



Direct Support Professional Certification Initiatives From Across the Country

Joseph M. Macbeth
President/Chief Executive Officer

Dan Hermreck
Chief Innovation Officer



NADSP

NADSP VISION STATEMENT

A world with a highly qualified and professional direct support workforce that partners with, supports and empowers people with disabilities to lead a life of their choosing.

NADSP MISSION STATEMENT

To elevate the status of direct support professionals by improving practice standards, promoting system reform, and advancing their knowledge, skills and values.



Making a world of difference
in people's lives

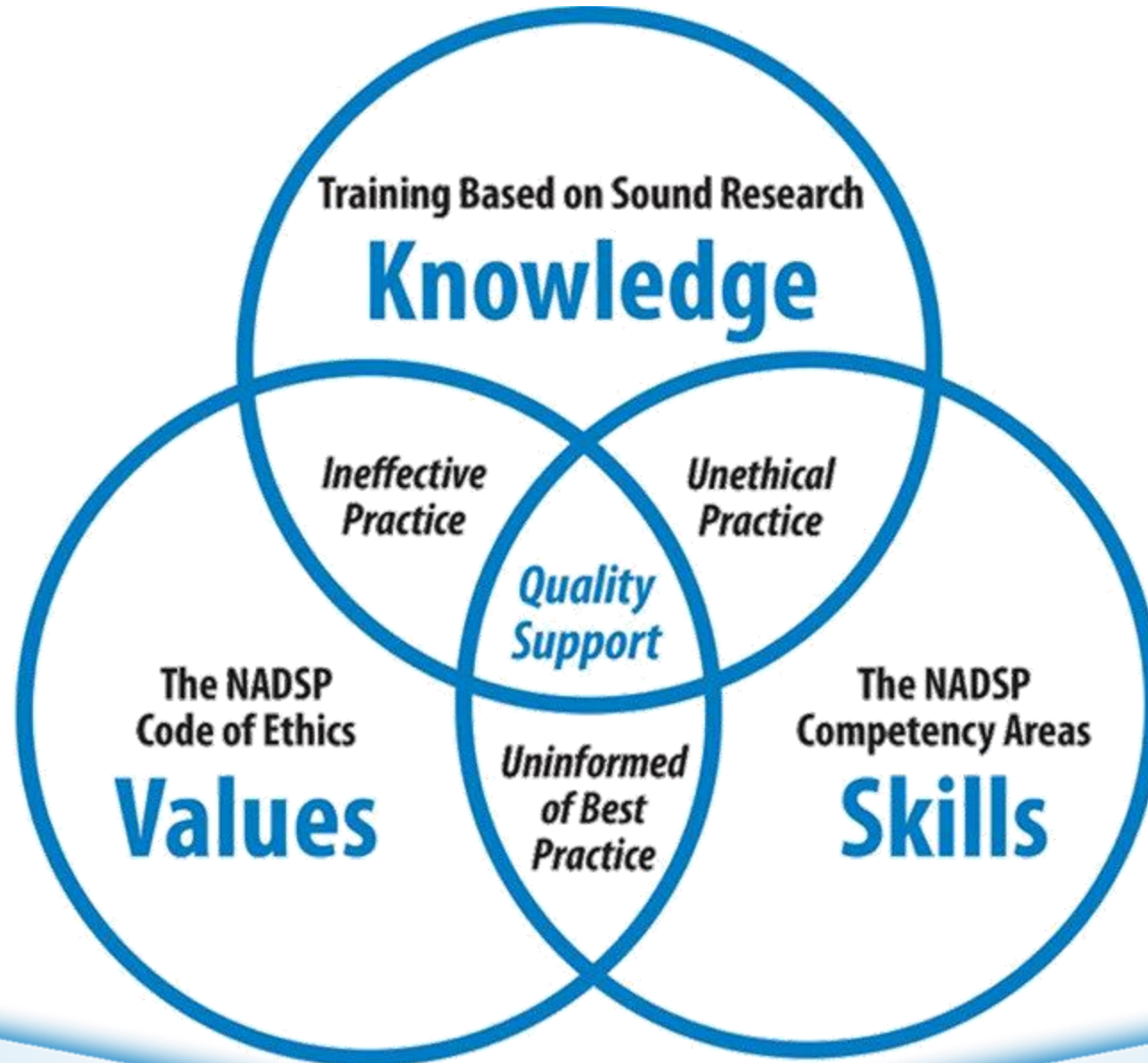


What is Quality in I/DD Support Systems?

“Quality is defined at the point of interaction between the staff member and the individual with a disability.”

John F. Kennedy, Jr. (1996)

Components of Quality



NADSP E-Badge Academy



2 Major Badge Categories for DSPs



Accredited Education badges focus on Knowledge.

To claim an Accredited Education badge, a user must upload *training records* documenting the completion of NADSP-accredited training.



Core Competency badges focus on Skills and Values.

To claim a Core Competency badge, a user must upload a *testimonial* describing an example of their work that meets the requirements for the badge.



Respectful Communication badge



By earning Respectful Communication, you will demonstrate the following:

1C. Communicates with the individual and his or her family in a respectful and culturally appropriate way.

This badge is part of the Communication CMS Core Competency. It also aligns with the NADSP Competency Area of Communication.

Respectful Communication badge



In writing your testimonial for Respectful Communication, you must address the following prompts:

- 1. Describe an example in which your use of respectful communication had a positive impact on a person you support.**
- 2. Explain how your use of respectful communication aligns with the NADSP Code of Ethics.**

From our User Guidebook...

- Ultimately, the E-Badge Academy is based on the idea that you are a professional who regularly uses your professional knowledge and professional skills to support people, and that you do so within the boundaries established by a code of professional ethics.
- We want to see the NADSP-accredited trainings you have completed, but we also want to hear about how you applied that training to real situations you encountered on-the-job.
- NADSP wants to give you credit for the good work you are already doing, but we need you to document the professional nature of your work through your badge submissions.

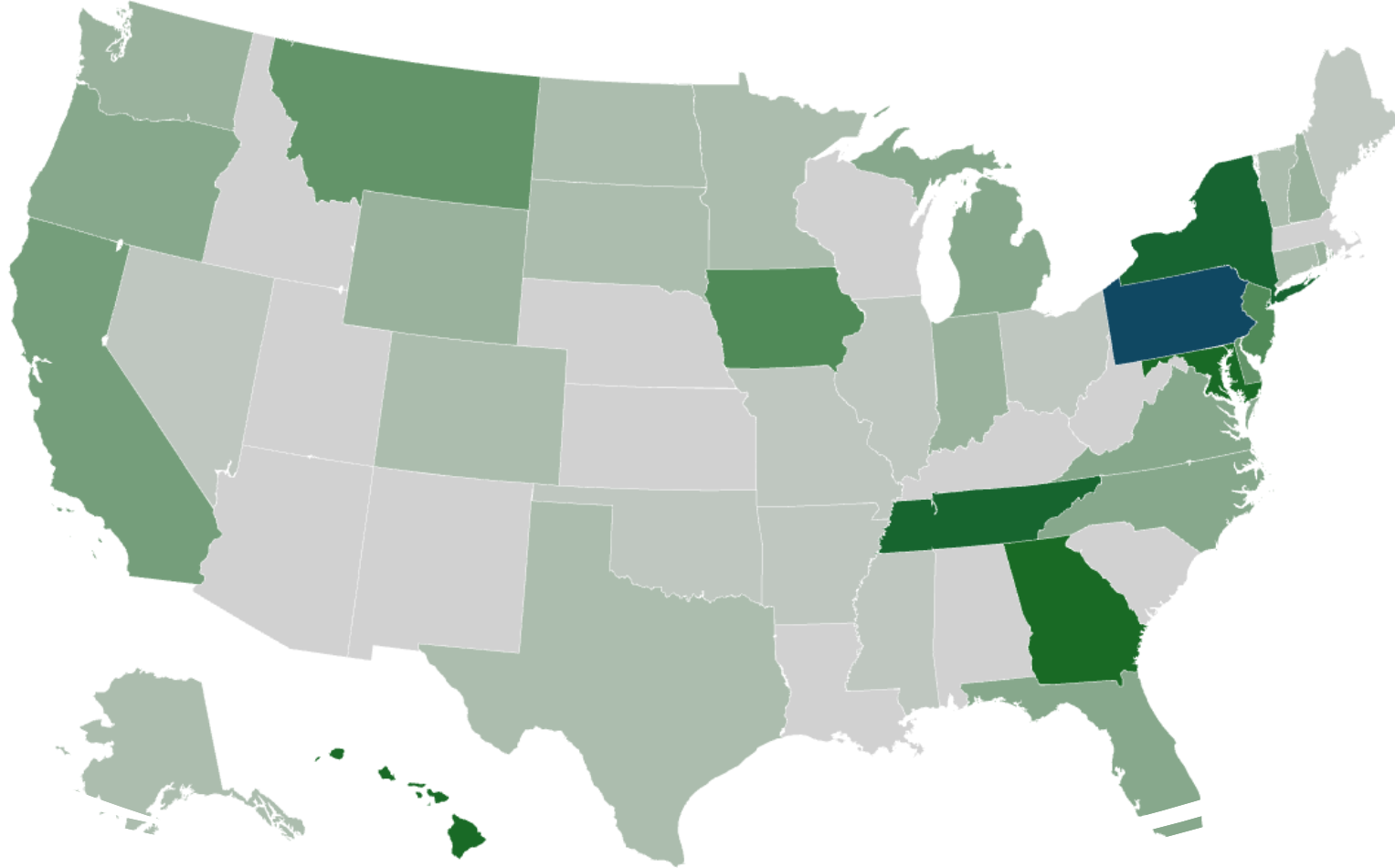


From our User Guidebook...

- We also hope that the process of applying for badges will provide you with an opportunity to reflect on your work.
- Reflection can be a valuable tool for professional growth, but often DSPs are so busy moving from one task to another that there is rarely an opportunity to stop and reflect.
- Please use this time working in the E-Badge Academy as an opportunity to think about those moments from your career that you are most proud of.
- Think about what went well and why it went well. Think about the skills and the values that you brought to that moment.

Since launch we have awarded the following certifications nationwide:

DSP-I	7,172
DSP-II	3,641
DSP-III	2,614
FLS	1,877
Total Certs	15,304



E-Badge Geography

- There is E-Badge Academy participation at some level in 37 states.
- The amount of involvement varies between a single provider contracting for their own access and statewide efforts.



Alaska

Alaska

- Alaska uses a centralized certification program run by the University of Alaska-Anchorage Center for Human Development.
- The UAA Center for Human Development has developed their own NADSP-accredited curriculum that is used to meet the accredited education requirements for certification.
- The program is online and available to DSPs statewide, including in some very remote locations.
- Training materials developed by UAA have been accredited by NADSP and are used to meet the accredited education requirements.
- The program provides mentoring and support for the participating DSPs.

Alaska Bonus Structure

- \$1000 for DSP-I (paid to both the DSP and the employer, \$2000 total)
- \$1000 for DSP-II (paid to both the DSP and the employer, \$2000 total)
- \$1600 for DSP-III (paid to both the DSP and the employer, \$3200 total)
- Additional bonuses are available for completing accredited training hours. (\$600 for the first 50 hours, and \$800 for the second 50 hours, these are also paid to both the DSP and the employer)

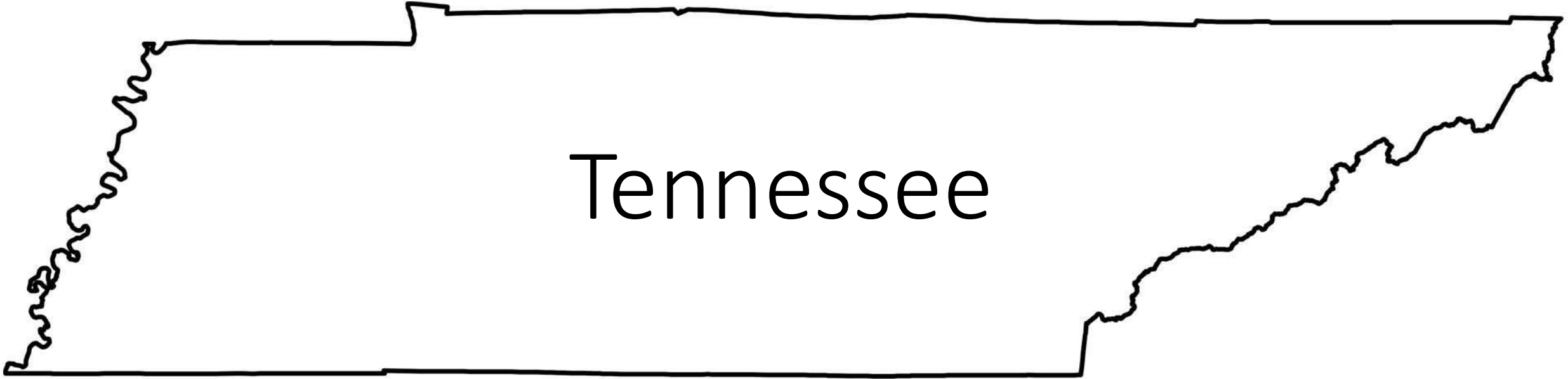
Alaska
certifications:

DSP-I	97
DSP-II	49
DSP-III	47
FLS	0
Total Certs	193

A Reflection from an Alaskan Direct Support Professional

"Before the certification. I didn't understand that disabled clients can achieve their goals. I was a direct care provider, and I would always take care of the client....DSP Certification program helps you to have a mindset to help the client use support to complete their objectives and goals professionally. It teaches you to have patience and open-minded, fully care for the client you support. It teaches you to have passion for what you do for the disabled client."

An Alaska DSP



Tennessee

Tennessee

- Tennessee's certification program is overseen by TennCare, in partnership with three managed care organizations (MCOs).
- TennCare contracted with NADSP for a large block of seats. Individual providers are recruited by an MCO, and NADSP allocates the contracted seats among the providers at TennCare's direction.

Tennessee Bonus Structure

- **DSP-I:** \$500 bonus plus a \$500 “training time” payment.
 - Employers received a \$250 incentive for each DSP-I.
- **DSP-II:** \$1000 bonus plus \$500 “training time” payment.
 - Employers received a \$500 incentive for each DSP-II.
- **DSP-III:** \$1500 bonus plus \$150 as a “training time” payment.
 - Employers received a \$750 incentive for each DSP-III.
- **FLS:** \$750 bonus



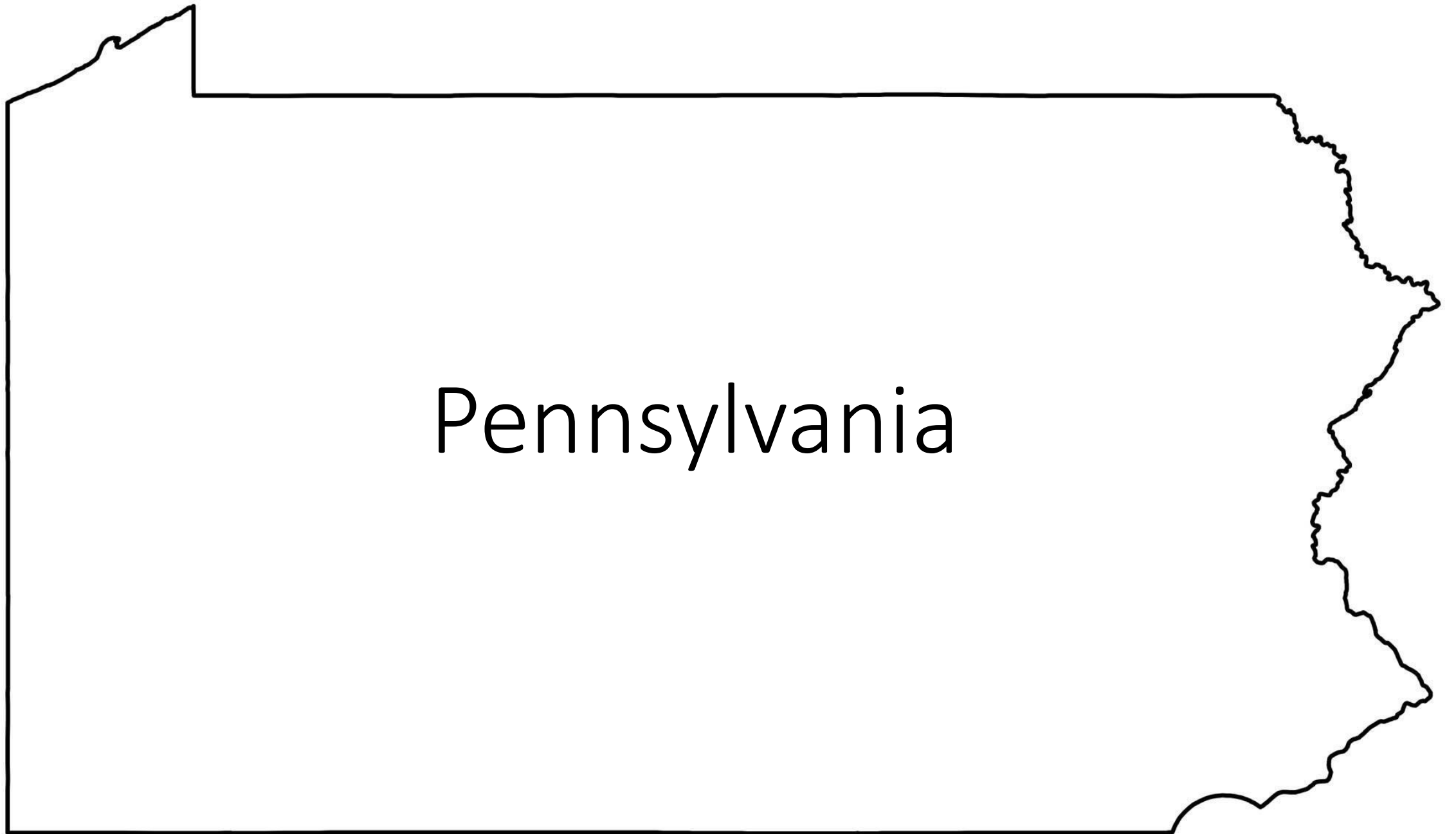
Tennessee
certifications:

DSP-I	205
DSP-II	148
DSP-III	123
FLS	51
Total Certs	527

A Reflection from a Tennessee Organization Leader

“The opportunity to gain professional credentials is a source of pride for everyone involved and has had a positive impact on employees and agency alike. Core Services Direct Support Professionals have become involved in DSP Advocacy efforts on both a national and state level. The agency DSP retention rate continues to rise, while the DSP vacancy rate has plummeted. The NADSP e-Badge Academy is a wonderful opportunity to create a virtuous cycle of growth and learning for employees and agency alike.”

A Tennessee Executive Director



Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania

- Pennsylvania is implementing a value-based payment program for IDD providers, one aspect of which is based on the percentage of DSPs and frontline supervisors who are nationally certified.
- Both NADSP and NADD certifications are accepted.
- This has created a tremendous incentive for Pennsylvania providers to encourage DSPs and supervisors to become certified.
- NADSP has accredited the state's MyODP training program.
- There is no statewide “bonus” structure for Pennsylvania DSPs, but incentive structures exist within individual providers.

Pennsylvania
certifications:

DSP-I	2,728
DSP-II	1,067
DSP-III	748
FLS	1,053
Total Certs	5,596

A Reflection from a Pennsylvania Direct Support Professional

"Since I started the program, I have been able to reflect on my career and appreciated how noble of a profession I have. I feel more competent. I carry myself with confidence and pride in my day-to-day activities. I appreciate the NADSP program for the opportunity to advance my career."

A Pennsylvania DSP



New York

New York

- New York has a multifaceted certification program.
 - A certification pilot for a group of provider agencies.
 - A micro-credential program linked to certification at several SUNY campuses.
 - An expansion of the certification pilot for DSPs who are state workers.

SUNY Bonus Structure

- DSP-I: \$750 bonus
- DSP-II: \$750 bonus

- Tuition, fees, and books will be paid for by the program.
- Additional resources may be available to help with other financial needs (transportation, childcare, etc.).

New York State Worker Bonus Structure

- **DSP-I:** \$500 bonus
- **DSP-II:** \$750 bonus
- **DSP-III:** \$1000 bonus
- **FLS:** \$1000 bonus

New York Pilot Bonus Structure

- **DSP-I:** \$500 bonus, plus a \$750 "training hours" reimbursement to the employer
- **DSP-II:** \$750 bonus, plus a \$750 "training hours" reimbursement to the employer
- **DSP-III:** \$1000 bonus
- **FLS:** \$1000 bonus, plus a \$500 "training hours" reimbursement to the employer



New York
Certifications:

DSP-I	1,991
DSP-II	1,249
DSP-III	865
FLS	476
Total Certs	4,581

A Few Takeaways from UMN Evaluation Pilot 1.0

- **Staff, LPAs & organizations were satisfied with their experiences**
 - Over 80% of LPAs and org leaders were satisfied or very satisfied with the program. Staff overwhelmingly reported that participation strengthened their skills, confidence, and professional identity.
- **Staff, LPAs & organizations were also satisfied with impact**
 - 80% of LPAs reported positive impacts on staff competencies, 63% reported positive impacts on organizational culture. 79% of organizational leaders reported positive impacts on people receiving services, with many citing more person-centered supports and improved staff professionalism.
- **Impact on workforce stability outcomes**
 - Early data indicated that certified DSPs turned over at substantially lower rates than non-certified peers—11% vs 44% in 2022 and 8% vs 38% in 2023
 - There is evidence that turnover declined for *both* groups in participating organizations.

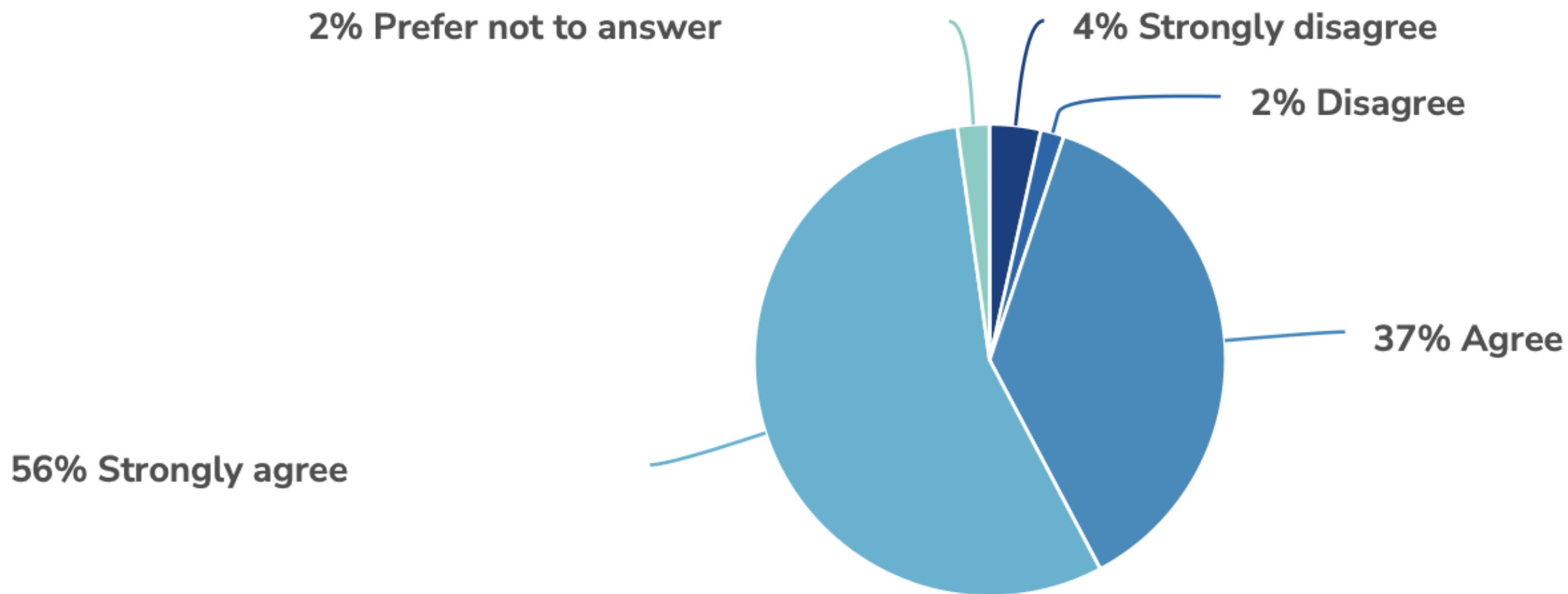
A Reflection from a New York Local Administrator

"I have worked for my agency for almost 27 years and I have never seen a group of staff so energized and proud of the work that they have done when writing their testimonials and achieving a level of certification...E-Badge Academy has taught our staff responsibility, commitment, self-respect, and integrity which is something I have always seen in these staff but they did not see it in themselves; they finally realize the work they are doing is what matters most."

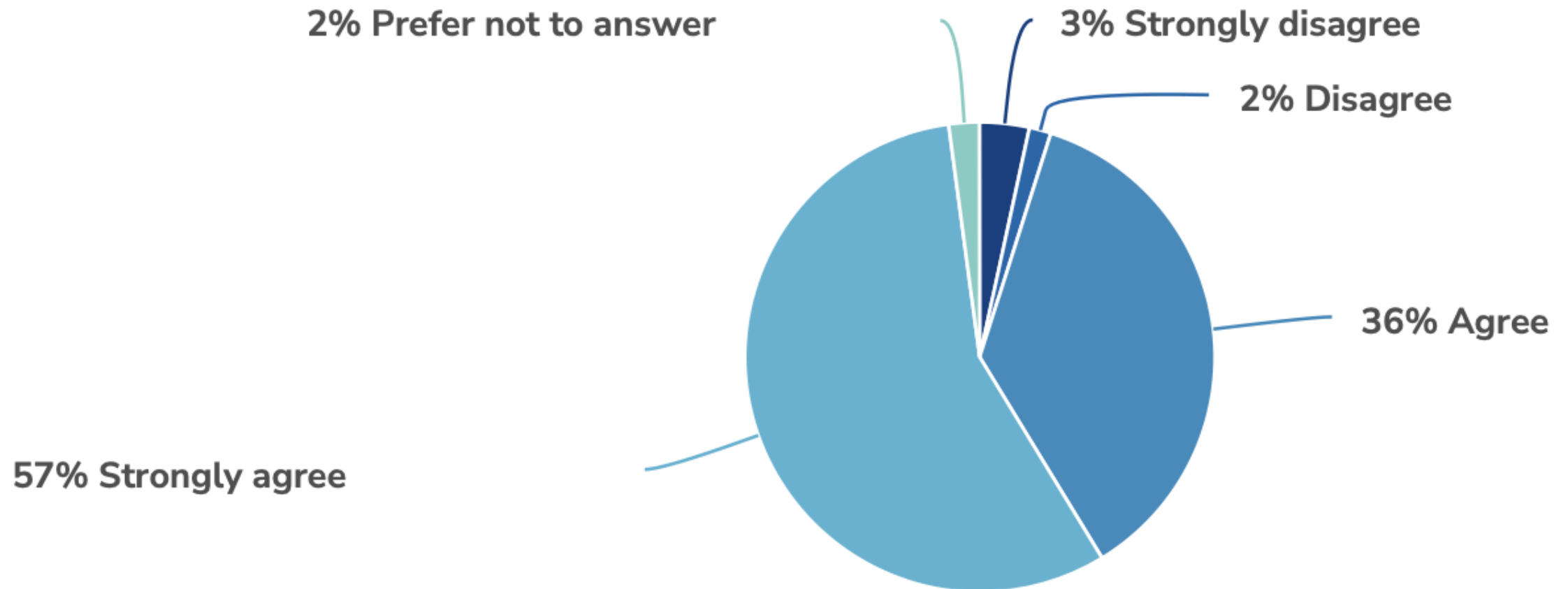
A Reflection from a New York Direct Support Professional

"Now that I've completed the NADSP program, I feel accomplished, empowered, and better equipped to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those I support. The journey was challenging at times, but it was also very rewarding. I'm proud of the growth I've experienced, both personally and professionally. I also feel more recognized and valued in my role, knowing that the NADSP credential is a national standard for excellence in direct support. This program has not only boosted my skills but has also renewed my sense of purpose and commitment to the work I do every day."

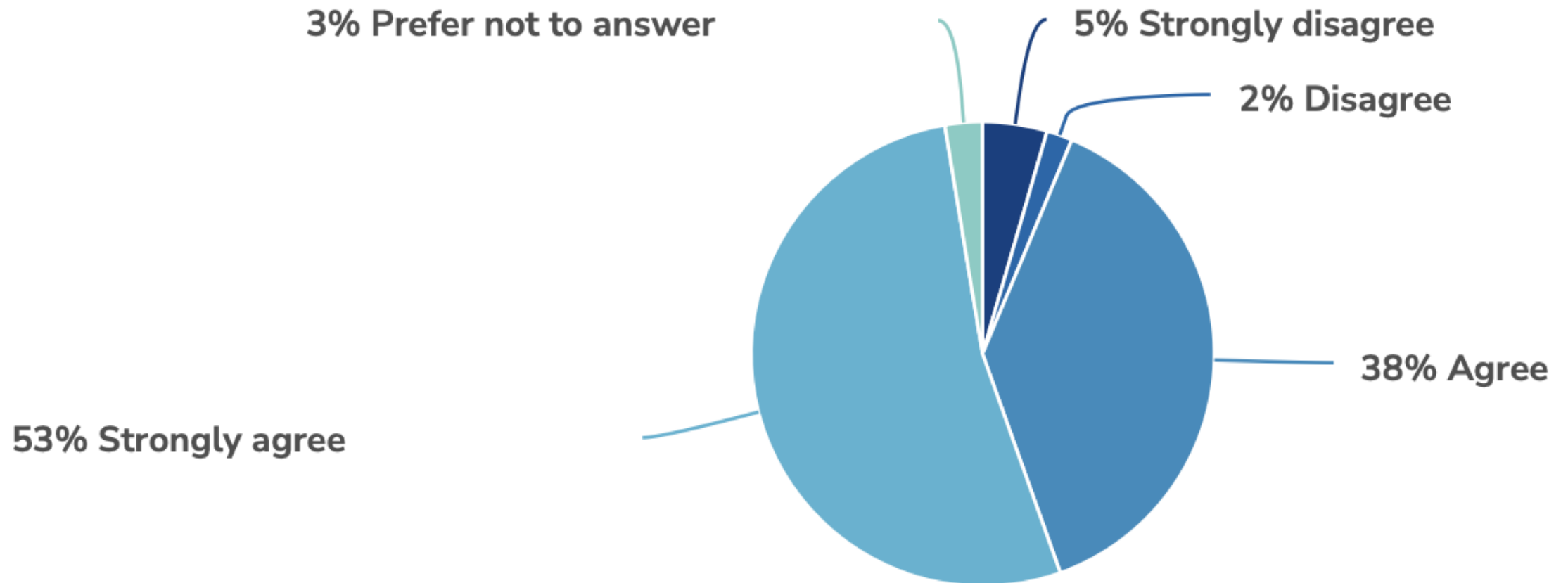
After completing testimonials in the E-badge Academy, I have a better understanding of my **professional skills**.



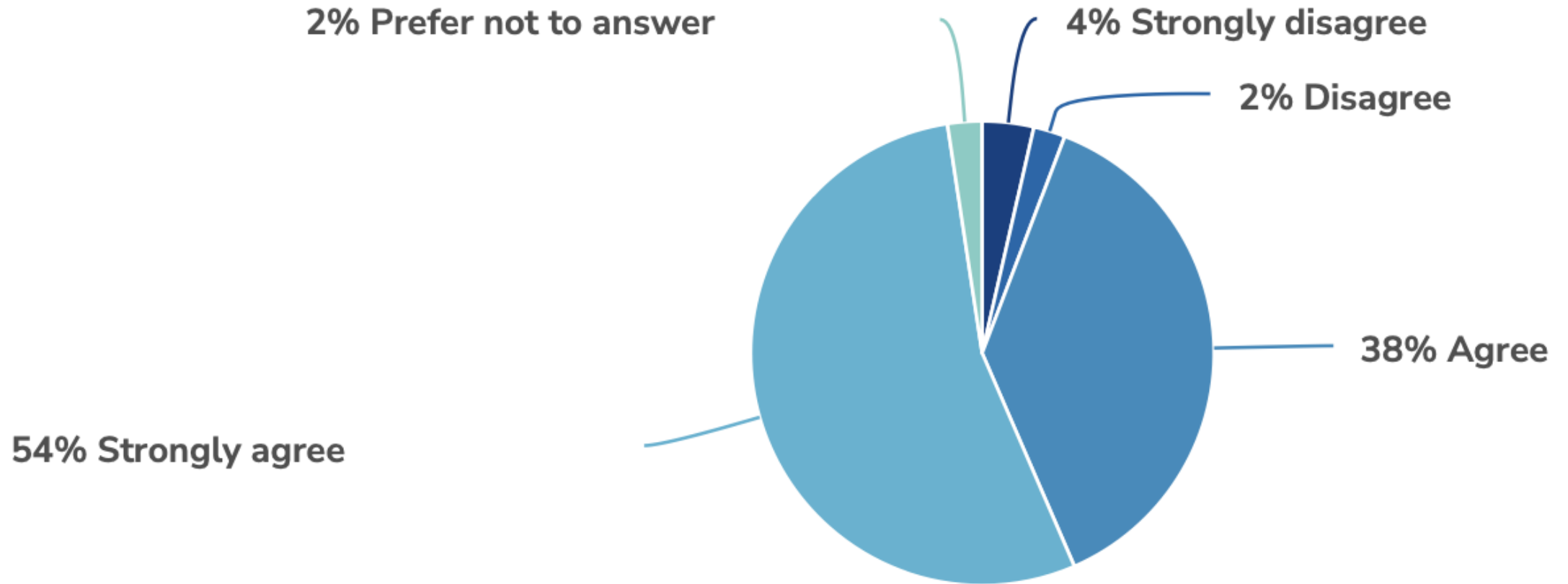
After completing testimonials in the E-badge Academy, I have a better understanding of **professional ethics** related to my work in direct support.



The E-badges I've earned by participating in the E-Badge Academy have **positively impacted** my work.



After completing testimonials in the E-badge Academy, I have a better understanding of how to provide **high quality support** to the person(s) I support.



Contact Us!

Joe Macbeth

jmacbeth@nadsp.org

Dan Hermreck

dhermreck@nadsp.org



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in people's lives

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