



Dear Direct Support Professional,

Every day you share your compassion and support individuals who rely on you. Your work ensures that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities stay safe and healthy, connect with the world, and enjoy fuller lives. As a direct support professional, you've made the world a kinder, safer, and more caring place.

Your impact is far beyond sight. Whether you go into someone's home to help them start the day, support their involvement in the community, train them on a new skill, guide them through processing their emotional reactions, or give a family needed respite, you are changing lives every day. Not everyone is cut out to support others' lives and goals like you do.

The pandemic continues taking its toll and we applaud you for bravely facing both new and old challenges. You may be going to great lengths to provide essential services to people with COVID-19 while trying to keep your own family healthy. You may be supporting others as they safely readjust to life in the community, or patiently working with individuals and families who are still struggling. Staffing shortages are not making your job any easier but you continue to adapt. We admire your dedication to those you serve and appreciate everything you do.

September 11-17 is Direct Support Professional Recognition Week, and we wish we could do more than send this message. You always deserve recognition, but we hope that sometime this week you can take minute to think about the difference you've made and what you mean to the people you support. Feel pride for how important you are.

At California Disability Services Association, we are always advocating for greater recognition and funding for your work. You are in our hearts. We will always be working with your organization – and many others like it – toward a service system that reflects your value and your vital role.

Happy DSP Recognition Week. Thank you for your incredible service to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Barry Jardini", written in a cursive style.

Barry Jardini
Executive Director

California Disability Services Association

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