

DIRECT SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

The Direct Support Professional (DSP) competencies, or skill standards, are organized around twelve broad areas for providing direct supports and services to individuals with developmental disabilities living in community care facilities. These areas, as well as the specific competencies, were identified through a job analysis process that involved individuals with developmental disabilities, DSPs, administrators, and regional center service coordinator, quality assurance and clinical staff. The competency areas include values and self determination, communication and social skills, positive behavioral support, teaching techniques, legal issues and individual rights, wellness, goal attainment and documentation, daily living, and leisure and recreation. The competencies and sample DSP training content are as follows:

VALUES AND SELF DETERMINATION

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|---|-----|--|
| 1 | The DSP demonstrates professional workplace behavior. | 1.1 | Participating fully as a team member. |
| | | 1.2 | Sharing information and communicating effectively. |
| | | 1.3 | Maintaining confidentiality. |
| | | 1.4 | Acting as a professional and positive role model. |
| | | 1.5 | Identifying how DSP personal values may affect the workplace behavior. |
| | | 1.6 | Scheduling time and resources |

VALUES AND SELF DETERMINATION

| <i>COMPETENCY</i> | <i>SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT</i> |
|---|--|
| 2 The DSP demonstrates respect for the individual. | 2.1 Understanding developmental disabilities. 2.2 Respecting and supporting individualities. 2.3 Recognizing, understanding, respecting cultural and religious diversity. 2.4 Using respectful language and terms when referring to and/or talking with individuals. |
| 3 The DSP demonstrates support for individual choice-making. | 3.1 Recognizing the individual's right to make choices. 3.2 Providing opportunities for choice. |
| 4 The DSP demonstrates strategies to encourage and develop individual confidence. | 4.1 Supporting full inclusion and independence. 4.2 Supporting and encouraging opportunities for participation in meaningful social, recreational, educational and vocational activities. 4.3 Allowing a reasonable level of risk. 4.4 Recognizing and acknowledging achievement. |

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SKILLS

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|---|---|
| 1 | The DSP demonstrates knowledge of various means of effective communication. | 1.1 Defining communication. 1.2 Demonstrating techniques for using different forms of communication. 1.3 Recognizing behaviors as a form of communication. 1.4 Demonstrating basic survival sign language skills. |
| 2 | The DSP demonstrates effective communication skills. | 2.1 Demonstrating active listening through interpreting the individual's communication, checking for understanding and providing feedback. 2.2 Understanding issues that may be barriers to effective communication. 2.3 Understanding how cognitive, perceptual and physical limitations effect communication. 2.4 Identifying how health status affects communication. 2.5 Observing behavior for communication cues. |

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL SKILLS

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|---|-----|--|
| 3 | The DSP demonstrates the ability to modify his/her communication to ensure understanding. | 3.1 | Identifying and accommodating each individual's communication style. |
| | | 3.2 | Understanding how changes in health, mood or injury may affect routine communication. |
| | | 3.3 | Utilizing adaptive devices, as needed. |
| 4 | The DSP encourages and supports problem solving and coping skills. | 4.1 | Recognizing and structuring opportunities to encourage communication and social interaction. |
| | | 4.2 | Developing problem solving and conflict resolution strategies. |

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

COMPETENCY

1 The DSP uses assessment strategies to evaluate how past, present and future events, and environmental factors affect behavior.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

- 1.1 Recognizing the influence of past, present and future events, and environmental factors.
- 1.2 Identifying behavior as communication.
- 1.3 Recognizing that conditions, such as hunger, illness, injury and other medical conditions, may influence behavior and communication.
- 1.4 Identifying potential outcomes that may be reinforcing the challenging behavior.
- 1.5 Identifying the communicative intent of behavior.
- 1.6 Identifying the individual's learning style.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|---|-----|--|
| 2 | The DSP demonstrates effective methods to teach positive replacement behaviors and support existing positive behaviors. | 2.1 | Identify and teach replacement behaviors and skills (communication and social skills, relaxation and coping strategies, etc.). |
| | | 2.2 | Promoting effective communication strategies, i.e., verbal, pictorial, gestural. |
| | | 2.3 | Promoting choice-making and predictability. |
| | | 2.4 | Identifying teaching strategies that are matched to the individual's learning style. |
| | | 2.5 | Providing meaningful reinforcements to encourage positive behavior while minimizing reinforcement for challenging behavior. |
| | | 2.6 | Modeling positive replacement behaviors. |
| 3 | The DSP demonstrates ability to work as part of a team in implementing positive behavioral support strategies. | 3.1 | Collaborating with family and support team to implement support strategies and monitor progress. |
| | | 3.2 | Documenting progress. |
| | | 3.3 | Adapting support strategies to ensure progress. |

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

COMPETENCY***SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT***

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|---|---|-----|--|
| 1 | The DSP demonstrates the ability to identify the steps required to complete a task or activity. | 1.1 | Understanding the concept and role of step-by-step approach to teaching. |
| | | 1.2 | Identifying, developing and using materials needed to teach. |
| | | 1.3 | Identifying sequential steps to complete varying activities. |
| | | 1.4 | Scheduling activities that promote independence. |
| 2 | The DSP applies least-to-most assistance and/or prompts. | 2.1 | Understanding and implementing least-to-most assistance and/or prompts. |
| | | 2.2 | Promoting independence and self-motivation. |
| 3 | The DSP demonstrates the use of positive feedback. | 3.1 | Providing positive and meaningful feedback to the individual. Using activities as reinforcers. |
| | | 3.2 | Using consistency in selection and application of feedback. |

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|--|-----|---|
| 4 | The DSP demonstrates the ability to follow a plan for successful teaching. | 4.1 | Understanding the purpose of a teaching plan for the individual. |
| | | 4.2 | Participating as a team member in writing and evaluating a teaching plan. |
| | | 4.3 | Implementing a plan for teaching. |
| | | 4.4 | Documenting the results of teaching. |
| | | 4.5 | Implementing strategies to maintain skills. |

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

COMPETENCY***SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT***

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|---|---|---|
| 5 | The DSP demonstrates the ability to do individualized teaching. | 5.1 Understanding of the individual's primary learning styles. 5.2 Using communication that is understandable to the individual. 5.3 Obtaining feedback to determine individual understanding of teaching. 5.4 Utilizing alternative teaching tools. 5.5 Utilizing progressive prompts. 5.6 Using adaptive technology and other accommodations to assist individual. 5.7 Knowing and using motivational strategies to teach and maintain skills. 5.8 Working as a team to provide effective instruction. |
| 6 | The DSP demonstrates the ability to assess and teach individual choice-making skills. | 6.1 Listening to the individual to determine his/her desires. 6.2 Promoting individual choice-making. 6.3 Designing situations that provide opportunities for choice. 6.4 Understanding and dealing with high risk choices. |

TEACHING TECHNIQUES

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|---|-----|--|
| 7 | The DSP assesses the effectiveness of teaching. | 7.1 | Developing and using observation and listening skills. |
| | | 7.2 | Obtaining feedback from the individual, co-workers, family and others. |
| | | 7.3 | Learning from experience. |
| | | 7.4 | Developing and using generalization strategies. |

LEGAL ISSUES AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE CURRICULUM CONTENT

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|---|--|-----|--|
| 1 | The DSP demonstrates a basic understanding of the statutory and regulatory structure of services for people with developmental disabilities. | 1.1 | Knowing basic information about the history of services. |
| | | 1.2 | Understanding the role of key agencies and/or organizations. |
| | | 1.3 | Understanding the basic statutory and regulatory requirements for services. |
| | | 1.4 | Understanding the role, responsibility and rights of parents and other legally authorized representatives. |
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| 2 | The DSP understands and supports individual rights and responsibilities. | 2.1 | Understanding individual rights and responsibilities. |
| | | 2.2 | Protecting from abuse and neglect. |
| | | 2.3 | Ensuring privacy and confidentiality. |
| | | 2.4 | Advocating to support individual rights. |
| | | 2.5 | Locating and using advocacy resources. |
| | | 2.6 | Supporting individual self-advocacy. |

LEGAL ISSUES AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE CURRICULUM CONTENT

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|---|---|-----|---|
| 3 | The DSP demonstrates correct procedures for mandated reporting requirements. | 3.1 | Understanding mandated reporting requirements. |
| | | 3.2 | Obtaining and completing reporting forms. |
| | | 3.3 | Documenting facts. |
| | | 3.4 | Following reporting procedures. |
| 4 | The DSP demonstrates knowledge of community resources to assist and educate individuals in securing needed services and supports. | 4.1 | Identifying community advocacy resources. |
| | | 4.2 | Providing information about services and supports for the individual in a manner that he/she understands. |
| | | 4.3 | Accessing community advocacy resources. |

WELLNESS

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|---|-----|---|
| 1 | The DSP demonstrates correct use of Standard Precautions. | 1.1 | Understanding Standard Precautions. |
| | | 1.2 | Using approved techniques to reduce the spread of disease and/or infection. |

WELLNESS

COMPETENCY

2 The DSP has knowledge of medications.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

- 2.1 Understanding of basic pharmaceutical terminology, symbols and abbreviations.
- 2.2 Knowing common medications, their prescribed use and possible side effects.
- 2.3 Assisting the individual with self-administration of medication(s).
- 2.4 Documenting self-administration of medications.
- 2.5 Correctly storing, recording and destroying medications.
- 2.6 Recognizing (through observation) side effects of medications and drug interactions and responding accordingly.
- 2.7 Knowing and explaining the effects of chemical use in combination with prescribed medication.

WELLNESS

COMPETENCY

3 The DSP demonstrates healthful meal planning and food preparation, storage and handling procedures.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

- 3.1 Working knowledge of a balanced diet and current food guides.
- 3.2 Working knowledge of the individual's diet, supplements, preferences and restrictions.
- 3.3 Shopping for food.
- 3.4 Understanding appropriate food preparation, storage and handling.
- 3.5 Correctly labeling/dating containers that require refrigeration or storage.

WELLNESS

COMPETENCY

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

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|---|--|-----|--|
| 4 | The DSP utilizes strategies to ensure safety, and to prevent injuries and accidents. | 4.1 | Maintaining proper storage of chemicals, cleaning supplies. |
| | | 4.2 | Being aware of safety considerations for the individual, e.g. transferring, adaptive devices, positioning. |
| | | 4.3 | Communicating potential household and/or environmental hazards to co-workers and individuals. |
| | | 4.4 | Implementing strategies to correct unsafe conditions. |
| | | 4.5 | Using basic body mechanics/procedures to prevent injury. |
| | | 4.6 | Safe use of equipment and recognizing when there is need for repair. |
| | | | |
| 5 | The DSP responds in a timely manner to medical emergencies. | 5.1 | Identifying medical emergencies. |
| | | 5.2 | Responding to medical emergencies. |
| | | 5.3 | Understanding of basic principles of first aid and CPR. |

WELLNESS

| COMPETENCY | SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT |
|---|---|
| 6 The DSP responds to environmental emergencies. | 6.1 Understanding of environmental emergencies. 6.2 Responding to environmental emergencies. |
| 7 The DSP will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of an individual's medical, mental and dental health care needs. | 7.1 Knowing the individual's medical history. 7.2 Assisting with and/or training personal hygiene and dental care. 7.3 Scheduling routine medical and dental exams. 7.4 Assisting with and/or training for proper care for hair, skin, nails and teeth. 7.5 Encouraging regular physical activities. 7.6 Recognizing and advocating for age and gender health screening needs. |
| 8 The DSP will recognize and respond to signs and symptoms of illness and/or injury. | 8.1 Recognizing, responding to and documenting changes in the individual's health status. |

WELLNESS

COMPETENCY**SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT**

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| 9 | The DSP will maintain documentation of individual health status and medical needs. | 9.1 | Preparing for medical visits, documenting health visits, physician orders and follow-up. |
| 10 | The DSP will access community health care resources. | 10.1 | Identifying and utilizing local health care and safety resources. |
| | | 10.2 | Advocating health care services for the individual. |

GOAL ATTAINMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

COMPETENCY**SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT**

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|---|--|-----|--|
| 1 | The DSP demonstrates ability to participate in the process of individual goal development. | 1.1 | Understanding the person-centered planning process. |
| | | 1.2 | Understanding individual likes and dislikes. |
| | | 1.3 | Listening to the individual, family and/or legal representative. |
| | | 1.4 | Assessing service quality outcomes. |

GOAL ATTAINMENT AND DOCUMENTATION

COMPETENCY

2 The DSP demonstrates knowledge of documentation requirements for individual goal attainment.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

- 2.1 Identifying the components and purpose of the Individual Program Plan and the Individual Family Support Plan.
- 2.2 Working as a team member to maintain accurate, on-going and consistent documentation of individual goal attainment.
- 2.3 Using correct terms and vocabulary in written documentation.
- 2.4 Reviewing and summarizing information on individual goal attainment.

DAILY LIVING

COMPETENCY

1 The DSP recognizes and supports the individual's daily routine.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

- 1.1 Knowing the individual's preferred daily routine.
- 1.2 Supporting the individual in his/her individualized daily routine.
- 1.3 Promoting and supporting independence.

DAILY LIVING

COMPETENCY

2 The DSP supports individuals in establishing and maintaining relationships with family and friends.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

2.1 Promoting interpersonal relationships.

2.2 Accessing community resources for information, counseling and other support regarding interpersonal relationships.

2.3 Providing information regarding intimacy.

LEISURE AND RECREATION

COMPETENCY

1 The DSP promotes community participation.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

1.1 Facilitating individual preferences through creative scheduling, use of volunteers and participating in community groups.

1.2 Knowing and using community activities and resources that promote integration.

1.3 Developing and using natural supports.

1.4 Promoting interpersonal skills and relationships.

1.5 Promoting independence.

LEISURE AND RECREATION

COMPETENCY

2 The DSP researches, develops and maintains information on community and other resources that meet individual needs.

SAMPLE TRAINING CONTENT

- 2.1 Learning about and using a variety of community resources.
- 2.2 Developing and maintaining information about community activities and resources.
- 2.3 Recognizing the importance of, and using, team work and networking to access the community.