



ARIZONA
— DEPARTMENT OF —
ECONOMIC SECURITY

Division of Developmental Disabilities

August 7, 2025

Agenda

- Turning 18: Legal Options
 - Laurie Shook - Encircle Families
- Finalized Strategic Plan
 - Thelia Morris



Turning 18

Legal Options



At Encircle Families

We are building a future where **every person** is valued and included in society.





We offer full support and guidance

- Connecting parents with a **community of support**, including parents of children with the same diagnosis
- Helping parents understand their rights and giving them the **tools to effectively advocate** for themselves and their child
- Providing parents with **credible, accurate information** in accessible language through our multilingual staff
- Informing them of all **resources** available to them and helping them navigate those resources



PARENT TRAINING
AND INFORMATION
CENTER
(PTI)



FAMILY
FAMILY HEALTH
INFORMATION
CENTER
(F2F HIC)



PARENT TO
PARENT USA
(P2P USA)



FAMILY VOICES
AFFILIATE
ORGANIZATION
(FVAO)



- IEP Training
- Positive Behavior Support
- Turning 18-Legal Options
- Understanding 504
- High School Transition
- Early Childhood Education (Birth to Kinder)
- Bullying Prevention
- Talking With Your Child About Sexuality
- Recognizing Signs of Abuse and Neglect
- Imagining a Great Life
- Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)



We are not lawyers and can not provide any legal advice.

Consult an attorney with any legal questions.

Federal and state laws are subject to change.



Learning Objectives

- Become aware of systems requirements and future planning options when your child turns 18
- Explore less restrictive options
 - Supported decision making
 - Powers of attorney
 - Delegation of educational rights
- Understand different types of guardianship
- Become familiar with the Guardianship process





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Families**

Things to Consider

Systems Requirements & Future Planning



Systems Requirements

- DDD redetermination
- Selective Service registration
- Social Security



DIVISION OF
**DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES**





FUTURE PLANNING

ABLE ACCOUNT

- Must have developed a qualifying disability before the age of 26
- Allows individuals to save for qualified expenses, invest for future needs, and keep benefits.

SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST

Allows for the additional financial support of an individual without potentially jeopardizing the benefits provided by public assistance programs.

LIVING WILL

Makes wishes known regarding life-prolonging medical treatments



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Families**

Less Restrictive Options

SDM, POA, Transfer of Educational Rights



Supported Decision Making (SDM)

People with disabilities (Decision Makers) use trusted friends, family members, or professionals (Supporters) to help them understand the situations and choices they face so they can make their own decisions and direct their own lives.



THINGS TO CONSIDER

- In what areas does the decision maker need support?
- How does the decision maker like supporters to help them?
- Who are trusted individuals to recruit as supporters?
- Will all supporters help with all areas or be assigned a specific area?
- What decisions does the decision maker want to make on their own?
- Is this the best option for the decision maker?



ROLE OF SUPPORTERS

AREAS OF SUPPORT

- Healthcare
- Voting
- Education
- Vocational
- Financial
- Housing

HOW TO PROVIDE SUPPORT/HELP

- With accessing and collecting information needed to make decisions
- With understanding options, responsibilities, and consequences of decisions
- With communicating decisions to others

SUPPORTER CANNOT

- Make decisions for the decision-maker
- Sign documents on behalf of decision-maker
- Coerce, intimidate, or deceive the decision-maker
- Be paid for their time
- Isolate or alienate decision maker from family or friends



Appointment Supporter Agreement

- Signed by decision-maker and supporter
- Decision-maker lists their disabilities and the areas where they want help
- **Formal document** that details specifics of relationship
- Witnessed by a notary or 2 witnesses





Powers of Attorney

- Durable general power of attorney (financial)
- Durable healthcare power of attorney
- Mental health care power of attorney



Educational Rights Transfer

If parents wish to continue to be involved in educational decision-making, students must delegate that right to their parents by filling out a Delegation of Educational Rights form available from their school.





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Guardianship

Definition, Types, Considerations, Process



Guardianship Defined

A guardian is a person who is **appointed by the court** to provide care and make decisions by informed consent for a person who lacks the ability to make responsible decisions, has considerable mental issues or is unable to communicate basic needs.



TYPES OF GUARDIANSHIP

TEMPORARY

Temporary guardians are usually a family member, or someone known by the ward. It is for a **period of 6 months or less.**

They may be appointed by the court in the event of an **emergency.** This process requires representation by an attorney.

LIMITED

If there are some rights the protected person should retain (e.g., voting, driving)

FULL

The guardian is responsible for:

- Living arrangements
- Education
- Social activities
- Medical care



Considerations

- To what extent can the person understand important decisions, even when explained in simplified terms?
- Does the person have the capacity to give informed consent?





Guardian's Responsibilities

- Seek services in the **best interest of the protected person (ward)**
- **Must always** consider the interests and desires of the ward
- Help the ward develop to their **maximum potential**



Guardianship Process

**FILL OUT
PETITION
AND FEE
DEFERRAL**

**SUBMIT
FORMS AND
RECEIVE
COURT
DATE**

**COURT
APPOINTS ATTY
&
INVESTIGATOR
FOR WARD**

**ATTEND
HEARING**

**RECEIVE
DETERMINATION
LETTER**

**FILE
ANNUAL
REPORT OF
GUARDIAN**



Levels of Support

**DO IT
YOURSEL**

F

\$

**DOCUMENT
PREPARER**

\$\$

ATTORNEY

\$\$\$\$

FAQs

When can a petition for adult guardianship be submitted to the court?

At the earliest, when the potential protected person is **17 ½ years old**.

Which forms are needed?

Adult guardianship packet & fee deferral/waiver form.

Where do I get the forms to petition the court?

Superior court of the county where the ward resides.

Can more than one person be appointed guardian?

Yes. The information for each co-guardian must be included on the petition form.

Is guardianship the same as conservatorship?

In Arizona, guardianship relates to a person and conservatorship relates to financial assets.

Is any training required?

Arizona requires petitioners to complete a short online training before they can be appointed guardians.

FAQs



Can guardians be changed?

Yes. Anytime the **court** deems it is in the best interest of the ward.

Why might there be a change in guardianship?

- The court determines the ward no longer requires a guardian
- The guardian resigns or is no longer able to serve
- The protected person or guardian dies.

Once a guardian is appointed, is that the end of the paperwork?

Each year, the guardian must submit an **Annual Report of Guardian** to the court on the anniversary of the appointment.

What if the ward has significant mental health concerns?

The court may grant the guardian a **Mental Health Authority** which gives the power to admit or readmit the protected person to a mental hospital without further court order.

A Mental Health Authority expires in 12 months if another court order is not issued. An evaluation by a psychiatrist/psychologist is required to reauthorize.





Your feedback matters!

Please scan the QR code to share your thoughts and help us improve future presentations.





If you feel moved by the work we're doing, we'd be grateful for your support. Your donation, no matter how big or small, helps us continue offering the resources, guidance, and care that families rely on.

[EncircleFamilies.org/donate](https://www.EncircleFamilies.org/donate)



5025 E. Washington St., Ste. 204

Phoenix, AZ 85034

www.EncircleFamilies.org

Strategic Planning Update

August 2025



Agenda

- Timeline
- Vision/Mission
- Focus Areas
- Goals
- Objectives
- Wrap Up and Next Steps

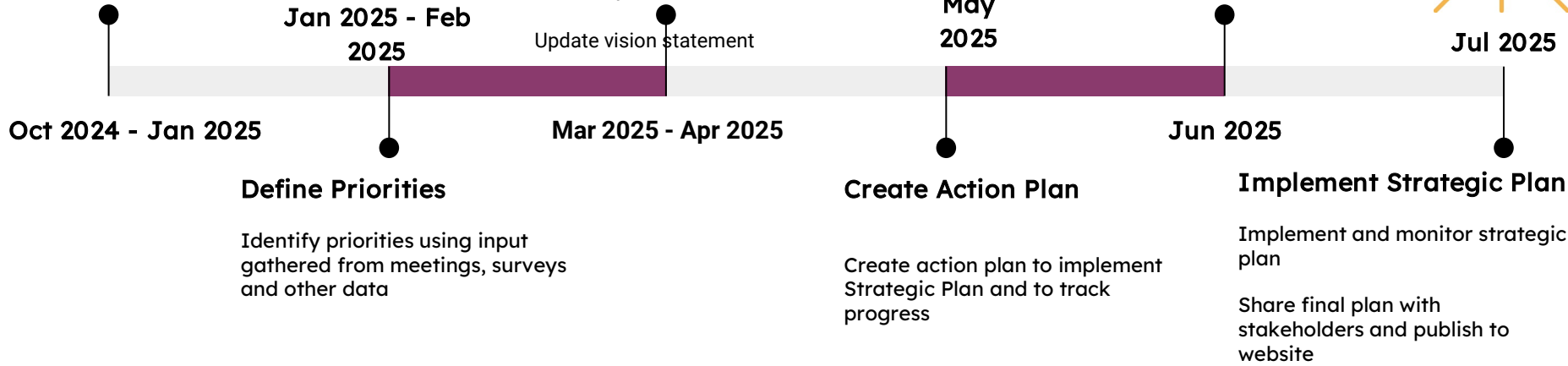
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DDD 5-Year Strategic Plan Development Timeline

Gather Information

Assess performance, analyze challenges and strengths, status of ongoing initiatives, gather input from internal and external stakeholders, review DDD vision/core principles



Define Priorities

Identify priorities using input gathered from meetings, surveys and other data

Draft Strategic Plan

Draft strategic plan with goals, objectives, initiatives and performance measures. Identify carryover projects (i.e. projects that will not be completed prior to end of current fiscal year)

Identify any DES or Governor priorities for potential incorporation into the plan

Update vision statement

Update Stakeholders

Facilitate community/stakeholder conversations

Create Action Plan

Create action plan to implement Strategic Plan and to track progress

Implement Strategic Plan

Implement and monitor strategic plan

Share final plan with stakeholders and publish to website



Where are we NOW? going?



The Strategic Plan is Published!

Available on the DES/DDD website

Where are we



How will we implement our plan?

Action plans

Communication plans

Resource capacity

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VISION

Arizonans with developmental disabilities lead the lives they choose

MISSION

The Division of Developmental Disabilities empowers individuals with developmental disabilities to lead self-directed, healthy and meaningful lives.

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Strategic Focus Areas



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Goals

Develop Support Coordination Program Excellence

Goal 1: The Division has the knowledge and resources to effectively support members and families.

Deliver High Quality Service

Goal 2: Providers consistently deliver person-centered care guided by best practices, and focused on member outcomes, satisfaction, safety, and wellbeing.

Empower Individual Success

Goal 3: Individuals achieve their definition of success.

Maintain Trust and Confidence

Goal 4: The Division continues clear, open communication with all stakeholders expanding trust and collaboration to achieve shared goals.

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Goal 1 - Objectives

GOAL 1: The Division has the knowledge and resources to effectively support members and families.

01

By 2030, the Division will have a qualified Support Coordination workforce that keeps up with program growth.

02

By 2030, the Division will improve the member and provider experience using stakeholder insights and evidence-based standards.

Goal 2 - Objectives

Goal 2: Providers consistently deliver person-centered care guided by best practices, and focused on member outcomes, satisfaction, safety, and wellbeing.

01

By 2030, the Division will maintain a provider workforce that keeps up with program growth.

02

Beginning July 2026, the Division will review all Qualified Vendors' Quality Management Plans at least once every 3 years to support quality service delivery.

Goal 2 - Objectives continued

Goal 2: Providers consistently deliver person-centered care guided by best practices, and focused on member outcomes, satisfaction, safety, and wellbeing.

03

By 2030, the Division will create a training program for Health Plan providers to deliver comprehensive care for individuals with intellectual/ developmental disabilities.

04

By 2030, the Division will publish quality indicators about Qualified Vendors so members can make self-directed choices about their services.

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Goal 3 - Objectives

Goal 3: Individuals achieve their definition of success.

01

By 2030, the Division will increase the percentage of members who report making decisions in their daily schedules from 76% to 86% (based on National Core Indicators [NCI] data).

02

Through 2030, the Division continues to ensure all members live in the least restrictive, most appropriate community setting of their choice.

Goal 3 - Objectives continued

Goal 3: Individuals achieve their definition of success.

03

By 2030, the Division will increase the percentage of members who report having friends who are not staff or family members from 55% to 79% by supporting participation in community activities that align with their interests and abilities (based on National Core Indicators [NCI] data)

04

By 2027, the Division will develop baseline data to measure the number of members who are competitively employed. By 2030, the Division will increase the number of members who are competitively employed by 3%.

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Goal 4 - Objectives

Goal 4: The Division continues clear, open communication with all stakeholders expanding trust and collaboration to achieve shared goals.

01

Through July 2030, the Division will use innovative and accessible modes of communication to expand stakeholder engagement.

02

Through July 2030, the Division will publish relevant data about the DDD program to better inform stakeholders.

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System-Wide Objective

Technological Innovation- spanning all focus areas and goals

01

By 2030, the Division will use approved tools and supportive technologies that meet current industry standards of security and integrity to improve program efficiency and effectiveness.

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Wrap up and Next Steps

Over the next 5 years:

- ✓ Create the required action plans to move each objective forward
- ✓ Implement the action plans through various projects
- ✓ You can expect to receive updates about the progress and outcomes on the strategic plan.

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Thank you