



Iowa Association of Community Providers Celebrates National Direct Support Professional (DSP) Recognition Week

Recognition Idea List

Dates: September 7-13, 2025 | Hashtag: #DSPRW2025

Below, you'll find budget-aware ideas you can run during DSP Week. Mix and match, and duplicate at different shift times to reach every DSP.

Tip: Snap photos (with consent) and post daily.

BUDGET-FRIENDLY / NO-COST

- Handwritten thank you notes from supervisors and executives – Be sure to make the praise specific and timely.
- Gratitude wall or digital kudos board; invite families and people served to add notes.
- Daily shout-outs on social with short staff spotlights; tag partners and use #DSPRW2025.
- Letter to the Editor from your CEO/board about the complex, skilled nature of frontline work.
- Peer-to-peer Excellence in Direct Support recognition - quick nominations and daily winners.
- Leadership ride along/shadow day - Execs work alongside a DSP and share what they learned.
- Open thank you mic at shift change or huddles for one week.
- Pass the praise chain - Each DSP passes a card with a specific example of great support.
- Have an office lobby? Loop a simple slideshow of kudos/stories.

LOW-COST APPRECIATION

- Snack cart or coffee run at varied times to reach all shifts.
- DIY care kits (travel lotion, granola bar, pen).
- Daily raffles, gift cards, preferred parking, or choose your shift day.
- Local discount booklet, ask businesses for DSP only coupons.
- Mini spa table (chair massage donated by a local school/vendor).
- Personalized certificates with a specific story of impact (include a copy for the personnel file).

RECOGNITION & ADVANCEMENT

- Offer one paid hour for a DSP-chosen online module or micro credential.
- Level up spotlight - Feature DSPs who completed new training; Have supervisor add a LinkedIn rec.
- Skill share lightning talks - 10-minute demos (visual supports, de-escalation tips, community hacks).

CULTURE & VOICE

- Reserve seats for DSPs on onboarding, safety, or scheduling committees.
- 30-minute AMA with leadership across shift (record and share).
- Anonymous micro-survey on a pain point (e.g., swaps); share one action you'll take next week.

COVERAGEAWARE REWARDS

- Raffle a paid shift off; supervisors cover the shift.
- Floating you-pick hours earned by taking part in recognition activities.
- Split celebrations (morning/evening) so every shift can attend.

COMMUNITY & MEDIA

- Request a mayor/county proclamation; take photos with DSPs and share.
- Issue a press release with photos/stories; invite local media to visit a site.
- Invite families/people served to send thank you notes or 30-sec videos (with consent). Ask vendors/partners to post appreciation and tag your agency all week.

FOOD & FESTIVITIES

- Picnic, potluck, or traveling taco bar (roll through multiple sites).
- Theme days (team shirt/decades/silly socks) + micro-raffles.
- Photo booth with a simple #DSPRW2025 frame; print quick keepsakes.