



# IN THE LOOP WITH TVS PROGRAMS

## Direct Support Professionals (DSP) Appreciation Week!



This year, TVS celebrated DSP Week with a Harry Potter themed celebration including Harry's glasses, Snitch chocolate candies, and Harry Potter trivia. Not all TVS DSPs are visible in this photo - some were wearing a cloak of invisibility.

## How can you show DSP Appreciation?

- A simple “thank you,” via a card, video, or face-to-face comment, can go a long way. Most DSPs are in this field because they care. Letting them know you recognize they care means a lot.
- Write and call your senators and congressmen. Let them know about the importance and urgency of having DSPs recognized as their own, separate standard occupational code.
- Make sure the DSPs in your life take time for some self-care. Depending on if you are a service recipient, parent, or supervisor, this might come in the form of allowing them some time off, offering to buy them a lunch, making sure they know what resources they have available to help them, or just letting them know you support them in whatever they need to do to stay healthy, happy, and productive.
- Don't just save your “thank you's” for DSP week: Let your DSP know each week how much you value them and enjoy having them as part of your support team!

## Celebrating DSP Week

Each year in the middle of September, organizations around the country recognize Direct Support Professionals Appreciation Week. How this week is recognized is up to each individual organization, but there are likely some commonalities between organizations, as we all strive to give DSPs the credit and support they deserve for the complex and important roles they fill each day.

## Some DSP Stats:

- This year, the U.S. Senate approved a resolution put forth by Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Susan Collins (R-ME) celebrating DSP Recognition Week. This resolution ([S. Res. 337](#)) designated September 10-16, 2023 as a time to recognize the work of DSPs, and, in turn, the lives of the individuals with disabilities whom they support.
- In an effort to address the direct support workforce crisis, 34 national organizations have voiced their support for S. 1332, the Recognizing the Role of Direct Support Professionals Act.



These organizations have addressed Senate leaders about the urgent need to create a standard occupational classification for direct support DSPs. The absence of an occupational code skews data collection, in turn hindering solutions of recognizing where workforce problems exist, and how best to address them.

- Instability in providing services to people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and high turnover rates among DSPs.
- According to the most recent Staff Stability Survey conducted by National Core Indicators® Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (NCI), the national turnover rate among DSPs is approximately 43% and ranges as high as 59% in some states. In addition, full-time vacancy rates for DSPs have increased to 16.5% in 2021—a nearly 94% increase from 2019.

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Learn more at: <https://www.cardin.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Direct-Support-Professionals-Week-resolution-2023.pdf> and <https://www.ancor.org/capitol-correspondence/celebrating-direct-support-professionals-dsp-recognition-week-2023/>