

ANOTHER GREAT COOKE SDMA SIGNING

Over the past 5 years our partnership with the Cooke School has resulted in many Cooke students choosing to participate in SDM facilitation. Last Friday saw yet another successful completion of that process when Decision-Maker Sarah celebrated her SDMA signing.

Sarah is 20, lives in Manhattan with her mom, and attends Cooke's Transitions program. Currently she has an internship at a Manhattan doctor's office. Sarah loves listening to music, and watching movies, especially Disney films. We hear that, like so many young women, she is especially fond of Cinderella and Bambi. Her very creative Facilitator Caitlin, (this is her second completed SDMA) incorporated those Disney characters in the mapping exercises we use to teach how everyone makes decisions– as a way to make that work more relatable, and much more fun!



Sarah's mom Nina, facilitator Caitlin, and Sarah

Sarah's mom Nina is an attorney who has always been opposed to putting Sarah under guardianship, and who was relieved to find an alternative that is appropriate for Sarah, enabling her to retain all her legal and civil rights. Asked about taking on the role of Supporter, she said "I'm a firm believer in helping her to move in the direction of making her decisions... [by] learning to ask for help." ...Every parent goes through a transition when their child starts making their own choices..."

Facilitator Caitlin, Director of the Special Needs Center at the Marlene Meyerson Jewish Community Center, remarked, "I'm stepping away [from Sarah's successful facilitation] with a lot of gratitude that SDM is an option for individuals... I'm proud of the process we went through together and see a lot of growth that should be [noted]... SDM is important because the other option, guardianship, is antiquated." Responding to Caitlin, mom Nina added "It's a little bit dangerous having someone else in charge of her life when I'm no longer here." We've heard from many parents how SDMNY facilitation and an SDMA system relieves them about their adult children's future, and that's just one more reason to celebrate.

CONGRATULATIONS SARAH, SUPPORTER NINA, AND FACILITATOR CAITLIN!