



Why Big Organizations Fail People with Disabilities: And What We Can Do About It

Summary:

Large IDD service organizations often prioritize compliance with funders over real quality for people with disabilities. Hierarchical structures block direct feedback, letting bureaucracy—not lived experience—define outcomes.

Highlights:

- **Two “Customers”:** Funders control resources; people with IDD have little influence.
- **Example – Chris:** “Challenging behavior” in a noisy, rotating-staff facility vanished in a small, quiet home—proving environment drives behavior.
- **Structural Issues:** Layers of management, control-focused supervision, accreditation based on capacity not results.
- **Better Path:**
 - Certify actual support practices and outcomes.
 - Use field evidence, not just audits.
 - Favor smaller, person-centered organizations.

Key Message:

Quality starts at the DSP–person interaction, not in boardrooms. Accountability must center on the individual with IDD.

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