



Supported Decision-Making Network of Ohio – SDMNO

Meeting Minutes
September 10, 2025
12:00 p.m.

Attendees: Dana Charlton, Angie Chapple, Lisa Comes, Amy Freeman, Alicia Hopkins, Lauri Kaplan, Whitney Langston, Ann Neu, Alissa Otani-Cole, Stephanie Leppert, Amy Mourdant, Jessica Norwood, Barb Sapharas, Renee Wood, Josh Young, Shirella Walls, Jannette Starr-Bowen, Jeanne Novak, Angela Brown, Carolyn Knight, Lauri Kaplan, Iliana Martinez

- 12:00 - **Welcome and Opening Comments** – Dana Charlton
Value statement - We want a faithful representation of the work that we do and conversations we have in the meetings. At this point note taking (AI summaries, Otter.ai, etc.). is welcome as long as the person is also present. If not, present, such notetaking will be stopped. If any specific person cannot be present, but needs such summaries, that person must reach out to one of the SDMNO core members.
- 12:05 - **Storyteller** – Janet Maine was unable to attend today's meeting as she is out of town celebrating the arrival of a new baby in her growing family. We look forward to reconnecting when she returns.
- 12:15 - **SDMNO Updates** – Alicia Hopkins expressed deep appreciation for her Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), highlighting their commitment to person-centered practices by supporting her autonomy in decision-making. She shared her DSPs actively communicated with her broader support team to ensure she could make her own dietary choices and expand her options, reinforcing her right to self-determination.
- Progress continues on the youth-led video initiative focused on supported decision-making. The latest video was filmed during the July 10th meeting of the Youth Advocacy Council for OCECD and features Micheal Uher. We also connected with the director of the National Youth Voice Youth Choice Organization, who shared that similar videos have been produced nationwide and expressed enthusiasm about collaborating with us.
- Outreach efforts are underway: we contacted 12 youth voice representatives from the provided list, and 5 have responded so far. Additionally, Josh received a response from another individual and will forward their information to Dana.
- 12:20 - **SDMNO Study/Survey Update** – Jeanne Novak
Jeanne is preparing to launch a statewide survey in Ohio, with distribution anticipated in October or November. Once finalized, she will share the link

for broader dissemination. The research explores key questions such as: *What information do individuals receive about guardianship and its alternatives? What types of support help them make informed decisions?* The project is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services through the Administration for Community Living and aligns with ongoing advocacy for supported decision-making in Ohio. To increase accessibility, QR codes and iPads will be available for on-site survey completion at the Synergy Conference.

Alicia Hopkins is contributing original artwork to serve as a visual backdrop for the survey display at Synergy, adding a creative and person-centered touch to the initiative.

In addition, Alicia will be showcasing her artwork in Cincinnati with a dedicated exhibition on October 10th. She is currently preparing the flyer, which will be posted on her art page. The Ohio Family and Guardians Network will also share the event link to help promote the show.

12:25 - **Strategic Plan and Next Steps - Breakout Rooms: Update & Review of SDMNO Strategic Plan:** Go to <https://www.sdmno.org/> for the strategic planning progress report document – lower left corner at the very bottom of the web page.

- Internal-Financial – How do we develop greater capacity and adequate funding?
Josh, Dana, Derek
 - Rather than pursuing formal membership structures, the group is exploring a model where organizations can become *supporting partners* contributing at various financial levels and having the option to display their logo in alignment with “Friends of SDMNO.” This approach offers flexibility and visibility while fostering broader coalition support.
 - A range of grant possibilities were discussed, including the precedent of APSI receiving an Arts Council grant. SDMNO may be eligible to apply for similar funding, which could be a promising avenue. Additionally, storytelling around supported decision-making (SDM) was emphasized as a powerful tool and these narratives should be actively shared to build awareness and impact.
 - No new developments on Senate Bill 35 at this time.
 - Progress on the website remains on hold until sponsorship or monitoring support is secured.
 - A bank account is now established. The next step is determining how to collect donations and ensure they are deposited directly into the account. This requires identifying individuals or systems to manage the process.
- Outreach – How do we extend our reach to targeted audiences? Amy, Lisa, Catie
 - Update the website – We’re seeking someone to assist with website updates for approximately 3–5 hours per month. This could involve the candidate attending the next meeting. Brendan Hamilton and Courtney Hineman have been identified as potential candidates. Additionally, Hadia will share contact information for another individual in Hamilton County to Amy for follow-up.

- DD & D session is scheduled in Summit County, September 24th.
 - Jeanne stated attendees can complete the previously addressed survey at the Synergy Conference. A QR code will be provided.
 - Derek Graham will be presenting in OACB's SSA track this year. He will not be providing updates on the guardianship role. However, he will be providing updates on Supported Decision Making in Ohio, covering the basics.
- Learning and Growth – How do we as a network continue learning and growing?
Renee', Carolyn, Jason, Celia,
- It was previously recommended that the Bill of Rights be included as a resource on the SDMNO website. However, given that version is now outdated, the site should be updated to incorporate additional foundational materials, including the Fair Housing Act (FHA), the Olmstead decision, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These resources offer more current and comprehensive protections relevant to supported decision-making.
 - Angie shared the agency resource form she had previously created and distributed to the group. We reviewed the form and made updates to reflect current contacts and offerings. The updated form is available here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd8NybinW3-bPI2PcEF1LVgpsYOsv-ZT_cVW5HvIERNfulM0w/viewform
 - Renee sent the link to her book, The First Cut is the Sweetest.
https://www.amazon.com/FIRST-CUT-SWEETEST-Renee-Wood/dp/B0FD7Z3XSX/ref=sr_1_1?crid=4MA0OZ2W12C9&dib=eyJ2IjojMSJ9.PsWVWk5DN5tNRAr87D2Ykwx1UmvrE0gNHjDLHKBXRSLnGjHj071QN20LucGBJIEps.Xid_YKI4QiZYaL6g29ookl8GmXaFUdcsoXNIKW_-7aU&dib_tag=se&keywords=the+first+cut+is+the+sweetest&qid=1757522817&srefix=the+first+cut%2Caps%2C214&sr=8-1
 - The plan is to engage relevant Facebook (FB) groups to help share this information. The approach will be to first gather key details, then post these to their FB group pages with an invitation for others to contribute additional resources or updates. Angie will serve as the point person for collecting and organizing all incoming data.

Finished break out reporting at 1:11 p.m.

1:15 – **What is happening in YOUR space that promotes SDM?**

- Josh (ONI) is currently receiving referrals for supported decision-making (SDM) consultations and is actively working with three individuals. He continues to meet regularly with people to provide advocacy and guidance around SDM practices.
- Whitney has a one-pager from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), which she will be sharing with the group.
- Jessica will be distributing the People First language document to support inclusive communication.
- Alicia, who uses assistive technology herself, is interested in connecting with families and self-advocates who also use alternative communication devices. Her goal is to build outreach and community among those navigating similar experiences.

1:15 - **Wrap Up** – Dana Charlton

- Renee confirmed that SDMNO does not need to issue physical checks, as the bank handles check issuance directly. A debit card has been requested for organizational use and will be issued in Renee's name. Lisa and Renee are listed as the primary signers on the account. A receipt form is currently being developed to document check disbursements. Full account details will be shared at the next board meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 1:21pm.

Next SDMNO meeting – October 8th, 12:00 to 1:30 Knowing that we all have busy schedules, please feel free to join late or leave early as you need.

- **SDMNO PROJECTS** (Ongoing – Will be placed on the agenda as information or action is needed):
 - Advocate Perspectives to Reduce Reliance on Guardianship – Jeanne Novak and Catie Lewis
 - Advocacy efforts for Supported Decision-Making in Ohio Statute –
 - ODEW "Age of Majority" Guidance - Catie Lewis
 - Exploring Family and Self-Review of New Additions to SDMNO Website – Josh Expert Evaluation
 - SDMNO Resource Website – Outreach group
 - Age of Majority IEP Guidelines – Catie Lewis
 - Restoration training
 - ORC 5126 Statute Changes – Derek Graham, Lisa Comes
 - Connect with youth ages 14 to 26 – Amy Freeman, Catie Lewis
 - Youth Advisory Council – OCECD
 - Project STIR™ Pilot with Youth in Transition – OSDA
- **SDMNO Resources - Facebook & other social media** – Outreach group – Lisa and Amy M. Click here to check it out! Note that there is a brief demo of the "Padlet". <https://padlet.com/lcomes/supported-decision-making-network-of-ohio-sdmno-dmro8jhkpe93c6m1>
 - <https://www.facebook.com/SDMOHIO/> click now and "LIKE" the page
- **Supported Decision-Making Toolkit on DODD website:**
 - This toolkit is available in English-<https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/advocacy/SDM-You-and-Family>
 - Arabic, French, and Spanish -<https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/advocacy/SDM-Translations>