

WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO TAKE RISKS.

We should all be able to experience self-determination by making choices and decisions based on personal preferences and our interests. In order to grow we should have the choice to experience and live life. Everyone ought to have opportunities, respectful support, and the authority to exert control in their lives. Even if one needs extra support or has a disability, we all have the same rights and responsibilities for self-determination, this includes risk. We all should weigh the risk/benefit of doing or not doing something. We all are responsible to educate ourselves about the risk involved and the possible outcomes of that risk.

YOU AND I HAVE ...

- The right to take risks as long as they do not harm others.
- The right to take risks despite the possibility there could be failure.
- The right to choose risk in areas others deemed “bad” choices—for example: soda, snacks, smoking, sex, alcohol.
- The right to return home from the nursing home even if others do not think it is ok.
- The right to leave the nursing home against medical advice.

I KNOW THAT YOU WANT TO KEEP ME SAFE.

I know that you are worried about me. I appreciate your concern. I worry about you too. Taking risks is a part of everyday adult life and I am an adult.

CASE EXAMPLES

I have a guardian and I am getting older. I can still walk but sometimes I get shaky and fall down. If I want to get out of bed and walk to the kitchen table on my own, knowing that there is a risk that I could fall, I want to take that risk. The hallway is carpeted, there are not any hard or sharp surfaces. I am older but the doctor says my bones are still strong. If I fall, the risk of the fall resulting in a serious injury is low. **It is a risk I am willing to take. I have that right.**

I am a smoker. I know that it is bad for me and can cause health problems, but I am ok with that. I do not have any serious health conditions and I can afford to smoke. Every year when I have my physical at my doctor’s office, my doctor gives me information about the dangers of smoking and quitting smoking. There are some things on the handout that I do not exactly understand but I know enough to know that smoking could give me cancer, or it might not. **It is a risk that I am willing to take. I have that right.**