

# THINKING FOR ME

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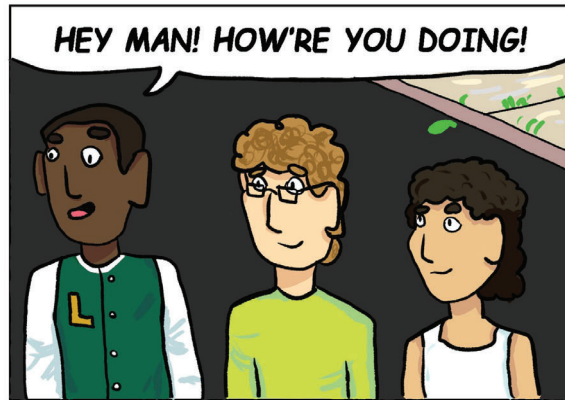
**THIS  
IS  
JAKE.**



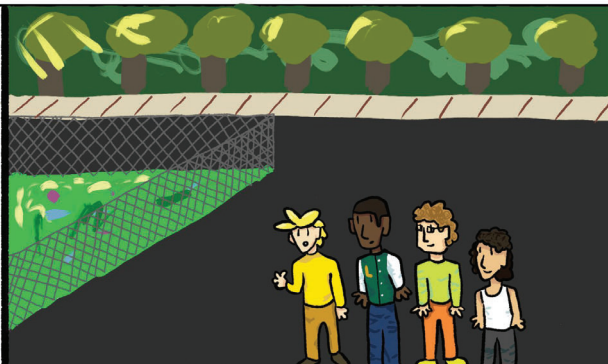
**HEY GUYS!**



**HEY MAN! HOW'RE YOU DOING!**



**JAKE'S A TEEN WHO'S  
ABOUT TO ENTER THE  
NEXT BIG STAGE  
OF HIS LIFE.**

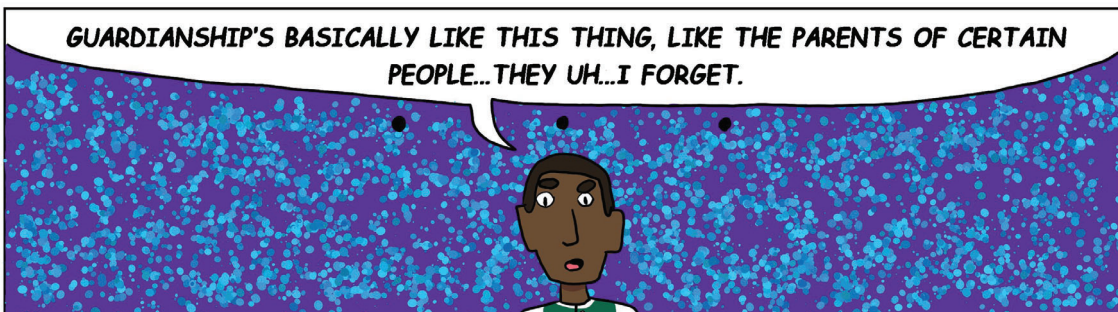
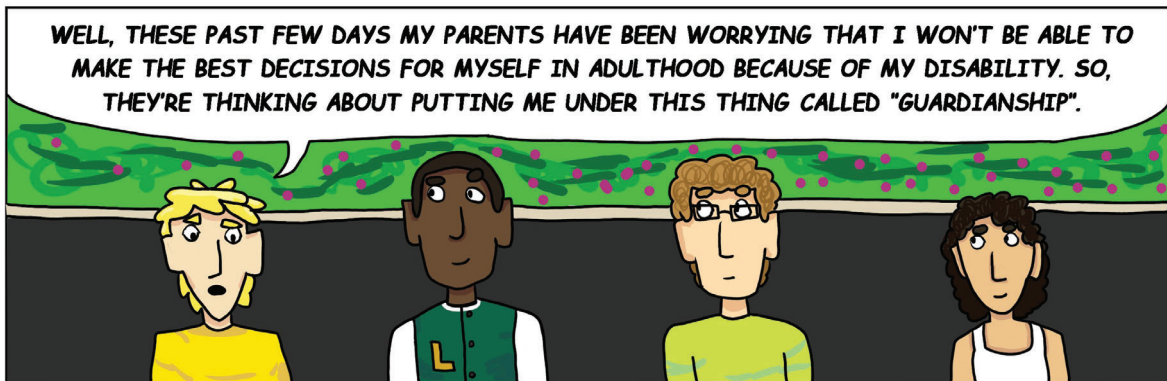


**I HEAR YOU'RE  
TURNING THE BIG  
ONE-EIGHT SOON!**



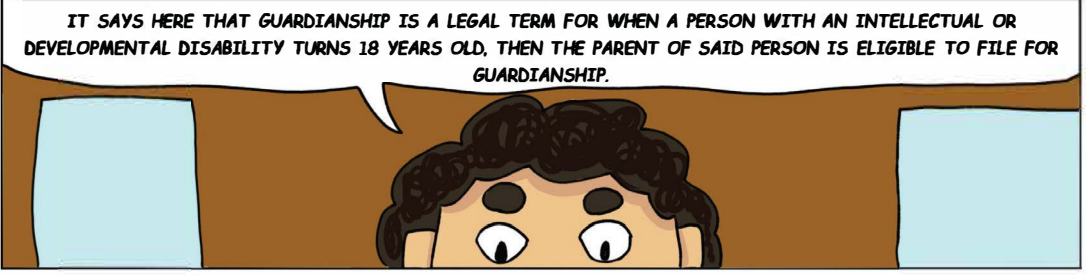
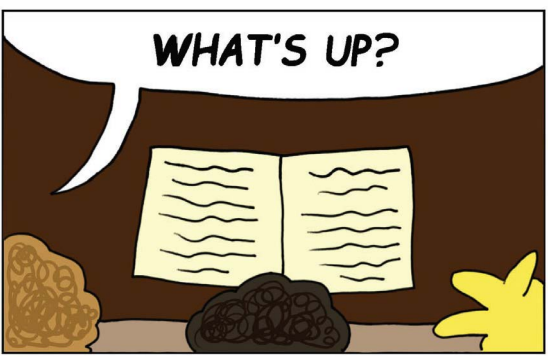
**SO, GOT ANY BIG PLANS FOR  
YOUR PARTY?**







LATER



# GUARDIANSHIP

- **GUARDIANSHIP IS WHEN A "GUARDIAN" (EX: THE PARENT ITSELF OR A PERSON CHOSEN BY THE PARENT.) HAS FULL LEGAL CONTROL OVER THE PERSON, WHICH MEANS THAT THE GUARDIAN AND THE COURT CAN PLACE LIMITS ON WHAT THE PERSON CAN DO.**



- **GUARDIANSHIP HAS FOR MANY YEARS BEEN LABELED AS THE DEFAULT CHOICE FOR PARENTS WHO DON'T THINK THAT THEIR KIDS CAN MAKE COMPLICATED DECISIONS.**



WAIT, IS THAT SUPPOSED TO BE A GOOD OR BAD THING?



DEPENDS ON WHO YOU ASK, FOR SOME PEOPLE, GUARDIANSHIP IS THE BEST WAY THAT PARENTS CAN HAVE SOME INFLUENCE OVER THEIR CHILDREN IF THEY DON'T FEEL LIKE THEY'RE CAPABLE OF LIVING COMPLETELY INDEPENDENTLY.



WELL, THAT KIND OF SOUNDS A BIT TOO RESTRICTIVE FOR A GUY LIKE JAKE.

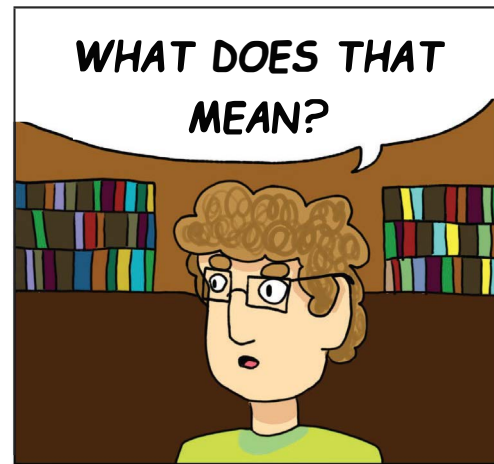


WHAT DO YOU MEAN?



I JUST WISH THERE WAS A WAY THAT IF JAKE WERE TO BE UNDER GUARDIANSHIP, THAT HE COULD HAVE MORE FREEDOM TO DO WHAT HE THINKS IS BEST FOR HIMSELF.

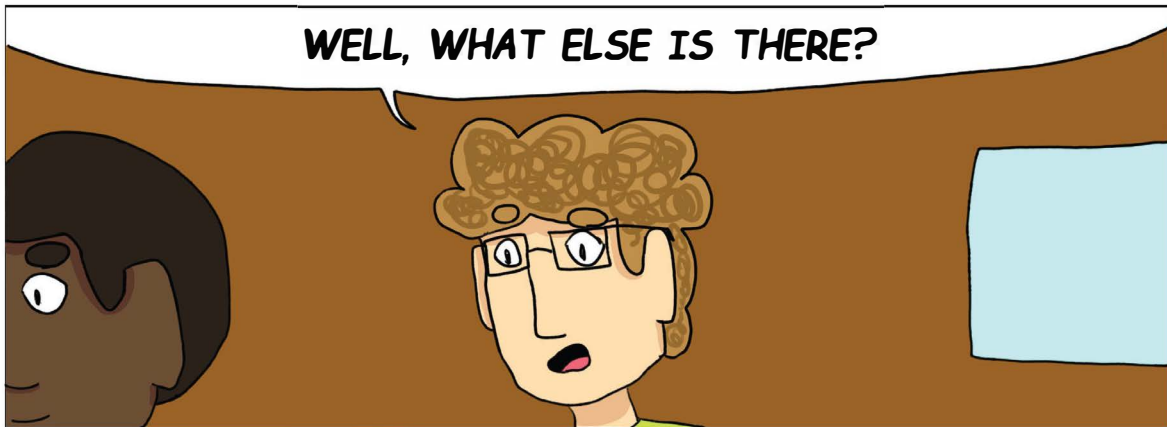




# SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING

SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING IS A MODEL FOR HELPING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR OWN LIVES.

- UNDER SUPPORTED DECISION MAKING, WE CAN FORM SUPPORT TEAMS MADE UP OF PEOPLE WE TRUST.
- OUR SUPPORTERS CAN BE FAMILY, FRIENDS, COMMUNITY MEMBERS, OR ANYONE ELSE WE TRUST.
- THESE SUPPORTERS MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACCESS PRIVATE INFORMATION (SUCH AS MEDICAL INFORMATION) THAT THEY WOULD OTHERWISE NOT BE ABLE TO SEE.
- SUPPORTERS ARE ONLY ALLOWED TO SEE OUR PERSONAL INFORMATION IF WE DECIDE THAT THEY CAN.



## POWER OF ATTORNEY

POWER OF ATTORNEY IS A LEGAL DOCUMENT.

- **GIVING SOMEBODY POWER OF ATTORNEY MEANS THAT THEY CAN MAKE LEGAL DECISIONS AND TAKE CARE OF YOUR MONEY OR OTHER ISSUES ON YOUR BEHALF.**



- THE PERSON YOU GIVE THESE RIGHTS TO IS YOUR AGENT.
- YOU CAN ALSO TAKE AWAY THE POWER OF ATTORNEY AT ANY TIME.
- THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF POWERS OF ATTORNEY: REGULAR AND DURABLE.
- A REGULAR POA WILL STOP WORKING IF YOU EVER BECOME UNABLE TO MAKE DECISIONS, WHILE A DURABLE POA, ON THE OTHER HAND, WILL STICK AROUND EVEN IF YOU'RE UNABLE TO DO THINGS BY YOURSELF!

THAT ALSO SOUNDS GOOD!



KINDA SOUNDS LIKE A SPIN-OFF OF THE LAST ONE TO ME.



IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE?



ACTUALLY, THERE IS!



# **REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE**

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**A REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE IS SOMEONE WHO MANAGES YOUR BENEFIT MONEY ON YOUR BEHALF.**

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- **YOU CAN USE A REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE IF: YOU GET FINANCIAL DISABILITY BENEFITS FROM THE GOVERNMENT, AND YOU NEED SUPPORT TO MANAGE YOUR MONEY.**
- **THERE ARE MANY REGULATIONS TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY ARE NOT MISMANAGING YOUR MONEY.**
- **SOMETIMES, THE GOVERNMENT WILL DECIDE YOU NEED A REP PAYEE EVEN IF YOU DO NOT WANT ONE.**
- **IF THIS HAPPENS, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO GET THE GOVERNMENT TO STOP USING A REP PAYEE FOR YOU.**

**ALL THESE OPTIONS SOUND GREAT! I'LL BE SURE TO MENTION THESE TO MY PARENTS AND THE PEOPLE IN MY IEP MEETINGS. THANKS GUYS!**



**NO PROBS,  
MAN.**





## Youth Ambassador

Giancarlo debuts his comic book **“Thinking for Me.”** The comic book is about a teenager becoming an adult, and how he navigates conversations around decision-making.



## Supported Decision-Making (SDM) Planning

The New Jersey state team seeks to promote supported decision-making as a more widely accepted alternative to guardianship. Our team includes our youth ambassadors, the NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities, The Boggs Center for Developmental Disabilities, the NJ Statewide Parent Advocacy Network (SPAN), and Disability Rights NJ. As part of the community of practice, the team will educate itself on best practices from outside the state and from experts here in New Jersey. In turn, we will then educate individuals with I/DD, families, educators/school system personnel, the judiciary, disability attorneys, advocacy organizations, and support coordination agencies about the value of self-determination and supported decision-making. We envision a multimedia approach that will include webinars, written materials, videos, and other forms of media complimented by the youth ambassadors' projects. Guardianship is systematically entrenched as the default option for youth with disabilities upon reaching adulthood, so we ultimately hope to change that restrictive culture through education.

## Resources

### Videos/Podcast



- Disability Rights New Jersey, **Supported Decision-Making 101 Webinar**



- The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, **Developmental Disabilities Lecture Series (DDLS) – Fall 2022 – Supported Decision Making**, presented by Michael Kendrick, PhD



- The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, **Boggs Cast Episode 10: Supported Decision Making** with Jonathan Martinis, Esq., JD

### Report



- New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities **Volume.2.2022.pdf (njcdd.org)**



- New Jersey Lawyer Magazine, December 2022 Edition, **Overprotected: Can Supported Decision-Making Disrupt the Pipeline from Special Education to Guardianship?**

### Training Curriculum



- The Boggs Center on Developmental Disabilities, **NJ Partners in Policymaking – Supported Decision-Making** is a part of the curriculum with one full day dedicated to the topic each year.

## New Jersey State Team Organizations

