

## 2019 Accessibility Plan

The Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities has an Accessibility Plan that outlines the work we have accomplished in the past as well as what lies ahead to help us identify, remove, and prevent barriers for persons with disabilities served by our organization and in the community. This plan is reviewed regularly to document our progress in completing identified activities for barrier removal. The plan provides for the continual monitoring of the Board's accessibility needs/priorities, as well as its financial planning to implement barrier removal as new measures become achievable.

This plan is reviewed yearly by several departments to ensure that people served are treated with respect and dignity, and that everyone's health and safety is at the forefront of our goals and objectives. Our Strategic Plan addresses several areas, while agency departments develop goals that are based on input received throughout the year. Physical environments and programs have been modified or changed, giving individuals have been provided access to their community through a variety of opportunities.

### ***Architectural***

Clermont DD continued the visitor procedure across all areas of the agency. This was adopted in 2017, continued in 2018, and is in place in 2019. Visitors are escorted to their meetings and other destinations around the Wildey Center, Donald A. Collins Center campuses, and the Krenning Center campuses. This gives the escort (a member of Clermont DD staff) an opportunity to assess any architectural barriers that may be in the way of the person accessing an area of our building.

Automatic doors have been added to many areas of the Wildey Center, which is our largest facility. This included outer doors that can be accessed by identification badges or keys, as well as indoor doors that have hallway buttons for easier access when traveling from area to area.

New signage was added to the Wildey property, to assist people to find the Main Entrance, Visitor Parking, etc., making their commute through the parking lot and building much easier.

A new awning was installed at the Wildey Adult Services entrance in 2018. This covers the wide walkway and provides the opportunity for individuals to sit outside during rainy spring seasons. It also provides coverage to stay out of the direct sunlight during our hot spring and fall weather. This awning offers a safe, accessible walkway to and from the building.



From a community standpoint, individuals from the Wildey Adult Services Community Integration Program complete a checklist when they are on outings. This checklist gives an array of information about accessibility. On outings in 2018, the group found doorways are not always big enough to accommodate large wheelchairs; gravel in some parking lots and on walkways made navigation for chairs, walkers, and those using canes very difficult; some businesses still lack automatic door openers; and curb cuts on sidewalks are sometimes few and far between. These are areas we are hoping our self advocates will add to their own platforms, when speaking with community, groups, businesses, and while attending Clermont Chamber of Commerce events.

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## **Environmental**

Clermont DD works hard to enhance its buildings and grounds, to ensure accessibility for all. In 2018, we purchased chairs for the Wildey Cafeteria, in an effort to assist students and adults with more comfortable, stable seating.

Paving and resealing of parking lots was completed in 2018, to make sure any potholes or cracks were filled for smoother ambulation.

Many students need to be lifted in the girl's locker room at the Wildey Center. To assist with this, a ceiling Arjo lift was installed through a grant with the Bureau of Worker's Compensation. This is a safer alternative for the person being lifted from wheelchair to changing table and back again.

In 2019, our Facilities Maintenance Division will be restriping all accessible parking spaces at the Wildey Center, where we have the most visitors. The striping becomes faded over time (due to salt used on ice and snow during the winter months), and we want to make sure the lines are defined for the spots that have space for lifts and for car doors to open wide.

The COVE is an area in the Wildey School Age Program that is designed for vocational work. This area is a former classroom that has been adapted with a stove, sink, and various other items used in

training for employment in the community. In 2019, this room will be adapted to better suit the needs of the students who are using it.

## **Attitudinal**

The Clermont DD agency has a strong presence across the county, as well as within our region (six-county Council of Government area). This presence also reaches to Columbus, which is the capitol of Ohio and the center of our state legislature. We strive to be part of as many things as possible, in order to break down attitudinal barriers that still exist in our society.

Community integration is a priority for the Adult Services program and with Community Activities. Both programs assist individuals to enjoy activities in the community that are well-rounded and integrated into settings where people of all ages, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, etc. live, work, and play.

Clermont DD and the individuals served by the agency continue to look at barriers within the community in a number of ways. Members of our staff are either enrolled in or alumni of LEAD Clermont, which is a premier leadership program in our county. We work with Connect Clermont, which is a non-profit board that addresses common issues such as housing, transportation, and inter-

agency awareness--all serious issues for individuals from Clermont DD as well as many other agencies in the county.

The Clermont County Safety Net Alliance was established in 2012 as a web portal to connect agencies to those who need services in our community. Clermont DD became an immediate member, listing our services within the portal for other agencies to find, should their clientele need our services.



Over the years, Community Relations, Community Support Services, and Behavioral Health staff have served on several committees within the Alliance including: executive committee/membership/marketing, emergency needs, and housing.

During DD Awareness Month (March), we host multiple awareness activities that help break down attitudinal barriers within our community. Our County Commissioners present a proclamation each year, which is taped for cable access, YouTube, and social media. The person accepting the 2018 proclamation was Austin Porter, a member of the self advocacy core team and an employee of Tractor Supply. Austin had just been honored

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as Employee of the Month, after two years of working with the Tractor Supply team. In 2019, Nick Weiss of Kroger Miami Township was the recipient.

Other awareness activities included Adult Services creating snack packs for families at the Ronald McDonald House in Cincinnati; children from Early Intervention making Get Well Cards for little ones in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; and the Wildey Adult Services packaging of craft bags for children staying at the Ronald McDonald House. In 2018, we created a billboard campaign to raise awareness about our services through the month's theme, "Celebrate CommUNITY." We continued this theme in 2019 and added additional activities such as volunteering at the League for Animal Welfare, packaging Thank You Hero Bags for the Clermont County Sheriff's Office Investigations and Special Response Team, and more.

Also in 2019, Clermont DD partnered with Hamilton, Butler, and Warren Counties to offer tours of a "Smart Home" to show off the benefits of using remote supports within an individual's home or apartment. Generous funding from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and the Ohio State University Nisonger Center made the Smart Home construction

possible. Located at the Warren County Board of DD, the home was open for tours each Wednesday from March-June, 2019.

Clermont DD belongs to a Council of Governments with Hamilton, Butler, Warren, Montgomery, and Greene County DD agencies. The public relations departments from these counties worked with Local 12 WKRC in Cincinnati to develop an awareness plan that included :30 commercials, posts on the Local 12 social media sites, and an on-air interview to discuss the Smart Home. The on-air interview was seen by viewers in the Tri-State area. One of those viewers was a Proctor and Gamble employee who scheduled tours for 30 of her co-workers so they could see the benefits of remote supports when caring for someone who has a developmental or physical disability.

Clermont DD has been a

member of the Clermont Chamber of Commerce for well over 20 years. Being a member assists the agency to be in tune with what is happening within the business community. Each year the Clermont Chamber allows us to present our Business Advisory Committee's "Employer of the Year Award" at their October Legislative event. (October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month.) At the 2018 Chamber Legislative Breakfast, we honored DEIMLING/jeliho Plastics as Employer of the Year, in front of a crowd from the business community. The speakers on that day were from Tata Consulting in Miami Township, who touched on the upsurge in remote supports they are seeing in the field of technology. We were very thankful we were able to be present with our award ceremony, to help the community better understand the correlation between the technological advances and the people we serve.



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The Clermont DD Superintendent and Community Relations Director belong to the Eastside Rotary Club and Batavia Rotary Club respectively. Both are active members and assist other members to be aware of the importance of disability issues in our community. Rotary members participated in Clermont DD fundraisers and supported the agency during levy campaigns by providing sign locations, speaking engagements, etc. This is one of many ways we break down attitudinal barriers across our county.

Our Business Advisory Council which is made up of staff from Community Employment Services Department and various business members from the Clermont County. In 2018, this group began work on a Disability Awareness Training Seminar for employers and their staff. The goal is to offer basic training that will help business employees learn sensitivity in a positive way. This curriculum is not completed, but we hope it will be finished by the end of 2019.

In all literature that is produced by the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities, we use people first language. We also use many icons to assist those who may have reading needs. When available, we use closed-captioning services for videos and other publications.

Interpreters are always available through Language Line Solutions, which is one of our contract agencies.

Clermont DD conducts several annual surveys through various means and departments, to ensure satisfaction and gather input from individuals and the community. We also offer Disability Awareness presentations to groups, and our Behavioral Health Services Department conducts many trainings per year regarding de-escalation and crisis intervention.

Clermont DD uses social media to break down barriers in many ways. In 2018, we took this one step further and began creating monthly podcasts for the public. This has been well received and will continue throughout 2019.

### ***Technology/ Communication***

We continue to upgrade our technology by utilizing laptops, iPads, and Microsoft Surfaces to increase accessibility for students, individuals, and staff. In 2018, the Sanctuary Core Team recommended the use of monitors in the lobbies of our buildings, as a way for people to be aware of trainings and events. Large screen monitors were purchased in the first quarter of 2019 and are being installed in all three buildings to boost communication for individuals, students, staff,

families, and the public.

Social media and our Cerkl online newsletter continue to engage communication on a whole new level. Many individuals have access to these pages and can ask questions at any time. Our answer rate is very high, so we can make sure people have the information they need, at all times. Our online newsletter has been increased to over 500 servers as of the first quarter of 2019, and we hope to keep boosting it throughout the year. Our open rate is usually in the 53-60% rate, and our engagement score ranges between 98-100%.

The Clermont County Information Technology Department was able to reduce the cost of internet services at the Wildey Center in 2018, while increasing speed for easier access for students, adults, and staff.

In 2018, security and speed were increased with the installation of six new SG300 switches with V-Lan. This divided the Clermont DD phone network from our data network and increased accessibility for everyone.

Clermont DD purchased ESign, which allows individuals to legally sign for paperwork via email, giving the person more independence and accessibility.

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A new firewall was purchased in 2018, giving the Donald A. Collins and Krenning Centers faster data and more secure connections overall.

In 2019, we are looking forward to updating our current exchange server. Email will be hosted by Microsoft Office 365 instead of local hosts. We also plan to upgrade our main server to provide larger capacity to add individual pictures to our database and gives more space for disaster recovery.

All computers running Windows 7 will be replaced in 2019.

## **Financial**

After the passage of our .75 mill renewal levy last year, our Business Operations Department worked hard to maintain our budget to ensure we are using our funding as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Growing waiting lists have been an issue in Ohio for many years. In September, 2018, Ohio began the "Fix the List" campaign where families and individuals complete assessments to determine if they need something now, if they truly can wait for the service, or if they no longer need the service they originally wanted when they were placed on the list. These assessment began with our Community Integration and Community Support Services Departments,

and will be completed in 2020. We will continue to monitor our budget to ensure it coincides with what the individuals and families completing the assessments currently need.

We held a successful Lip Sync Battle fundraiser in October, with all proceeds going to the Gift of Time Respite Cooperative. This was a collaboration between Clermont DD and the Clermont DD Empowers Me Board.

## **Transportation**

Transportation continues to be a barrier for our county. Clermont Transportation Connection is a bus line that can be accessed periodically, but due to changes in their funding, they don't have dedicated routes. This makes it very, very difficult for people who have set schedules for work, therapy, and doctor appointments. There are a few cab companies that are available at various times throughout the day and week. Currently, we have seen a considerable uptick in Uber usage. Although there are still several rural areas that Uber doesn't reach, those who live in the urban areas of our county are seeing success with it.

When our self advocates meet with local legislators during the Statewide Advocacy and Awareness Day at our State Capitol each March, they always bring transportation

needs to their attention. In 2018, Austin Porter (left in the picture) learned about self-driving cars while speaking with his State Representative, and how this legislation is getting a lot of attention at the state level. Ethan Stuempfle (right in the picture) has been using Uber for over a year and has spoken with other individuals so they can learn about the benefits of using this transportation system to get to work and access the community in an efficient and safe manner.



## **Barriers to Employment**

The Community Employment Services Department works with over 100 employers in the community to break through barriers that might still exist where people with disabilities are concerned. In 2018, over 80 people were successfully working in various full- and part-time positions in the community. Although we have a very positive working relationship with businesses and employers in our community, there are still



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barriers we encounter on a monthly basis. Sometimes, the barrier lies within developing the job itself. Believe it or not, there are still a few businesses who feel it would be more of a hassle to hire someone with a developmental disability than to work with our Community Employment Department. However few and far between these instances are, it still remains a barrier that we have not completely overcome yet.

As mentioned previously in this report, transportation remains a huge barrier for the individuals served at Clermont DD. Uber, Lyft, and cab services help to fill in the gaps left by the Clermont Transportation Connection system.

On an employer's work site, our Job Coaches from the Community Employment Services Department still encounter issues with acceptance of reasonable accommodations for the person who has a disability. Problems occur when work stations need to be made accessible, decreasing the overall success for the business/job seeker relationship.

Self advocacy has become one way that barriers to employment are being broken. Clermont County Turn Up the Voices is our new group that began in 2018 and has been teaching people to speak up for their rights in a positive, yet effective manner. In their

monthly meetings, this group touches on everything from non-professional behavior in the workplace and personal hygiene, to working with a job coach and learning social/interpersonal skills.

In September, Clermont County Turn Up the Voices co-hosted a District Advocacy Conference with self advocates from Warren, Clinton, and Butler Counties. The conference featured a keynote address from John Cronin of John's Crazy Socks (pictured below) in New York, who is an individual with Down syndrome that started his own company to overcome employment barriers. The conference also highlighted several breakout sessions: Lifelong Learning Experiences, Protection at Work and in the Community; Working, Living, and Being all You Can in the Community; Charting the Life Course; and a section for Self Advocates and their Stories (three of our self advocates shared their stories). We are

currently working with the same counties to plan the 2019 conference that will take place in November.

Transitioning from high school to work and learning to overcome employment barriers is something that our Community Employment Department spearheads each summer. They host a Pre-Employment Transition Program that offers career exploration and work experiences various jobs. There were six worksites in 2018 that gave young adults an opportunity to explore a variety of work settings: Rojo Ranch Stables, Big Lots Beechmont, Coney Island Amusement, Clermont Family YMCA, Round Bottom Recycling, and Matthew 25 Ministries.

Clermont DD will continue its work to remove barriers in all areas of this plan throughout 2019 and in the future.



### 2019 ADA Accessibility Recommendation Timelines

Building	Areas of Compliance	Estimated Cost	Targeted Date of Completion
Wildey	Restriping handicap and visitor parking areas along with crosswalks	\$3,000.00	<b>September</b>
Wildey	Redesign of COVE room to meet the need of the individuals served	\$2,500.00	<b>August</b>
Wildey	Audible Alert System on existing phones (lockdown, bomb threat, evacuating,...)	\$1,500.00	<b>May</b>
Krenning	Audible Alert System on existing phones (lockdown, bomb threat, evacuating,...)	\$1,500.00	<b>May</b>
DAC	Audible Alert System on existing phones (lockdown, bomb threat, evacuating,...)	\$1,500.00	<b>May</b>