Training and Professional Education Classes for Direct Support Professionals Supporting Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) in Maryland

Prepared by Jubilee Association of Maryland for the Montgomery County Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission – May 2025

The Need:

Direct Support Professional (DSP) Workforce Crisis

- High DSP turnover destabilizes the lives of people with disabilities and increases the cost of services.
  - National Turnover: 40%
  - Maryland Turnover: 30%

- People with I/DD are aging, and a forecasted decrease in the number of available DSPs due to population trends will worsen the crisis in the coming decades.

DSP training and professional development are the keys to quality services and workforce retention.

- People with I/DD, their families, and their staff report improved outcomes when quality staff training happens.

- DSP Training and professional development programs decrease injuries and incidents of abuse and neglect by more than 60%.

- Maryland graduates of the DSP II curriculum have a turnover rate of less than 10%.

Maryland DSP Training Consortium Initiatives

Maryland DSP Training Consortium

Creates and administers courses and programs for DSP training, including DSP I, DSP II, DSP Mentoring, and Frontline Supervisor classes.

SEEC plays a leading role in curriculum development and administering the Consortium, including holding an EARN grant from the Maryland Department of Labor that funds the Consortium's work.

Consortium Members
MD Developmental Disabilities Administration, MD Dept. of Labor, Ardmore Enterprises, Chesapeake Center, ChesterWye, Compass, Inc., Jubilee Association of Maryland, MACS, SEEC, Spring Dell Center

Other Participating Agencies
Arc Howard County, Arc Montgomery County, Arc Southern Maryland, Appalachian Crossroads, New Horizons, Rock Creek Foundation, Benedictine School, Caroline Centers, L.I.F.E., Inc.

MDDSP
TRAINING CONSORTIUM

Maryland DSP Training Framework

Three progressive levels of credentials for DSPs
as they grow in career competencies:

- DSP I - Fundamentals
- DSP II – Deepening Skills
- DSP III, etc. – Advanced Training

The Framework has been adopted by the
Maryland Developmental Disabilities
Administration (DDA). The MDDSP
Consortium has led the promotion and
implementation of the Framework.

DSP I

DSP II

DSP III

Mentor

Frontline Supervisor

DSP I Certification

- 20-hour hybrid course over 3 months

- Created by the MDDSP Consortium

- **Contact to join: Kelsey Johnson, Workforce Training and Curriculum Coordinator at SEEC, kjohnson@seeconline.org**

- Target Audience: (1) New DSPs who have successfully passed their organization's new hire orientation and onboarding process (2) new staff working with self-directing families

- Goals: Create a solid foundation for new DSPs rooted in the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) competencies

DSP II Certification

- 50-hour hybrid course over 5 months

- Created by the MDDSP Consortium

- **Contact to join: Kelsey Johnson, Workforce Training and Curriculum Coordinator at SEEC, kjohnson@seeconline.org**

- Target Audience: (1) Experienced DSPs who are looking to attain advanced skills and grow within their organizations; over 600 people credentialed as DSP II to date (2) experienced staff working with self-directing families.

- Goals: Deepen the skills of DSPs who have been in the field for at least one year, empowering them to drive quality services and lead by example within their teams; also rooted in CMS/LTSS competencies

CMS/LTSS Competencies
- **Communication**
- **Person Centered Practices**
- **Risk & Safety**
- **Empowerment & Advocacy**
- **Health & Wellness**
- **Community Inclusion**
- **Employment**
- **Positive Behavior Support**

Mentor Program

- 15-hour hybrid course over 3 months
- Created by the MDDSP Consortium
- **Contact to join: Kelsey Johnson, Workforce Training and Curriculum Coordinator at SEEC, kjohnson@seeconline.org**
- Target Audience: DSP II graduates who want to gain specific skills in mentoring other DSPs
- Goals: Provide DSP IIs with leadership, mentoring, and coaching skills so they can support other DSPs

Frontline Supervisor Training

- 30-hour hybrid course over 5 months
- Created by the MDDSP Consortium
- **Contact to join: Kelsey Johnson, Workforce Training and Curriculum Coordinator at SEEC, kjohnson@seeconline.org**
- Target Audience: Supervisors of DSPs, regardless of exact position title within their organization
- Goals: Ensure frontline supervisors have the skills necessary to support DSPs, clients, and their families; also rooted in CMS LTSS competencies

Other DSP Training Opportunities

Skill Up For Success

- 18-hour in-person course over 1 month
- Created by Ardmore Enterprises
- **Contact to join: Junior Andris, Manager of Training and Development, Ardmore Enterprises, jandris@ardmoreenterprises.org**
- Target Audience: DSPs within their first 6 months of hire who need additional support to be successful
- Goals: Support new DSPs who need help with cultural competency, technology proficiency, professionalism, collaboration, and teamwork
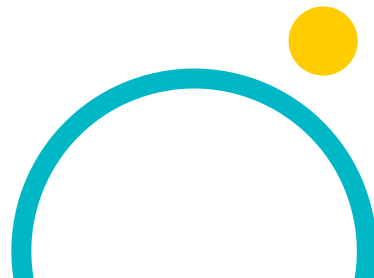
The Academy at Jubilee

- Courses vary from 2 hours to multi-month

- A program of Jubilee Association of Maryland, in partnership with Ardmore, Compass, and SEEC

- Target Audience: Professionals at all levels in the IDD field, as well as people receiving services, and self-directing families and their staff

- Goals: Provide high-quality, in-person training to DSPs across the region. Courses offered were developed both in-house and by the MDDSP Consortium, the Coach Approach Partners, the National Council for Mental Wellbeing.

- Courses include: Mandt, Medication Technician Training, CPR/First Aid, DSP II, Coach Approach, Cultural Humility, and Transformative Communication.

- **Learn more at jubileemd.org/about-the-academy**

National Training Tools and Programs for DSPs Available in Maryland

NADSP eBadging

- Online learning activities

- Administered by the National Alliance of Direct Support Professionals.

- Many providers in Maryland participate.

- Target Audience: DSPs and Frontline Supervisors at various points in their careers

- Goals: NADSP eBadging is available nationally and allows DSPs to pursue DSP I, II, III badges as well as Frontline Supervisor badges through a variety of online activities. NADSP uses their own set of competencies, not CMS's.

- **To learn more, visit** https://nadsp.org/services/the-nadsp-e-badge-academy/

College of Direct Support

- Online learning courses
- Created by the University of Minnesota
- Target Audience: DSPs and Frontline Supervisors throughout the state
- Goals: College of Direct Support is an online platform developed by the University of Minnesota with classes covering a wide variety of competencies and topics in the IDD field. DDA has signed a contract to provide this for free to all provider agencies. It is used by the MDDSP Consortium as part of DSP I, DSP II, and the Mentor Program.
- **More details on how to join will be provided by DDA later in 2025**.