



21[•]NEXT COMMUNITIES

5 RESOURCES

Department Of Health Services
for Children with Special Need

<https://tinyurl.com/5xc5tc29>

National Association of
Councils

on Developmental Disabilities

<https://tinyurl.com/v4mtx4w>

Sheppard Pratt
Vocational Services and
supported Employment

<https://tinyurl.com/4kddymhm>

Melwood

<https://tinyurl.com/4d69abc3>

Abilities Network

<https://tinyurl.com/u8kzjxtn>

INTRODUCTION

My pathway into social services on behalf of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) was a natural but circuitous one. I come from a family of service providers - teachers, nurses, home health aides, members of various branches of the military, and people in service to the needs of others.

Caseloads of social workers are dense and happy endings are often the exception rather than the rule. However, I am fortunate enough to regularly expand my horizons, and develop and deepen my relationships with my clients in order to meet their individual needs. My role as a service coordinator requires me to link them to services based not only on their abilities and needs but their personal interests as well.

Service coordination for adults with I/DD is a lifelong commitment, yet many systems and services, and yes, careers, are finite. I remain committed to changing many of the aspects of the systems that shortchange my clients of dignity, choices, opportunities, and experiences afforded their peers.

5 TIPS



1. **Always** be respectful. You get what you give.
2. **Communication is key.** Learning how your client communicates is just as important as what they are communicating. Nonverbal cues, gestures, and body language can only be learned through spending time with a person and getting to know them. Learn their communication style, they have one!
3. **Follow the golden rule!** Treat others the same way you'd want to be treated. Avoid talking down to them or in front of them as if they are not in the room.
4. **Meet individuals where they are, that's where they met you.** Decide together where you want to go. Individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities have the right to make choices and work to support and facilitate their choices.
5. **Commit. Be consistent. Document.** Service support requires coordination between multiple agencies, providers, family members, and other caregivers. It is important to maintain accurate documentation to satisfy all legal, financial, and bureaucratic requirements to prevent gaps in service delivery and access to the greatest extent possible.



"Mother, sister, niece, daughter, friend, auntie, twin, lady, survivor, fighter, Ms. Danette." I get called a lot names, but it's what I answer to that matters the most.

Danette Tarvin