A kit from the Self-Determination Institute and the Self-Determination Tech Alliance

Host an information session for your group

This kit has everything your group needs to run its own information session: the three ways, a 10-minute talk to read or adapt, a guide for the meeting, answers to common questions and words to share.

We supply the kit. Your group runs the session.

What hosting is

An information session is a time for the people in your group to learn the three ways to get regional center services, together.

It takes about an hour, in person or online. We charge nothing for the kit or for hosting. Your group runs it and picks the day, the place and who leads.

Any group can host: a self-advocacy group, a parent group, promotoras, a faith or cultural group, or an independent facilitator giving a group an hour a month.

If you are a service provider, such as an independent facilitator, say so at the start, and keep the session about the three choices, not your own services.

What the crew does

Pick what fits. One person or a whole organization can join, at no cost.

Share

Pass the flyer or the home page to your group, your network, or one person.

Host

Hold an information session for your group, in person or online. Write to us and we will help you plan it.

Write to us: support@sdta-np.com

Help in your area

Pick your regional center area when you join. Then spread the word close to home: at your regional center's local Self-Determination advisory committee and wherever people already gather. Everyone who wants to help in an area is welcome.

To tell us you are hosting, join the Choice Crew, check “Host an information session for your group”, and write to us at support@sdta-np.com. We will help you plan it.

Your email is never published, but everything else you write on the form is shown on the page. So never put a phone number or an email address in the other boxes.

choices.sdta-np.com/crew

Start with the three ways

There are three ways to get your regional center services. You choose. The campaign never says which one is right for you.

Your regional center arranges it.
Less for you to manage.

Traditional services

Your regional center arranges your services with providers it works with.

Who finds your providers: Your regional center, and you can ask for a provider you prefer.

Good to know: Less for you to manage. Most people get services this way.

Participant-directed services

Inside traditional services, you can direct certain services yourself, such as respite or personal assistance. You hire your own worker, for the hours approved for you, at a set rate. A financial management service pays them after you approve their hours.

Who finds your providers: You, for those services.

Good to know: You are the employer, or share that role with the financial management service. There is no individual budget.

Self-Determination Program (SDP)

You get an individual budget, based on the services already approved for you. You decide how it is spent and who provides your services.

Who finds your providers: You, with help from an independent facilitator (paid from your budget) or your service coordinator.

Good to know: More of the work is yours, like a spending plan tied to your goals. A financial management service pays your providers. SDP starts with a free orientation.

You direct it.
More choice and control,
and more of the work.

In all three, you stay with your regional center and still have a service coordinator.

New to regional centers? Read the basics (choices.sdta-np.com/basics): what a regional center is, who can get services, and how to apply.

At your session, give each of the three the same time and the same care. Nobody has to choose today.

A 10-minute talk

Read it out loud as it is, or say it in your own words. While you talk, show the three ways on this page or on the Choices flyer (choices.sdta-np.com/crew).

The talk at a glance

1 **Welcome** 1 minute
2 **The three ways** 5 minutes
3 **Make your plan** 2 minutes
4 **Where to start** 2 minutes

The script

Welcome 1 minute

Thank you for joining us.

Choices is for people 3 and older with California regional center services, and their families. It is a statewide awareness campaign from the Self-Determination Institute and the Self-Determination Tech Alliance, two nonprofits.

We are part of the Choice Crew. The Choice Crew is the people and organizations spreading the word, so every person and family knows all three ways before their next planning meeting.

Today we will look at all three ways, in plain words, and how to get ready for your next planning meeting.

The three ways 5 minutes

There are three ways to get your regional center services. Many people and families have only heard of one.

[Ask the group: before today, which of the three had you heard of?]

One way is traditional services. Your regional center arranges your services with providers it works with. You can ask for a provider you prefer. Less for you to manage. Most people get services this way.

Another way is participant-directed services. Inside traditional services, you can direct certain services yourself, such as respite or personal assistance. You hire your own worker, for the hours approved for you, at a set rate. A financial management service pays them after you approve their hours. You are the employer, or share that role with the financial management service. There is no individual budget.

And another way is the Self-Determination Program, or SDP. You get an individual budget, based on the services already approved for you. You decide how it is spent and who provides your services. You can get help from an independent facilitator, paid from your budget. Or your service coordinator can help you. More of the work is yours, like a spending plan tied to your goals. A financial management service pays your providers. SDP starts with a free orientation.

[Show the line with the three ways.]

At one end, the line says: “Your regional center arranges it. Less for you to manage.” At the other end: “You direct it. More choice and control, and more of the work.”

In all three, you stay with your regional center and still have a service coordinator. The campaign never says which one is right for you. You choose.

[Take a question or two, or keep them for after the talk.]

Make your plan 2 minutes

Make your plan before your next planning meeting.

Picture your best life. What would a good week look like? What help would it take to get there?

Acierto PCP helps you put your best life into your own words: your strengths, what matters to you, and your goals. Bring it to your planning meeting. No sign-up. What you type stays on your device.

You can ask for an IPP (Individual Program Plan) meeting at any time. The regional center must hold it within 30 days after you ask. Ask in writing so there is a record.

DAN, the Disability Access Navigator, answers your questions about all three choices and helps you write your meeting request. Day or night, in English or Spanish. Free to people and their unpaid supports. No login.

Where to start 2 minutes

Here is a next step for each of the three.

For traditional services: at your planning meeting, say what you want your services to do for you.

For participant-directed services: ask your service coordinator which of your services you can direct, and how the financial management service works.

For the Self-Determination Program: go to a free orientation from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. Also look at Acierto IF, to find an independent facilitator, and Acierto FMS, to compare financial management services.

All three choices, in English and Spanish, are on the campaign website: choices.sdta-np.com.

New to regional centers? Read the basics on the same site: what a regional center is, who can get services, and how to apply. Want to learn the three choices with other people? Start a team with the “You are not alone” kit, on the same site.

People and organizations who want to spread the word about the three choices in their own communities: join the Choice Crew, at no cost, at choices.sdta-np.com/crew.

Thank you.

Run your session

Before your session

- Pick a day, a time and a place that work for your group, or a phone or video call. Plan on about an hour.
- Invite people the way your group already talks: at a meeting, in a newsletter, in a group chat, by text or by email. Words to share are further down this page.
- Ask each person what helps them take part, such as a ride, interpretation, large print, captions or breaks.
- Have the Choices flyer ready to show or share: English (PDF) (choices.sdta-np.com/crew) and Spanish (PDF) (choices.sdta-np.com/crew/?lang=es).
- Choose who will give the talk and who will keep time.

Your session, about an hour

1 Say hello 10 minutes

Each person says their name and one thing they want: for their own life, or for the person they support.

2 The talk 10 minutes

Read or adapt the 10-minute talk above.

3 Questions 25 minutes

Answer questions with the help of the answers further down this page. Nobody has to know every answer. When someone needs a firm answer about their own services, they can ask their service coordinator, in writing. DAN can help them get ready to ask.

4 Next steps 15 minutes

Each person picks one next step: read the basics, start a person-centered plan in Acierto PCP (acierto-pcp.sdta-np.com), ask DAN a question, or ask for a planning meeting. Share the flyer, and invite people to join the Choice Crew or to start a team.

After your session

- Invite anyone who wants to help to join the Choice Crew: choices.sdta-np.com/crew

- People who want to keep going together can start a team with the “You are not alone” kit: choices.sdta-np.com/team
- DAN helps people get ready for a planning meeting, whichever of the three ways they use.
- Tell us how it went: support@sdta-np.com

Talking points

Keep these in mind as you talk.

- There are three ways to get your regional center services. You choose.
- The campaign never says which one is right for you. It makes sure people know they have a choice.
- In all three, you stay with your regional center and still have a service coordinator.
- Each person who qualifies gets a service coordinator. The service coordinator helps make a plan, tells the person where services are, and helps them get the services.
- Make your plan before your next planning meeting. You can ask for an IPP (Individual Program Plan) meeting at any time.
- Talk with the person who gets services, not only with the people who support them.
- Share what happened for you, not what someone else should do.
- People learn in different ways. Offer the flyer and this kit in English or Spanish, and let each person pick what works for them.

Questions people ask

Which of the three is best?

The campaign never says which one is right for you. You choose. A person-centered plan helps in all three ways.

Do I keep my service coordinator?

Yes. In all three, you stay with your regional center and still have a service coordinator.

I am new to regional centers. Where do I start?

Read the basics (choices.sdta-np.com/basics): what a regional center is, who can get services, and how to apply.

How is an SDP budget set?

If you already get regional center services, your individual budget starts from the services authorized for you in the most recent 12 months, plus services your IPP team agreed to that are not being provided yet. If you are new to the regional center, or have less than 12 months of services, the budget comes from the services and supports the IPP team finds you need. Your IPP team is the people who write your IPP (Individual Program Plan) with you at your planning meeting.

Do I pay an independent facilitator?

In SDP, a financial management service (FMS) pays your providers. Before you join SDP, the regional center can approve and pay for a facilitator's help. After you join, your FMS pays your facilitator from your budget. You never pay a facilitator yourself. If a facilitator asks you for money, do not pay. Talk to your service coordinator.

Where can I learn more about SDP?

Go to a free orientation from the State Council on Developmental Disabilities: scdd.ca.gov/sdp-orientation. It has two parts, two hours each, and Part A comes first. Each person registers and stays for the whole of each live session. The recordings are for review only: they do not give you the certificate that SDP needs. If you took the orientation before April 1, 2026, you do not need to take it again. Everything you need to know about SDP, step by step, from the Self-Determination Institute: completeguidetosdp.org. For anyone choosing the Self-Determination Program: Acierto IF (acierto-if.sdta-np.com), to find an independent facilitator, and Acierto FMS (acierto-fms.sdta-np.com), to compare financial management services.

Which of my services can I direct myself?

Ask your service coordinator which of your services you can direct, and how the financial management service works. Read the guide to participant-directed services (choices.sdta-np.com/participant-directed).

What does DAN cost?

Free to people and their unpaid supports. No login.

Raising unmet needs

What a person gets is decided in the IPP, based on their needs and goals.

Tell the people at your session about unmet needs, especially anyone thinking about the Self-Determination Program.

In the Self-Determination Program, the IPP team sets your individual budget. Your IPP team is the people who write your IPP (Individual Program Plan) with you at your planning meeting. If you already get regional center services, your individual budget starts from the services authorized for you in the most recent 12 months, plus services your IPP team agreed to that are not being provided yet. If you get few or no services today, the IPP team must talk about your unmet needs.

What to ask for, and how

- Before the meeting, write down what you need that you do not get today, and how it would help your life.
- Ask your service coordinator, in writing, for the IPP team to talk about your unmet needs when your budget is set.
- If your circumstances, needs or resources have changed, the IPP team can adjust the budget, and the reason is written in your IPP.
- DAN helps you put what you want into words your regional center can more easily say yes to.
- Your service coordinator is your partner in this. Go in ready to work it out together.

Source: Welfare and Institutions Code section 4685.8(m)(1)(A).

Share it

The Choices flyer

One sheet. The front shows the three ways as one range. The back has next steps for each.

English (PDF) (choices.sdta-np.com/crew)

Spanish (PDF) (choices.sdta-np.com/crew/?lang=es)

Words to copy

Paste them into an email, a text, a newsletter or a post. Change them as you like, and add your session's day, time and place.

An email

Subject: Three ways to get regional center services

Hello,

There are three ways to get your regional center services. Many people and families have only heard of one.

The three ways are traditional services, participant-directed services, and the Self-Determination Program (SDP). The campaign never says which one is right for you. You choose. In all three, you stay with your regional center and still have a service coordinator.

Learn all three, and make your plan before your next planning meeting, at choices.sdta-np.com. The site is in English and Spanish.

Our group is holding an information session about the three ways on [day and time], at [place or video link]. Everyone is welcome.

[Your name]

A text message

There are three ways to get your regional center services. You choose. Learn all three, in English and Spanish: choices.sdta-np.com

A newsletter

Your life. Your plan. Your choice.

If you are 3 or older and get services from a California regional center, there are three ways to get them: traditional services, participant-directed services, or the Self-Determination Program (SDP). Many people and families have only heard of one. Choices is a statewide awareness campaign from the Self-Determination Institute and the Self-Determination Tech Alliance, two nonprofits. Learn all three, and make your plan before your next planning meeting, at choices.sdta-np.com.

A social media post

There are three ways to get your regional center services. Many people and families have only heard of one.

The three ways are traditional services, participant-directed services, and the Self-Determination Program (SDP). The campaign never says which one is right for you. You choose.

Learn all three, in English and Spanish:
https://choices.sdta-np.com

Know someone who gets regional center services? Please share this with them.

#SelfDetermination #California #DevelopmentalDisabilities

Get ready with DAN

Close your session with the next step everyone can take.

DAN, the Disability Access Navigator, answers your questions about all three choices and helps you write your planning meeting request.

Day or night, in English or Spanish. Free to people and their unpaid supports. No login.

Ask DAN: app.sdta-np.com

"Your life. Your plan. Your choice." comes to you from the Self-Determination Institute and the Self-Determination Tech Alliance, two nonprofits. Questions: support@sdta-np.com
This kit was last checked on October 24, 2026. It is general information. Ask your regional center how it applies to you.