

Misconceptions About Guardianship

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I HAVE TO GET GUARDIASHIP OF MY SON/DAUGHTER

- Parents do not automatically become guardian when their child turns 18, and guardianship often isn't necessary. There are many other less-restrictive ways to stay involved and help someone make decisions, such as Supported Decision-Making.

2

IT WON'T HURT TO PUT GUARDIANSHIP IN PLACE

- Guardianship is the removal of a person's legal right to make decisions about their life. It can also be expensive and difficult to reverse once it's in place. People with guardians might not develop decision-making skills, they might experience low self-esteem, and they often achieve less independence.

3

IF I'M NOT THE GUARDIAN, I CAN'T GET IMPORTANT INFO

- Most information can be obtained with the simple use of a release of information form (e.g., HIPAA). Attorneys can also help create authorization forms which allow you to access important records.

4

GUARDIANSHIP WILL PROTECT THE PERSON

- A guardian cannot stop a person from being arrested, getting hurt, engaging in risky behaviors, or being taken advantage of. No study has shown that people with a guardian are safer than those without. In fact, people with more self-determination and control over their lives are better able to resist abuse and exploitation.

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SO, WHAT CAN WE DO INSTEAD OF GUARDIANSHIP?

- There are many less-restrictive options you can learn about and explore, like a Release of Information, Payee, Chosen Rep., Powers of Attorney, or Supported Decision-Making, which happens when people choose others they trust to help them understand information so they can make their own decisions.