



Career Pathways: Direct Support Professional

A Direct Support Professional (DSP) is someone who works directly with people who have intellectual or developmental disabilities. DSPs aim to assist people in realizing their full potential. They help people become integrated and engaged in their community.



About Direct Support Professionals

DSPs support people with disabilities to participate in their communities, including through employment. They also provide other services, such as help with activities of daily living.

Historically, DSPs primarily served as caregivers for the people they supported. In the past few decades, however, the needs of those served began to change, and the roles of DSPs began to change as well. Today, the role of a DSP goes beyond caregiving and focuses more broadly on supporting people with disabilities to participate fully in their communities, live in integrated settings, and seek Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE).



Key Tasks

- Provide support in various settings
- Job coaching
- Provide emotional support
- Administer medication
- Mobility assistance
- Access resources and opportunities in the community



Key Skills

- Observant and Intuitive
- Interpersonal Skills
- Work well with teams
- Ability to remain calm in difficult situations
- Dependability



Education & Certifications

- Registered Behavior Technician
- High school degree or GED



Industry Sector Employers

- The Friendship House
- St. Joseph's Center
- The Human Resources Center, Inc
- Devereux Advanced Behavioral Health
- The Arc of Northeastern PA
- Keystone Independent Living
- Allied Services

**List above shows a sampling of sector employers and college/university programs which is not limited to the list above.*



Learn more about Direct Support Professional and other career pathways at **ScrantonChamber.com**

Sources:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/individuals/DSP>

