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- Celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month - **Statewide efforts recognize people with developmental disabilities achieving** **success within their local communities.**

Look for news and information on the subject at www.dodd.ohio.gov throughout March.

1. Enthusiastic Participants Gather at Kickoff to Ohio's Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Celebration

More than 350 participants representing at least 29 counties gathered in the Ohio Statehouse Atrium in Columbus on the morning of March 4, to celebrate *Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month*. Traveling from as far away as Lucas, Cuyahoga, and Hamilton counties, buses, vans, cars, and various other modes of mobility rolled into the downtown Columbus venue to join in the annual kickoff celebration.

Individuals with disabilities, family members, staff, service providers, legislators, and other stakeholders in the developmental disabilities community enthusiastically participated in the event, hosted by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) in cooperation with Ohio Public Images (OPI) and the Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB). The crowd was likely the most diverse and geographically-representative group ever to attend the kickoff, according to OPI Board members.

This year's program (see <http://dodd.ohio.gov/DDAwarenessMonth.htm>) included speakers representing the Ohio General Assembly, governmental agencies serving the developmental

disabilities community, and many people with disabilities, celebrating self-advocacy and the results realized in pursuing abilities and interests with the help of supportive families, staff, and local communities. OPI executive director Lon Mitchell notes, “We extend special thanks to all who took the time to come to Columbus this year and participate in this enthusiastic gathering. It is very exciting to see the energy and the interaction at this event grow stronger each year.”

Quotes and photos tell the rest of the story ...

“ There are many stories to tell across Ohio, of the strides you are making in your communities. And, together, we are creating more of these stories here today, and every day. ”
- Michael Rench, Administrator, Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission



Every Picture Tells a Story

The statewide ‘Just Like You’ DD Awareness Month theme was apparent both in clothing choices and in spirit at the Kickoff Event. The theme reinforces the fact that people with disabilities have individual interests, desires, and feelings, just like everyone else does.

“ How many of you were active in getting the words ‘mental retardation’ removed from the names of Ohio agencies that serve you? ” – (Above, top) Hands begin to be raised, applause gains momentum.



Employees of the *Just-A-Buck* Store in Parma take the podium and make one thing perfectly clear ...

“The most important thing is customer service!”

Pictured are (front row) John Neal, Theresa Koelliker, Robert Weinbroer and Sara Schultz, Just-A-Buck employees. Second row: Store manager Kim Pritchard and supervisor Rhonda Guddy, along with with Lon Mitchell (far right), executive director of Ohio Public Images, the nonprofit organization that coordinates Ohio’s DD Awareness Month activities.



“I created the Allen County Board’s new logo with this in mind – I wanted to express a sense of community.” – Bonnie Boutin, Allen County self-advocate and artist (at podium)

“ My Life Got Much Better with Assistive Technology.” – Joe Vance, Allen County self-advocate and electronics enthusiast (seated)



There are many PATHS within the Statehouse! (L. to R.) State Representative Barbara Sears and Mark Davis (OPRA), join PATHS representatives Stacey Krohn, Beverly Bradshaw, Jamie Cummins, Barbara Kost, Christy King, and Jeffrey Wright, along with DODD Director John Martin.

“PATHS training helped me think about my job as a career – made me feel good about what I do.”
-Beverly Bradshaw, PATHS graduate

More about DD Awareness Month in *Pipeline Quarterly* winter '09-'10, publishing soon.



2. Awareness Activities Across Ohio, Part II - A Marvelous Mix

As in the March 3 issue of *Pipeline*, [Pipeline Volume 4 Issue 5](#), we share another sampling of the many activities and events celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month across Ohio. We'll wrap up the month with Part III in the March 31 *Pipeline*.

A. ➡ [Ohio Public Images \(OPI\) Annual Awareness Awards Luncheon](#)

What: Ohio Public Images (OPI), a not-for-profit corporation, was established in 1983 to promote positive awareness and understanding of people with developmental disabilities. Each year OPI honors individuals and groups, statewide, who have -- through various events and individual efforts -- shared positive images of the lives of people with developmental disabilities. This year's Awareness Awards Luncheon was March 15.

Where: In Dublin, Ohio, in conjunction with the Ohio Association of Superintendents of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities winter conference.

Briefly: See accompanying photos of self-advocacy awards ...



Self Advocacy Awardees take the spotlight ...

(Top) **Brady Sellet**, representing Hamilton County and Cincinnati Children's Hospital;
 (Lower) **PersonnelPlus Advisory & Advocacy Council**, and the **DD Council Center on Public Policy** –
 representing the Athens County Board of DD ... and self advocates around the state.

For More Info: Visit the Ohio Public Images website at www.publicimagesnetwork.org for more about this event, and for materials supporting this year's DD Awareness Month theme, *"Just Like You."*

B. ➡ [Knox County DD Awareness Month Luncheon Hosted at MVDC](#)

What and Where: Nearly 120 people filled the Great Room at Mount Vernon Developmental Center (MVDC) to celebrate Developmental Disabilities Awareness on March 4th.

Briefly: The event was co-sponsored by MVDC and the Knox County Board of DD. Attendees included local and state civic leaders, as well as representatives from schools and service providers, and individuals with disabilities and their families. Speakers included family members who shared the importance of services received from the County Board, as well as an individual who lives at MVDC who shared her experiences and plans for the future. Knox County

Commissioner Alan Stockberger presented a proclamation on behalf of the county recognizing DD Awareness Month, and MVDC Superintendent Ernie Fischer commented,

“The participation at this event clearly demonstrates that the people of Knox County are supportive of services to persons with developmental disabilities in this community. The comments we heard from families of people served by the County Board and by the individual served at MVDC reflect the positive impact those services have made on their lives.”



**The MVDC Great Room comes by its name honestly ...
and comfortably gathered the local community to enjoy food and fellowship, including a cake sweetly
representing this year's DD Awareness Month Theme.**

For More Information: Ernie Fischer, Superintendent, Mount Vernon Developmental Center
(740) 393-6226; ernie.fischer@dodd.ohio.gov

C. ➡ Stark County – Awareness Signs and Songs

What: HandPrints Sign Choir, in combination with S.I.G.N. Ministry, offered a free public concert on March 13.

Where: Hosted by North Canton Church of Christ, an easily accessible location.

Briefly: HandPrints choir is comprised of 20 adults of varying abilities from throughout Stark County. Some are employed in the community, while others attend the County Board workshop or other private provider facilities. The choir practices their signing skills every week, and performs popular music using sign language. HandPrints was formed in 2008 and performs several times per year. S.I.G.N. Ministry is comprised of 30 individuals with varying abilities, and was formed in 2007. The combined concert was well-received by all.

For more information: HandPrints: Contact Roxanne Korte, (330) 704-0079.
S.I.G.N. Ministry: Rebecca Cole, (330) 554-2698. General info: Lisa Parramore, (330)479-7871.

D. ➡ Richland County – Awareness Comes in All Colors

What: Richland Newhope celebrated Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month by hosting its 17th Annual Richland County Third Grade Coloring Contest Awards Luncheon on March 5.

Where: Richland Newhope Industries.

Briefly: About 75 people attended the event, including Miss Ohio 2009 Erica Gelhaus, and Ms. Wheelchair Ohio 2009 Danielle Brown. All Richland County schools with third grade classes were invited to participate in the contest. Participants were asked to color a picture featuring two children in a classroom, one of whom uses a wheelchair. The picture contained the message,

“They like to be friends, at home and at school.”

Richland Newhope received 583 entries from 17 schools. One winner was selected from each school and the student, along with his or her parents, teacher, and principal, were invited to a pizza luncheon on March 5. The event also included disability awareness simulations.

Each contest winner received a certificate, and other memorabilia including a button designed by individuals served by Newhope. Teachers also received a resource guide about disabilities and how to incorporate lessons into classroom curriculum.



More than a coloring contest ...

Winners all, they learned that everyone needs and wants friends, at home and at school.

For more information: Jane Imbody, Richland Newhope, (419) 774-4215.

E. ➡ Lawrence County –

What: *The Lawrence County Board of DD Balloon Launch* marks the beginning of DD Awareness month for the organization, and has been an ongoing event for more than 10 years. This year's event was held on March 1.

Where: Open Door School (LCBDD) -- provides services for students, ages 6-21.

Briefly: Every student at Lawrence County Early Childhood Center, and at Open Door School received a helium balloon with a tag attached, including the student's first name and school address. Each year the students release their balloons into the community and wait to see who

might find their balloon. Individuals who find the balloon tags are encouraged to send a letter to the school. The furthest place a “finder’s” letter has been mailed from was Halifax, VA, approximately 350 miles away from the school. According to Kendra Kelley, Principal at Open Door School (a part of the LCBDD), “When people write back, the children get such a kick out of it.”



A colorful community gathering where children of all ages love to see their balloons drift up into the sky.

For More Information: Tim Nunnery, Lawrence County Board of DD, (740) 532-7401.

Look for more about DD Awareness Month celebrations in the next *Pipeline* – March 31.



PCI – The Positive Culture Initiative

3. Southeast Ohio Explores ‘Gentle Teaching’

A positive culture is an intentional way of supporting all people within our communities that focuses on creating healthy relationships and acknowledging the unique gifts that each brings to those relationships. It is about making the shift (in thinking) away from power, control and coercion in language and actions, and toward affirmation, unconditional acceptance, and encouragement. Read More...

The evolution of an individual’s ability to be comfortable with himself or herself is an outgrowth of how that person feels about two things, according to Dr. John McGee – “Does that person feel *safe*, and does that person feel *loved*?” He continues,

“Safe and loved. Safe and loved. Those are the keys to mending the heart and building trust. Only when those feelings are present will an individual trust you as a care provider, and only then can a person grow and change.”

The methodology McGee has developed, ‘Gentle Teaching,’ focuses on caregiving within the Positive Culture Initiative (PCI) framework – and is an example of a positive approach to working with people in the developmental disabilities community, or experiencing other issues.

And so, in Nelsonville, Ohio, last week, nearly 100 direct care and other support staff representing the Southeast Ohio region gathered at the Inn at Hocking College for two days of 'basic training' in the concept of Gentle Teaching. They left with several new tools in their toolboxes. They also learned to use existing tools in different ways, as McGee noted ...

"Your eyes, your hands, your words, your presence – they all can express to individuals that they are valued, they are cared for, and they are safe. You are likely one of many caregivers who has come and gone in their lives. Who knows what a person may have experienced before? But chances are good that you can reach them if they are feeling safe and loved. "

During discussion, it was clear that reaching out to someone who has been fearful of others for any of a variety of reasons takes courage on the part of both people involved – the caregiver and the recipient of the care. However, McGee's videos demonstrating the success of Gentle Teaching techniques -- over time, and with a variety of individuals in many different settings -- spoke volumes.

A major breakthrough, such as a smile where none had been seen before, was worth the 'stretch' ... the effort ... the consistent approach. As McGee so aptly stated,

"I call it a smile. You call it an 'outcome'. Either way, it's a great feeling."



Morgan County, Closed for the Day.

Morgan County Board of DD Superintendent Mary Ann Chamberlain (center, back row, pink shirt) and staff attended the Gentle Teaching training 'en masse'. According to Mary Ann, getting everyone possible to this training was a priority that warranted the organized in-service approach.



Gurus gather...

(L. to R.) John McGee, David Sincoff, and Mike Beaver take a break during lunch. While John is the foremost expert on Gentle Teaching, and literally wrote the book on the subject, David Sincoff and Mike Beaver, Athens County DD, have been long-time proponents of the Positive Culture concept, as well.

NOTE: John McGee is an internationally known speaker who works in many countries to promote the concepts of non-violence. As part of the Positive Culture Initiative, the DODD will continue to offer training on positive strategies utilizing a variety of methodologies and techniques, including Gentle Teaching with John McGee. These training opportunities will be provided in various locations throughout Ohio. Information on such trainings will be posted at https://dodd.state.ohio.gov/apps/internet/reg/ViewREG_Mainmod.asp.

For More Information: Pam Berry, DODD Policy Staff, pam.berry@dodd.ohio.gov; (614) 301-2992; visit <http://dodd.ohio.gov/futuresmore/pci.htm>



4. Empowered Group Purchasing – Purchasing with Purpose

The Arc of Ohio (The Arc) and Columbus-based Foundation For the Challenged (FFC) -- with the help of an organization named Pro Op -- have partnered to create *Empowered Group Purchasing*, a new entity that will help individuals, families, nonprofit groups, provider service organizations, government agencies, and others in the developmental disabilities community to realize significant savings on the cost of frequently-purchased goods and services.



Empowered Group Purchasing functions like a discount club without walls. Research and development for *Empowered Group Purchasing* was funded by a grant from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, and included focus groups that identified the need for a 'group identity' that could lead to group purchasing power for the developmental disabilities community.

What, exactly, is it?

It's an opportunity to shop with clout – save money with a membership card – and purchase needed items at a lower price. Access to Empowered Group Purchasing is available with a membership in The Arc of Ohio, or any local Arc Chapter. Membership starts at \$25 for an individual. After completing an Arc membership application, an Empowered Group Purchasing membership information packet will be provided, explaining how to access vendor discounts.

Membership can be completed online at The Arc of Ohio's website www.TheArcofOhio.org or by calling (800) 875-2723, or a local Arc Chapter office.

According to Gary Tonks, executive director of The Arc of Ohio, "Knowing that people with developmental disabilities often experience economic challenges in meeting basic living expenses, and could be considerably empowered with improved purchasing capabilities, the concept of Empowered Group Purchasing was developed especially to meet this need -- and improve the purchasing environment for this significant consumer market. That's why we call purchasing through this kind of arrangement, 'purchasing with purpose.'"

Fran K. Wesseling, Executive Director of the Foundation For the Challenged, notes,

"There are millions of people with disabilities who have buying power, and companies are just beginning to realize their potential as customers. Empowered Group Purchasing gives them a voice and financial leverage. The Group Purchasing network provides members discounts on items including food, medical supplies, insurance products, gasoline and more. It's really very exciting."

Discounts range from 10-60% off retail pricing, and it is estimated that a typical family could save more than \$1,000 annually, depending on frequency and type of purchase.

Wesseling adds, "Beyond the benefit of savings, users of Empowered Group Purchasing will illustrate the purchasing power and consumer value that people with developmental disabilities, their families and support community have -- evoking a new awareness. And, while members are saving, their purchases also will continue to grow advocacy and support programs."

Membership may be completed online at www.TheArcofOhio.org, or by calling (800) 875-2723.

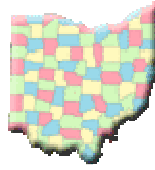


5. OPRA to Introduce New Service Provider Directory

Looking for a Medicaid Waiver or ICFMR provider?

The Ohio Provider Resource Association's (OPRA) new Service Provider Directory will offer vital information for individuals with developmental disabilities, caregivers, and other support professionals, and will be available online at www.opra.org beginning the week of March 22.

Any provider (OPRA member, non-member, agency, or individual) can use the new online directory, and registration is free. Beginning the week of March 22, just click on the State of Ohio icon that you see at www.opra.org, to enter the new Service Directory Area.



This online guide will feature a comprehensive list of resources for individuals, families, and professionals searching for service providers in Ohio's developmental disabilities system. The one-stop tool will enable users to find providers that offer services in the following areas:

- Individual Options Waiver
- Level One Waiver
- Supported Living Services
- Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFMR)

In addition, the new Service Provider Directory will be helpful to individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members, service and support professionals, and others, in identifying providers of the following services:

- Homemaker Personal Care
- Transportation
- Supported Employment
- Adult Day Services
- Respite Care

According to OPRA staff, the new Service Provider Directory's interactive map of Ohio will include features to help users search for comprehensive listings of individual providers, County Boards, and private providers, and will be searchable by agency, county, city, or services. Providers that wish to be listed in OPRA's new Service Provider Directory, will need to create an account with OPRA online at www.opra.org.

For more information contact OPRA at (614) 224-6772, email opra@opra.org, or visit www.opra.org



6. Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council Seeks Applicants for Membership, Sets Conference for May 26-27

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council consists of at least 28 members appointed by the Governor. Members are people with developmental disabilities; parents and guardians of people with developmental disabilities; representatives from appropriate state agencies; and, nonprofit organizations and local agencies providing services to people with developmental disabilities. All members are appointed by the Governor for three year terms.

Seeking Applicants for membership

The Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council (ODDC) is seeking applicants for membership

terms beginning in October of this year. Applications are due by June 10, 2010. Council membership must comply with categories listed in the federal Developmental Disabilities Act, and openings this year are:

- Two individuals with a developmental disability;
- One parent or guardian of children with a developmental disability.

All candidates for ODDC membership should:

- Have experience serving on committees, boards, or within organizations;
- Have first-hand knowledge of Ohio's developmental disabilities community;
- Have time to attend six meetings per year and serve on at least two committees.

Serving as a member of Council provides an opportunity to work in a collaborative manner with state and federal policymakers, state and local service providers, and individuals with developmental disabilities and their families.

The ODDC advocates to improve the system of supports and services for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families, and conducts grant activities for the same purpose.

Governor Ted Strickland will appoint new members for three-year terms beginning October 1, 2010, and ending September 30, 2013. Application packets are available from the ODDC office, or download the application at www.ddc.ohio.gov. Applications must be completed and returned to the office by June 1, 2010, and may be requested by U.S. Mail at: ODDC, 8 East Long Street, Suite 1200, Columbus, Ohio, 43215, or by phone at: (614) 466-5205; toll-free (800) 766-7426. Email carla.sykes@dodd.ohio.gov.

If you are leaving a voice message, please spell your name, and provide your address including zip code, as well as your phone number.



Conference Set for May 26-27

Our Choice: Living in the Community, a conference for Ohioans with disabilities, their families and advocates will be held May 26-27 at the Hyatt Regency, Columbus. Conference highlights will include keynote addresses by:

- Steve Gold, attorney and nationally-known Olmstead advocate, Philadelphia;
- Ann O'Hara, Director of TAC Housing Group, Boston;
- Jim Dickson, Vice President/Legislative Affairs, American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), Washington, DC

In addition, Governor Ted Strickland will present Ohio's 2010 Olmstead Plan, along with directors of appropriate state agencies, including the DODD. Workshops will focus on various subjects, including HOMEChoice, long-term care, waivers, housing, and more. An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) 20th Anniversary Celebration also will be part of the conference program.

Thanks to the generosity of event sponsors, people with disabilities and family members (one per family) may attend at no charge. The free registration includes a hotel room for one night, travel, and attendant fees. *All participants will need to register -- no walk-ins.* Details and registration materials will be available soon.

Sponsors: Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, Ohio Olmstead Task Force,
HomeCHOICE project of ODJFS
Co-sponsors: Ohio Legal Rights Service, CareSource, AARP

Questions? Contact the AXIS Center at AXISCenter@aol.com



7. April is Autism Awareness Month – Rally Set for April 14th

The Autism Society of Ohio estimates that there are more than 58,000 individuals with autism in Ohio. At the sixth annual Autism Rally at the Ohio Statehouse on April 14, participants -- including individuals with autism, advocates, families, and state legislators -- will gather to support legislative action, and encourage the passage of House Bill 8, Health Insurance Reform, assuring coverage currently not available. In addition, the rally will provide a forum for information regarding other issues of interest relating to autism.

The rally will take place on the Statehouse South Lawn, 11 a.m. – noon, Wednesday, April 14.

Speakers will include members of the Ohio General Assembly, and various stakeholders in the developmental disabilities community, as well as self-advocates of all ages. Information tables staffed by representatives of various organizations providing opportunities for people with developmental disabilities, including autism, also will be a part of the event.

Autism Awareness Legislative Reception

During the evening of April 14th there will be an Autism Awareness Legislative Reception from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., in the Statehouse Atrium. Legislators have been invited to meet with constituents from their districts to learn more about autism and autism supports and services in their area. Department Directors, members of the Interagency Workgroup on Autism and representatives of the Governor's Office also have been invited.

For more information, contact: Barbara Yavorcik, Executive Director, Autism Society of Ohio, (614) 537-4079; askASO@autismohio.org; www.autismohio.org



8. Pipeline PostScripts – Timely News Briefs & Notes

Many events are listed at the DODD website calendar. Click on 'calendar' at the lower bar of the homepage, at https://dodd.ohio.gov/apps/internet/evcs/EVCS_View.aspx

1. Arc of Ohio to Host Legislative Event

The Arc of Ohio has named its 2010 Legislators of the Year, advocating for the rights of citizens with developmental disabilities, and this year honoring Senator John Carey, Senator Dale Miller, and Representative Brian G. Williams. This legislative event, celebrating Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, and honoring members of the 128th Ohio General Assembly will be hosted at:

The Hyatt on Capitol Square
75 East State Street
Columbus, OH 43215
5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, March 23, 2010
R.S.V.P.: The Arc of Ohio
arcohio@rroho.com or (614) 487-4720

2. Disability Housing Network to Discuss Model Housing Plans and More

The Disability Housing Network (DHN) Spring Conference, March 24, at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Dublin, Ohio, will provide an opportunity to analyze specific housing plans and identify common themes, and present findings that can be shared and possibly replicated elsewhere.

The DHN Spring Conference is also the 'housing track' on the morning of the second day of the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA) two-day conference. Descriptions for the housing track sessions are at <http://www.disabilityhousingnetwork.org/>. Registration is available on the OPRA website, at <http://www.opra.org/>.

DHN Executive Director, Steve Farrell, notes, "Attendees are invited to submit legal questions on topics faced by housing corporations for consideration by the presenter at next week's session. *Questions should be submitted to steve.farrell@disabilityhousingnetwork.org by March 19.*

Disability Housing Network (DHN) was established to promote and support education and best practices in the development and management of rental housing for individuals with mental retardation and developmental disabilities by member nonprofit housing development corporations.

3. Census Information Important to Disability Community

Data from the U. S. Census, which is conducted every ten years, is used to draw boundaries for congressional districts, and to determine how to distribute more than \$300 billion in federal funds to states and local communities. The 2010 Census Questionnaire is being mailed this month to all U.S. households. The form contains only ten questions. To gather necessary information, census workers will visit households that do not return the forms.

Please support this important statewide and nationwide effort by completing and returning your Census Questionnaire promptly. For more information, visit www.census.gov.

4. DODD Hotline for Reporting Abuse, Neglect, and other Possible Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs)

To report abuse/neglect and other MUI's call toll-free: **1-866-313-6733**. Please note that MUIs are to be reported to the local County Board of DD, however, it is understood that there may be times an individual, staff member, or family member may feel it is a conflict -- or that, potentially, a County Board may be involved in the allegation. In those instances it is important to remember the hotline number is there to be used for reporting concerns in these situations.

Pipeline feedback ... direct from you to the state ...

Pipeline is an electronic publication of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), distributed approximately twice monthly to update and inform readers of timely, relevant information affecting stakeholders in the developmental disabilities community. Share comments about *Pipeline* at feedback@list.dodd.ohio.gov, or contact Sherry Steinman, sherry.steinman@dodd.ohio.gov or phone (614) 644-0262. *The DODD values subscriber confidentiality and does not intentionally share subscriber addresses with others. However, in the event of a public records request, the DODD will comply with all applicable Public Records Laws.* To subscribe to *Pipeline* or add a new address, email: join-pipeline@list.dodd.ohio.gov and write SUBSCRIBE in the subject line. To discontinue your subscription to *Pipeline* or remove an old address, email: join-pipeline@list.dodd.ohio.gov and write UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line. Pipeline is archived at <http://dodd.ohio.gov/publications/pipeline.htm>

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