

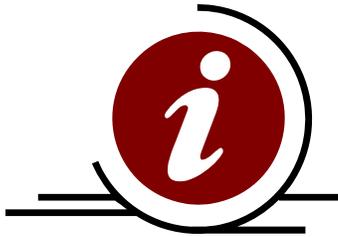


Introduction: Journey of Support

This is just the beginning:

The information presented in this guide should be viewed as a starting point to the work of supporting individuals. As a Direct Support Provider (DSP) you have many different roles to play. You will at times play the role of guide, teacher, confidant, listener, protector, and learner. These roles may require that you further explore areas that have only been briefly noted in this guide. The resources at the end of each section will provide you with more detailed information. Your supervisor can also direct you to appropriate development and training opportunities in order to build your skills and knowledge as a DSP.

This guide will provide you with:



- Information about common disabling conditions
- Explanations of values regarding disabling conditions and how they relate to your work as a Direct Support Provider (DSP)
- Information that reflects best practices in the work of providing support to others
- Additional resources including related internet web sites, texts, and videos/DVDs

Some underlying themes:

There are a number of core concepts that have guided the writing of **Journey of Support: A Direct Support Provider Action Guide**.



**Core
Concepts**

- 1) The belief that individuals who require support, or who have disabling conditions, are citizens with the same rights, privileges, and protections as all citizens.**

It is important that individuals are always treated with the utmost dignity and respect. All individuals are of equal value regardless of the type of disabling condition or degree of disability they experience.

- 2) A belief in the importance of relationships and community involvement.**

Life will be enriched for individuals with disabling conditions when they share community places, spaces, and relationships with others. It is critically important that individuals are not disconnected from the mainstream of society.

- 3) A belief in the strengths, gifts, and potential of each individual.**

In the past, individuals who required support were often defined by what they could not do. Today it is understood that every person is capable of achieving, if given appropriate support. Individuals, when seen through a

“giftedness lens”, have proven that they can meet and exceed expectations.

4) A belief in the importance of seeing a positive future for individuals who require support.

Thinking negatively about the potential of individuals will lead to low expectations, lack of opportunity, and providing only the most basic care. Individuals need and deserve a quality of support that will ensure a positive future.

How to use this guide:



This guide is intended to support DSPs working in different environments across programs. It is not intended to provide DSPs with information on specific programs such as Children's disAbility Services, Child and Family Services, and the Community Living disAbility Services. If you would like or require more information on specific programs consult your Resource Coordinator.

Organization of this guide:



This guide is presented in nine separate sections. These can be read as a whole or taken separately depending on your interest and need. The

sections can be used to increase your knowledge about an area or to promote discussion between yourself and your Resource Coordinator.

**The work of
direct
support:**



As a DSP you will be working for the Department of Families, while building relationships with the families you support. You will be held accountable for upholding and respecting the values of the Department. At the same time it is important to acknowledge that you come to this work with your own set of values. If, at any time, you find yourself in a conflict with either the values of the family you support or the values of the Department of Families consult with your Resource Coordinator.