



Day in the life of the: Direct Support Professional

Your schedule – This is an hourly position with set days and hours, but Direct Support Professionals (DSPs) are there when Youth need them most. Your shift will vary to accommodate the needs of the youth with developmental disabilities residing in Hillside’s IRAs (Individualized Residential Alternatives). Flexibility is a critical part of your schedule; shifts occur days, evenings, and weekends. The majority of shifts occur during 3 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Your Responsibilities – You are relied on to deliver services that provide quality and dignity in the lives of our developmentally disabled youth. A developmental disability is defined as being onset before age 22, has significant impact on life functioning, and is expected to be life long. Youth at Hillside may have an intellectual disability, Autism Spectrum Disorders, or Epilepsy, but diagnoses vary.

Each day you will be counted on to carry out these responsibilities:

- ensuring the safety of the youth;
- aiding the youth to progress out of the IRA;
- helping develop positive and hygienic behaviors,;
- assisting the youth in learning to build positive relationships; and
- taking youth on walks, play games/sports, and on outings in the community.

It’s a hands-on approach that includes physically assisting the youth with any needs, prompting positive behaviors and keeping them active, creating recreational schedules and passing medications.

You also demonstrate professionalism through adherence to daily documentation requirements of:

- progress notes,;
- behavior tracking,; and
- all medications.

Our DSPs typically report into the Residential Supervisor who is committed to providing you with support and guidance as needed.

Your Background – You'll start off on the fast track in this role with prior experience working with individuals with special needs, in Special Education, or developmental disabilities. Educational majors such as Social Work, Education, or Psychology have proven beneficial.

Your Total Experience – Hillside is proud that its Shared Vision has a focus on nurturing the aspirations and growth opportunities of staff. DSPs have a wide range of options including moving into a DSP III role to providing mentorship to level I Direct Support Professionals, or eventually into a Supervisory role. If you choose to further your education, a path we fully support, you could even set your sights on becoming a Clinician. The DSP role can be challenging at times, but Hillside has a stellar team that works together to effectively minimize those challenges. Every day you will be giving so much, and in short order you'll start receiving the rewards of celebrating the small victories and gaining the trust of these extraordinary youth.

Hillside Family of Agencies provides individualized health, education, and human services in partnership with children, youth, adults, and their families through an integrated system of care. Our DSPs are personally and professionally dedicated to this mission not only in practice but in spirit.

"This position is great for someone who is willing to put the effort into building relationships and wants to make an impact on the lives of youth in OPWDD programs."

-Direct Support Professional's, Rochester, NY