

- DSP Spotlight -

July 2022

Nicole Darling



What do you like to do in your free time? In my free time I love going to the Cleveland Zoo, watching the Guardians play and going to the beach with my family. I also love taking hikes along the creek with my dog.

How did you start in the field? In August of 2018, I was a stay at home mom and struggling to find a job that would fulfill me. One day while visiting my aunt, she asked me if I wanted to be a provider with the company she receives services from. I asked her what the job was as she said, "just about everything you, me, and your siblings have done since you were a kid." That was all I needed to hear to know that this career path was the right one for me and I've never looked back.

Has there ever been anyone that has stood out to you as a mentor in this field? I've had a few mentors in this field, mostly my peers at the company I work for. They have been a true blessing to me, whether they're showing me the ropes of this field or just calling to say "hey". I've taken their lessons and applied them to both my work life and my personal life and I feel they have made me a better person. I've definitely grown a lot while being under their wings.

What is your favorite thing to do with the people you serve? My favorite thing to do with the people I serve would be to take them on a drive. It may sound strange, but sometimes you just need a casual drive even if there is no destination. I've noticed that sometimes an individual will open up and talk more if we are just riding around somewhere and it gives me the chance to really get to know them. It's also a tactic I use to turn around a sad day.

What is your favorite part of being a Direct Support Professional? My favorite part of being a DSP is being an outside source who is there to help, listen, and encourage. We've all had those moments in life where we needed guidance but wanted an unbiased opinion. Having someone help weigh the pros and cons instead of telling you what they feel is best for you can be very beneficial.

What makes Nicole such a great DSP?: I have observed Nicole working with an individual at Special Olympics and other community events and activities. She works very hard and is very attentive to the individual she serves. Her job is not easy, but she is always very observant, caring and respectful to the needs of the individual in her care. I have observed many different providers over the years due to my daughter's experiences and Nicole is excellent.

Thank you for your outstanding contributions to helping people with developmental disabilities and their families in Medina County. Thank you for sharing your dedication and commitment to making a difference in the lives of others every single day.

