

Although I am disappointed and saddened at any proposal to cut DDS funding, I always feel that perhaps you somehow just don't get it. My son Steven was treated for a brain tumor when he was four months old and the surgery required to remove this deadly intruder left him as helpless as a baby and completely dependent on others for his care. He is now thirty years old and I am sixty-four. I ask that you each close your eyes and imagine how your family would continue to have any hope if this was your son. We cared for him for fifteen years at home and did our best to meet his needs and let him know that he is very much loved. He can walk only with assistance and mostly uses a wheelchair, he has seizures, cerebral palsy, vision problems, orthopedic problems (needs braces on his legs) and is non-verbal and has severe intellectual deficits. Can you picture yourself changing the diapers of your adult children? The family becomes very isolated and activities outside the home are almost non-existent. There are no vacations but probably the worst is the sleep deprivation. Let's not forget the boss (I worked for DCF) who makes no allowances for your special circumstance and it goes on and on. We were so very fortunate to secure Steven a place at the Oak Hill group home in Middletown, where we live. He has done so well and is cared for by a dedicated, loving and competent staff who partner with us to be sure Steven is happy and active and receiving all the emotional and medical support he needs. I often think of what would have happened if his placement never came and the thought terrifies me. Honestly, I had moments of thinking I would take my own life and take Steven with me...in my darkest moments I thought that such an act of desperation was the only way I could keep Steven safe. I know that many of the families on the waiting list have felt this piercing hopelessness and I pray that you fully fund DDS for 2016-17 so that these folks can see some light, know that our politicians care for the most vulnerable citizens and recognize that continued slashing of the budget will cause more families to slowly disintegrate. Many, many families are hoping you will spend a few moments in their shoes, advocate for their children and see that they are protected from harm. Please help us.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Allison  
Middletown