



Supported Decision Making

Easy Read



Office for **Disability** issues

Te Tari Mō Ngā Take Hauātanga
Administered by the Ministry of Social Development



**Think
differently.**



For more information see our website:
www.aucklanddisabilitylaw.org.nz

What is supported decision making?



Everyone has the right to make their own decisions.

Sometimes you might need support to make your decisions.



Supported decision making means that people assist you to make your own decisions.

This way you have control and choice over your life.

Why is supported decision making important?



Supported decision making is a human right.

This means that everyone has this right.



You should have the same control over your life as other people have over their own lives.



Supported decision making is a **right** in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** is an agreement.



It is also called the **Disability Convention**.

This agreement says what countries have to do to make sure that disabled people have the same rights as everybody else.



The **Disability Convention** says that:

- everyone has the right to make decisions about their own lives
- everyone should have the support they need to make decisions.



Supported decision making is a way to make sure disabled people have equal rights with other people.

Communication support



It is important you are given the support you need when you communicate.

Communicate means how you tell other people what you think or feel.



Everyone communicates in different ways.

Some people:

- use body language
- use sign language
- speak
- use communication tools, like computers.



Kinds of support



There are lots of different kinds of support that you can use to assist you to make decisions.

You can choose which kinds of support are right for you.



1 kind of support you can choose is:

Having a team of people who know you well that can assist you.

Teams like this are sometimes called:



- circles of support
- support networks
- effective communication partners.



Another kind of support you can choose is:



Having the time you need to:

- **talk about the different choices**
- **make your own decision.**

Another kind of support you can choose is:



Using a communication tool.

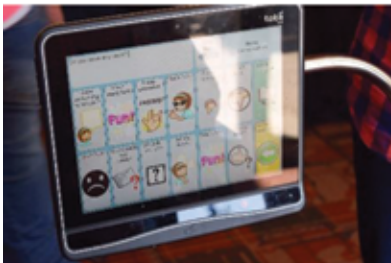
These are sometimes called **augmentative or alternative communicators**.

Sometimes they are called **AAC**.

Augmentative or alternative communicators are tools which assist people to communicate.

These can include:

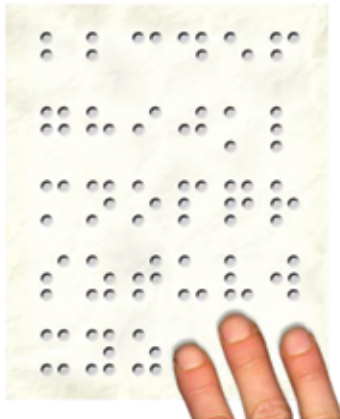
- electronic speech devices like tablets
- electronic speech Apps
- talking mats
- other visual aids.





Another kind of support you can choose is:

Having information in easy to use formats.



This can include:

- Easy Read
- braille
- large print
- sign language.



Getting the right support



Most people have whānau / family or support people who know what they usually want and need.



You can choose who the best people to support you are.

You might choose to have more than one support person.



When someone is supporting you to make a decision it is important that they know some things about you:

- they need to know what is important to you
- they need to know what kinds of decisions and choices you usually make.



What if people do not listen to you?



Sometimes people might think that you cannot make decisions for yourself.

This might be:

- your whānau / family
- your support staff.



Some people might need to change their thinking about whether you can make your own decisions.



You might need to speak up for yourself and show people that you can make your own decisions.

You have the right to make your own decisions about your life.

An example of supported decision making



Here is a story about someone using supported decision making.

We changed the names of the people in the story to protect their privacy.



Jake and his mum Mary went to a dentist appointment at the hospital.



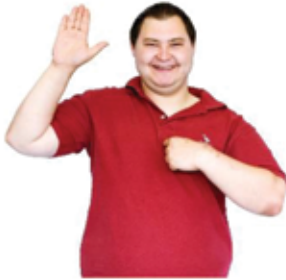
When the dentist looked at Jake's teeth she decided that Jake needed surgery on his teeth.



The dentist wanted Mary to sign a form for Jake to have surgery.



She said that the form had to be signed that day so they could book the surgery.



Mary said that Jake needed to make his own decision.

Jake needed time to make a decision.



Mary said that she and Jake could talk while the dentist met with other patients.



This would give Jake some time to make his decision.



The dentist said this was okay.



Jake and Mary talked about the form.

They also talked about the surgery.



Mary asked Jake if he wanted to talk to his stepbrother Rob about it.

Jake said he did.



Mary rang Rob on her mobile phone.

Jake and Rob talked about what would happen if Jake had the surgery.



They also talked about what would happen if Jake **did not** have the surgery.



Rob reminded Jake of the last time he had surgery on his teeth.

After talking to Rob Jake said "I say yes."



After this Mary and Jake went back to talk to the dentist.



Mary said that Jake was ready to sign the form.

The dentist checked with Jake that he wanted the surgery.



Jake said "I say yes"



This story shows that Mary was not allowed to make a decision about surgery for Jake.

This is because the law says that Jake should make his own decision.



The dentist could have let Mary and Jake take the form away.



This would have meant Jake and Mary would have had lots of time to talk about the decision.



But the dentist did let Mary and Jake have some time to talk.



The dentist also checked that Jake had made his own decision.



This meant that Jake was able to make a supported decision.

Mary supported Jake to make his own decision.



This is how she supported him:

- Mary supported Jake with his communication.



Mary was able to talk to Jake about the surgery in a way that Jake could understand.



Mary also talked about what signing the form meant.



- Mary supported Jake to talk to another person in his support network.



- Jake was supported to understand what the surgery meant.



Rob reminded Jake of a surgery he had had before.

This helped Jake to understand what this surgery would be like.



Jake was able to make his own decision about surgery.



**This information has been translated into Easy Read
by People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi**

