



Clermont County
Board of Developmental Disabilities

Building Skills...Empowering People!



2014
Annual Report



Contents

- 2 Our Mission, Vision & Philosophy
- 3 Core Values
- 3 Board Members
- 4 Executive Summary
- 5 Early Childhood Services
- 6 School Age Services
- 7 Adult Services
- 8 Community Support Services
- 9 Community Relations
- 10 Emergency Preparedness
- 11 Business Operations
- 12 Strategic Partners
- 14 Farewell, Sharon Woodrow!

Our Mission

To promote safe and supportive environments while understanding our responsibility to respect the choices and needs of individuals with developmental disabilities and to empower them to be engaged in their community.

Our Vision

To promote and support competence and confidence in families with babies and children and a self-determined, safe and healthy lifestyle for Adults. The Board will be a well-managed, financially responsible public organization with a committed and respected staff that provides cost-effective, quality services. The Clermont County Community will be well informed about developmental disabilities, including causes and preventive measures, and will be accepting of individuals who have developmental disabilities.

Our Philosophy

Individuals and families served by the Clermont County Board of DD have the right of choice and flexibility regarding what, how and where services are provided. Individuals and families will be empowered to make decisions, become partners and work cooperatively with professionals, and exert control over the services provided to them.

WE BELIEVE that persons with developmental disabilities have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, be able to take reasonable risk and be protected from exploitation, abuse and degrading treatment.

WE BELIEVE that infants and toddlers learn best in their natural environments, doing things they enjoy and with people with whom they are familiar.

WE BELIEVE that educational services will honor the informed choice of the individual or individual's family in partnership with local school districts.

WE BELIEVE that adults with developmental disabilities have the right to make choices regarding their lifestyle, their working environment and their living arrangements.

WE BELIEVE in providing adequate information to make informed choices. We believe in the importance of ongoing life planning and supporting individuals and families through the many transitions of life.

WE BELIEVE that adults have the right to work in the community in accessible workplaces, with access to the supports necessary to be successful and the right to wages and benefits provided to other workers in the same setting. We believe individuals should be encouraged to seek employment first.

WE BELIEVE that persons with developmental disabilities have the right to have access to the supports and services they need to be participating members of their communities, including transportation, recreation, social outlets and friends and regular interaction with peers who do not have disabilities.

Core Values

Safe and Supportive Environment

for individuals we serve, families, visitors, staff, and the community.



Understand

our mission, our values, our jobs, our mandates, and to ensure that others understand.

Responsibility and Respect

for individuals we serve, each other, the community, to manage resources efficiently, and to provide access to efficient services and programs.

Engagement

with the individuals we serve, families, advocates, each other, and the community.

Board Members

Clermont DD Board in 2014

Harry Snyder, President
Laurie Benintendi, Vice President
Kim Pellington, Secretary
Greg Carson
Robert Grant
Jennifer Mailloux (through July)
Rex Parsons
Emily Chesnut (starting August)



Clermont DD Empowers Me Board in 2014

Brad Toft, President
Donald Collins, Vice President
Michael Chapman, Secretary
Stefanie Warren, Treasurer
Lisa Davis
Jeff Diesel
Peter Miller
Jeff Weir
Julie Wood
Cory Wright





Executive Summary

Dan Ottke, Superintendent

2014 was a year of significant change for the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

One of the most significant changes was the announcement that Sharon Woodrow, the Superintendent for the past 11 years, would be retiring. Along with her announcement, the leadership team had three other announced retirements: Jodie Jones (Investigations), Sue Brenner (SSA Supervisor), and Maureen Serbu (Assistant Director of Business Operations).

The Adult Services Program went through a yearlong re-tooling process, assisting individuals who used the waiver for funding their day services to find another provider. This involved working with local providers to ensure local capacity existed to support these individuals. Two provider fairs were held in 2014 to offer individuals and their families the opportunity to meet with potential providers and to find a provider that would best meet their needs.

The agency participated in our CARF survey and received notification that it was again awarded a three year accreditation. The agency has received three years every time it has been surveyed since and including the first survey in 1996. We are very proud that Clermont DD is meeting and/or exceeding the standards of excellence for services.

Other areas of note for 2014 included the development of a Mental Health Services Program to better serve individuals with a Developmental Disability and a Mental Health Diagnosis. The agency also partnered with the Southwest Ohio Council of Government to contract for Investigative Agent Services. The Wildey building underwent renovations to better improve heating and air efficiency and quality, and also to improve the welcoming of visitors and improve overall safety and security.

Finally, we learned in 2014 to expect that there could be significant changes in the next few years as it relates to the service delivery system for individuals with Developmental Disabilities. We are committed to working with the individuals, their families, their guardians, our staff, and the providers here in Clermont County to navigate these changes and to meet the needs of those we serve.

Early Childhood Services

Early Intervention, Help Me Grow,
Regional Infant Hearing Program

This program follows guidelines and/or rules from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, from Part C of I.D.E.A., as well as rules from the Ohio Department of Health. The overarching goal of early intervention is to increase the family and caregiver's competence and confidence in helping their child learn and grow.

In 2014, we:

- Fully implemented the state-recommended, Evidence-Based Practice system of service delivery.
- Continued to assist families in early identification of autism, resulting in a 40% increase in the number of autism-specific evaluations in 2014.
- Offered respite for children birth to 3 on a regular basis; this continues to be a popular service with families.
- Met 91.6% of child outcomes.
- Used various sources to obtain feedback regarding services: phone and exit surveys, anecdotal feedback, ongoing administrative review and direct home visits.



Areas of oversight:

Ohio Department of Health, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, Family and Children First Council

Individuals served by the Early Childhood Program:

Early Intervention

(total individuals enrolled): 423 Waiting List: 0
Active enrollees as of 12/31/14: 217 Waiting List: 0

*"Because of the EI services we have,
my son has become the bubbly, laughing,
communicative little boy we were so
concerned he could never be."*

School Age Services



The Thomas A. Wildey School provides intensive, specialized instruction to children age 5–22 in seven classrooms split into two tracks of service: medically-fragile classrooms for students with medical, physical and sensory needs, and transition classrooms that focus on functional academics, life skills and developing vocational skills.

Students are referred by their local school district, and placement is determined by the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team. The district of residence pays 100% of the cost of students to attend the Wildey School and provides transportation.

[Individuals served by the School Age Program:](#)

January, 2014: 45 students

December, 2014: 40 students



[In 2014, we:](#)

- Became familiar with the Employment First Initiative, how it will impact students, and spent time developing more meaningful transition plans.
- Met individually with families to discuss individual options and planning for 2014 graduates.
- Increased time for therapists (Occupational, Speech/Language, Physical) to complete documentation/write reports after school hours, increasing their time with students during the school day.
- Eliminated two positions: part-time Speech-Language Pathologist and Instructor Assistant.
- Completed renovation of pool and gym.
- Received \$1,000 grant from The Greater Cincinnati Foundation.
- Created “COVE” – Classroom for Vocational Education.
- Gave each classroom 2 iPads.
- Added flat screen TVs with Apple TV to classrooms so teachers can mirror their iPads as an instructional tool.
- Began training on “Sanctuary” (trauma-informed care).
- Continued to be an active member of the Regional Autism Advisory Council (RAAC)
- Continued staff professional development in multiple areas.

Adult Services

The Adult Services Department offers several services to individuals: Community Employment, Bridges to Transition, PRIME, Supported Employment Enclaves, Sheltered Employment, and Community Integration and Activity Programming.

In 2014, we:

- Continued to expand on Employment First Initiative efforts by hiring an Employment First Specialist.
- Continued the Bridges to Transition Project, offering school-to-work transition for students aged 14-25; served 80+ students by providing services including Job Seeking Skills, Personal Adjustment, Summer Youth Work Experiences (SYWE) and Career Exploration all within school and community settings.
- Paid students for their work experiences through SYWE, which encouraged youth with disabilities to pursue community employment when they graduate.
- Participated in volunteer-based community integration activities at the Wildey Center.
- Explored service projects with local businesses including the Cincinnati Nature Center, Wal-Mart, Round Bottom Recycling, and Park National Bank.
- Maintained the music sensory room and provided individuals from all the buildings the opportunity to participate in its use.
- Placed 28 individuals in community jobs through Community Employment Department; 17 additional individuals participated in Community Based Work Assessments.
- Had no waiting list for Community Employment Services.
- Collaborated with business professionals, owners and HR staff from Deimling Jeliho, Round Bottom Recycling, and Kroger on the Clermont DD Business Advisory Council.
- Changed procedures so Individual Budget funds could pay for work-related expenses (transportation, provider hours, etc.) to assist individuals to find meaningful community activities while not working.
- Successfully consolidated Adult Services into two buildings, supported people while they found other placements, and moved those who were continuing with the program into our remaining buildings.
- Continued to serve people with more challenging mental health diagnoses as well as developmental disabilities at the DAC Program.
- Continued to support and train individuals in ways to cope with their daily struggles in efficient and effective ways including those outlined in Mandt Training.
- Obtained feedback through Individual Planning process, annual satisfaction surveys, and Client Council meetings.



Community Support Services



Community Support Services staff help support individuals with Developmental Disabilities and their families by determining eligibility, facilitating assessments to determine the service needs, identifying available resources and facilitating service planning that ensures that individuals and their families have choice and control in planning while maintaining the health and well-being of the individual being served. Areas of service are based on the rules and laws set by the State, as well as the budgets and priorities of the County Board. Components of services within the Community Support Services Division include: intake, eligibility, referral and waiting list management; service and support administration; behavior support services; investigations of major unusual incidents.

In 2014, we:

- Expanded services to include 10 additional Level One Waivers, 10 additional SELF Waivers, and 30 additional individuals for the Adult Services Individual Budget.
- Addressed emergency needs by enrolling 2 individuals on an Individual Option Waiver and providing 16 individuals with Stabilization Funding for a limited term to prevent an emergency.
- Received 196 funding requests were granted through the Alternative Option Program.
- Assisted 227 families to receive Family Support Services funding.
- Assisted an average of 12 families per month to receive in-home behavior support consultation.
- Provided Saturday respite services twice a month through the Gift of Time Respite Cooperative with an average of 18 individuals each session.
- Continued partnerships with other agencies in supporting individuals with co-occurring diagnoses of developmental disabilities and mental health.
- Provided information and tools to promote Self Advocacy by expanding staff support for the individuals in our People In Action (PIA) chapter.
- Collaborated with PIA for their training on "Bullying and Rights" at the Ohio People First Conference and a local provider meeting.
- Assisted 247 individuals who contacted the County Board requesting Intake and Eligibility Determination.
- Coordinated 77 more MUIs than in 2013; 27 more were confirmed substantiated than in 2013.

"My Mom and I were so happy to see so many people advocating for my sister. I honestly didn't know there was such a good network of people tirelessly helping her. The old cliché rings true: we cannot thank everyone enough for their help!"

Individuals Served by Program/Service Area:

HCBS Waivers:	380 total enrolled	Waiting List: 833
Supported Living:	45 enrolled	Waiting List: 342
Adult Individual Budget:	174 enrolled	Waiting List: 35
Behavior Support:	More than 120 served	Waiting List: 37
Family Support Services:	248 served	Waiting List: 0
Alternative Options:	196 served	Waiting List: 121

Community Relations

The Communications and Community Relations Department has four main areas that help tie the Clermont DD agency to the community. These areas are press/media relations, volunteer coordination, community activities (day/evenings/weekends), and fundraisers/events/awareness activities.

In 2014, we:

- Created an online Volunteer Orientation video that now appears on our YouTube Channel.
- Attended several exhibits including the Autism Expo, Clermont County Fair (2 booths), Felicity “Cool Tools for School” festival, Transition Bootcamp in September, and the Employment First “WORKing Together” Conference in October.
- Offered new community activities including a walking club, Auntie Anne’s pretzel tour, and an ice cream social.
- Participated on three work groups for the Clermont Chamber Foundation’s “Agenda for the Future” project (see “Partnerships” on Page 13).
- Were interviewed by Cincy Magazine for the Agenda for the Future project.
- Collaborated with the Southwestern Ohio Council of Governments to produce excellent awareness month activities in March and October.
- Nominated several people for the Ohio Public Images Media awards including Kristin Rover, Clermont Sun Reporter, Batavia Trustees and Administration, Matt Stricklin in Personal Achievements Category, and Bridges to Transition Employers (Big Lots, Grants Farm, Clermont YMCA and Coney Island Amusement Park).
- Were honored that the Bridges to Transition Employers won an “Award of Merit” at the Media Awards.
- Welcomed Pete Miller and Jeff Diesel as new members to the Clermont DD Empowers Me Board.
- Worked with the Community Support Services Department to produce a successful Golf Outing on Saturday, May 17, raising over \$5,000 for the levy fund.
- Attended Special Olympics State Summer Games June 25 and 26.
- Produced several fundraisers for the Clermont DD Empowers Me Board including a Fit and Fun Fest on July 12 and Car Show on August 16.
- Received a \$1,000 donation from the Loveland American Legion for the Activity Fund.
- Presented “Clermont’s Got Talent” on September 20; 100 people attended, 10 acts performed, and Nathan Grant of Loveland was the winner.
- Participated in the Clermont Chamber Membership Drive on October 8.
- Worked with Terri Tolley of the Community Support Services Department to help her produce the Amish Mafia Concert for the Levy on October 11, raising over \$1,400.
- Were invited to community dances (activity program) with Faith Community Church, Bethel American Legion, Loveland Legion, and Mt. Carmel Legion.
- Honored community members for the assistance they give us at our Good Fortune recognition dinner on October 28.



Emergency Preparedness in Clermont County



As in previous years, Clermont DD remained committed to safety and emergency preparedness in 2014. We met with the following groups and organizations:

- Clermont County Long-Term Recovery Committee
- Clermont County Citizen Corps Council
- Tri-State COAD (Community Organizations Active in Disasters)

As a way to give back to the community that so graciously supports Clermont DD, we continued to operate the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) in the event of any county disasters. Luckily, we did not have to activate the VRC in 2014, but we participated in two training events:

- Tabletop Exercise on May 21 with the Disaster Resistant Communities Group in Tallahassee, Florida to test the Clermont DD VRC Procedure Plan
- Tabletop Exercise with New Richmond Community on October 22 to test New Richmond's Flood Plan

We were also asked to share our VRC module with Warren County Emergency Management Agency. In doing so, we volunteered to assist them should a disaster arise in their county before they develop their VRC.

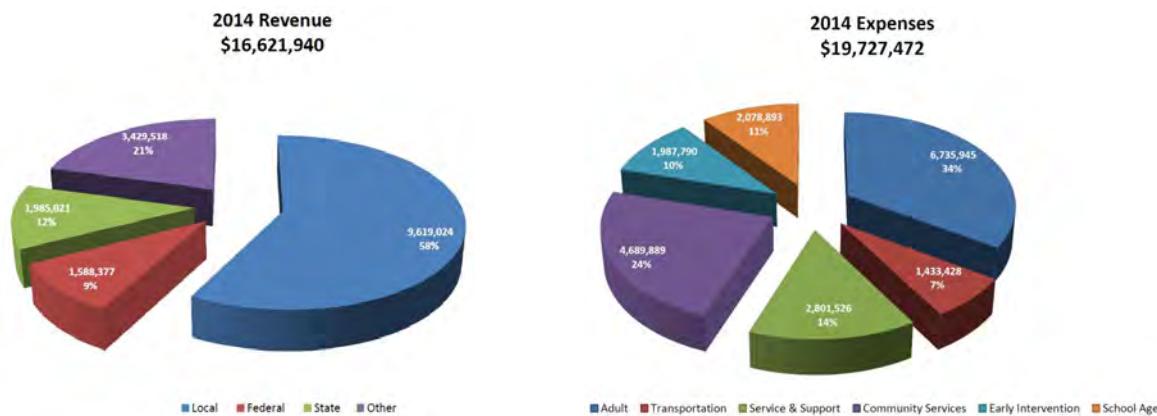
The Clermont County Emergency Management Agency is responsible for activating the VRC; we will continue to work with this department when disasters in Clermont County occur.

Business Operations

The Business Operations Department provides several key functions to the Agency: fiscal operations, information technology, risk management and safety, human resources, administrative quality and compliance, facilities management, and transportation management.

In 2014, we:

- Assisted the Adult Service Department to transition into a smaller program, reducing the number of staff and realizing cost savings in this department.
- Received a three-year CARF accreditation.
- Implemented wireless internet throughout the Wildey Center.
- Replaced all Windows XP computers that access the Internet.
- Fixed an aging copier instead of purchasing one for the SSA cubicle offices.
- Implemented a HIPAA compliant e-mail system to automatically encrypt sensitive information that is sent outside the agency.
- Renovated over two-thirds of the Wildey Center to include a new HVAC system and new main entrance to enhance security and more effectively manage visitor traffic.
- Improved and increased exterior lighting at the Wildey Center, added an additional walkway and parking lot lights to improve visibility for safety and security, and improved signage at the Wildey Center.
- Assisted 15 employees to take advantage of the Early Retirement Incentive Plan (ERIP) which reduced the number of staff from 189.5 to 159 positions.
- Contracted with First Transit for Adult Services Transportation.



Strategic Partners

[Regional Autism Advisory Council \(RAAC\)](#)

Clermont DD has been an active supporting member of the Regional Autism Advisory Council (RAAC) since 1999. RAAC encompasses all four counties: Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren. Each county meets monthly in regional task forces. Early Intervention and Adult Services also meet as individual work groups several times a year.

Clermont County Task Force: This task force meets monthly. Representatives from Clermont DD, local school districts, and Family and Children First Council regularly attend.

Training Series: The Clermont County Task Force presents a local training series consisting of 4-5 sessions attended by a variety of educational professionals, social workers, parents, mental health providers, DD providers, and DD Adult Services staff.

Summer Institute: RAAC sponsors this summer training series which is a premiere Autism training opportunity for educational professionals, para-professionals, DD professionals, healthcare professionals and parents.

[Clermont DD Empowers Me](#)

The Clermont DD Empowers Me Board was established as a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation whose mission is to assist Clermont DD to seek funding for programs and services for individuals served and to support their mission, vision, and goals of empowering people with disabilities.

Two additional members joined the original board in 2014. Events sponsored by Clermont DD Empowers Me this year were Clermont's Got Talent, Let the Good Times Roll Car Show, and the Fit and Fun Fest 5K event. Information about the Board can be found on the inside cover of this Annual Report or by visiting empowersmeboard.org.

[Southwestern Ohio COG](#)

In 2009, Butler, Clermont, Hamilton and Warren Counties formed the Southwestern Ohio Council of Governments (SWO COG) and began collaborating on many common concerns to provide the best possible services to persons with developmental disabilities in their respective counties. Along with public relations collaboration, we also purchase investigations services, and participated in their "WORKing Together" Conference. In 2014, Shirley Riggs was hired as SWO COG's Executive Director.

[Business Advisory Council](#)

Throughout 2014, this Council continued to focus on recruiting members from the business community, completing the information page for the Clermont DD website, and fostering an employment initiative throughout the Clermont County area. This year's Employer of the Year was Pam Brown of Kroger Mulberry who was honored at the Clermont Chamber of Commerce's October Monthly Luncheon in celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness Month. For more information, visit the BAC page at clermontdd.org.

[**Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries, Inc.**](#)

Clermont DD's partnership with Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries is one that assists with our work contracts through the Clermont Sheltered Work Administrative Services, Inc. Goodwill East in Batavia continued to offer additional work choices to the individuals served here in Clermont County. In 2014, Goodwill sponsored several activities including the Fit and Fun Fest 5K and Clermont's Got Talent.

[**FAST TRAC**](#)

Clermont FAST TRAC is a collaborative, sustainable mental health system of care that is family-driven and youth-guided, providing community-based and individualized supports and services that are responsive to the cultural characteristics of Clermont County's multi-need children, youth, and their families, strengthening them with hope and supporting them to lead successful lives. Clermont DD continued its collaboration with FAST TRAC in the areas of Social Marketing, Cross Systems Collaboration, County Quality Improvement, Evaluation Committee, Training Committee, and Sustainability Committee, and Wraparound.

[**LifePoint Solutions/Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health**](#)

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is a treatment designed specifically for individuals with self-harm behaviors, such as self-cutting, suicide thoughts, urges to suicide, and suicide attempts. Many clients with these behaviors meet criteria for a disorder called borderline personality (BPD). It is not unusual for individuals diagnosed with BPD to also struggle with other problems – depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, eating disorders, or alcohol and drug problems. DBT is a modification of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). In developing DBT for individuals served by Clermont DD, we have partnered with LifePoint Solutions, a Clermont County Mental Health Provider agency. Trained therapists and counselors from LifePoint Solutions have been working with our county board staff to provide weekly group sessions at the Wildey Center and individuals also receive one-on-one counseling weekly at the LifePoint location in Amelia. In 2014, LifePoint Solutions merged with Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health.

[**Clermont Agenda for the Future Project**](#)

The Clermont Chamber Foundation and the LEAD Clermont Alumni Association joined forces in 2014 to conduct a community-wide dialogue to create a new "Agenda for the Future" in Clermont County. This initiative was supported by a grant from Duke Energy and involved community conversations asking for positives about the past 5 years and growth for the next 5 years in the county. Clermont DD administrators participated on three work groups (Transportation, Housing, and Community) which helped develop goals for the overall project that will help Clermont County grow and prosper.



Farewell, Sharon Woodrow!

On December 31, 2014, Superintendent Sharon Woodrow retired after 20+ years of service to individuals and families served by Clermont DD.

Throughout the 11 years she served as Superintendent, Sharon brought growth and change to the agency. Her visionary and competent professionalism led Clermont DD through several challenging levy campaigns and progressive programmatic changes. She participated on numerous statewide committees and brought Clermont DD to the forefront as a leader in the developmental disabilities community. Throughout it all, the individuals served at Clermont DD were her main focus and, in her retirement, we know she will continue to be an advocate for those with special needs.



"Look at a day when you are supremely satisfied at the end. It's not a day when you lounge around doing nothing; it's a day you've had everything to do and you've done it." – Margaret Thatcher



Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities

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Wildey Center Adult Wing
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