lives.

Some ways to do what Te Tiriti says are:



- build relationships with Māori
- make sure Māori take part in important things like making decisions
- include ways to make sure Māori are treated in **culturally safe ways**
- find ways to include things in your work like Māori:
 - values
 - views
 - dreams / things they hope to do in the future.





Culturally safe way means working in a way that respects the **culture** of a person like being Māori.



Culture is a way of:

- thinking that a group shares
- doing things as a group.

There are many different cultures in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Some examples of the different cultures are:

- Māori culture
- Pacifica culture
- Deaf culture.



Some other ways to do what Te Tiriti says are:

- provide information:
 - in **accessible** ways
 - that respects Māori culture
- show respect for the things that Māori say are important to them
- respect decisions Māori make for themselves
- work out where things are not equal for Māori
- try to fix **discrimination** making it harder for Māori to have equal rights.



Here **accessible** means that everyone can understand something.



Discrimination is when people are treated unfairly because of things like:

- how old they are
- if they are a man / woman / someone of another gender
- if they are disabled.

Discrimination can make it harder for Māori to have the same rights as everybody else.



Cultural responsiveness and supported decision-making

Here **cultural responsiveness** is doing things in ways that:

- respect Māori culture
- understand Māori culture.



Anyone can support a Māori decision-maker.



The values of te ao Māori can guide supporters when supporting a:

- Māori decision-maker
- their whānau / family.



Using Māori ways like **tikanga** and **kawa** in supported decision-making can:

- make sure the whole person is thought about including their:
 - physical / body health
 - mental health
 - emotions
 - social life / friendships
 - spiritual needs / beliefs.



Tikanga means the:

- right way to do things in te ao Māori
- rules in te ao Māori.



Kawa is the way to do things in the right way for Māori.



Using tikanga and kawa in supported decision-making can:

- empower the decision-maker to make decisions that think about their:
 - culture
 - beliefs
- support their whānau / family to take part in decision-making
- work for the Māori decision-maker
- support the **wellbeing** of the:
 - decision-maker
 - their whānau / family.





Wellbeing means things like:

- how we feel about ourselves
- looking after our bodies by doing things like exercise
- getting support when we are sad or worried.



Here are some things to think about when using supported decision-making with a Māori decision-maker.



Think about different preferences around tikanga of doing things.



This can mean thinking about:

- karakia / prayer
- mihi / greeting
- **whanaungatanga.**



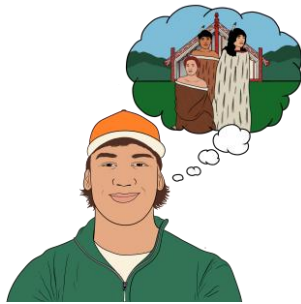


Whanaungatanga is about feeling connections with family / community.



Whanaungatanga is about making connections with a Māori decision-maker by understanding their relationships with:

- other people
- places
- their whānau / family history.



Supporters of Māori decision-makers need to:

- know about Māori culture
- respect where the decision-maker is from.





Supporters of Māori decision-makers also need to value:

- who people are
- where they come from
- what is important to them
- what is important to their whānau / families
- their hopes for a good life
- their dreams for the life they want to have.



It is also important to think about **whakamana te tangata** when supporting a Māori decision-maker.



Whakamana te tangata is supporting the **dignity** of the person and their whānau.



Here **dignity** is where a person is worth your respect.



It is important the supporter:

- respects the:
 - decision-maker
 - their whānau / family
- promises to work with the:
 - decision-maker
 - their other supporters
- is ready to use supported decision-making.





It is important the supporter:

- is ready to be able to make decisions collectively / together by working with whānau / family
- supports **Māoritanga** from the way the decision-maker has experienced their Māori culture.



Māoritanga is about:

- Māori culture
- ways of being Māori.

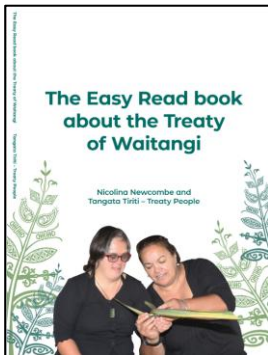


For more information about supporting a Māori decision-maker visit our **website**:

<https://tinyurl.com/UnderstandMT>



This website is not in Easy Read.



You can find out more about Te Tiriti in the Easy Read Book about the Treaty of Waitangi at this **website**:

<https://treatypeople.org/easyread/>

Enabling Good Lives

Enabling Good Lives



Enabling Good Lives is a different way of thinking about disability support.

Enabling Good Lives is about having:

- choice and control in your life
- the support you need and want
- a good life.

Enabling Good Lives supports disabled people to have more control over their own lives like:

- disabled children
- disabled adults
- whānau / families.



Supported decision-making is an important part of Enabling Good Lives.

Enabling Good Lives



What is Enabling Good Lives?

Members of the disabled community in Aotearoa New Zealand developed / made Enabling Good Lives.



The goal is to make sure each person is supported to live their best life.



Enabling Good Lives has
8 principles.



Here **principles** are ideas that guide
a group to reach its goal.



Principle 1: Self-determination

Self-determination is when
someone has choice / control over
their own life.



Self-determination supports people to
be in control of their lives.

Principle 2: Begin early



Whānau / family get the support they
need as soon as they find out their
child has a disability.



Getting the right support early can make it easier for families.



Principle 3: Person centred

Supports are **tailored** to disabled people:

- when they need them
- in a way they want them.



Tailored means something is made differently for each person because everyone has different needs.



Tailored support can support disabled people to reach their goals.

Principle 4: Ordinary life outcomes



Ordinary life outcomes means disabled people can do the same things other people the same age as them are doing.



This means disabled people have the right support to do everyday things like:

- go to school
- get a job
- have a home.





Principle 5: Mainstream first

Mainstream means services that can be used by everyone.



Disabled people can use mainstream services.



If mainstream services do not work for them then they can try services that are for disabled people.



This supports disabled people to take part in their community life.



Principle 6: Mana enhancing

This principle is about respect.

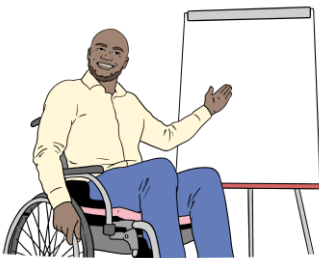


Mana enhancing means to make something better.

Respect needs to be shown to:



- disabled people
- whānau / families of disabled people.



The things disabled people do for their communities should also be respected.



Principle 7: Easy to use

Supports for disabled people should be:

- easy to use
- **flexible.**



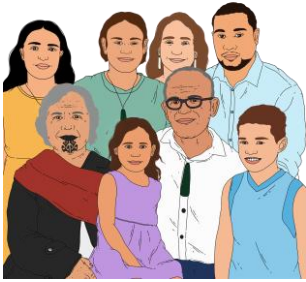
Flexible means the disability supports fit around what the person needs.



Principle 8: Relationship building

Relationship building supports are in place so disabled people can make stronger relationships with:

- their whānau / family
- their friends
- people in their community
- other people who are important to them.





You can find out more about the Enabling Good Lives approach by watching a video made by Whaikaha.



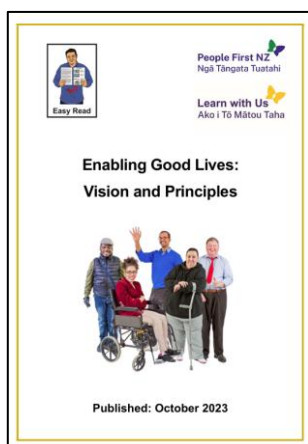
This video:

- is about 8 minutes long
- has New Zealand Sign Language.



You can watch this video at this **website:**

<https://youtu.be/qsRGWKcZfOo>



You can read more about Enabling Good Lives in Easy Read at this **website:**

<https://tinyurl.com/EGLEasyRead>

Safeguarding



Here **safeguarding** is:

- keeping someone safe
- protecting someone.



Supported decision-making is an important part of safeguarding the:

- rights of a decision-maker
- wellbeing of a decision-maker
- safety of a decision-maker.





What is safeguarding?

Safeguarding people means to keep things safe like:



- their rights
- their wellbeing
- preventing / stopping things happening like:



- harm
- **abuse**
- **neglect.**



Safeguarding also supports people who experience these 3 things.



Abuse is when someone hurts another person.



Here **neglect** is when a person is not given the things they need like food.



Safeguarding is very important for disabled people / tāngata whaikaha Māori who:

- are not able to get out of the way of harm without support
- do not have their human rights respected
- are at **risk** or are experiencing:
 - harm
 - abuse
 - neglect.



Here **risk** is about when something bad could happen to you.



What are some of the main ideas?

Everyone has a right to:

- make their own decisions
- be a citizen
- have a good life
- be safe
- have good wellbeing.



Safeguarding:

- protects these rights
- make these rights work for people better.



Everybody is responsible for safeguarding.



There are different layers of safeguarding.



Here **layers** are like different levels of safeguarding.

Each layer works to keep people safe.



Personal layer

This layer is doing something for a person like building up their **capabilities** to:

- make their own decisions
- take risks
- have the same opportunities as other people.





Here **capabilities** means being able to do something like make a decision.



Relationships layer

This layer supports people to make their relationships strong with their:

- whānau / families
- supporters
- people in their community.



Community layer

This layer supports communities to be:

- inclusive / include everyone
- welcoming to everyone.





Services layer

This layer is about how the services people need to use support them to:

- protect their rights
- **promote** their rights.



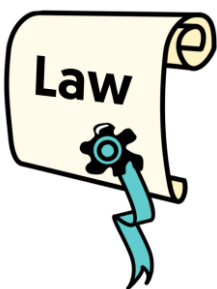
Here **promote** means to support more people to know about human rights.



System layer

This layer is about how people are supported to get their rights through the things the Government does like:

- laws
- regulations / rules
- policies / how to do things.

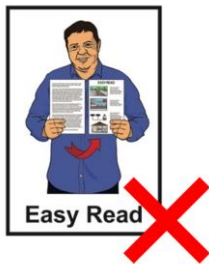


More information



For more information about supported decision-making visit our **website** at:

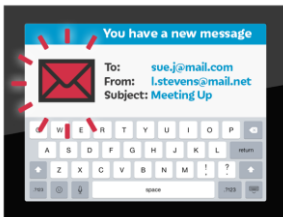
www.supportmydecisions.nz



This website is not in Easy Read.



You can also contact us if you have any questions about Whaimana by:



- **emailing** us at:

contact@whaikaha.govt.nz

- **calling** us at:

0800 942 452.





If you find it hard to use the phone
the **New Zealand Relay** service is for
people who are:

- Deaf / hard of hearing
- deafblind
- speech impaired / find it hard to talk.



You can find out more about the
New Zealand Relay service at:

www.nzrelay.co.nz

This information has been written by the Ministry of Disabled People – Whaikaha.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make it Easy Kia Māmā Mai service of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



The ideas in this document are not the ideas of People First New Zealand Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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