



COLLEGE OF DIRECT SUPPORT

PARTNER PROFILES

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DJK Enterprises: Small Oklahoma Agency Doing Big Things, Saving Money, Time With CDS & Therap

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DJK Enterprises is a small agency in a small southern Oklahoma town of approximately 17,000 people. We may be small, but we feel we are doing some very big things in the world of technology and online training to create a high quality, sustainable organization. And we're proud of the legacy we are creating in the process.

That old saying that "time is money" seems more and more relevant these days. With constant funding cutbacks due to the current economic climate in Oklahoma as well as across the country -- it seems that any money an agency can save is extraordinarily important to the organization and to the people it supports. The College of Direct Support (CDS) is a money-saving miracle for DJK Enterprises.

Although being a smaller agency, DJK of Ada, Oklahoma was one of the first in the state to start using CDS. DJK currently serves 45 individuals in four counties and employs about 100 staff members. In August 2008 our agency adopted the CDS curriculum and began using it to train our staff of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), Program Coordinators, House Supervisors, and Administrative Staff, including Jean Hayes, our Chief Executive Officer.

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ments without the high cost of travel statewide for various training sessions. By saving us that travel time and related expenses CDS saves us money.

When asked to comment on CDS, Michaela A. Bishop, Training Director for the Developmental Disabilities Services Division in Oklahoma, stated: "There are currently 64 contract agencies enrolled in CDS statewide out of about 110 agencies. The cost for CDS is about one-fifth the cost of university contracts for training classes. The cost of a course is a biggie in our current economic climate."

The benefits we derive from CDS didn't all happen overnight. We have encountered our obstacles, including staff members who were scared of change or who feared web-based instruction because of limited experience with computers, with new technologies or with online learning. It has taken some time, but we seem to have conquered or adapted to these challenges and have become a leader in online training for developmental disabilities professionals in Oklahoma.

After launching our efforts with CDS, we were invited to the first-ever conference that featured CDS and Therap Services – the two leaders in applying emerging technologies in the field of developmental disabilities. The name of the conference was "CDS-Therap: Side-by-Side Technology I." It was at that conference in Kansas in the fall of 2009 that we first heard about something called the "CDS-Therap bridge."

CDS trains and has helped us truly professionalize our workforce. Therap provides an online tool for streamlining documentation and record-keeping processes for service providers. Given their common goal of

streamlining provider processes by minimizing paper and maximizing efficiency and effectiveness, these two agencies built an online bridge between their technologies. The bridge is being used here and at other agencies around the country. And it works!

The bridge is a link between CDS and Therap's applications. The staff members of agencies that use Therap and the CDS, as DJK Enterprises does daily, can now get to a list of their current CDS lessons from their Therap Dashboard. All users from an agency which has the Therap-CDS bridge feature activated will see a "My CDS Training" section on the rightmost panel of their First Page and their Dashboard. This section will list the features of the bridge. The bridge is user friendly and took us only a few minutes to set up.

We have found that Therap and CDS are both powerful tools for improving the quality of our supports, but that together the individual power is magnified. Therap provides a means of efficiently and

effectively managing the data and information we need every hour of every day. CDS is actively empowering and developing our workforce. Together we enjoy some additional benefits.

Jean Hayes, our CEO, has observed that, "The use of both of these systems has brought our costs down dramatically. And we are excited to work toward being as near paperless as we can by the end of 2010. CDS has also made getting people trained to meet state requirements so much more convenient for us."

So how do we save money using these interconnected features? Here's the simplest, most basic example. Using the integrated system we have observed that we save at least 1 minute a day per staff member in log-in time and looking up log-in information. Now this may not sound like much, but that is approximately 2.5 hours per year per staff member. When we

multiply that by our 100 employees, that's a saving of 250 hours per year. There are many other related savings on paper, ink, and maintenance on printers and copiers, staff time for records and files and reports. We've found that those expenses pile up quickly and reducing them has a real impact on our budget and on the proportion of our budget that goes to direct support of persons with developmental disabilities.

At DJK we feel we are only at the beginning of drawing benefits from the integrated systems. We have plans for using other features in the works, such as CDS transcripts being transferred to the Therap Training Management System. This will create a central location to maintain all staff training and employment records while maintaining

direct access to the CDS website through the bridge.

Luann Taylor of DJK stated, "I believe it would be in the best interest of any agency to look into Therap and College of Direct Support to see how the bridge between these agencies can save you

both time and money."

If you would be interested in more information on the upcoming features I would encourage someone from your agency to attend a CDS/Therap conference. The schedule and locations of upcoming CDS/Therap conferences can be found at the website: www.therapservices.net.

In 2011 DJK will celebrate its 20th anniversary and we will look back on our use of CDS as a turning point in the history of DJK and its impact on our staff and those we serve.

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About CDS Partner Profiles

CDS Partner Profiles highlights the activities of state and local organizations that have integrated the College of Direct Support into efforts to elevate the preparation, performance, status, and compensation of direct support professionals (DSPs) and frontline supervisors and managers (FSMs). The purpose of the the CDS Partner Profiles is to identify and describe a variety of innovative and exemplary initiatives and activities into which the CDS has been integrated. CDS Partner Profiles are written by leaders of organizations that are actually engaged in these efforts.

College of Direct Support (CDS)
www.collegeofdirectsupport.com

The College of Direct Support (CDS) and its companion College of Frontline Supervision and Management (CFSM) are internet-delivered multimedia, competency-based training curricula for DSPs and FSMs supporting individuals with disabilities.

The CDS is available for review at: collegeofdirectsupport.com

For more information about the CDS, contact Bill Tapp at bill@collegeofdirectsupport.com or Donna Kosak at donna@collegeofdirectsupport.com or call toll-free, 877-353-2767

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