



What
Is A
DSP?



My name is Karen Larson, I am the Program Coordinator with the
Region 10 Quality Council.

Region 10 Quality Council has started new Quality Improvement projects.
We are working on a project to increase awareness and recognition of
Direct Support Professionals (DSP).

Our goal is to get the word out about who
DSP's are and what they do.

One of the action steps is to interview DSP's and write a Human Interest Story to
run in the newspaper and put on social media.

On the following pages are the stories from DSP's about what they do and why
they do it.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at anytime.

Karen M. Larson

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First, a little information...What is a Direct Support Professional?

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) work closely with people of all ages who have disabilities. DSPs help people with disabilities achieve the fullest lives possible by empowering them to overcome challenges.

Some other titles you may be more familiar with are...

- Nurse
- Job Coach
- Family Care Provider
- Personal Assistant,
- Personal Care Assistant
- Habilitation Specialist.

Some of the duties that DSPs might do are.....

- Chef
- Housekeeper
- Secretary
- Beautician
- Laundry worker
- Banker
- Chauffeur
- Personal shopper
- First aid administrator
- Medication Administrator
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Music therapist
- Art therapist,
- Dietitian
- Job coach
- Teacher



We are in a DSP crisis.

- The University of Minnesota Institute on Community Integration Impact magazine states; “...the reality is that significant challenges remain in finding, keeping and training DSPs who support persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities”.
- Often labeled a “crisis,” this label has plagued this industry since the start of community services.
- A 30 year crisis is not a crisis; it is a systematic and pervasive failure in the long-term services and supports system in the United States that has created a public health “crisis”.
- Impact magazine also reported one of the contributing factors to DSP shortage is high turnover.
- The Minnesota state average turnover rate for DSPs in 2018 was 46%. One cause is low wages.
- The national average wage for DSPs is \$11.76 hour (NCL, 2018).



How do we fight the shortage?

- Please spread the word. DSP's are valuable, professional, hardworking, caring individuals and love their jobs.
- Please give DSPs the recognition for the career path that they have chosen to support persons with disabilities to reach their personal goals.
- Please give DSPs the wage they earn. DSP work hard to provide safe, person-centered, and quality care to the people they serve.



Hello, my name is Shea Erickson.

I am a Direct Support Professional (DSP).

As a DSP, I assist Andrew with daily living skills, cooking, shopping, laundry, and community events. I have been a DSP since 1997 and have loved every minute of it. I was inspired to be a DSP by my Aunt Nancy and my Mom. I have been working with Andrew for 12 years. I know that I am doing my job right when I hear Andrew's giggle and he shows me his awesome smile.



Hello, my name is Lacey Stadler.

I am a Direct Support Professional (DSP).

As a Direct Support Professional, some of my responsibilities are: taking folks to medical appointments, completing paperwork, meeting 245D rules and coordinating with team members. I have been working in the field for 20 years and the biggest part of my job is making people happy. I love working as a DSP.



Hello, my name is Lori Rand.

I am a Direct Support Professional (DSP).

As an overnight sleep staff, I assist meeting the needs of the people I work for by assisting with personal needs, giving medications, meal preparation, playing cards, or going for walks. I have been working as a DSP for 9 years and love every minute of it. Knowing that I brought some enjoyment to someone's day is the best.



If you would like help spread the word or
if you have any questions or concerns please contact me
at anytime.

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