

The value of human life and the quality of human life is before you right now.

The question of attaching meaning by means of a living wage to DSPs who provide supports to individuals with physical, intellectual and behavioral disabilities is the free choice presented to you now. And to place importance upon their quality of care.

The problem is enormous. The solution, as most solutions are, is simple. Your action and response to our dire need and plea addressing this serious need that has gone ignored for far far too long can transform so much more than is even evident to outsiders unfamiliar with the vital role of DSPs. And most importantly, your crucial input and active part today will improve their quality of life. Let me explain.

I beg you to consider the current wages of DSPs and how these wages undermine society's understanding of the value of supports provided to individuals with disabilities.

The constant multi tasking, physical and emotional demands and highly trained skills required to full fill our work.

Suffice it to say that you need to "be on the floor" observing a typical day in our "high tier" need clients home in order to fully grasp my meaning. You would then walk away shaking your head in disbelief and make your free will choices accordingly to support this great mission of....supporting and respecting the individuals that we serve to live a healthy and fulfilled life in their home and community.

Lastly, please consider this; Due to the current wages for DSPs, I personally have a side cleaning job and a third part time job that I'm addition to my full time work as a DSP, adds up to earning a living wage. My coworkers also have part time jobs on their days off. The ones that don't work extra jobs are forced to receive food and rental assistance!

This is a shame and a sad reflection on an old value on human quality of life, that of DSPs and of the beautiful individuals that we serve.

The choice is simple. Your active response to this grave and serious need can elevate our society's understanding of the work that we do BUT most importantly, improve the quality of care of the human beings we support. Please consider the impact of DSP staff being exhausted and experiencing burn out to make ends meet while earning a disrespectful wage! The grueling constant stress, worry and anxiety over meeting basic needs in reality and the consistent staff changes are not helpful to the individuals that we have grown to care for and who require stability due to the horrors they have experienced at institutions like Fairview.

You have the opportunity NOW to make a drastic and positive change

Make the right choice.

Please.

Thank you for your time.

-Lori Asher  
Scappoose group home.