
The West Virginia Direct Support Skills Certificate Program Guide

A Curriculum Framework and Foundation
Curriculum for Professional Certification in
Direct Support Practice

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The West Virginia Direct Support Skills Certificate Effort

A Collaborative Effort of the West Virginia Direct Support Workforce
Development Team

Building a Stronger Direct Support Workforce

Introduction to the Project

In West Virginia, as in other parts of the country, many people with developmental disabilities rely on employees of community agencies who are called direct support professionals (DSPs) to learn what is necessary to do “every day” things like paying bills, getting a job, doing laundry, meeting friends and participating in the life of their community.

In this important work, the direct support professional is called upon to perform highly complex tasks in an ethical and proficient manner. These tasks range from building relationships of trust with co-workers and service participants, teaching essential skills based on individual need, helping people advocate for themselves, preventing and managing crises, and serving as a sage and supportive counselor. Unlike the cog and widget world whose productivity is measured in the margin of profit reaped by their employer, the measure of direct support excellence is that the people they support feel valued, respected and confident in their ability to direct the course of their lives to the degree possible. These are the very foundations of human well-being.

These foundations are threatened for people with developmental disabilities in West Virginia and in other parts of the country due to the erosion of quality and stability in the direct support workforce. Across the country it has become extremely difficult to attract workers to the human services field - studies consistently show that employers consider recruitment as their #1 problem followed closely by retention. Strikingly high annual turnover rates (50-75%) tell the story of a revolving door shuttling workers in and out of the lives of people who rely on them for very personal and basic help in their lives. Such discontinuities in service take an enormous emotional toll on people with developmental disabilities who must put up with an unending stream of new and inexperienced helpers, and waste millions of dollars in training costs that would be better used to support the long waiting list of people who need supports. Frequent turnover also diminishes the effectiveness and good will of longer term, committed employees who are dragged down by poor quality work.

The factors contributing to this include: a slower growing labor pool that cannot meet America's growing job demand; greater competition from other employers in the rapidly growing service sector of the economy; and a rapidly expanding demand for human services. These factors will remain over the next decade as structural determinants of the problem. For these reasons it is necessary to utilize strategic and thoughtful methods of finding the people to fill the jobs, holding on to them and improving the quality of the workforce. This program framework and curriculum represents one such effort.

In 2003 The West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council approved funding a project to strengthen the direct support workforce by creating a statewide plan that would address challenges associated with recruiting and retaining direct support staff and by developing a "Foundation Curriculum" that would enhance the knowledge of skill of current direct support workers. The Human Services Research Institute was awarded this work and initiated planning and development activities in October of 2003, in partnership with the West Virginia Developmental Disability Council Staff and a stakeholder group organized to assist with the project, the West Virginia Developmental Disability Workforce Development Team (WDT), representing the interests of consumers, families, policy makers, employers and support staff. The members of the stakeholder team and the project team are listed in Appendix A.

A Career Path is More than a Curriculum

Early on in team meetings, the WDT determined that an over-arching focus of the educational segment of the project should be concerned with how an educational program could provide a scaffold for career paths in the direct support profession. With the endorsement of the project's Workforce Development Team, the project reached beyond the production of a specific curriculum to provide a design for a multi-tiered professional skill certificate program for direct support professionals that serves as a curriculum framework that can be utilized as a career path in direct support. The career skills certificate program is called the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program and this report provides the architecture of this program.

Viewing direct support as a career profession will be essential to attract serious minded job seekers who are anxious to find meaningful and sustaining life work. It is also an important shift in perspective for the employers and systems who must succeed in attracting good people to do human services work to meet our current commitments to people currently receiving support and to sustain the promise of full community inclusion for others who will need support in the future.

The West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program seeks to promote this fundamental shift from viewing direct support as "just another job" until a better one comes along, to promoting direct support as a role that is selected as a conscious career choice providing a gateway into a lifelong career in human services. A multi-level professional skills certificate program has the potential to enhance the human service field's image to one that is more attractive to both incumbent and potential employees by providing graduated levels of skill and knowledge that can easily be translated to skill-merit based steps for career advancement. In this way it provides a gateway and guidance into a rewarding and engaging career of helping others to effectively determine the course of their lives despite barriers of disability, poverty, poor health, or other conditions that limit full participation in community life.

The message of educational opportunity that a professional certificate conveys is a language that is understood by the broader workforce and educational partners such as 1 Stop Career Centers, Technical Schools and Community Colleges who can steer candidates toward human service roles and who are able to partner in identifying the fiscal and technical resources important to the education and training process.

Using this Guidebook to the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program

The Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of the program guide is to provide useful information for West Virginia's educators and trainers who seek guidance in developing a high quality skills-based career path program for direct support professionals in the human services field. The guide provides a helpful map to accomplish this complex task by describing in detail the key elements of a robust professional skills certificate program for new and incumbent members of developmental disabilities direct support workforce.

In the guidebook, users will find detailed entry and exit requirements for a series of three levels of direct support mastery with the outline for a fourth or specialty level. The guide also provides readers with the recommended program guidelines and the mission of skills certification in the direct support role in West Virginia. Essential information about **how** to assess candidate skills is included as well as guidance on the using experienced practitioners to mentor the skill development of the program candidates.

The Framework Guide is not a Curriculum

This guidebook is not a curriculum, but by providing a comprehensive overview of the knowledge and skills required of successful candidates at each level, the guide provides the necessary information for users to develop or select the curriculum that will enable their program candidates to meet the program expectations successfully. In this way it serves as a curriculum framework. The framework provides sufficient information about the certificate entry and exit requirements and performance outcomes to enable instructional designers to select or create curriculum that align with the framework elements.

There are many good curricula products designed for enhancing the skills and knowledge of direct support professionals. Until recently, it has been rare to align these curricula with a comprehensive set of learning outcomes clustered at levels of increasing mastery and culminating in one or more skills certificates. This Framework Guide makes it possible to do this thus approaching instructional design in a more comprehensive and thoughtful fashion that will yield important awards to the learners who take on the challenge.

Curriculum Materials Useful to Achieving the Certificate Requirements

If your current training curriculum does not provide adequate coverage of the West Virginia Certificate Program outcomes, you will want to look at what is available to cover the gaps and infuse your existing curricula with additional content. A helpful guide that rates curricula relevant to direct support roles in residential settings may be found at: <http://134.84.215.92/resource/>

Also, through this project, a specific curriculum has been developed to assist candidate's to achieve one of the levels described in the framework: *the Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support*. This product, called the **Foundation Curriculum** will be piloted over the coming year and will soon be available through the West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council.

It is important to recognize that a variety of curricula may be used to achieve the outcomes specified in the skills certificate program framework as long as the content of the curriculum offers the information and experiences that will enable learners to achieve the learning outcomes specifically called for in the framework.

Foundations of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program

To be of value, professional skills certificate programs must offer relevant content in a manner that helps candidates succeed in mastering the content and applying it in their every day work. Certificate programs vary in quality and rigor, but there are some best practices in professional skills certification that the West Virginia program has adopted. These best practices help to ensure of robust program and include:

- Using nationally validated practice guidelines that are normed for the profession that is being certified (in our case community based direct support professionals).
- Using competency based methods including criterion referenced requirements (called "Learner Outcomes")
- Incorporating valid and meaningful performance based assessment methods
- Tying theory and knowledge to everyday practice
- Focusing on thinking and problem solving skills that carry across different circumstances and environments
- Providing substantial support and mentoring to learners
- Adopting effective adult education methods

By following these best practices in the field of professional accreditation, the West Virginia Direct Support Skills Certificate program has the potential to vigorously enhance candidate skill while also offering important fair employment practice protections to employers who choose to use the program for promotion, performance appraisal and other high stakes decisions.

Building a Solid Professional Foundation

The program framework and curriculum are rooted in competencies that encompass professional skills, knowledge, ethics and developmental experiences that are normed

specifically for direct support practice and are nationally validated. The sources of these skill, knowledge and attitude sets include:

1. The Community Support Skill Standards (Taylor, Bradley and Warren, 1996)
2. The National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals Code of Ethics (NADSP, 2000)
3. The SCANS Skills (Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, 1990)
4. The MN Frontline Supervisor Competencies

These elements also serve to establish a professional identity for the direct support role by describing the essential practice guidelines, knowledge base and ethical foundation of direct support work. The US Department of Labor describes these items as essential to a professional occupation.

Recent years have witnessed an exciting evolution of community-based supports from a “medically directed” field to one where consumers are empowered to direct their own lives. This change has not been accompanied by a parallel shift in the dated view of direct support as a “custodial” role to reflect its contemporary expression - that of highly skilled professionals who know how to develop partnerships with other supporters, and work creatively to facilitate and network supports in person centered ways. The West Virginia Direct Support certificate framework provides the tools to effect this important shift and to help employees, employers and society as a whole to realize that direct support and human services have viable and multiple career options.

The Curriculum Development Process

The West Virginia Direct Support Workforce Development Team met in a series of workshops over a six month period to achieve consensus on the key characteristics of the direct support development program that would be most beneficial for West Virginia. Using competency based employee development models applied in West Virginia, Ohio, Massachusetts, Minnesota and New York; the team determined the fundamental characteristics of the program adapting the models as necessary for West Virginia. Decisions were documented and incorporated into draft frameworks and curricula which the Workforce Development Team (WDT) reviewed and refined. An overview of these decisions is shown in Figures 1 A and 1B.

Figure 1 A - WDT Decisions

Overall Employee Development Model Decisions

	YES	NO	Not Sure
Mandated at orientation level –Voluntary for level 2	x		
Transportable	x		
Previous relevant learning Experience Credited	x		
Financial Support Provided to the DSP(no cost training)	x		
Competency-Based Curriculum	x		
Valid Assessment of mastery	x		
Multiple Award levels: Orientation, Foundation, Advanced Proficiency, Specialized	x		
Incentives for Completion (monetary or non-monetary)	x		
Earns College Credit	x	If agreements can be developed	
Articulation Agreements with Universities	x		
Consumer/Family Satisfaction Component	x		
Curriculum Regularly Updated	x		
DSP renews foundation annually through relevant CEUs	x		




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Figure 1 B - WDT Decisions

Overall Employee Development Model Decisions

	YES	NO	Not Sure
Foundation curricula is basically orientation		x	
Foundation is orientation plus other	X		
High School or GED required to enter the program	X		
Long term employees without H.S./GED can qualify	X		
Skills Mentoring is part of the program	x		
Consumers-Families assist with instruction	x		
Aligns with Federal Apprenticeship Standards	x		
Signed commitment to NADSP Code of Ethics	x		
Program should be primarily employer based	x		
Providers should collaborate on offering instruction	X		
A college or technical institute should provide instruction			sometimes
CDS is a prime source of foundation curricula?	X		
CBI should be augmented with live instruction	X		
Uses CSSS, Code of Ethics, MFLS as core content	X		




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These decisions provided essential guidance to the overall purpose and content of the West Virginia Direct Support Skills Certificate Program. The program framework that grew out of these decisions is organized into several key components addressed in the following sections.

Program Architecture

A Useful Framework

This framework is a map or blueprint for a relevant and practical skills certificate program in West Virginia. It describes the features that are necessary to any robust and credible skills certificate program and customizes these to be useful as an employee/trainee development program for direct support professionals.

The primary program components are:

1. **Mission and Guiding Principles** – These elements clarify the purpose of the credential program and provide essential guidance necessary within a decentralized system of employee development.
2. **Learner Outcomes** – these are the measurable performance criteria that candidates need to demonstrate to earn each credential award. These criteria are drawn from validated skill, knowledge and attitude sets based upon direct support practice.
3. **Award Levels and Associated Entry/ Exit Criteria** – These describe the range of credentials available within the West Virginia Direct Support Credential and the the entry and exit requirements, inclusive of learner outcomes, that candidates must demonstrate before meriting a specific credential.
4. **Educational Plan** – This component provides information about how the program will be executed. It includes general elements regarding who should provide instruction, guidelines to effective instruction and the requirements for assessment of candidates. In addition to these general elements, this report will provide an instructional approach based on a specific curriculum resource recommended by the WDT for piloting the framework.

These elements provide the framework for the West Virginia Direct Support Skills Certificate program that that offers all the essential information necessary to any local or regional entity who seeks to prepare candidates to achieve the West Virginia Direct Support credentials. With this information, any credible training site can select and implement curricula that will support achievement of the required outcomes. The framework concept and its components are explained in the following sections.

Frameworks: The Key to Quality Performance & Local Autonomy

Program and curriculum frameworks are used to provide a validated and centralized content base that will be useful in guiding program development across a wide range of conditions and locations. For example, some states have designed “curriculum frameworks” for academic achievement such as math competencies that children should achieve at specific grade levels. Local public school districts use these frameworks to guide their curriculum development and are held accountable by parents and funders for helping students achieve their goals and remain on par with others in the state. Such frameworks assure that critical, valid competencies are incorporated in any locally administered program while permitting the local implementer some autonomy in developing and selecting curriculum.

The West Virginia Direct Support credential is designed in a similar manner - the program framework provides performance criteria validated as indicating expertise in direct support as well as providing information necessary to local sites seeking to implement the program. The idea is that training will be offered in multiple employer locations throughout the state thus providing professionals with necessary access to learning opportunities.

The West Virginia Direct Support framework provides the necessary quality benchmarks for these settings by specifying measurable outcomes and program guidelines. In turn, the local settings will have discretion over the curriculum and instruction models they will choose to help learners achieve the outcomes with the proviso that the selected methods and curriculum are relevant to helping learners achieve the desired criteria and that they are consistent with the program mission and guidelines.

Learner outcomes can be achieved with high quality instruction using any relevant curriculum that is aligned with the framework. The framework provides the guidance necessary to assure that local users can easily identify what is important for direct support professionals to know and do to work effectively in community based programs in West Virginia. In this way the skills certificate program can be replicated across the state encouraging local creativity in design of learning materials while assuring continuity in expectations and learner outcomes across the entire state.

Specific Curriculum for Piloting the Framework

For this grant, however, the Workforce Development Team has determined that the proposed framework should be piloted using a nationally developed, asynchronous, self-directed curriculum resource distributed through the internet (The College of Direct Support) along with additional curriculum supporting more traditional face-to-face instructor-student learning environments. This approach was taken to:

- maximize the potential of the distance learning content through interactive discussions
- enhance participant motivation to complete the program, and

- foster a professional self and group identity through connection with other direct support professionals

For these reasons a specific curriculum is offered in the final section. There you will find a curriculum map that identifies the courses within the College of Direct Support that provide important content to prepare candidates for the performance outcomes in the first three levels of the West Virginia Direct Support Credential Framework. This section will also include the curriculum for implementing the “Coaching Sessions” that provide the connective tissue between the self-directed internet based instruction of the College of Direct Support and applications in the real work environment for the foundation level of the West Virginia Direct Support Credential, the Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support.

If the College of Direct Support becomes available on a statewide basis beyond the borders of this pilot demonstration activity, then the proposed curriculum will be useful on this broader scale. If this is not the case, the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program Framework provides the necessary guidance for local settings to select from a wide array of high quality traditional curricula that is selected to align with the West Virginia Direct Support Learner Outcomes.

Using either path to fulfill the program, community based organizations will be better off if they collaborate in educational consortia to implement the program. Given the voluntary status of the program, and the challenges it entails, it would be unrealistic to expect that an individual organization would identify a sufficient number of candidates (approximately 10-20) to form a learning cohort (unless the organization was quite large). It is easier, however, for employers working in collaboration to achieve a higher quality program with a more diverse group of learners. Outcomes research is showing that in programs of this nature, the experience of connecting with a diverse group of peers doing direct support is a highly motivating force for credential candidates.

The Mission and Guiding Principles

Rationale

These components describe the intent and the vision of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program. There are any number of reasons that credentialing programs are undertaken. For example, some programs are developed to control the number of people entering a profession, others represent an unimaginative response to prescriptive legislation. As a result it is critical to specify the intent of a program through its mission statement. This provides people with a holistic understanding of the spirit of the program that will invite and people to learn more about it.

The guiding principles provide sufficient guidance to enable evaluators, designers and other to view program coherence and alignment over time. Very often in larger scale social policy endeavors, program drift from the initial vision and spirit in which it was conceived. The mission and guidelines provide an important safeguard in this area.

Mission

The West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program promotes workforce development through continuous training, leadership opportunities, and career recognition of the Direct Support Profession. The Direct Support Profession assists people to live self-determined lives.

Guiding Principles

The West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program will be guided by specific principles in its operation throughout the state. These principles, along with other framework elements, will provide a means of assuring that candidate preparation programs are consistent and parallel throughout the state regardless of the local entity organizing the program. ***The West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program will be:***

1) Voluntary

- Participation in the skills certificate program is voluntary beyond Orientation requirements legally specified by regulation of all direct support employees at the orientation level
- The West Virginia Direct Support Certificates offered at the Foundation Level and the Advanced Level provide the basis for a voluntary career path and will not be required through law or regulation
- All direct support professionals in West Virginia are required by regulation to complete specific Orientation training requirements prior to active service, the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program will build upon this Orientation knowledge at the Foundation and Advanced Levels

2) Affordable

- Tuition, books, & materials are free
- The program will be provided at no cost to candidates
- Program leaders will seek public and private funds necessary to support tuition and fees

3) Doable and Flexible

- Respectful of peoples' time and life obligations
- Offers reasonable, not impossible to reach, challenges
- Provides pro-active support for candidate involvement and development
- Recognizes utility of providing additional support for candidates
- Links people with resources to get high school equivalency and master essential skills
- Skills certificate candidate preparation programs may select or design any curricula that aligns with the program framework and effectively prepares candidates to meet the required "Learner Outcomes"
-

4) Offer educational approaches that are both effective & responsive to learner needs

- Approaches are consistent with best practice in adult education, including use of a variety of approaches and media
- Strategies are regularly evaluated
- Learners help shape the educational environment

5) Create value and incentive for participants and others throughout the state

- Provides career paths by striving to link pay and promotion increments to credentials
- Offers a gradual series of awards for mastery of skills that people receive recognition for accomplishing goals
- Articulates with relevant degree and training programs where possible
- Aligns with national credentials including the apprenticeship requirements for Direct Support Specialist established by the US Department of Labor
- Respected by human service stakeholders (workers, employers, service participants, policy makers, funders and regulators)
- Involves program graduates in leadership positions

6) Use competency based educational methods

- Incorporates nationally recognized standards for skill, knowledge, and ethical practice as foundation criteria for mastery
- Integrates agency specific skill, knowledge and ethical requirements as needed
- Ethical problem solving is addressed and taught in the program
- Builds on the every day work experiences of candidates and uses these situations frequently in the learning process
- Recognizes different learning styles; uses multi-model modes of instruction and accommodates various skill levels
- Uses “authentic” assessment (embedded, performance-based, incremental recognition) aligned with foundation criteria

7) Assure that program leaders, teachers, methods and materials are respectful and inclusive of the current and potential workforce as well as people with disabilities and of diverse cultures and lifestyles

- Respectful and sensitive to diverse cultures & lifestyles

- Uses “people first” language and models respectful and empowering interactions and attitudes
- Inclusive of incumbent and new workers and recognizes past life/work experience
- Accommodates candidacy of independent support brokers and other self-employed professionals
- Diverse learners are accommodated through curriculum, methods, and assessment
- Allows for different levels of direct service staff—those enrolling in the program/have more skills are recognized by more pay and respected—but retain value for those who do not enroll
- Addresses people who work in groups as well as people who work in decentralized positions
- Involves service participants, their families, and direct support staff as instructors and facilitators

8) Incorporate evaluation criteria

- Regularly evaluates the program framework so that it can change with the times
- Measures program impact (turnover, consumer satisfaction, consumer outcomes, linkages, program outcomes)
- Measures return on investment
- Involves stakeholders (consumers, families, etc.) in evaluation activities

9) Create linkages to policy and regulatory system

- Requires evidence of completion of all state & federal training requirements
- Meets all legal employment requirements fairness, relevance to occupation, etc.
- Influences policy and regulatory system to assure alignment and seek program support

10) Involve the broad range of people with a stake in the career development of direct support professionals in decisions guiding program operation

- Program design, review and ongoing implementation will seek the meaningful participation of key stakeholders including direct support professionals, people with disabilities and their families, employers, advocates and county and state policy makers

Learner Outcomes

“Begin with the End in Mind”

Steven Covey – The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

As advocates for community support we have moved our focus from the inputs, processes and outputs of support to a recognition that the presence of meaningful life outcomes for people who receive support is a key indicator of the integrity and quality of support interventions. This shift in perspective has not translated into our expectations of direct support training.

Instead our focus has been on providing the minimum training topics & hours that regulations require without examining the impact of this training on job performance as a measure of the validity and adequacy of workforce preparation. Steven Covey suggests that effectiveness improves when you “begin with the end in mind”. In keeping with this advice and the desire to shift perspective to the actual performance of staff rather than the time they spend learning, the West Virginia Direct Support Workforce Development Team determined the specific performance outcomes that the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program should lead to.

The West Virginia Direct Support framework accomplishes this shift by describing what a DSP must know and do (Candidate Outcomes) rather than the number of hours or topics they should cover in classroom training and makes mastery of these outcomes a requirement for successful completion of the certificate.

The “Learner Outcomes” table that follows is organized by displaying the outcomes assigned to two of the four recommended levels of the certificate framework. Outcomes for the “Orientation” level are not described because these outcomes are defined by the orientation program offered by each individual employer. Outcomes for the “Specialized Level” are not provided. More work remains to identify the desired types of specialization certificates and to research the various practice guidelines in these areas.

The table of Learner Outcomes does provide an overview of the Learner Outcomes for the Foundation Level and the Advanced Level of the framework.

Description of Learner Outcome Table & Outcome Dimensions

As described earlier, the direct support professional role is complex and wide ranging in its functions. To help organize the performance goals (outcomes) across this vast range of duties, the Learner Outcome table is organized into four different dimensions of performance. While this is an artificial distinction in that human behavior and work performance is contextual and holistic, so that it cannot be easily unbundled into separate dimensions, the dimension clusters provide a useful organizing construct for this framework and its users to assure an organized and comprehensive approach to instructional design. Outcomes have been categorized in four separate dimensions to assist with selecting the best assessment approaches and to assure that the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program is preparing candidates in multiple dimensions of effective performance. There are 4 types of outcomes listed:

- ✓ Technical Skill
- ✓ Orientation Work Skill
- ✓ Ethical Practice
- ✓ Knowledge

Column 1 of the table indicates which type of outcome is in that row.

Technical Skill Outcomes: (labeled in column one as “TS”) These are skills specific to direct support that an effective direct support professional must perform well – these are drawn from the technical skill sets of the Community Support Skill Standards along with relevant county or state requirements.

Orientation Work Skills & Interpersonal Competence (denoted as “ORIENTATION”): These performance outcomes are not specific to just direct support but can be thought of as those activities that help to ensure success in a variety of jobs, not just human services. These skills are embedded in many of the CSSS Technical Skills but it is useful to make this a separate dimension to be clear about the specifics of these skills. Based on previous experience we include the following skills in this dimension:

- ✓ Demonstrates interpersonal competence – works well with others and in teams as needed
- ✓ Demonstrates proficiency in cultural competence
- ✓ Demonstrates proficiency in critical thinking skills (solves problems, powers of observation, analyzes, integrates and interprets information)
- ✓ Communicates clearly in required writing and oral communication

- ✓ Adopts and uses creative approaches (less predictable or conventional)
- ✓ Applies responses or strategies to broader systems

Ethical Practice Outcomes (denoted as “E”): These are performance outcomes that define practice that is consistent with the NADSP Code of Ethics. While these outcome overlap with some outcomes in the Technical Domain, it is important to make this an explicit and separate dimension to assist with curriculum development and assessment.

Knowledge Outcomes (denoted as “K”): – This includes mastery of the facts and theories associated with effectiveness in direct support

Column 2 of the table lists the outcomes proposed as requirements for fulfilling the Foundation Level to achieve the Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support. Column 3 of the table lists some possible ways of assessing or measuring the candidate’s achievement of the outcome. This is included to provide instructional designers with ideas on measuring performance in this area. Assessment methods coded with an * indicate a “required” assessment. Column 4 lists the outcomes proposed as requirements for the “Advanced Level to achieve the Certificate of Advanced Proficiency in Direct Support (CAP) Column 5 lists potential ways of measuring the outcome and those coded with an * are required assessments in the West Virginia Direct Support Skills Certificate framework.

You will notice that the framework planners recommend that the technical outcomes for the Foundation Level comprise the full range of Community Support Skill Standards competencies in the following areas: CSSS Competency Area 2) Communication, Competency Area 4) Community and Service Networking, Competency Area 5) Facilitation of Services, Competency Area-6) Community Living Skills and Supports, Competency Area 10) Crisis intervention, and portions of other competency areas as deemed necessary. Additionally, there are several technical outcomes specific to the state regulations in West Virginia. Curriculum and instructional designers who are designing the training programs that will enable candidates to fulfill the Foundation Level requirements should reference the Community Support Skill Standards book to gain a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of these technical skills.

The remaining competency areas of the Community Support Skill Standards comprise most of the technical skill outcomes for the “Advanced” level. There are also additional knowledge, ethical and Orientation outcomes established for the advanced level.

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
Technical Skill (TS)			Participant Empowerment CA	
	Participant Empowerment CA (1) 1A Assists and supports the participant to develop strategies, make informed choices, follow through on responsibilities, and take risks	Consumer report	Participant Empowerment CA (1)1A Assists and supports the participant to develop strategies, make informed choices, follow through on responsibilities, and take risks.	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report
TS			Participant Empowerment CA (1) 1B. Promotes participant empowerment by facilitating the participant's leadership in the design of his/her support services.	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report
TS			Participant Empowerment CA (1) 1C. Provides opportunities for the participant to be self-directed by increasing awareness of self-advocacy methods and techniques, encouraging and assisting the participant to speak on his or her own behalf, and providing information on peer support and self-advocacy groups.	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report
T			Participant Empowerment CA (1) 1D Provides information about human, legal, civil rights and other resources, facilitates access to such information and assists the participant to use information for self-direction and decision making about living, work, and	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
			social relationships.	
	Communication CA (2)			
TS	Communication CA (2): 2A Uses effective, sensitive communication skills to build rapport and channels of communication by recognizing and adapting to the range of participant communication styles.	* Foundation Portfolio		
TS	Communication CA (2) CSSS: 2B Has knowledge of and uses modes of communication that are appropriate to the communication needs of participants	*Foundation Portfolio		* Advanced Portfolio Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS	Communication CA (2)CSSS 2C Learns and uses terminology appropriately (ADL, LD, ADD, FOUNDATION), explaining as necessary to ensure participant understanding	*Foundation Portfolio Written Test		
TS			Assessment CA (3) 3A Initiates or assists in the assessment process by gathering information (e.g., participant's self-assessment and history, prior records, test results, evaluation results, additional evaluation) and informing the participant about what to expect throughout	* Advanced Portfolio

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
			the assessment process	
TS			Assessment CA (3) 3B. Conducts or arranges for assessments to determine the needs, preferences, and abilities of the participants using appropriate assessment tools and strategies, reviewing the process for inconsistencies, and making corrections as necessary.	* Advanced Portfolio
TS			Assessment CA (3) 3C. Discusses findings and recommendations with the participant in a clear and understandable manner, following up on results and reevaluating the findings as necessary	* Advanced Portfolio
TS			Community and Service Networking CA (4)	
TS	Community & Service Networking CA (4) 4A Helps to identify the needs of the participant for community supports, working with the participant's informal support system, and assisting with, or initiating identified community connections.	Response to simulations and scenarios in classroom Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills		

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
		Mentor Report		
TS			Community & Service Networking CA (4) 4B. Researches, develops, and maintains information on community and other resources relevant to the needs of participants	* Advanced Portfolio
TS			Community & Service Networking CA (4) 4C. Ensures participant access to needed community resources coordinating supports across agencies	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS			Community & Service Networking – CA (4) 4D. Participates in outreach to potential participants	*Scenario essay Supervisor/ Skills Me* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS	Facilitation of Services –(5) CSSS			

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
TS	FACILITATION OF SERVICES –(5) CSSS 5A. Maintains collaborative professional relationships with the participant and all support team members (including family/friends), follows ethical standards of practice (e.g., confidentiality, informed consent, etc.), and recognizes his or her own personal limitations.	Classroom exercises Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report		
TS	Facilitation of Services –(5) CSSS 5B. Assists and/or facilitates the development of an individualized plan based on participant preferences, needs and interests.	Classroom exercises Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report		
TS	Facilitation of Services –CA (5) 5C. Assists and/or facilitates the implementation of an individualized plan to achieve specific outcomes derived from participant’s preferences, needs and interests	Classroom exercises Skills mentor/ supervisor report Consumer report	Facilitation of Services –(5) CSSS 5C. Assists and/or facilitates the implementation of an individualized plan to achieve specific outcomes derived from participant’s preferences, needs and interests	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS	<u>Facilitation of Services (5) CSSS</u> 5D Assists and/or facilitates the review of the achievement of individual participant outcomes.	Classroom exercises Skills mentor/ supervisor report Consumer report	<u>Facilitation of Services (5) CSSS</u> 5D. Assists and/or facilitates the review of the achievement of individual participant outcomes.	Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
				Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
	Community Living Skills and Supports CA (6)			
TS	Community Living Skills and Supports CA (6) 6A Assists the participant to meet his or her physical (e.g., health, grooming, toileting, eating) and personal management needs (e.g., human development, human sexuality), by teaching skills, providing supports, and building on individual strengths and abilities.	*Foundation Portfolio Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report Consumer Report		
TS	Community Living Skills and Supports CA (6) 6.B Assists the participant with household management (e.g., meal prep, laundry, cleaning, decorating, budget/ money management) and with transportation needs to maximize his or her skills, abilities and	*Foundation Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report Consumer Report		
TS			Community Living Skills and Supports competency area (6) 6C. Assists with identifying, securing and applying needed equipment (e.g., adaptive	* Advanced Portfolio Consumer

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
			equipment) and therapeutic techniques (e.g., physical, occupational and communication).	Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS	Community Living Skills and Supports competency area (6) 6D. Supports the participant in the development of friendships and other relationships Identifies resources and uses strategies that enhance inclusion, build friendships and increase civic participation of people s/he supports.	*Foundation Portfolio Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report Consumer Report	Community Living Skills Uses tools of person centered planning and team work to identify and overcome specific barriers to inclusion and the development of relationships and social networks for one or more people s/he supports.	*Advanced Portfolio
TS	Community Living Skills and Supports CA (6) 6E. Assists the participant to recruit and train service providers as needed.	Not assessed at this level	Community Living Skills and Supports competency area (6) 6E. Assists the participant to recruit and train service providers as needed	Consumer report Supervisory report
			Education, Training & Self Development CA 7	
TS			Education, Training & Self Development CA 7 7A. Completes required training education/certification, continues professional development, and keeps abreast of relevant	*Advanced Portfolio

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
			resources and information.	
TS			Education Training & Self Development CA 7 7B. Educates participants, co-professionals and community members about issues by providing information and support and facilitating training.	*Advanced Portfolio
TS	ADVOCACY CA 8		ADVOCACY CA 8	
TS	Advocacy CA 8 8A. Identifies advocacy issues by gathering information, reviewing and analyzing all aspects of the problem.	Response to simulations and scenarios in classroom Skills Mentor Supervisor report Consumer Report		
TS			Advocacy CA 8 8B. Has current knowledge of laws, services, and community resources to assist and educate participants to secure needed supports	*Advanced Portfolio Written test
TS			Advocacy CA 8 8C. Facilitates, assists, and/or represents the	*Advanced Portfolio

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
			participant when there are barriers to his or her service needs and enlists the support of decision makers when appropriate to overcome barriers to services	Consumer Report
TS			Advocacy CA 8 8D. Interacts with and educates community members and organizations (e.g., employer, landlord, civic organization) when relevant to participant's needs or services.	*Advanced Portfolio
			Vocational, Educational & Career Support – CA 9	
TS			Vocational, Educational & Career Support – CA 9 9A. Explores with the participant his/her vocational interests and aptitudes, assists in preparing for job or school entry, and reviews opportunities for continued career growth.	*Advanced Portfolio Skills Mentor/ supervisor report
TS			Vocational, Educational & Career Support – CA 9 9B. Assists the participant in identifying job/training opportunities and marketing his/her abilities and services	*Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
TS			Vocational, Educational & Career Support – CA 9 9C. Works in collaboration with the participant, employers and school personnel to support the participant, adapting the environment, and providing job retention supports	*Advanced Portfolio Consumer Report Supervisor/Skills Mentor Report
	Crisis Intervention – CA (10)			
TS	Crisis Intervention – CA 10 10A. Identifies the crisis (actual and possible), defuses the situation, evaluates and determines an intervention strategy (how to respond to those e.g. person is hitting others, fire, person has severe allergic reactions, person threatening suicide) and contacts necessary supports	Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report Multiple choice Scenario/essay		
TS	Crisis Intervention – CA 10 10B. Continues to monitor crisis situations, discussing the incident with authorized staff and participant(s), adjusting supports and the environment, and complying with regulations for reporting.	Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report Multiple choice Scenario/essay		
			Organizational Participation CA (11)	
TS			Organizational Participation (11) 11A. Contributes to program evaluations, and helps to set organizational priorities to ensure	*Advanced Portfolio

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
			quality.	Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS	Organizational Participation CA (11) 11B. Incorporates sensitivity to cultural, religious, racial, disability, and gender issues into daily practices and interactions	Foundation Portfolio Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report	.	
TS			Organizational Participation (11) 11C. Provides and accepts co-worker support, participates in supportive supervision, and contributes to the screening of potential employees.	*Advanced Portfolio Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
TS			Organizational Participation (11) 11D. Provides input into budget priorities, identifying ways to provide services in a cost-beneficial manner.	*Advanced Portfolio Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report
	Documentation CA (12)			
TS	Documentation CA (12) 12A. Maintains accurate records, collecting, compiling and evaluating data, and submitting records	* Foundation Portfolio Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report		

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
TS	Documentation CA (12) 12B. Maintains standards of confidentiality and ethical practice	* Foundation Portfolio Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report Consumer Report		
TS	Documentation CA (12) 12 C. Learns and remains current with appropriate documentation systems, setting priorities and developing a system to manage documentation.	* Foundation Portfolio Skills Mentor/ Supervisor report		
TS – State Based	Medication Administration			
TS – State Based	Effectively assists in medication administration procedures	Supervisor Observation	(AMAP Certification will be a “Specialized Level Module”)	
Orientation work skills & Interpersonal competence				
ORIENTATION	Demonstrates basic work readiness skills and habits including punctuality, organization, productivity, cooperation and the ability to get along with others	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report	Mentors and supports new workers in learning the requirements of the job and in adapting to the work culture.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
ORIENTATION	Works independently on many day-to-day responsibilities.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report	Consistently works independently and demonstrates sound decision making abilities.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Finds the information necessary to accurately understand work related topics, problems and issues and communicates his or her interpretation of this information to others.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report	His or her interpretation of information is consistently accurate and insightful and contributes to effective support of service participants and the recognition of system problems or pathways to support.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Communicates ideas and information in a clear and organized manner in writing and when speaking with others	*Foundation Portfolio Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report Classroom exercise	Demonstrates advanced communication skills including summarizing viewpoints, recognizing contributions, defining action steps, taking perspectives, resolving conflicts, validating others, and moving parties toward consensus.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Seeks, clarifies and acts on feedback from consumers, supervisors and team members constructively.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report	Provides support, guidance and accurate feedback to other team members constructively and with sensitivity.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Identifies problems and conflicts and offers assistance to other team members in solving problems.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report	Identifies problems, issues and conflicts, offers possible solutions and strategies to prevent future problems.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Effectively assists work teams in achieving desired team goals.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report	Participates effectively in work, planning or project related teams and takes informal or formal leadership roles.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
ORIENTATION	Identifies personal and professional areas of strength and areas in need of improvement.	*Foundation Portfolio (Professional development plan)	Initiates and engages in learning and experiential activities that address identified areas for improvement and shares expertise with others.	*Advanced Portfolio Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Responsive to supervisor's direction and adjust priorities accordingly.	*Supervisor Skills Mentor Report	The DSP organizes his/her work and manages multiple and/or competing demands.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION	Demonstrates interpersonal and cultural sensitivity and respect in working with others.	Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report	Demonstrates peer support skills including advising, modeling, sharing resources and teaching.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
ORIENTATION			Anticipates problems or conflicts that may arise from insensitivity to cultural differences (religious, racial, ability, gender and role) and contributes to solutions.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor report
Knowledge (k)				
K	Explains the thrust of each of the twelve competency areas of the CSSS and why each is important to be effective direct support (refer to Competency Area Descriptions).	*Multiple choice Foundation Portfolio		
K	Recognizes, theories, patterns and consequences of segregation, exclusion and social isolation in the experience of many people with developmental disabilities and can provide examples of	*Multiple Choice Classroom exercise	Applies knowledge of theories and patterns of segregation and social isolation to support activities focuses on preventing these damaging patterns in the lives of people s/he supports	Supervisor-Skills Mentor observation

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
	these among people s/he supports.			
K	Recognizes the meaning of key terms and theories associated with mastery of CSSS competencies required at the Foundation level.	*Multiple choice	Identifies and applies theories associated with mastery of specific CSSS competencies required at the Advanced level.	*Multiple Choice Scenario essay
K	Explains why consumers/ families may benefit from choosing their own support staff.	*Multiple choice		
K	Describes ways of supporting people to be empowered, self-directed and to manage their own services	Foundation Portfolio	Can identify three key aspects of each of the following best practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self determination ✓ Person-Centered planning ✓ Self Advocacy 	*Multiple Choice Feedback Quiz Classroom exercise
K	Names several agencies that provide supportive resources or services to people within their community.	*Multiple choice Scenario problem		
K	Describes several therapies or adaptive equipment items.	*Multiple choice classroom discussion scenario problem		
K	Explains why each of the ethical code areas is important to direct support practice.	*Multiple choice Classroom discussion scenario problem		
K	Describes the reasons people s/he supports take specific medications, dosage	*Supervisor - Skills Mentor Assessment	Identifies challenges people with developmental disabilities experience at	*Multiple Choice

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
	schedules and serious potential side effects.	Foundation Portfolio	various stages of individual growth and developmental maturity.	Classroom exercise
K	Describes the signs and symptoms of common illnesses and how to respond to health related situations.	*Multiple choice Foundation Portfolio		
K	Can describe what benefits (e.g. Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare)- are and why they are important to people with developmental disabilities	*Multiple choice Essay	Identifies the benefits and funding programs (SSI, Social Security, Medicaid, Medicare, SSA, HEAP, food stamps, section 8/HUD, ICF/MR, Home and Community Based Waiver, Supported Employment, CAVS) that are likely to be used by people with developmental disabilities, and can explain how to access such benefits	
K	Can name several developmental disabilities and behavioral health conditions and describe how they affect a person's life.	*Multiple choice Essay	Recognizes key characteristics of major DD conditions, e.g., Down Syndrome, Autism spectrum disorders, cerebral palsy, Fragile X, Traumatic Brain Injury and Behavioral Health Conditions (e.g., depression, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Psychosis, Bi-polar disorder) and anticipate effects of these conditions on people's lives	
			For people s/he supports can describe the how specific DD conditions and/or behavioral conditions affect that person's life and knows effective direct support responses to assist the individual with the challenges of these conditions	
K	Explains key principles of positive behavioral support	Classroom discussion	Knows and implements individualized positive behavioral support plans and interventions	

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
		Written test	specific to people s/he supports with particular emphasis on prevention	
K	Can generally describe the roles of IPP Team Members and other specialized professionals who are frequently called upon to support people with DD	Classroom discussion Scenario problem	Describes methods of seeking the support and involvement of IPP team members when necessary to the well-being of the service participant	Classroom discussion Scenario problem
Ethical Practice (E)	Promptly fulfills appropriate agency and any other regulatory or legal requirements in reporting situations of abuse and neglect or other violations of rights.	*Scenario essay Supervisory/ Skills Mentor Report Multiple choice	Recognizes support services, related policies, procedures that violate rights or pose challenges to the exercise of rights and offers suggestions to address.	*Classroom Exercise
E	Support that s/he provides is consistent with the NADSP code of ethics.	Supervisor report Consumer report	Identifies effective approaches to resolve ethical dilemmas using the Code of Ethics.	*Scenario Essay Classroom Exercise (involving Actual and simulated ethical dilemmas)
E	Recognizes problems that present ethical dilemmas and seeks support and advice when confronted with difficult ethical dilemmas.	Scenario problem set Supervisor report	Consistently models ethical practices and assists others with developing and using ethical practice.	*Supervisor/ Skills Mentor Report Consumer report

TABLE OF LEARNER OUTCOMES

Column 1 Outcome Type	Column 2 Required Learning Outcomes at the Foundation Level	Column 3 Possible assessments	Column 4 Required Learning Outcomes at the Advanced level	Column 5 Possible assessments
				ort
E	Recognize unethical behavior of peers and reports to supervisor	*Scenario Problem Supervisor Report	Responds immediately and effectively to observations or reports of unethical behavior	Role play Scenario problem response
E	Knows the difference between personal ethics and professional ethics.	Classroom discussion Essay	Explores options including personal risk when seeking solutions for ethical dilemmas	Scenario Essay Classroom Exercise (involving actual and simulated ethical dilemmas)

Award Levels & Requirements

Award Levels

This component provides an overview of the award steps at each level of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program framework: 1) Orientation; 2) Foundation Level and 3) Advanced Level and 4) Specialized. The fourth level is proposed to provide certificates in specialized areas but types of specialization and candidate requirements have not yet been developed for this level.

Skills certificate programs can offer recognition and certificate awards for one or more levels of mastery. Programs with multiple levels provide a scaffold on which career paths be developed. This component gives an overview of the types of awards offered and the requirements for receiving the rewards.

The planners have identified four levels that will become part of the West Virginia Direct Support certificate framework. The first level is the “Orientation” level where a candidate would begin to work on a skills certificate. At this level the candidate has completed basic orientation training and other requirements. The candidate would then be eligible to work on the Certificate of Initial Proficiency (CIP) in Direct Support at the Foundation Level. After completing these requirements the candidate could go on to the Certificate of Advanced Proficiency at the Advanced Level (CAP) if she or he chooses. If the candidate achieves the Certificate of Advanced Proficiency she or he will receive the West Virginia Direct Support CAP and the US Department of Labor Certificate for Direct Support Specialist. The graphic below provides an overview of these levels.

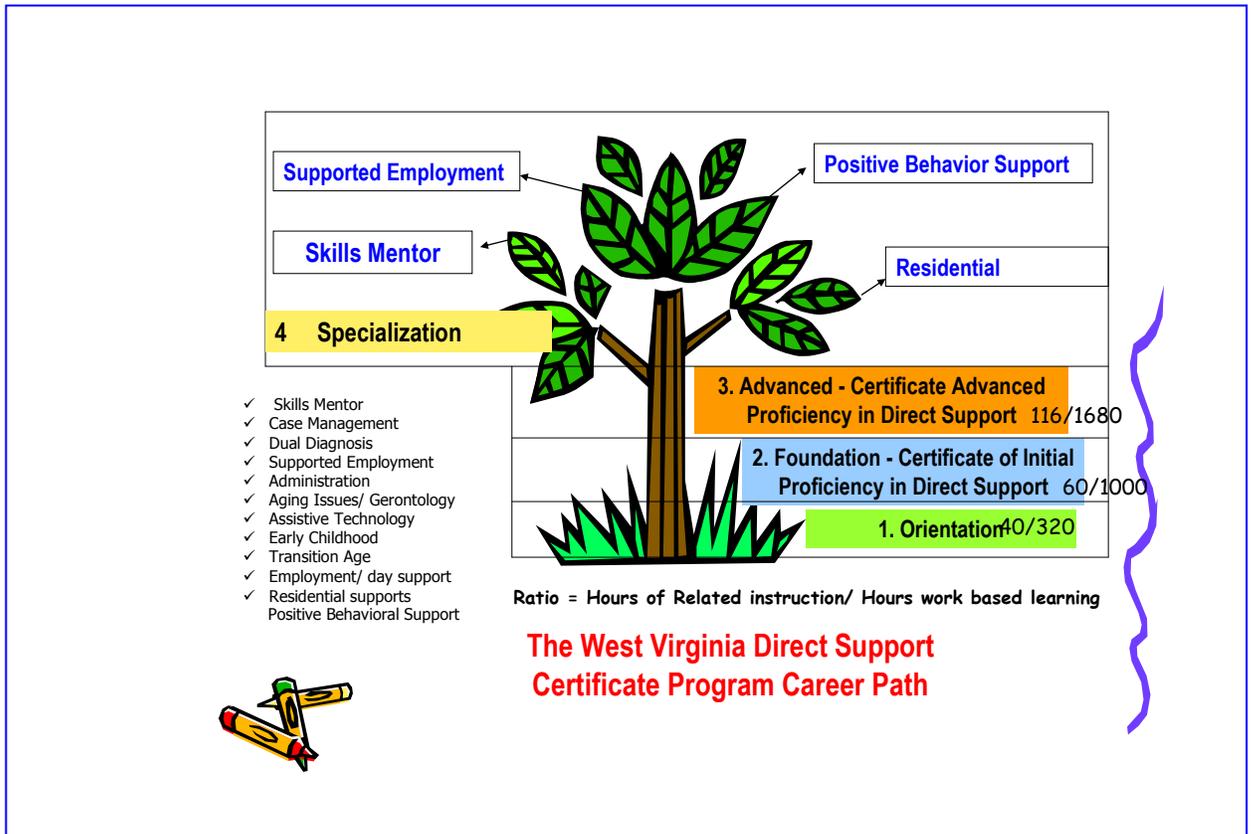
The following graphic provides an overview of the proposed West Virginia Direct Support Certificates. Candidate requirements for each level are detailed in subsequent sections of this report.

OVERVIEW OF WEST VIRGINIA DIRECT SUPPORT CAREER PATH

The table below provides a comprehensive overview of the requirements established for three levels of the West Virginia Direct Support Career Certificate Framework:

- Orientation Level
- Foundation Level
- Advanced Level

As you review this table you will note that one of the required elements to successfully achieve the Certificate of Initial Proficiency and the Certificate of Advanced Proficiency are the mastery of learning goals called “Learner Outcomes” (requirement number 9 in the second, and third columns). These learner outcomes are those described in full in the preceding chapter.



The requirements for hours of work experience and for hours of related instruction have been selected to meet the federal apprenticeship standards for Direct Support Specialist at the completion of the Advanced Level. Employers or training entities may register with the Department of Labor to provide a recognized apprenticeship program using this framework.

Table of West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Award Levels and Associated Candidate Requirements

Orientation Level	Foundation Level Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support Level	Advanced Certificate of Advanced Proficiency in Direct Support Level
<p>Candidate is in a Direct Support role as an employee, training intern or an independent contractor in good standing with his or her employer(s) and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has an acceptable criminal background check 2. Has an acceptable Abuse Registry Check 3. Possesses a high school diploma or its equivalent. Currently employed DSPs with 5 years of experience in direct support may enter the Orientation level without a high school diploma or its equivalent. 4. Meets all state and regulatory requirements applicable to employment or training internship 5. Signs a commitment pledge to the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals (NADSP) Code of Ethics¹ 6. Meets experiential requirement: successful completion of employer's specified orientation period including at least 320 hours of 	<p>Candidate has completed the Orientation required training and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is employed as a DSP, training intern or an independent contractor in good standing with his or her employer(s) 2. Maintains acceptable criminal background check (<i>no new check necessary</i>) 3. Meets all state and regulatory requirements applicable to employment or training internship 4. Meets on the job experiential requirement of 1000 hours (in addition to 320 hours earned at the Orientation level) employed as a direct support professional and/or direct support training intern under the guidance of a Skills Mentor (<i>see requirements for a Skills Mentor</i>). 5. Renews commitment pledge to the NADSP Code of Ethics 6. Submits testimony (<i>see testimony requirements</i>) from a consumer or consumer 	<p>Candidate holds the Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support and:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is employed as a DSP or is an independent contractor in good standing with his or her employer (s) 2. Receives another acceptable criminal background check (within 3 months of application date) 3. Meets all state and regulatory requirements applicable to employment. 4. Meets experiential requirement of 1680 hours (may include experience gotten at Orientation and Foundation Levels) employed as a direct support professional guided by a skills mentor (<i>see requirements for skills mentor</i>). 5. Renews commitment pledge to the NADSP Code of Ethics

¹ The NADSP Code of Ethics is a nationally validated code of ethical practices relevant to direct support work. (obtain at NADSP.org)

Orientation Level	Foundation Level Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support Level	Advanced Certificate of Advanced Proficiency in Direct Support Level
<p>employment/internship as a DSP when an orientation period is not specified.</p> <p>7. Completes 40 hours of “Related Instruction” (see <i>definition of related instruction</i>)</p> <p>8. Submits application and resource file with evidence of meeting requirements – no fee required</p>	<p>representative (when consumer input is not available) indicating that the DSP has provided quality support</p> <p>7. Submits evidence of effective performance at the Foundation Level (see <i>performance review requirements</i>) based on a joint review by candidate’s supervisor and skills mentor (in some cases this will be the same person).</p> <p>8. Completes 60 hours of “Related Instruction” (see <i>definition section for Related Instruction</i>) – in addition to the 40 hours of related instruction required at the Orientation level. This accumulates to a total of 100 related instruction hours across the Orientation and foundation proficiency levels.</p> <p>9. Satisfactory performance on required learner outcomes at the foundation proficiency level (see <i>Table of Learner Outcomes</i>). Outcomes are specified in four dimensions of direct support practice including:</p> <p>A. Technical skill outcomes: For the Foundation Level these include skills described in four complete areas of the Community Support Skill Standards² (CSSS) and portions of other CSSS</p>	<p>6. Submits testimony (see <i>testimony requirements</i>) from a consumer or consumer representative (when consumer input is not available) indicating s/he has provided quality support</p> <p>7. Submits evidence of effective performance at the advanced proficiency level (see <i>performance review requirements</i>) based on a joint review by his or her supervisor and skill mentor (in some cases this will be the same person).</p> <p>8. Completes 116 hours of “Related Instruction” (Cumulative hours of Related Instruction across three levels is 216)</p> <p>9. Candidates are required to maintain skills developed at the Foundation Level and to achieve satisfactory performance on required learner outcomes at the advanced proficiency level. Outcomes are specified in four dimension of direct support practice (see <i>Table of Learner Outcomes</i>) including:</p> <p>A. Technical skills: For the advanced proficiency level these include the eight remaining areas of the CSSS, &</p>

². The Community Support Skill Standards are nationally validated practice guidelines normed at a proficient level of mastery in direct support (obtain at HSRI org)

Orientation Level	Foundation Level Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support Level	Advanced Certificate of Advanced Proficiency in Direct Support Level
	<p>Competency areas: The four complete areas are: CSSS #2) Communication, 6) Community Living Skills and Supports, 10) Crisis Intervention and 12) Documentation. Partial areas include: 1) Participant Empowerment (Standard 1a) 5) Facilitation of Services (Standard 5b), & relevant local performance criteria.</p> <p>B. Ethical Practice skills (based on NADSP Code of Ethics)</p> <p>C. Interpersonal and Orientation Work Skills (e.g., teamwork, problem solving, thinking skills etc.)</p> <p>D. Knowledge of the context and practice of direct support in human services***</p> <p>10. Performance demonstrated by satisfactory completion at the Foundation Level of valid and reliable assessments including an Initial Proficiency Portfolio</p> <p>11. Applicants for the CIP must complete an application, submit a complete resource file of evidence of requirements and pay any required fee</p> <p>12. People holding the Certificate of Initial Proficiency (CIP) must renew their certification by submitting evidence of 16 hours of relevant</p>	<p>relevant local technical criteria. The eight remaining CSSS Areas include listed by CSSS area: 1) Participant Empowerment; 3) Assessment; 4) Community and Service Networking; 5) Facilitation of Services; 7) Education, Training and Self Development; 8) Advocacy 9) Vocational, Educational and Career Supports 11) Organizational Participation.</p> <p>B. Ethical Practice skills (based on NADSP code of ethics)</p> <p>C. Interpersonal and Orientation Work Skills (e.g., teamwork, problem solving, thinking skills etc.)</p> <p>D. Knowledge of the context and practice of direct support in human services</p> <p>10. Performance demonstrated by satisfactory completion at the Advanced Level of valid and reliable assessments including an Advanced Proficiency Portfolio</p> <p>11. Applicants for the CAP must submit an application form and a complete resource file along with any required fees</p> <p>12. People holding the Certificate of Advanced Proficiency must renew their certification by</p>

Orientation Level	Foundation Level Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support Level	Advanced Certificate of Advanced Proficiency in Direct Support Level
	CEUs (Social Work, QMRP, Certificate of attendance at workshop, conference, or other relevant development activity) every 2 years and pay fee of \$25	submitting evidence of 16 hours of relevant CEUs (Social Work, QMRP, Certificate of attendance or other relevant development activity) every 2 years and pay fee of \$25

Educational Plan

Educational Setting

A review of past and current models of training, development and skills certificate programs for direct support professionals suggest that, at least initially, a skills certificate program should be based in employment settings to be effective. This model provides easy access to overworked employees who often must work two jobs to make ends meet. The employment setting also facilitates involvement of those employees who might lack the confidence to go to a “college” setting for training.

This means that employers will provide training consistent with the West Virginia Direct Support principles and requirements in agency (employer) classrooms and/or learning stations (such as computer terminals), using instructors they have selected and trained and curricula and materials selected or designed to align with the West Virginia Direct Support outcomes. Following this model, human Service organizations, either alone or, ideally, in collaboration with other employers where this is possible, will provide training to their employees or training interns. Employees should be paid for time in training. Employers and others will be guided in program execution and fidelity by a committee or regional council(s) representing direct support, employers, consumers, families and other stakeholders who will use the West Virginia Direct Support Framework to help plan program development and assure ongoing fidelity to the mission and requirements of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program.

As program recognition and desirability grows, it may be possible to work collaboratively with a Technical Training institute, Community College or other external training provider to replicate the program and still maintain involvement and interest of potential candidates. In these cases it is critical for a representative human services stakeholder group to maintain an advisory relationship with the training provider over time.

Educational Methods

Building a new employee development program provides an exciting opportunity to integrate important advances in educational methods. Too often training resources are invested in methods that are unlikely to produce successful outcomes. The West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program will build in quality by integrating effective educational methods and goals including:

1. Creating a scaffold for direct support career advancement in community based human services by offering multiple skill certificates spanning a range of levels of mastery in direct support
2. Using effective adult learning strategies – 75% interactivity no more than 25% lecture (interactive activities can occur in a computer based modality).
3. Providing good conditions for learning - well equipped classrooms, access to refreshments, class sizes sufficient to support small group activity but not so large as to present learning challenges (ideally 10 to 30)
4. Use of competency based approaches (see West Virginia Direct Support Learner Outcomes) using the following validated practice guidelines as Orientation content: The Community Support Skill Standards, the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals Code of Ethics, and the Minnesota Frontline Supervisor competencies.
5. Uses reliable, performance based assessment methods aligned with learner outcomes
6. Aligns with national standards for Direct Support Specialists (see US DOL Direct Support Specialist Standards)
7. Provides each learner with a “skills mentor” who has mastered West Virginia Direct Support competencies to assist candidates in applying knowledge and theory to real work situations
8. Offers local flexibility in selection of curricula and learning arrangements (e.g., class hours, instructors, location, curricula materials) as long as the local training entity provides adequate preparation for candidate mastery of West Virginia Direct Support requirements
9. Incorporates regular evaluation processes to examine quality and promote continual improvement
10. Uses effective instructors who have recent experience working in a community human service agency or equivalent environment
11. Provides a method for candidates to receive program credit for relevant past experience
12. Promotes professional identity and professional growth through supporting self-directed learning with synchronous learning and through opportunities for reflection and discussion of work experience (constructivist educational approach). Ideally candidate cohorts will meet every 2 to 3 weeks and no less than once per quarter.
13. Seeks articulation agreements with post-secondary schools and facilitates award of college credit for EBT for those who want it

14. Designs the Foundation Level to take from 8 to 12 months (including Orientation level) to complete. The Advanced Level will take from 6 to 8 months to complete (this assures that candidates meet the national standards within the 18 month period required to be awarded the Department of Labor (DOL) certificate as a Direct Support Specialist.

Assessment Plan

Fair and reliable assessments are essential to well designed career certificate programs. It is particularly important that certificate requirements are relevant to the job role that is being certified. In this case because the fundamental skill sets that are the foundation for the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program have been developed and nationally validated using recognized job analysis and research methods and are specific to direct support, we can be assured of their meeting the tests of validity that are necessary for programs yielding high stakes employment decisions such as certification, performance appraisal and career advancement. The assessment methodologies that the planners propose are designed to carefully align with the valid outcomes criteria thus they are assured of construct and content validity. Additionally, the West Virginia Direct Support project team has undertaken extensive research and practice to refine the proposed assessment methods thereby assuring their credibility as reliable performance measures.

Resource File & List of Assessment Requirements

With assistance from a skills mentor, each candidate will be required to organize and for completing requirements. These materials will be organized in a binder or accordion file called a "Resource File." This will contain evidence that the candidate has met necessary requirements including:

- Documentation of employer verification that Orientation requirements have been met
- Skills mentor verification of hours of guided work experience
- Up to date criminal background check
- Completed certificates and continuing education evidence
- Instructor verification of completion of required hours of related instructions
- commitment to the NADSP Code of Ethics
- Skills mentor performance rating - A Rating of candidate proficiency on required Learner Outcomes
- Multiple choice test to assess mastery of "knowledge outcomes" required at each proficiency level.

- Consumer testimony
- Portfolio materials

Portfolio

The primary assessment of candidate of mastery of learner outcomes is the West Virginia Direct Support Portfolio that will sample key dimensions of competence called for in the framework.

The West Virginia Direct Support Portfolio is a collection of learner produced materials that will follow a specific format to demonstrate mastery of key learner outcomes. The portfolio format is similar at each level, but the content will be different as different outcomes are demonstrated within each level. Successful completion of the Portfolio is required to achieve each certificate. These portfolios are defined here:

West Virginia Direct Support Foundation Portfolio – A portfolio of required elements that demonstrate mastery in the outcomes required for the Foundation Level that indicate Portfolio Assessment is required.

West Virginia Direct Support Advanced Portfolio – A portfolio of required elements that demonstrate mastery in the learner outcomes required for the Advanced Level that indicate Portfolio Assessment required.

West Virginia Direct Support Portfolio Required Elements:

Recommended Portfolio Components

1. **Title Page** – Identifying information about the author (learner) and his/her work situation and his/her Skills Mentor. Detail to include: Name, date, job title, training/ education location, employer name and address, skills mentor name
2. **Table of contents** guides reader to required elements and that distinguishes the CIP and CAP elements (the different competency areas addressed at each level)
3. **A self assessment** using a specific inventory related to the specific learner outcomes addressed at this stage (e.g., initial or advanced)
4. **Professional development Plan & personal mission statement contents to include:**
 - Description of learner's reasons for choosing a career in human services
 - Explanation of what the completion of the portfolio means to the learners (its relationship to career goals, what the learner gained by completing the portfolio)
 - Future goals in human services

5. **Work Packets:** A “Work Packet” is composed of a high quality sample of the candidate’s work related to designated learner outcomes and accompanied by a summary statement that explains the sample and how it demonstrates the candidate’s mastery of particular learner outcomes. Two Work Packets will be required at the Foundation Level and two will be required at the Advanced Level.

At the **Foundation Level** one work packet will be focused on the outcomes of the Communication Competency area and one will be required for the Community Living Skills and Supports (CSSS area #6).

At the **Advanced Level** one work packet will be focused on the outcomes of the Participant Empowerment Competency Area one will be focused on the outcomes in the Community and Service Networking skill area. Learners cannot use the same work sample for more than one competency area.

Benchmarks for Evaluating Candidate Mastery -Competency Profiles

In addition to identifying the “Learner Outcomes” the planners determined a universal scale of mastery that will serve as a scoring rubric to assure that requirements are rated using the same scale across the state regardless of where a candidate receives training. These are called competency profiles. Competency profiles provide a holistic way of looking at the overall profile of proficiency that a candidate demonstrates. The key elements of the profiles are based on the literature regarding expert performance models as well as input and validation of content experts in human services. These profiles will be used by Instructors, Skills Mentors and Portfolio Assessment teams to provide guidance on judging performance and can be used with a variety of assessment instruments. The profile provides a scoring scale that anchors assessors’ judgements to specific criteria thus improving the reliability in judging qualitative work samples such as portfolios.

Competency Profile for Orientation Level :

The candidate is deemed eligible (*see Table of Eligibility and Exit Requirements for the West Virginia Direct Support Certificates -Orientation Level*) to participate in training and/or educational programs leading to the West Virginia Direct Support Certificates. The candidate meets employability criteria or training intern criteria which may include satisfactory criminal background check, educational achievement, applicable regulatory requirements and has completed required orientation training. At this level, the candidate will need substantial guidance in his or her work to assure that the candidate expands their somewhat limited knowledge and understanding of the direct support role and responsibilities. The worker has limited knowledge regarding people with developmental disabilities and is not familiar with the personalities, preferences, needs and gifts of the specific people s/he is supporting. Despite these limitations the worker treats all co-workers and people s/he supports with dignity and respect and shows responsibility to supervisors and team members through punctuality, follow through, and a positive work attitude. The worker’s practice and abilities focus primarily on maintenance of basic health and safety or provision of instruction/skill maintenance programs designed by other professionals. S/he has little to no

familiarity with standards of practice such as the *Community Support Skill Standards* and the *NADSP Code of Ethics*, however s/he expresses an interest or desire to improve skills and competency through the West Virginia Direct Support skill certificate process.

Competency Profile for Foundation Level:

The candidate has effectively fulfilled the requirements for the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support (see *Table of Eligibility and Exit Requirements for the West Virginia Direct Support Certificates*). The Direct Support Professional who merits this credential demonstrates the technical skills, knowledge, ethical practice and Orientation work skills required for effective direct support at the initial proficiency level. These criteria are specified in the *West Virginia Direct Support Table of Learner Outcomes - Foundation Level*. Mastery at the Foundation level of proficiency means that the DSP is able to work safely and effectively with minimal supervisory support to accomplish support goals. The proficient DSP contributes to the development and implementation of *Person Centered Plans* conducting his/her work in an ethical and respectful manner, in accordance with the NADSP Code of Ethics. The proficient DSP can recognize which problems pose ethical dilemmas and s/he can determine which ethical guidelines apply to specific situations s/he encounters. S/he seeks appropriate assistance in resolving ethical dilemmas s/he may confront. The DSP with this level of skill demonstrates a solid understanding of the challenges facing the service participant and recognizes the importance of consumer choice, self-determination and connections to personal support networks and community resources. S/he actively seeks to promote these conditions in the lives of those s/he supports through a range of methods including facilitating self advocacy and providing basic advocacy when necessary supports are not available. The proficient DSP recognizes the importance of supporting people in building and sustaining the full range of relationships including acquaintances, friends, family and intimate partners and seeks to facilitate and strengthen healthy relationships. The DSP who holds this certificate is able to handle many day-to-day decisions and problems independently. S/he is self-directed in duties to which s/he has been thoroughly trained and is responsible and efficient in his or her work habits. S/he has a thorough understanding of the standard operating procedures and regulations applicable to his or her work site. S/he consistently demonstrates cooperation with others, helpfulness to new employees, openness to feedback, and performs to the best of his/her ability. In team situations, this DSP supports and contributes to team and goals and the overall mission of the organization /person who s/he serves. This DSP has a solid understanding of the professional nature of the DSP role as it is defined in the CSSS and practiced in the contemporary; community based human service direct support settings and demonstrates commitment to human services work.

Competency Profile for Advanced Proficiency Certificate Level:

The Direct Support Professional who merits this credential demonstrates leadership and significant expertise in the direct support role. The DSP at this level is respected by peers and often provides support, guidance and leadership to less skilled DSPs. S/he recognizes ethical dilemmas and can sort through these dilemmas finding ethically responsible solutions. The advanced DSP is very effective in helping the service participant to achieve desired outcomes. The Direct Support Professional at this skill level demonstrates skill at the advanced proficiency level in all areas described as the *West Virginia Direct Support Advanced Proficiency Outcomes* and maintains proficiency in those outcomes described at the Foundation level. The advanced proficiency level signifies that the DSP is very skilled, creative and thoughtful in recognizing and nurturing the participant's strengths and building upon the Participant's choices and preferences in the pursuit of growth, learning, social affiliation, and the fulfillment of valued roles (e.g., employee, association

member, volunteer). The advanced DSP continues to recognize the importance of people building and sustaining relationships ranging from acquaintances, friends, family and intimate partners and seeks to facilitate and strengthen healthy relationships. At this level s/he is creative and skilled at seeking out opportunities to facilitate relationship building and helps others to welcome and reciprocate relationships with the people s/he supports. S/he also is proactive and successful in identifying and connecting the participant with high quality community resources and personal or natural support networks. At this level, the DSP has a solid understanding of the organization of human services at the community level and the generic and natural supports available within communities. In addition, DSPs with this level of credential are able to connect individual problems to an understanding of societal and systemic influences. S/he is aware of how human services have evolved over time from a medical approach to a community support approach and what changes this has brought about for service participants. DSPs at this level are assertive and effective in supporting self-advocacy and self-determination and advocating in partnership with the people they support and on behalf of people with disabilities in general.

Credit for Previous Work and Learning

The planning group has agreed that a method for crediting past work experience and previous mastery of required competencies must be available to candidates. These rules are specified here:

Candidates who have more than two years of supervised direct support experience within the past 5 years may receive credit for 1000 hours of supervised work experience accompanied by validation of these hours. Candidates with one year of direct support experience within the past three years may receive credit for 500 hours of validated supervised experience.

Candidates may receive credit for up to 15 hours of related instruction at the Foundation level that relates to one of the four major competency area requirements. The candidate is required to submit the syllabi of the relevant trainings, proof of participation, and complete the portfolio work sample for the area in which s/he is seeking credit. For example, if a direct support professional seeks credit for previous mastery of documentation. S/he must provide syllabi of training related instruction events that addressed competency area 12 "Documentation" standards as well as proof of her/his presence. He or she must prepare and submit an acceptable portfolio work packet for the identified area in which s/he is seeking credit.

West Virginia Direct Support Program: Foundation Curriculum

Welcome to the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program Foundation Curriculum

What is the West Virginia Direct Support Foundation Curriculum

The The West Virginia Direct Support Foundation Curriculum Program is a course of learning designed especially for Direct Support Professionals who are seeking the Certificate of Initial Proficiency in the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program. Providing direct support to people with developmental disabilities is a complex and rewarding job that requires thoughtful preparation. The Foundation Curriculum is designed to help new and incumbent workers to learn and practice the skills needed to be successful at direct support and to explore and celebrate the work in a collegial environment with other direct support professionals and their skill mentors.

At the center of this curriculum is the view that direct support professionals must have the opportunity to discuss and reflect upon the skills, knowledge, and values that are associated with effective direct support work. These include the importance of working in partnership with service participants to help them direct the course of their own lives as much as possible. This means exploring and strengthening skills in empowering others by encouraging choice, self-determination and community participation and by offering the help needed to achieve life goals. The West Virginia Direct Support Foundation curriculum will introduce direct support professionals to the skills, knowledge and attitudes essential to quality support.

What can you expect in the West Virginia Direct Support Foundation Curriculum?

This curriculum is designed to be used in concert with the content available through the **College of Direct Support (CDS)**, an internet based series of courses focused on direct support practice. By providing the structure for face to face coaching sessions with learners who are using the College of Direct Support, the Foundation Certificate Curriculum provides learners with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of CDS content through discussion and exercises with other DSPs

that are focused on how the CDS content applies to the day to day work of the learners and the people they are supporting. Emphasis will be placed on putting new information and ideas into the context of each learner's work situation and promoting collaboration, creativity, teamwork and problem solving throughout the curriculum.

The curriculum draws from the view that people learn more when information is put into the context of how it will be applied – this is sometimes called situational or authentic teaching. It also seeks to engage the affective or emotional life of the learner along with the cognitive channels while minimizing the didactic or “lecture” form of instruction. Another mediating factor in its design is the view that learning is strengthened when people discover meaning together through dialogue and reflection. Coaches should keep these ideas in mind as they use the curriculum.

How is the curriculum organized?

The activities of the curriculum are organized to occur in nine day long coaching sessions over a period of 6 to 9 months culminating in the award of the *Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support Practice* (CIP) to successful candidates. The ideal class size for coaching session ranges from 10 to 25 candidates. Candidates will be assigned a support person called a Skills Mentor who holds the CIP and will serve as a support to the candidate helping her with organizing the requirements of the class and in applying new knowledge in the work place. Skills mentors should attend the first class with candidates and some portion of classes to provide ongoing support.

Another organizing feature of the curriculum is that each session is organized into three major areas that we will refer to as the **POINT** system where: “P” stands for the points that should be covered by the coach during the session. “O” signifies the Outcomes that learners should achieve by the end of the session and “INT” signals the interactions and activities that the coach should facilitate to promote the identified outcomes. The POINT system will be illustrated in each session to help the coach achieve success.

How are candidates evaluated?

The primary forms of assessment will be the candidate's successful completion of the Foundation Portfolio (recall that this was described in the Framework Document). Candidates will also be judged on their completion of other session requirements including the specified courses in the College of Direct Support, and completion of session preparation assignments.

Technology and Mentoring: A winning combination

This Foundation Curriculum for Direct Support professionals in West Virginia weaves together the strands of extraordinary technical advances in education: “anytime – anywhere” multi-media instruction delivered through the internet with the best of traditional professional development experiences: small group, hands-on learning along with individualized coaching and mentoring. The resulting product is a curriculum that gives learners hi-tech access to a wealth of national experts with dynamic updated content on direct support practice through the College of Direct Support and provides them with the “hi-touch” personalized instruction available in small groups and 1:1 mentoring. Each strand strengthens the final fabric compensating for the inherent limitations in each approach.

Technology learning is powerful because it draws together the best content available regardless of location but lacks the warmth and possibilities that emerge from transforming learning through dialogue and person- to-person support in application. Classroom based instruction in human services is typically limited by poor organization of instructional design and lack of depth and range of content. The marriage of these approaches, however, can offset the limitations of each method and bring an exciting learning experience to program participants.

Key Features of the Foundation Curriculum

This curriculum is designed to provide a learning experience that offers comprehensive preparation for direct support professionals seeking the Certificate of Initial Proficiency at the Foundation Level of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program. Primary sources of content used in this curriculum, the College of Direct Support, and the Foundation Level Coaching sessions are based upon the Learner Outcomes of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program including the Community Support Skill Standards, the NADSP Code of Ethics and the Minnesota Frontline Supervisor competencies.

Users of this curriculum will notice that it is designed to provide a bridge between the content that the learner explores through the courses and lessons offered in the College of Direct Support to the ability to use this content in effective applications in the workplace.

The way this is accomplished is to provide learners with a learning map to follow that integrates the courses of the College of Direct Support with Coaching Sessions. The Coaching Sessions provide learners with the opportunity to come together to discuss what they have learned in the CDS courses, clarify questions and identify and practice ways of applying this knowledge in the workplace.

The curriculum provides trainers with the sequence of College of Direct Support courses that learners should complete to meet the requirements at the Orientation, Foundation and Advanced Levels of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program. It also provides trainers with curriculum to lead the Foundation Coaching Sessions.

The Self-Directed Learning Map

Recommended CDS Courses to Fulfill the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program “Related Instruction” Requirements

The West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program framework provides a detailed description of candidate requirements at each of three levels of mastery and also specifies the learner outcomes for the Foundation Level and the Advanced Level. Planners anticipate that areas of specialization such as “positive behavior support” could be certified. This information is located in preceding chapters. The levels are:

Orientation Level – Candidates will be eligible to enter the Foundation Level after fulfilling Orientation Level requirements which are equivalent to orientation level training.

Foundation Level – Successful candidates will receive the Certificate of Initial Proficiency in Direct Support (CIP) after successfully completing this level.

Advanced Level – Successful candidate will receive the Certificate of Advanced Proficiency (CAP) in Direct Support after successfully completing this level.

Specialized Level – This level is not yet developed but may offer certificates in specialized areas of expertise such as working with specific populations or working in key content areas such as person centered planning or positive behavior supports.

The following is a list of CDS courses and lessons that will provide a significant portion of the required hours of instruction at each level of the framework. These specific CDS courses were selected because they align with the “Learner Outcomes” specified at each level of the framework.

The course recommendations are based on work completed by the Workforce Development Team which cross referenced the CDS course content with the West Virginia Foundation and Advanced Level learner outcomes (these criteria may be seen in the “Learner Outcome” table found in Chapter Four). Organizations who will be selected to pilot the certificate framework and curriculum will have access to the College of Direct Support courses for the duration of the pilot period.

The purpose of this section is to provide guidance on the CDS portions of the candidate preparation curriculum to both pilot sites and subsequently to users of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Framework who also have access to the College of Direct Support. Recommendations are based upon the consensus of the WDT regarding which CDS courses and lessons are most likely to facilitate the essential outcomes at each level. The other key component to this curriculum is the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Coaching Sessions. These sessions are designed to wrap around the DDS curriculum with a candidate group that convenes as a group periodically throughout the period of their self-directed study with the CDS.

The Coaching Map

In addition to the recommended CDS courses, this section provides the syllabus and curriculum necessary to conduct the Coaching Session. These sessions provide the connective tissue that links the self-directed learning accomplished with the College of Direct Support to other modes of learning and experience that will help the candidate put theories into the context of his or her own work place. The sessions will provide the interpersonal experiences that open the affective channels of learning and provide opportunities for joint dialogue, reflection, and cooperative learning experiences that are helpful to mastery and retention. Using experiential and constructivist learning approaches, the Coaching Sessions will help learners to make sense of what they are learning via the CDS and to apply it in the context of their own work.

The Coaching Sessions are designed to correspond to a recommended sequence of self-directed learning on the CDS so that Coaches and Learners can meaningfully discuss the material they have been exploring outside of the classroom and to provide an organizational construct for the sessions.

Map of Orientation Level Recommendations

At the Orientation Level the framework calls for 40 hours of related instruction and 320 hours of work experience. The Foundation Level, which is the focus of this curriculum, follows and builds upon the solid foundation begun through completion of Orientation requirements. This assures that direct support professional certification in West Virginia is targeted to a level that goes beyond basic requirements while at the same time enabling candidates to use their orientation (Orientation) level training toward credential related requirements. With this in mind, and with access to the CDS – agencies may identify portions of the CDS that they can use as a substitute of supplement to existing orientation training. Agencies have broad discretion in these decisions because the framework does not specify particular “learner outcomes” at the Orientation level that will be required or assessed as part of the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate program. This means that an agency may use their current orientation training, provided that it fulfills the experiential and instructional hour requirements as Orientation level preparation.

As we view the course maps, it is important to keep in mind that each CDS course is comprised of anywhere from 4 to 8 lessons related to the overall course topic. These lessons can be accessed as individual modules or as a group. In some cases agencies may wish to use entire courses or they may choose to use one or more lessons from a variety of courses to meet their orientation level needs. The Coaching sessions in the Foundation Curriculum integrate specific courses and lessons as preparation for each coaching session. This gives the coach the ability to track learner engagement with the CDS over time and to discuss ways of applying CDS knowledge on the job.

Course Map for Orientation Level

CDS Lessons-Courses Recommended for the Orientation	Hrs	LESSONS
Safety at Home and in the Community	8	1. Risks, Choice, and Common Sense
		2. Safety at home
		3. Fire Safety
		4. Responding to Emergencies
		5. Safety for all occasions
		6. Motor Vehicle Safety
		7. Universal Precautions/ Infection Control
		8. Accident and Incident Reporting
Maltreatment of Vulnerable Adults & Children	4	1. Defining Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
		2. Reporting Abuse, Neglect and Exploit.
		3. Preventing Abuse, Neglect and Exploit

CDS Lessons-Courses Recommended for the Orientation	Hrs	LESSONS
		4. Documenting and following up on Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
Direct Support Professionalism	4	1. Becoming a Direct Support Professional
		2. Contemporary Best Practices
		3. Applying Ethics to Everyday Work
		4. Practicing confidentiality
Introduction to Developmental Disabilities	5	1. A Brief History of DD
		2. The Ideas of Best Practices
		3. Terminology and classification in DD
		4. Causes of DD
		5. Services for people with DD
Individual Rights & Choices	4	1. Overview of Individual Rights
		2. Identifying Restrictions of Individual Rights
		3. A past of barriers, a future of risks, choices, and solutions
		4. Your role in supporting expression of rights and facilitating choice
Medication Administration I	4	
Documentation: Lesson 1	1	
Positive Behavioral Support Lesson 1	1	
<i>NON CDS Curricula typically included at orientation level (0-6 months)</i>		
First Aid/ 4 hours	4	
CPR / 4 hours	4	
Crisis prevention (type training)	8	
Agency related SOPs / 8	8	
<i>ESTIMATED TIME</i>	55	

Employers/ training designers should keep in mind the following Issues when orienting new employees. CDS content should be enriched by face to face contact that enables trainers to:

- ✓ Connect personally with new hires to assist the new employee to feel comfortable within the organization and to make connections with other employees
- ✓ Connect personally to model healthy norms, attitudes and facilitate learning
- ✓ Get written commitment to the Code of Ethics if an agency wants to introduce this early in the employee's experience
- ✓ Orient learner to the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate concept & opportunity
- ✓ Provide a mentor if this is available

Attending to these issues will help employees get through the first difficult months. Readers will also note that the framework calls for 40 hours of related instruction at the Orientation level. The course map provides recommendations for approximately 55 hours of training. Agencies should use what they are comfortable with in determining which, if any, of these courses and lessons to offer for orientation level training and whether the CDS material can substitute for any instructor led material they are currently using. For example, Individual Rights and Choices may be able to substitute for the agency's existing module on "rights" that uses a live trainer.

Map of Foundation Level Course Recommendations

The Foundation Certificate requires an additional 60 Hours of "Related Instruction" along with other requirements listed in the framework. The following table provides an overview of how additional CDS courses should be used to fulfill these requirements. Readers should keep in mind that the estimated hours represent hours spent on the computer. The estimate does not include any additional hours that the candidate may spend in the coaching sessions or in assignments outside of class.

CDS Foundation Courses	Hours	Lessons
Supporting Healthy Lifestyles	5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Living a Healthy Life 2. Health through the Lifespan 3. Individual Health Needs 4. Care of Common health Conditions 5. Recognizing Signs and Symptoms of Illness 6. Working with a Healthcare Provider
Medication Administration II	4	New Course
Teaching People with Disabilities	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understanding Teaching 2. Preparing to Teach 3. Teaching Strategies 4. Organizing and Applying Teaching Strategies
Person Centered Planning	4	New Course
Community Inclusion	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The DSP role in Community Inclusion 2. Matching community resources with individual interests 3. Community Bridge-Building and Networking 4. Natural Supports
You've Got a Friend: Supporting family	4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The importance of relationships

CDS Foundation Courses	Hours	Lessons
connections, friends, love and the pursuit of happiness		
		2. Barriers, challenges and opportunities for friendship
		3. Strategies for building and maintaining relationships
		4. Supporting family networks
Positive Behavior Support	6	2. Functions and Causes of behavior
		3. Understanding positive approaches
		4. Preventing challenging behavior
		5. Responding to challenging behavior
		6. Behavior support plans
		7. Rules, regulations, policies and rights
Documentation	3	2. Types of documentation
		3. Effective documentation
		4. Confidentiality in documentation
Total Estimated Time on computer	34	
Total Estimated Time in Coaching Sessions	36	This is based on an estimate of 9 coaching sessions of 3 -4 hours per session.
Total Hours of Related Instruction	70	This total exceeds the required number of hours of related instruction (60) by 10 hours. Agencies may choose to stick with the 60 hour minimum by eliminating lessons within a course, eliminating a whole course ,or by reducing the number of coaching sessions or the hours of coaching sessions. When making these decisions, agencies should evaluate the resulting program to make sure it will result in learners achieving the desired outcomes.

Syllabus for the Foundation Level Curriculum

OVERVIEW OF SESSION TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Session Logistics	Session Syllabus
<p>Session 1: Welcome to the West Virginia Direct Support Certificate Program</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Location:</p>	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction of Candidates 2. Program Vision & Overview 3. Purpose of Coaching Sessions 4. Overview of Materials: Learner Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards, NADSP Code of Ethics 5. The Mountain Community Resource File and Portfolio 6. Role of Skills Mentors 7. How to Meet the Program Challenge: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Professional Commitment ✦ Use your coach & skill mentor ✦ Help each other – team work ✦ Just do it! <p>To prepare for this class you should....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be on time – bring your heart & mind ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book ✓ Turn off your pager(s) – cell phone(s) ✓ Register on-line to use the College of Direct Support ✓ Complete assignments below <p>Assignments due today – yes – do this before the first class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Read the Welcome tab section of the candidate handbook and several sections on the Portfolio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Portfolio Development Guidelines ➤ Communication Work Packet 🕒 Skim (Skim not Skip) the rest 🕒 Read the descriptions of each of the twelve competency areas in the CSSS 🕒 Register for CDS and Take Lesson 1 in Course Direct Support Professionalism. This lesson is called “Becoming a Direct Support Professional”

Session Logistics	Session Syllabus
	<p>Due for next class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete remaining lessons in CDS Course: Direct Support Professionalism. ➤ Read the CSSS Competency area 7: Education, Training and Self Development (p.51) ➤ List examples (3 to 5) of professional direct support practice and examples (3 to 5) of unprofessional direct support practice ➤ Complete a journal entry on why you want to take this course or on what it means to add the word “professional” to the occupation of Direct Support.
<p>Session 2: Foundations of Direct Support</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Location:</p>	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Direct Support Professionalism 2. Ethics of Direct Support 3. The CSSS: Skill & Knowledge Guidelines 4. Work Packets <p>To prepare for this class you should....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be on time - bring your heart & mind ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book ✓ Bring completed assignments (see below) <p>Assignments due Today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Completed CDS Course on Direct Support Professionalism (review this course if you took it more than 2 months ago!) 🕒 Completed journal -response to term Direct Support Professional 🕒 Completed lists of examples of professional/non professional direct support practice 🕒 Completed read through of CSSS competency area #7: Education, training and professional development <p>Due for next class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete CDS Course: Introduction to Developmental Disabilities (review this course if you took it more than 2 months ago!) ➤ Complete CDS Course: You’ve Got a Friend

Session Logistics

Session Syllabus

Session 3: Living the Good Life – What Everybody Wants

Date:

Time:

Location:

- Write a journal entry discussing ways that you have helped or can help the people you support to develop and maintain relationships
- Read through CSSS Competency Area 2: Communication, p.26
- Read through CSSS Area 6: Community Living Skills & Support, p.45
- List 2 to 3 ideas for work products for Communication Area and 2 to 3 for the Community Living Skills area.

Topics to be covered:

1. Living the “good life” – Life, liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness with and without a developmental disability
2. Empowerment and Self-Determination
3. Valued roles
4. Work Packet Products

To prepare for this class you should....

- ✓ Be on time – bring your heart & mind
- ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book
- ✓ Bring completed assignments
- ✓ Jot down any questions or issues you have after completing Intro to DD Course, the You’ve Got a Friend Course or on your reading of CSSS on Communication and Community Living Skills and Supports

Assignments due today:

- 🕒 Completed CDS course: Intro to DD
- 🕒 Completed CDS course : You’ve Got a Friend
- 🕒 Journal entry: ways that you have helped or can help the people you support to develop and maintain relationships
- 🕒 Completed reading of CSSS competency areas: Communication and Community Living Skills and Supports
- 🕒 Ideas for work products in Communication and Community Living Skills & Supports

Due for next class

- Complete CDS Course on Teaching People with Developmental Disabilities
- Read through CSSS Competency Area #1: Participant Empowerment (p.21).
- Read through CSSS competency Area # 12: Documentation, p. 67
- Complete the product for your Community Living Skills &

Session Logistics

Session Syllabus

- Supports Work Packet
- Complete the product for your Communications Work Packet

Session 4: The Gift of Teaching

Topics to be covered:

1. Communication essentials
2. Community Living Skills and Support Work Packet
3. Communication Work Packet
4. Learning Styles
5. Effective teaching strategies
6. Community Living Skills

To prepare for this class you should....

- ✓ Be on time
- ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book
- ✓ Bring completed assignments
- ✓ Jot down questions or issues from the Teaching People with DD Course or reading of CSSS

Assignments due today:

-  Complete CDS Course on Teaching People with Developmental

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Session 5: We are all members of the same community

Disabilities

- ⌚ Completed read through of CSSS competency area 1: Participant Empowerment and area 12: Documentation
- ⌚ Community Living Skills and Supports product for Work Packet
- ⌚ Communication product for Work Packet

Due for next class:

- Complete CDS course: Community Inclusion
- Read CSSS area #4 Community and Service Networking, p. 35
- List 3 to 5 things you have done in your work or could do in your future work to see that people get included.
- Read through NADSP Code of Ethics and select several (2-4) statements that you think would help people to become full members of their community - be prepared to explain your selections
- Complete the Community Living Skills and Supports Summary work sheet for packet

Topics to be covered:

1. Community life: places, roles, participation
2. Inclusion and Participation
3. Building on strengths and preferences
4. Creative networking: Thinking outside the box
5. Professional Development Statement

To prepare for this class you should....

- ✓ Be on time - bring your heart & mind
- ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book
- ✓ Bring completed assignments
- ✓ Prepare any questions on CDS Course Community Inclusion and CSSS area Community and Service Networking

Assignments due today:

- ⌚ Complete CDS course: Community Inclusion
- ⌚ Reading of CSSS area 4: Community & Service Networking
- ⌚ Your list of things you have done in your work or that you could do in the future to see that people get included.
- ⌚ Your selection ethical practices that you think would help people to become valued members of their community

Session Logistics

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**Session 6:
Person Centered
Support:**

Date:

Time:

Location

- 🕒 Your completed Community Living Skills and Supports summary worksheet for your work packet

Due for next class

- Completed CDS course: Person Centered Planning
- Read CSSS area # 5: Facilitation of Services, p.40
- Select some ethical statements from the code that you think will help you support people in a person centered manner – be prepared to explain your selections
- Complete the Professional Development Plan Summary Worksheet
- Complete the Communications Summary Worksheet for your work packet
- Select someone you support and create a list of their preferences, strengths and interests. Describe how you have or could build upon these to promote inclusion

Topics to be covered:

1. Ethics of Person Centered Work
2. Person centered thinking, planning & actions
3. Coordinating and partnering with others
4. Portfolio Professional Development Plan

To prepare for this class you should....

- ✓ Be on time
- ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book
- ✓ Bring completed assignments (see below)
- ✓ Jot down any questions you have on the Person Centered Planning Course or the worksheets you completed

Assignments due Today:

- 🕒 Completed CDS course: Person Centered Planning
- 🕒 Completed reading of CSSS area 5: Facilitation of Services
- 🕒 Your list of ethical statements that guide you in supporting people in a person centered way
- 🕒 Your list of strengths & preferences of someone you support
- 🕒 Your Professional Development Plan Worksheet
- 🕒 Your summary worksheet for Communication

Assignments for next class:

- Complete CDS course: Positive Behavioral Supports

Session Logistics	Session Syllabus
<p>Session 7: Positive Behavioral Support & Risk Management</p> <p>Date:</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Location</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read through CSSS area # 10 - Crisis intervention area, p.60. ➤ Journal entry on how the behavioral support course helped you to understand someone you work with ➤ Your finalized Community Living Skills and Supports Work Packet <p>Topics to be covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Managing risk and preventing crisis 2. Positive Behavioral Support 3. Learning to Listen - attending to non verbal forms of communication 4. Portfolio organization <p>To prepare for this class you should....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be on time - bring your heart & mind ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book ✓ Bring completed assignments ✓ Jot down any questions you have on the Positive Behavioral Support course or on your reading of CSSS area on Crisis Intervention. <p>Assignments due Today:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🕒 Complete CDS course: Positive Behavioral Supports 🕒 Read through CSSS Crisis intervention area 🕒 Journal entry on how the behavioral support course helped you to understand someone you work with 🕒 Completed Community Living Skills and Supports Work Packet <p>Assignments for next class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Complete CDS course Supporting Healthy Lives ➤ Complete CDS Course Medication Administration II ➤ Complete a journal entry on what is comforting to you when you are sick or on an activity you like that is part of a healthy lifestyle ➤ Identify the NADSP Code of Ethics statements that provide guidance on health and safety issues ➤ Complete the Communications Work Packet
<p>Session 8: Health &</p>	<p>Topics to be covered:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoting health and well being

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Well-Being

2. Person centered health support
3. Managing risk and safety
4. Signs and symptoms of illness
5. Medication responsibility and awareness
6. Confidentiality, Coordination and follow through with others

To prepare for this class you should....

- ✓ Be on time - bring your heart & mind
- ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book
- ✓ Bring completed assignments (see below)
- ✓ Jot down any questions you have on the Positive Behavioral Support course

Assignments due Today:

- 🕒 Complete CDS course Supporting Healthy Lives
- 🕒 Complete CDS Course Medication Administration II
- 🕒 Complete a journal entry on what is comforting to you when you are sick or on an activity you like that is part of a healthy lifestyle
- 🕒 NADSP Code of Ethics statements that provide guidance on health and safety issues
- 🕒 Work Packet on Communication

Due for next class

- Complete CDS Course: Cultural Competence
- Read CSSS areas # Organizational Participation (p.63)
- Integrate all parts of Portfolio for submission

Topics to be covered:

1. Your work community
2. Cultural Competence
3. Collaboration & teamwork in learning organizations

**Session 9:
Teamwork in a
Learning
Organization**

To prepare for this class you should....

- ✓ Be on time - bring your heart & mind

Session Logistics

Session Syllabus

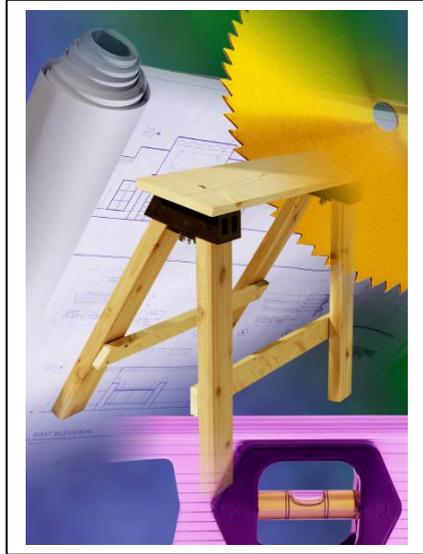
- ✓ Bring Course Materials: Candidate Handbook, Community Support Skill Standards (CSSS) Book
- ✓ Bring completed assignments (see below)

Assignments due:

- 🕒 Complete CDS Course: Cultural Competence
- 🕒 Read CSSS areas Organizational Participation
- 🕒 Submit Portfolio

Congratulations – you made it!!

(Insert Curriculum Here - Curriculum under construction)



References

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Taylor, M. (2000). *New Tools for the New Century: Ideas for Building a Quality Workforce*.

Taylor, M., Bradley, V., & Warren, R. (1996). *The Community Support Skill Standards: Tools for Managing Change and Achieving Outcomes*. Cambridge, MA: Human Services Research Institute.

Appendix A

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West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Direct Support Workforce Development Team

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