

GEAUGA COUNTY *BOARD OF* DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

*Helping Individuals Live, Learn
and Earn in Our Community*

ANNUAL Report 2015



**2014**

was a very busy year for the Metzenbaum Center, as new state and federal rules continued to change the Developmental Disabilities system in Ohio. In 2014, the federal government's Center for Medicaid/Medicare Services (CMS) officially announced that it is a conflict of interest for Medicaid funded programs to be operated by the same agency that determines an individual's service plan.

In Ohio, county boards of developmental disabilities (CBDD) are the case managers who assess, determine client needs and write service plans. To meet CMS' new requirement, all County Boards of Developmental Disabilities have until 2024 to completely "privatize" their traditional adult and transportation services.

According to new Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities' (DODD) rules, county boards must become the facilitators and overseers of services. County boards must recruit, train and otherwise support a pool of private companies/agencies and individuals who will directly provide needed services for individuals with developmental disabilities. Pools of providers are required to give individuals free choice of providers for all direct service care. In addition, DODD requires county boards to contribute about 36% of the funding to cover these services. This funding is referred to as Medicaid Match. For Geauga County, the Medicaid match is more than \$3 million and growing.

The Metzenbaum staff has been busy adjusting to these new rules. We are transitioning our day programs and transportation to private providers. MSI, Inc. has assumed the operation of the workshop, day habilitation programs and the satellite sites in Middlefield. In addition, MSI has assumed most of our transportation routes. More than 15 other providers are currently providing employment, workshop or day habilitation services to Geauga County residents with developmental disabilities.

Our Employment First Manager has grown the pool of employment providers to five contract agencies. Our Transportation Manager has developed a group of five contract agencies and a number of client selected individuals who will provide transportation. Overall, we have more than 26 private providers who are partnering with the Metzenbaum Center to make sure that local individuals with developmental disabilities have the resources and supports they need to live, learn and earn in our community. That has always been our goal, and will continue to be the goal in this ever-changing landscape.

With Warm Regards,

Superintendent Don Rice





EMPLOYMENT FIRST

The Employment First program currently has partnerships with five local agencies to provide employment services to Geauga County residents with developmental disabilities: MSI, Inc., Siffrin, Two Foundation, Creative Life & Work Services (CLW) and Kiononia. Over the past year, many strides have been made to ensure individuals with developmental disabilities have opportunities for gainful employment, including:

- ◆ A collaboration with the Geauga County ESC to work with youth transitioning into adulthood, ensuring a smooth transition from school-aged services to adult services, while discussing provider options to assist in community employment.
- ◆ The creation of an evaluation tool for Habilitation Integration, which will be sent to private providers to measure how they are integrating their day programs with the community.
- ◆ Continued collaboration with Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, in accordance to the Employment First Initiative
- ◆ Administration of Employment First assessments for individuals who would like to work in a sheltered workshop. This is required to justify why the individual applying cannot work in the community.

Moving forward through the rest of 2015 and 2016, Employment First will continue to work with the Geauga County ESC and local schools to help assist individuals transition from youth services. A specific focus will include the potential development of a Summer Youth Experience. As always, there will be a consistent effort to establish new partnerships within the Community Employment effort, as well as collaboration with SSAs and individual's support teams to explore where that individual is on their path to community employment, focusing on the services and supports needed to help them accomplish their community employment goals.



HELP ME GROW/EARLY INTERVENTION

In 2015, Help Me Grow/Early Intervention has increased its outreach efforts to include a variety of local entities, including:

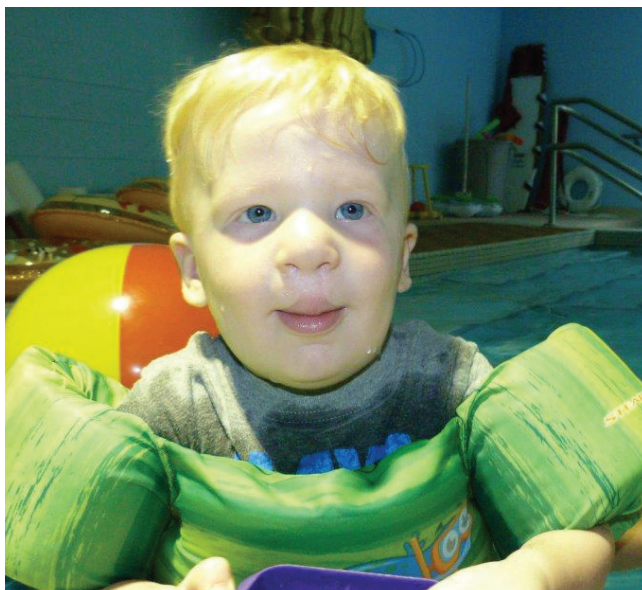
- ◆ Amish Well Child Clinic and Amish Birthing Center
- ◆ Chagrin Falls Community Center
- ◆ Hannah's Home
- ◆ University Hospitals
- ◆ Geauga County Day Cares
- ◆ General Health District
- ◆ Local Pediatricians

In addition, Play, Learn and Grow groups have expanded to include:

- ◆ Ledgemont Elementary
- ◆ Middlefield Library
- ◆ Bainbridge Library
- ◆ Middlefield Splash Park
- ◆ Burton Elementary
- ◆ Additional play groups at the Metzenbaum Center

We also constructed a special event, Night To Shine, to honor the children in our programs, helping them to showcase what makes them unique. This event was held during Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in March.

Outreach is a critical piece of the Early Intervention/Help Me Grow programs. Families are able to connect with each other, sharing the services they received at no cost through our programs, helping to ensure that children with developmental disabilities are receiving the services and supports they need prior to transitioning to early childhood services. Earlier in 2015, we were monitored for Transition Compliance, to ensure that children turning three have transitioned to an appropriate preschool setting to meet the individual needs of children in a timely manner. Our program received 100% compliance.



The Early Intervention program continues to take part in the Evidence Based Practice Coaching Model for delivery of services. Our team of professionals provides services in the natural environment of the child. Young children tend to thrive when they are familiar with their surroundings and with the people and objects that are important and comfortable to them. For young children with disabilities, these reassuring surroundings are an important part of their early intervention services. Our natural environments philosophy help children practice new skills while reaping the full benefits of professional intervention services in the comfort of their own home. ◆



COMMUNITY & RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Thus far, 2015 has seen an increase in residential opportunities throughout Geauga County for individuals with developmental disabilities. A new person-centered service plan and assessment has been created, in accordance with a new state mandate, and we have experienced an increase in private provider agencies that are certified to provide care and support to Geauga County residents with developmental disabilities.

The number of individuals requesting case management services continues to increase, with many of the requests needing assistance in finding community employment. There will be a continued push with Employment First to find opportunities for gainful employment.

Looking toward the future, we are placing an emphasis on identifying individuals with a developmental disability at the earliest age possible. This will help to ensure that they receive the program services and supports they need immediately, while making transitions to future services smoother.

TRANSPORTATION

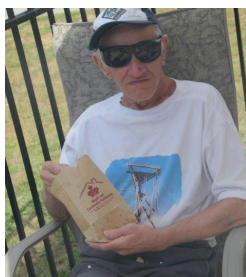
In accordance to the CMS ruling, the transportation department at the Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities is working on increasing partnerships with private providers to completely transition transportation operations from the Board. Currently, three partnerships have been established: MSI, RaeArc and Services for Independent Living.

MSI is currently transitioning to take over all day habilitation/workshop transportation, while we continue to focus on finding additional private providers capable of supplying transportation needs for individuals to get to and from employment. Our focus over the course of the next year will be to identify additional private providers and offer them the resources they need to become qualified transportation providers.

INTERMEDIATE CARE FACILITY (ICF)



The goal of the ICF is to provide a safe environment where local individuals with developmental disabilities can be healthy, independent, self-determined and enjoy a greater quality of life. This is done by offering permanent housing options to individuals, while ensuring that all medical and personal needs are cared for.



Over the last couple of years, many changes have been made to the ICF. Four houses were renovated, downsizing to 25 individuals was complete and continuous efforts have been made to ensure compliance with new state and federal mandates. Currently, we are serving 25 individuals, each with their own bedroom and bathroom, allowing them to have privacy when they desire and be social with others living in the same facility.

Going into the next year, we have a renewed focus on community outings and inclusion with the community. The goal of the GCBDD is to help individuals live, learn and earn in the community, and hosting outings that integrate the individuals we serve with the general public helps to accomplish that goal. We have enjoyed many outings that brought the community together in 2015, including a Family Fun Day and community concert, and we look forward to providing similar opportunities over the course of the next year.

RECREATION

The recreation opportunities made available through the Metzenbaum Center offer local individuals with developmental disabilities the chance to pursue their recreational passions, from Special Olympics to horseback riding. Each month, we hold dinner clubs, allowing athletes to socialize with each other and talk about the sports and activities they are passionate about.

This past year, our athletes experienced great successes in basketball and swimming. Among our three basketball teams, one team made it to the state tournament, the first time in that team's history it has accomplished the feat! Additionally, we were able to take ten swimmers to the Ohio State University natatorium for the state swim meet. We couldn't be any more proud of our athletes!

Among the programs offered this past year, we were able to include basketball, swimming, bowling, volleyball, track and field, golf, softball (both team and skills) and soccer. We play games against teams from Medina, Ashtabula, Lorain, Lake, Summit and Portage counties, as well as other local teams with available schedules.



Community integration is a primary focus for the recreation program, and we are happy to welcome a partnership with Hawken School. Through this partnership, varsity soccer and basketball players from the school come to the Metzenbaum Center to play alongside our athletes and help them improve their performance.

Swimming in the Metzenbaum pool is offered to individuals both currently served at the Metzenbaum Center, as well as local private providers and senior citizens from the West Geauga Senior Center.

We also schedule a variety of field trips to local attractions, including Recreation Unlimited, Punderson Camp and Fieldstone Farms for horseback riding.

Moving into next year, we will continue to focus on providing a variety of recreational opportunities, while working to increase community integration among our programs.



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