



The Arc

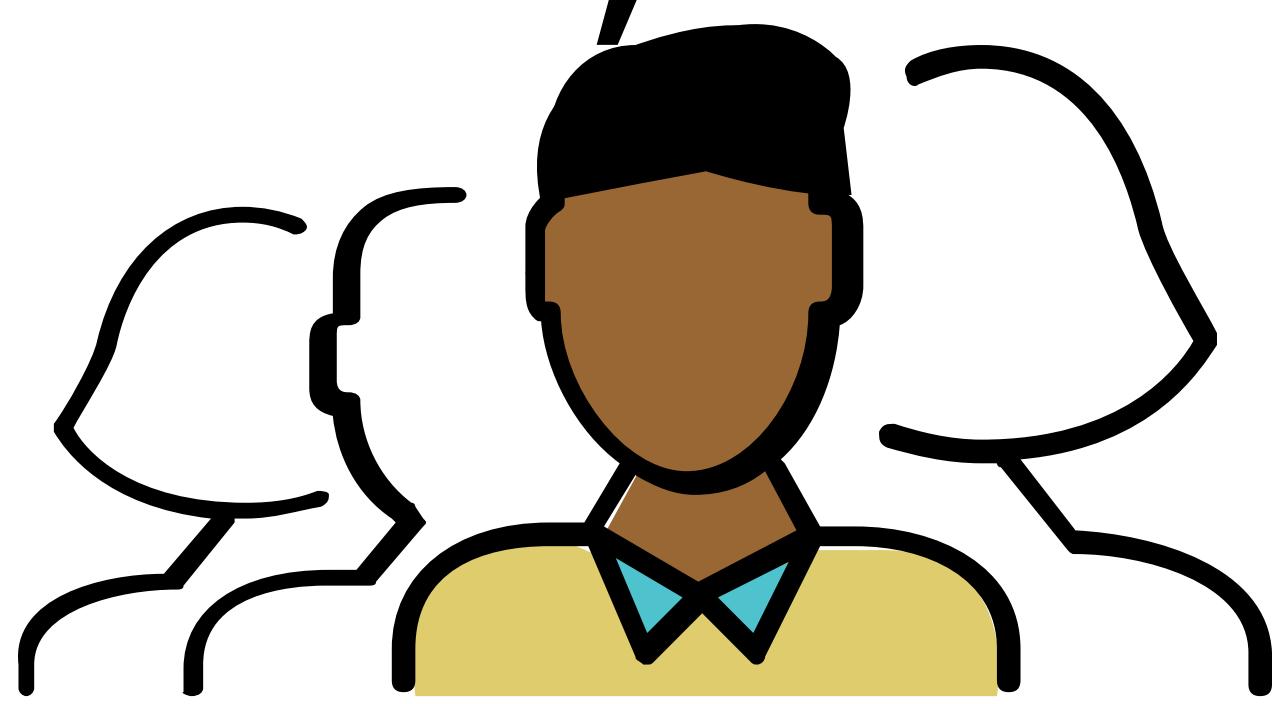
Maryland

Film Screening: "The Heart For It" The Invaluable and Unrecognized Profession of Direct Support

Showings in the Baltimore County Delegation Room (House Room 180) on
Thursday 1/9/20 at 12 PM, 12:15 PM, 12:30 PM, and 12:45 PM

People who receive DD
Community Services in
Maryland

24,896



Maryland is experiencing a Direct Support Professional workforce shortage for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Without change, the quality of care and the quality of life for thousands of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families is at risk.

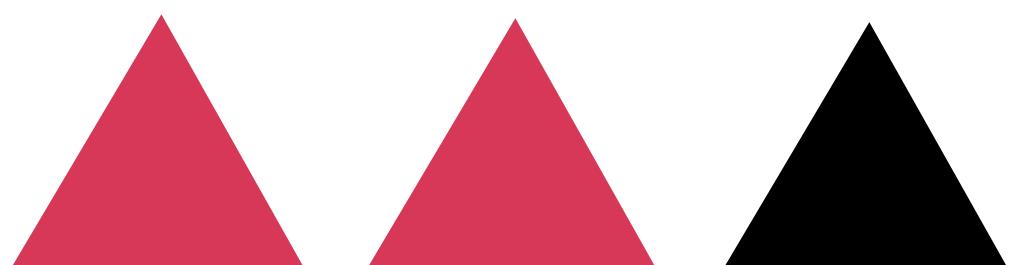
DSPs must not only have "*the heart for*" the work they do, but possess patience, knowledge, and skills unmatched in most other professions.

Direct Support Professional Turnover, Workforce Vacancy, and Tenure Rates

A survey completed by the Maryland Association of Community Services in 2019 found concerning statistics related to DSP workforce vacancy and turnover percentage rates, with trends higher than the national average*

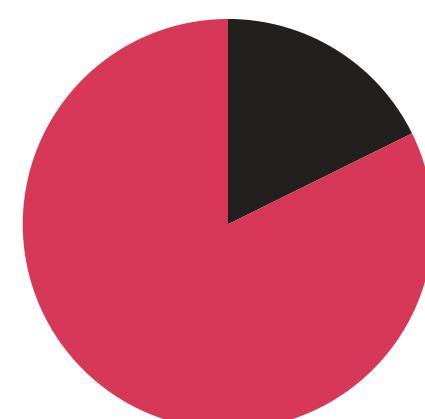
Direct Support Provider organizations report they often cannot commit to supporting people with disabilities who are new to the system because they lack staffing to do so. This is creating a crisis of capacity that has permeated every area of the state, causing parents to quit jobs as they descend into personal crisis after their children exit the school system.

(*NCI 2017 Staff Stability Survey Results)



1 out of 3 Direct Support Professionals leave within the first 6 months. The majority of these departures are voluntary.

The hours are long, the work is difficult, the responsibilities are high, and they are going to jobs in fast food and other industries where they can make the same with less responsibilities and stress.



The average vacancy rate of the DSP workforce is 17.7%, however many providers report much higher vacancy rates, especially those in rural areas where workforce availability is low and competition for that workforce higher.

Over half of all DSPs leave the job within the first year.



Please Join Us for popcorn, nuggets, and a free screening of "The Heart For It." For 10 minutes of your viewing time, you will receive valuable information from families, people with disabilities and DSPs, and gain a better understanding of the need for a concerted advocacy effort to save the future of developmental disabilities supports for thousands of people with I/DD and their families.

What Do Direct Support Professionals Do?

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) help people with Developmental Disabilities in the following ways:



They create and implement person-centered plans of support, document services, and complete other required paperwork.



DSPs transport people with developmental disabilities to work, appts, and activities.



They support people with DD to obtain work, and provide job coaching and other support in the job.



DSPs provide personal care assistance to bathe and dress, transfer into and out of personal wheelchairs, etc.



DSPs schedule and obtain appropriate medical and dental care for people, and coordinate insurances for coverage.



They assist with banking and budget management, and ensure people have what they need (food, clothing, and shelter)



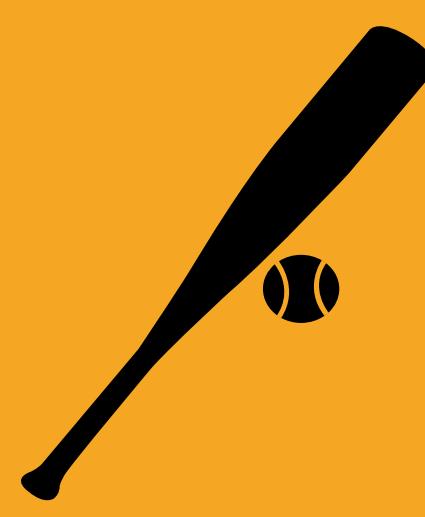
DSPs help plan and prepare meals and provide cooking instruction.



DSPs respond to mental health emergencies and provide behavioral supports.



They administer medications and treatments and document according to nursing standards.



They connect people with friends and natural supports in the community.

... and much more.

What can WE do? The first step to deal with the DSP Workforce shortage must be Developmental Disabilities Administration **funding increases** so that service provider organizations and people who self-direct their services are able to provide more competitive DSP wages and benefits.

Other changes like **credentialing, career ladders, paid career development, strong mentoring, recognition** by the Bureau of Labor Statistics through classification of DSP as a profession, and a **state-wide campaign for the attraction, training, and retention of DSPs** are elements needed to build and retain a more qualified, competent, and stable workforce.