

My name is Natalie Williams and I am a DDS Case Manager/ Support Broker in the Self Determination division in Wallingford. Every day I work with individuals and families that depend on DDS funding to ensure that some of their very basic needs are met. I work with people who without the funding we provide would not be able to attend necessary medical appointments, manage their finances without being exploited, or even maintain safe and healthy living environments. I also experience first hand the struggle of families who are faced with the dilemma of earning a living and providing care for a son/daughter who requires constant supervision and my agency does not have the funding to meet their need.

As an agency employee I have witnessed the exhaustive measures that we've taken to make cuts and even when we have only done so as a last resort it still results in a reduction in services. The people that I work with are vulnerable and struggle with many activities that you and I take for granted. We all recognize that tough times require tough decisions, but responsible and compassionate decisions are what makes sense in the "business" of human services, and my Department is just that, in the overall public system our human service agencies should be deemed vital and valuable because the people that we support are just that. In good conscience I implore you to look at other measures to balance the budget that do not impact the most vulnerable of our population and send a message that you value the disabled in Connecticut.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Natalie Williams".

Natalie Williams
11 Ann Street
East Haven, CT