

Employment First & Advocacy Newsletter



Questions about employment or advocacy? Contact Tammy Smith, Employment & Advocacy Coordinator

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WHAT IS YOUR “WHY”?

DODD-Department of Developmental Disabilities has been sharing stories about “why” DODD staff and other community members chose to work in the DD field as well as “why” advocacy is important.

This month we will share some reasons “why” individuals with disabilities choose to work, as well as “why” learning advocacy skills can help on the path to employment. Understanding your “why” can help guide your choices and future!

“Why” work?

After reading the list below, ask yourself, “Why” do you want to work?

Some benefits of working include:

- Learning new things
- Earning money
- Meeting new people
- Helping others
- Contributing to the community
- Sharing what you have to offer
- Encouraging others
- Becoming part of a team
- Growing personally and professionally
- Gaining independence
- Reaching your goals

“Why” is advocacy important for employment?

Here are a few reasons:

- **Knowing yourself** helps to find jobs that match your likes, interests, and strengths.
- **Speaking up** helps those who support you to connect you to a job that matches your interests. You are also able to ask questions when needed and share ideas in the workplace once employed.
- **Problem solving** helps you to find solutions on your own or in a group at work to overcome challenges you may face.
- **Leadership skills** can help you to encourage others, advance at your job and be confident in the work that you do.
- **Knowing your rights and responsibilities** ensures that you are comfortable talking with your employer about any supports needed to be successful at work.

To improve your advocacy skills, ask yourself:

- What are two things you enjoy doing?
- When was the last time you spoke up for yourself?