



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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Table of Contents

Mission, Vision, & Philosophy	2	Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	13
Executive Summary	3	Early Intervention	14
Core Values, Board Members	5	Wildey School	16
Administrative Team	6	Community Support Services	18
Good Fortune Awards	7	Service and Support Admin.	20
Business Operations	8	Aktion Club	22
Behavioral Health Services	10	Community Relations	23
Community Employment	12	Community Partnerships	25

Mission

To help those we serve expand capabilities and navigate the possibilities.

Vision

We envision a culture comprised of inclusive communities where people with disabilities thrive and live a life on their own terms.

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.

Executive Summary

Each year, preparing this summary, I appreciate the opportunity to pause and reflect on the past year. It was a busy year with many accomplishments.

Three big accomplishments in 2023 included the renewal of the Five-Year Operating Levy originally passed in 2003; achieving a three-year accreditation through the Ohio Department of DD; and the completion of a new Three-Year Strategic Plan that will carry the agency through 2026.

Additionally, we were excited to welcome new Board members; attain grants to provide Technology First assistance and supports for children and their families. We saw one of the largest investments in State Budget resources that went towards addressing the Workforce Crisis in Ohio's Direct Support Professional system.

We wanted to thank those we serve, their families, the provider community, our own staff, and other community stakeholders who spent a lot of time with us and for us, identifying areas of strategic direction over the next three years. From that process the following areas were identified: continue to improve transportation options; continue to improve housing options; continue to explore meaningful employment opportunities; develop methods to meet the respite needs of families that we serve; continue to find resources for the needs of the growing multi-system youth population; continue to support private providers maintain their staff levels; continue to measure the effectiveness of our internal and external communication methods; focus on staff training, recruitment and retention efforts, and succession planning;



continue to build on IT infrastructure and cybersecurity efforts; facility preventative maintenance; and financial stewardship and educational efforts to those we serve and community stakeholders. The upcoming year will be used to get a baseline on where things stand and develop actionable goals to begin addressing these identified areas.

As mentioned above, we were very thankful for the support of the Clermont County community in supporting a renewal of the five-year operating levy that generates about a third of our local revenue. Without that support, it would result in a significant loss of service to those we serve. Also, I was proud of our staff's efforts to obtain a three-year accreditation from the State Department of

Developmental Disabilities. This was the result of a lot of hard work and effort to show how we are meeting the various standards in several different categories across our departments.

We were excited to fully welcome Eric Thompson, Natalie Fiscus, and Elizabeth Jensen to our seven-member Board early in the year. They each bring their lived and professional experiences to the Board and we're appreciative to them for their willingness to serve the community and those we serve.

While there is a lot to be proud of in 2023, we continue to understand that we have a big responsibility to those we serve and those with which we partner to continue to make strides and improvements. Please reach out to me at dottke@clermontdd.org with ideas or ways that we can continue to do just that.

We look forward to 2024 and appreciate you taking time to review the important work of this agency over the past year.



Clermont County Family and Children First Council that includes Superintendent Dan Ottke, Sharon Richmond, and Lori Watkins from Clermont DD.



Cooking pancakes at the Kiwanis Pancake Breakfast.



Being interviewed by Cub Scouts from the East Fork District.

Core Values - SURE

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.

Engage

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

Board Members

Clermont DD Board

Mary Jane West, President
Michael Chapman, Vice President
David Thamann, Secretary
Natalie Fiscus
Elizabeth Jensen
Eric Thompson
Jeffery Weir

Clermont DD Empowers Me Board

Julie Wood, President
Jeff Weir, Vice President
Cory Wright, Secretary
Jeff Diesel, Treasurer
Donald A. Collins
Lisa Davis
Jodi McPherson
Pete Miller
Brad Toft
Stefani Warren



Clermont DD Board, accepting the Oath of Office in January, 2023.

Our Administrative Team



Dave Sininger
Director
of
Business Operations



Megan Davidson
Willey
School
Principal



Lori Watkins
Director of
Behavioral Health
Services



Arley Hammons
Director of
Early Childhood
Services



Sharon Richmond
Director of
Community Support
Services



Adrianne Keys
Director of Waiver
and SSA
Services



Lisa Davis
Director of
Community
Relations



Scott Brown
Community
Employment
Program Coord.

Good Fortune Dinner

Each year, the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities hosts the Good Fortune Recognition Dinner to honor various people who do great things for the people and families we serve. In 2023, the event took place at Norlyn Manor in Batavia. There were over 150 guests who attended, and it was our "good fortune" to enjoy recognize them for the great services they delivered as providers, direct support professionals, self advocates, friends, volunteers, and staff.

2023 Award Recipients

Provider of the Year

Faith Jennings, Independent Provider
Logan Morgan, Direct Support Professional
Residential Concepts, Agency Provider*

*Bottom photo at right

Self Advocate of the Year

Mark Iles, Jr.**

**Top photo with
2022 Self Advocate of the Year Abby Minardi

Families Connected Advocacy Award

Mary Beth Roberts
Tina Grooms, ResCare

Early Childhood Award

Sarah Florence and Family

Friends of DD Award

Dr. Neil Dubin
Milford Tractor Supply Co.
Robin Cooke and the GOT Respite Crew
Shirley Reynolds and Stan Herold, Batavia Bowl

Employer of the Year

Laszlo's Iron Skillet

Volunteer of the Year

Paul Daugherty, Individual Volunteer
Day in the Ring 4H Advisors & Members, Group

Community Leader of the Year

Jean Schmidt, State Representative***
Middle photo with Superintendent Dan Otke

Triumph Staff Award

Pattie Doss



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.

2023 Recap:

- Passed a .75 mill renewal levy in November, 2023.
- Sold the Krenning Building, leaving the Thomas A. Wildey Center Campus as the main facility for Clermont DD.

Facilities

- Renovated the Wildey School Age Entrance with GEER grant funding (Governor's Emergency Education Relief), making the entrance more safe and secure for the students being served.
- Replaced the swimming pool boiler.
- Replaced hallway tile floors in all areas of the Wildey Center.
- Paved and seal coated the walking track for students, individuals, staff, and the community to enjoy.
- Painted the exterior facia of the Wildey Center.
- Widened the front drive entrance and replaced the culvert.

Information Technology

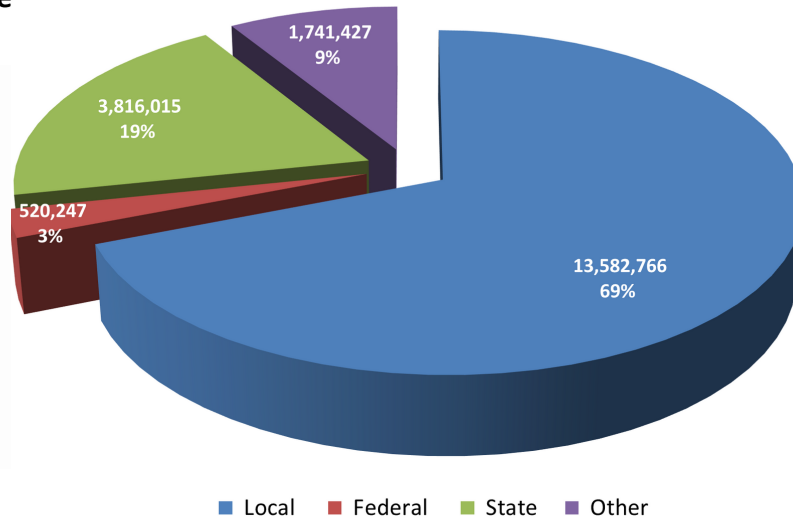
- Moved employee files from an in-house server to the Microsoft OneDrive Program.
- Moved department and agency files to the Microsoft SharePoint Program.



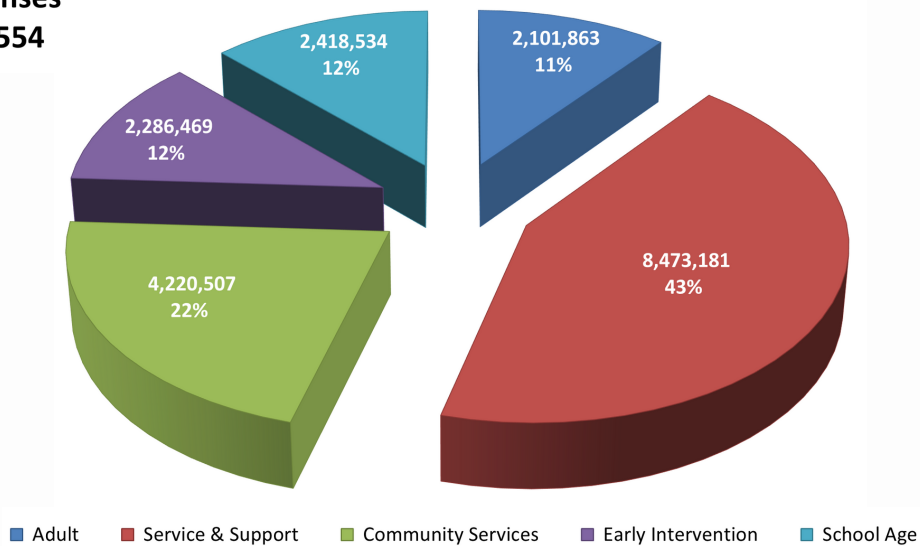
Graphic design of the levy sign that was used for the replacement levy in 2023.

Revenue and Expenses

2023 Revenue
\$19,660,455



2023 Expenses
\$19,500,554



Behavioral Health Services

The Behavioral Health Team had an amazing year in 2023! We processed a total of 111 individual referrals for Behavior Support, Mental Health, and CITE services; through direct service, support, and referral processes, we interfaced with at least 308 unique individuals. As is often the case, many of the individuals we serve have intense needs and receive more than one service. Below is our 2023 service and utilization analysis:

2023 Recap:

- Behavior Support: 161 individuals served.
- CITE services: 52 referrals, 62 individuals served.
- Grant funded programs for multi-system youth.
- Compassion Collaborative (SFY23): 35 total youth (Clermont and Hamilton).
- Resilience Project (SFY23): 16 youth.
- Galperin Autism Consulting (SFY23): 24 individuals (Clermont and Hamilton).
- Mental Health supports: 45 individuals.
- Psychiatry service transfers: 34 individuals.
- SWOCOG 4-bed respite program: 7 individuals.
- Got Respite: 11 individuals.
- Trainings and support groups, including SURE refreshers, Internet Safety, Trauma-informed Care, Life Skills, Behavior Concepts, De-escalation/Crisis Response, and Resilience and Behavior Support strategies: 29 separate sessions, 415 attendees in total (NOT included in our unique number of individuals served).

Much of these efforts involved not only working with individuals, but supporting their families & providers, as well as cross system collaborations with other agencies and programs such as Clermont County Children Services, Family & Children First Council, Hamilton County DDS, Clermont County Mental Health & Recovery Board, Child Focus, Inc., Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health, Pressley Ridge, and SWOCOG. We have worked extremely hard to build and maintain relationships with our community partners.



Director Lori Watkins honoring staff Dean Swartz and Rachel Perlstein for their years of service at the All Staff Inservice on January 2, 2023.

Grant Funding

This year we were also remarkably successful in increasing our grant-funded services for Clermont County DD and collaborating agencies. On behalf of Clermont DD, the Behavioral Health Services Department wrote applications for and received \$740,342 in grant/subsidy funds for SFY/CYs 2024:

- Strong Families, Safe Communities (\$211,831/year) and the DODD KFT funds (\$65,250/year) for a bi-annual funding cycle through SFY25.
- DODD respite grant totaling \$378,500 to support the SWOCOG Respite program.
- DODD Home & Community Based Services (HCBS) ARPA funds (\$84,600). These are new funds for projects through SFY24, including:
 - \$10,000 to address transportation barriers for our individuals to access community activities.
 - \$25,000 to plan and start an outdoor playscape for school age/early intervention youth.
 - \$11,000 for three Universal Changing Tables.
 - \$30,000 to fund community activities for individuals and their providers.
 - \$8,500 to fund attendance by our individuals to conferences/advocacy activities across the state.

Other Successes of the Year

- We partnered with Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health to co-facilitate a yearlong Dialectical Behavioral Therapy group for our individuals.
- Our entire team renewed our certification in the Child and Adolescent Needs & Strengths (CANS) assessment – a tool used by OhioRISE across the state for youth to age 21.
- We successfully completed the DODD Accreditation process and maintained ongoing Restrictive Measures management through our Human Rights Committee.
- We supported our inaugural Basketball is Life group.
- We supported 3 University of Cincinnati social work interns for a total of 859 service hours in 2023, two of which were hired by CCBDD after they graduated.



Director Lori Watkins (pictured left), honored as a nominee for the Good Fortune “Triumph” Award with other members of the Clermont DD Staff.



The GOT Respite Crew received the Friends of DD Award at the 2023 Good Fortune Dinner.



Basketball is Life class

Community Employment Services

The Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Community Employment Department is a stand-alone program, designed to assist people with developmental disabilities to find meaningful employment. We adhere to Employment First Policy, whereby, according to state law in Ohio, employment services for people with developmental disabilities shall be directed at community employment and all people with developmental disabilities are presumed capable of community employment.

2023 Recap:

- Continued to provide quality services and placement of employees into full time competitive jobs with benefits and competitive wages.
- 18 Job Seekers found jobs in their field of interest.
- Average hourly wage was \$12.94/hr.
- Average work week was 23 hrs.
- Coaching hours – 960 for 50 people.
- We provided retention services for 60-65 people working in 40 businesses in and around Clermont County.
- Our Transition Program provided Pre-Employment Transition services to 28 students virtually as well as in person.
- Transition Summer Youth Work Experience served 11 students who worked at: Coney Island, Holiday Inn, Tractor Supply Co., Wildey School.
- OCTOBER was National Disability Employment Awareness Month. Jacob West, Kroger Eastgate employee, accepted the Proclamation from the Clermont County Commissioners.
- Good Fortune recognition event "Employer of the Year" recipient was Laszlo's Iron Skillet in Withamsville.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee was developed as a result of Sanctuary CORE Team discussions and the desire to improve staff awareness in unfamiliar areas. Members of this committee developed a definition, a mission, and a monthly curriculum of meetings with learning and presentations that are broadcast via Zoom for staff to receive the valuable information, whether they are in the office, working remote, or on vacation.

The Committee's Definition of Inclusion/Diversity: The act or practice of including and accommodating people, promoting diversity, respecting people for their uniqueness, and acknowledging the intrinsic biases of the human condition, culture, personal experiences, and history.

The Committee's Mission is to educate and promote an increased awareness, as we support diverse populations in Clermont County.

Monthly discussion topics have been designed to focus on notably-recognized events and holidays, as well as current events and to provide education about these. Often, presenters are utilized to teach and instruct about their "lived experience."

Topics in 2023 included: disability awareness, mental health awareness, antisemitism, LGBTQ, breast cancer awareness, black history month, polish heritage month, Juneteenth, and more. Special presenters joined us from the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center, Crawley Consulting, West Clermont Schools, and Cincinnati Children's UCEDD to name a few.



Early Childhood Services

Early Intervention (EI) Services are provided by the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities for children under the age of three. This program follows rules from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and from Part C. of I.D.E.A. The overarching goal of Early Intervention is to increase a family's competence and confidence in helping their child to learn and grow. The early childhood programs operating under or coordinated by Clermont DD in 2023 were:

- Early Intervention Service Coordination – System of the coordination and implementation of services for children birth to three.
- Early Intervention Services - Specialized services for children under the age of three with developmental delay, disability, or diagnosed medical or physical condition.
- Early Intervention Hearing Services - Services for children birth to three identified with hearing loss and their families. In 2023, Hearing Services served twelve counties: Adams, Auglaize, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Fayette, Hamilton, Highland, Van Wert and Warren.



AREAS OF OVERSIGHT:

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES ONGOING SUPPORT AND MONITORING OF ALL COMPONENTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PART C SERVICES. THIS INCLUDES IFSP OUTCOMES, TRANSITION, AND EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT, PER DODD REQUIREMENTS.

LOCAL FAMILY AND CHILDREN FIRST COUNCIL: MONTHLY MEETINGS AND MONTHLY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL SO THEY CAN SEE THE DATA THAT IS BEING COLLECTED AND THE WORK THAT IS BEING DONE IN OUR PROGRAM. THE EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE COORDINATION GRANT AND BUDGET FILTERED THROUGH THE COUNCIL UNTIL THE FISCAL YEAR SWITCHED OVER IN JULY AND NOW OUR BUDGET DOES NOT HAVE TO FILTER THROUGH THE COUNCIL ANYMORE PER RULE.

Wildey School

The Thomas A. Wildey School is a public separate school through the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). Our school is located within the Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities facility.

The Thomas A. Wildey School partners with local school districts in Clermont County and beyond to provide specially-designed instruction for students as Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams see fit. When an educational placement at Thomas A. Wildey is deemed appropriate by the student's IEP team, the school district of residence is responsible for 100% of the cost to educate the student as well as providing specialized transportation.

This school age program provides specially-designed instruction to students impacted with disabilities as young as kindergarten and all through a student's 22 year in some cases. Students are placed in classrooms based on age. Each classroom does not exceed a 60-month age range as required by ODE. All of our students participate in Ohio's Standards Extended and consist of learners in the lowest 1% in a district's public school system, allowing them to participate in the alternative state assessment based on criteria set by the state, and agreed upon by the IEP team.

2023 Recap:

- At the conclusion of the 2022-23 school year, the school operated eight classrooms. During the 2023-24 school year the school operated seven classrooms, but are already making plans to return to 8 as the district needs are increasing rapidly.
- Currently serving 11 districts.
- Currently serving an average of 40 students, in the low-incidence population, and students with autism and low-incidence needs.
- Serving with three related service providers in house for speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, one health and physical education teacher who also serves as our life guard, and collaborating with the local ESC for additional vision, orientation, and mobility services.
- Staff use a variety of extended standards curricula to meet student needs and also provide grade-level access to state standards in a modified format.
- Specialized settings within our school include our adaptive gymnasium, therapeutic pool, "Comet Living" (mock apartment for independent living skills practice), "Comet Mart" (real-life set up for practice with shopping, store-related work skills, and healthy living skills) and our newest addition "Comet Works" (vocational practice lab with over 40 vocational skill tasks based on real world work experiences).



- Class size is typically six students, with a ratio of 1:2.
- Meal services are provided by Milford Exempted Village Schools and are picked up and delivered to our school as a part of vocational practice for upper-aged students.
- New for the 2023-24 school year, is a PBIS team (Positive Behavior Intervention Support) which is working on schoolwide modeling and positive behavior supports, as required by the Ohio Department of Education; the team is building lesson plans based on locations in the school building to open lines for discussion and modeling practice for expected behaviors in these school settings.
- All school monthly events allow a focus on socialization, inclusive experiences based on seasons or interactive themes, and have included volunteers from local high schools and elementary schools, as well as LEAD Clermont county leadership development group.
- We have partnerships with local vendors who provide services to equipment and wheelchairs in-house, to best serve families by eliminating additional time out of school to service items when needed or new equipment is required.



Community Support Services

The Community Support Services Department has a Community Integration Team of Service and Support Administrators (SSAs) who help support individuals with developmental disabilities and their families by determining eligibility, facilitating assessments to determine service needs, and identifying available resources. Resources that are considered include Family Support Services, Private Insurance, Medicaid Cards, other public funds, personal assets, and natural supports. Efficient utilization of available resources is necessary to maximize the number of individuals who can be supported while balancing our fiscal accountability to taxpayers who make these services and supports possible. Another duty of the Community Support Services Department is to provide support and technical assistance to Agency and Independent Providers. The Provider Liaison engages providers and networks to provide support in the certification process, development of needed paperwork, compliance, billing, training, operations, and culture.

2023 Recap:

- Successful Transition of Duties for CSS Administrative Assistant and New Role Development.
- Achieved major database clean-up project, necessitated by moving from Gatekeeper to Britteo.
- Advancement with Britteo at 100% usage for all CSS documents and forms.
- Developed Acuity Tool to identify SSA necessity and caseload assignments.
- Creation of a CSS Plan Document to use for individuals with acuties.
- SSAs settled into new way of doing business: Acuity Tier=SSA Assignment.
- Enhanced role of Intake SSA with responsibility for eligibility assessments and assisting with resources for individuals without SSA (Information and Referral).
- Partnership of CSS Administrative Assistance, Intake SSA and Database Manager to build system to navigate eligibility referrals and redeterminations.
- Hosted the Red, White and Bloom Event to spotlight the Smart Apartment and other tech tools and resources of our community agency partners.



Provider Liaison Colleen Foxton, checking in vendors and visitors at the Red, White, and Bloom Event.



Director Sharon Richmond (left), recognizing staff for their years of service at the All Staff Inservice.

- Centralized resources on a searchable spreadsheet to be more proficient in assisting individuals and families with a variety of needs.
- Provided assistance to families who needed help maneuvering the Family Support Services funds.
- Produced the deliverables for the FY 23 Innovative Technology Solutions Grant with Tech Toolkit Development, Smart Apartment Model, and Information on Apps as tools.
- Built on a dedicated Provider Liaison Role to provide ongoing support to our Provider Community in the areas of certifications, trainings, information sharing and recruitment.
- Held a week-long Provider Appreciation event, featuring various services and awarding a daily Raffle Basket.
- Participated in job fair opportunities and disseminated provider recruitment fliers at a variety of venues.
- Dealt with and navigated through demanding situations that confronted the individuals and families we serve.
- SSAs represented individuals in ongoing meetings with entities including schools, developmental centers, Ohio Rise, and resilience teams.
- Created a flow system in partnership with Early Intervention for children moving from EI Services at age three to the CSS Intake and Referral System.
- Facilitated Intermediate Care Facility searches resulting in placement for nine individuals seeking 24/7 residential care.

<p>MEET <i>Nicole Chandler</i> the Commuter-Themed Basket Winner!</p>  <p>Nicole is a DSP with Goodwill at their East location. She has been with the company for SIX years!</p> <p><i>"Every day is different and you never know what to expect walking through the door!"</i> -Nicole</p> <p><small>CLERMONT COUNTY BOARD of Developmental Disabilities</small></p>	<p>MEET <i>Monet Mitchell</i> the Cincinnati-Themed Basket Winner!</p>  <p>Monet is a DSP with TruCare Provider Services. She has been with the company since May 2023!</p> <p><i>"My favorite thing about being a DSP is being able to help individuals maintain a sense of independence they might not otherwise experience. From the moment I chose this career path, I have been humbled and rewarded simultaneously and I look forward to many years of assisting so many wonderful individuals."</i> -Monet</p> <p><small>CLERMONT COUNTY BOARD of Developmental Disabilities</small></p>	<p>MEET <i>Mary Sprague</i> the Tailgating-Themed Basket Winner!</p>  <p>Mary is a DSP with Residential Concepts Incorporated (RCI) and works at their Williamsburg location. She has been with the company for ONE year!</p> <p><i>"It's so rewarding when you've successfully made their day by putting a smile on their face or you've made them laugh. :)"</i> -Mary</p> <p><small>CLERMONT COUNTY BOARD of Developmental Disabilities</small></p>
<p>MEET <i>Jessica Miller</i> the Cravings-Themed Basket Winner!</p>  <p>Jessica is a DSP with Residential Concepts Incorporated (RCI) and works at their Williamsburg location. She has been with the company for over TWO years!</p> <p><i>"My favorite thing about working in this field is how rewarding it is, and the bonds that I have made with individuals. Helping them feel independent, confident, and a part of their community is what makes me proud of the work I do."</i> -Jessica</p> <p><small>CLERMONT COUNTY BOARD of Developmental Disabilities</small></p>		<p>MEET <i>Connie Misch</i> the Cozy Day-Themed Basket Winner!</p>  <p>Connie is an Independent Provider and currently serves an individual in Clermont County. She has been a provider for TEN years!</p> <p><i>"My favorite things about being a Provider is helping my clients thrive by achieving their own accomplishments independently. Watching them become confident individuals everywhere and mostly in their community. Watching them glow in pride doing it themselves! Teaching confidence and dedication to self and to each other!"</i> -Connie</p> <p><small>CLERMONT COUNTY BOARD of Developmental Disabilities</small></p>

Service & Support Administration

The Service and Support Administration Department assists individuals and their families to choose services that will best meet their needs within a given budget. A Service and Support Administrator (SSA) is assigned to individuals receiving Medicaid waiver services to help coordinate their services. The SSA helps individuals and others close to them create a service plan based on their needs and goals. The service plan identifies each service the individual will receive along with the name of the service provider they have chosen. Services may include day services, community employment, residential supports, self advocacy, community activities, and transportation. The SSA can help the individual or family access information about service options and available service providers. SSAs are responsible for getting the written plan and any updates to the individual, guardian or family and all service providers in a timely manner. The SSA maintains contact with the individual, family and providers throughout the year to ensure that services are delivered according to the plan. The plan may be changed or adjusted at any time and is reviewed at least annually.

2023 Recap:

- In January, the SSA Department took over completing Waiver List Assessments. 40 were completed throughout the year.
- 228 redetermination applications were completed from January through May: 37 in January, 43 in February, 53 in March, 44 in April, and 51 in May,
- We welcomed several new SSAs to the team throughout the year.
- New training and onboarding for SSAs was created in 2023, to assist new staff to more efficiently learn their role at Clermont DD.
- Providers attended several SSA meetings to share information about their agencies. In 2023, we heard from PACK4U, Assurance Plus,
- Worked with providers, individuals, and families as the Department of Health and Human Services ended the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency funding as of November.
- Launched the Clermont DD SSA Bulletin, a one-page quarterly newsletter for providers serving individuals on waivers.
- Honored staff for various years of service at the annual All Staff Inservice (pictured below).



Director Adrianne Keys (left), recognizing staff for their years of service at the All Staff Inservice.

- Collaborated with Ohio Department of DD to host an Ohio ISP gathering at Crossroads East in Clermont County. DODD's Regional Team hosted this event to help assist SSAs with the Ohio ISP transition.
- Began using a Funding Authorization Form with providers to streamline information on services.
- Hosted a self-care, stress management training for all Service and Support Administration Staff.
- An SSA Intern joined us in September and will be with our department until April, 2024.
- Our department was instrumental in helping Clermont DD receive a three-year Accreditation from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.
- Received training from two staff from DODD in October for the Ohio ISP.
- We received some great feedback following a satisfaction survey in 2023: "Our SSA has been a great help. The SSA looks at our sons' individual needs."



Members of the Service and Support Administration participated in the annual Haunted Drive-Thru.



SSA Department Staff attended the Good Fortune Awards in October.

Aktion Club and Self Advocacy

The self advocates who participate in the Aktion Club of Clermont County, Ohio truly made an impact in 2023. They not only held monthly meetings that featured visitors from various organizations, they recruited new members, volunteered in the community, and held a fundraiser so people in the group could enjoy a fun social networking experience. In April, they celebrated their first anniversary as a Kiwanis Aktion Club and invited members of the sponsoring group, Kiwanis Club of the East Fork Region, to their anniversary celebration. Club members made presentations about their year (pictured below, right).

- Held a planning session in January to decide on speakers, activities, and events for the year. Speakers we heard from were: PigAbilities/Flying Pig Marathon, Taft Museum of Art, Prism Marching Arts, and the Clermont Search and Recovery Team
- Abby Minardi, 2022 Self Advocate of the Year, accepted the Commissioners Proclamation for DD Awareness Month.
- Attended the DD Advocacy and Awareness Day at the Ohio Statehouse on March 1.
- Sponsored a poster contest for the students at the Wildey School during DD Awareness Month.
- Served guests at the Kiwanis Club/Clermont County Parks Pancake Breakfast on March 4.
- Delivered books to all twelve Child Focus centers in the county during DD Awareness Month. These books focused on inclusion: "Strictly No Elephants," "The Rabbit Listened," and "Communication is More than Words," were the three they chose to share.
- Participated in a strategic planning session with the Impact Group in May to help create the Clermont DD Strategic Plan.
- Held elections for new officers. Those leading the Club were: Austin Porter, President; Ryan Baker, Vice President; Ellen Thompson, Secretary; Abby Minardi, Treasurer; Mark Iles, Webmaster; Lindsey Wright, Reporter. Former President John Hicks will serve on the Board of Officers for one year. *Pictured in photo at left below.
- Hosted a table at the Red, White, and Bloom Remote Supports/Technology Event on July 10.
- Conducted a self advocacy meeting during the Red, White, and Bloom event and recruited five new members.
- Self Advocates volunteered for the Clermont County Fair in many ways including riding on the Kiwanis parade float, working the information booth, and by making announcements in the Paging Booth.
- Hosted a booth at the Clermont County Sheriff's National Night Out on August 1.
- Club members volunteered to prepare weekend meal bags for Empower Youth throughout the year and rang the bell in December for the Salvation Army.
- Our club was picked for a \$250 grant by the Ohio District Kiwanis Foundation. The club members voted to use the money to shop for holiday presents for individuals on the Clermont DD Giving Tree in December.
- Two club members attended at Leadership Summit at the University of Cincinnati in September.
- Raised \$740 from a fundraiser at the Batavia Chipotle Restaurant to be used for a social networking event.
- Mark Iles, Jr. was presented Self Advocate of the Year at the 2023 Good Fortune Awards.
- Club member Jake Jackson sang the National Anthem at one of the four opening ceremonies to the Kiwanis Club's Field of Honor. *Pictured in center photo below.
- Hosted a booth at the Williamsburg Christmas Walk on December 1, giving away 350 Christmas Tree ornaments to children who attended.



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, and fundraisers/events/awareness activities. Community Relations staff also serve as advisors for the Aktion Club self-advocacy group.

- Chaired the All Staff Inservice Committee and assisted with facilitating the event on January 3.
- Assisted the Aktion Club with events throughout the year including meetings, planning, and scheduling speakers.
- Joined the staff Resilience Team to plan after-work social events for staff to enjoy.
- Created a comprehensive calendar of events for DD Awareness Month to assist with public awareness.
- Submitted three ads to Southwest Ohio Parent Magazine, spotlighting Clermont DD services.
- Worked with the OSU Extension Office Snap-Ed Department who facilitated three six-week sessions for Health Cooking and Health Lifestyles.
- Attended the DD Advocacy and Awareness Day on March 1 with the Aktion Club, meeting with State Senator Terry Johnson (pictured below). We were excited to have him listen to our accomplishments and suggestions to better assist people with disabilities across the state.
- Worked with the Kiwanis Club of the East Fork Region on their March 4 Pancake Breakfast.
- Created a social media inclusion awareness campaign with MDC Design Studio and the Southwestern Ohio Council of Governments public relations team that received 750,000 impressions, 81,643 post engagements, and 5,018 video plays. Zach Keaton from Clermont DD participated in the voiceover for the video.
- Participated as active members of the Batavia Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club of the East Fork District, Clermont County Community Services Board, District Commissioner for the Boy Scouts East Fork District, and the Clermont County Safety Net Alliance.
- Activities continued in-person during 2023 and continued to have growing attendance. We enjoyed our regular dances that are sponsored by local groups and legions, bingo, craft nights, and bowling, but ventured out to several fun locations for Dinner on the Road and enjoyed a B&B River Cruise on the Ohio River in Cincinnati as well as attending the Renaissance Festival and hosting karaoke.
- Events in the community included the Child Focus Family Fun Day in April, Local12 Retirement and Health Expo in May, West Clermont Mental Health Awareness Fair, Thomaston Woods Summer Blast, two booths at the Clermont County Fair, National Night Out, Play/Learn/Grow events, a back-to-school event at Williamsburg Woods, two back-to-school vaccination clinics with Clermont County Public Health, Health and Wellness Drive-Thru with Clermont County Family and Children First, and supported the Human Resources Department in prepping materials for several job fairs.
- Assisted Community Support Services to produce a successful Red, White, and Bloom Technology Event in July.



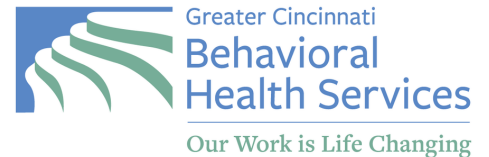
Community Relations

- Assisted with coordination of A Day in the Ring during the Clermont County Fair (pictured below).
- Created an information video with Silfies Media that was used in a variety of speaking engagements throughout the year.
- Attended an Early Childhood Collaborative Legislative Open House and spoke with State Senator Terry Johnson as well as State Representative Jean Schmidt to discuss Early Intervention needs in Clermont County.
- Helped organize a stakeholder planning session with the Superintendent for Strategic Planning. This committee was attended by 30 people from the community and organizations who are partners with Clermont DD.
- Received a \$2,100 donation from the Loveland American Legion and Ladies Auxiliary for our Activity Fund (pictured below).
- Took Spring and Fall photos for the Wildey Students, as well as Senior Pictures.
- Assisted with coordinating the annual Wildey School Graduation Ceremony.
- Developed a new website that launched in June.
- Hosted a Western Day for the Wildey School students that included a petting zoo and barrel train (*pictured below).
- Assisted with planning a successful Direct Support Professionals Appreciation Week in September.
- Coordinated the 2023 Good Fortune Awards with over 200 people in attendance. See Page 7 for the winners.
- Celebrated National Disability Employment Awareness Month with the Clermont County Commissioners Proclamation Ceremony in October.
- Provided 350 cookbooks as giveaways to the Clermont Chamber Women's Day in October.
- Accompanied two self advocates to a Leadership Summit at the University of Cincinnati.
- Produced an outstanding Haunted Drive-Thru in October, with over 200 cars attending. Additional booths this year were added our friends at the SnapDragons (special needs athletics program), and a local Jeep Club.
- Participated in the Ohio Self Advocacy Collaborative, which is a group of DD professionals who share ideas about self advocacy events and clubs across the state.



Community Partnerships

The Clermont County Board of Developmental Disabilities is proud to work with so many partners throughout the year. In 2023, the following agencies played a crucial role in the lives of the individuals served at Clermont DD.



a subcommittee of Family & Children First Council



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