



FOCUS



Lawrence County DD Forms Sports League for Residents with Developmental Disabilities

Lawrence County Developmental Disabilities (LCDD) has established a multi-agency sports league to offer recreational sports for those in the county with developmental disabilities.

The league, known as the Lawrence County DD Sports League, was developed in June of this year to offer an inclusive environment for residents to compete in sports with peers of their own. Currently, the league has four teams from PCS in Ironton, PALs in South Point, Easterseals in Burlington, and Open Door School in Coal Grove.

Players who receive services from Lawrence County DD make up the league, which meets monthly for competitions. The league recently met to play basketball, and future events for volleyball and bowling are currently in the works.

Dakota Clark, service and support administrator with Lawrence County DD, facilitates the league, and hopes that options for other sports will be explored for participants, as opportunities for inclusive sports are sparse in the region.

"We formed this league because of the lack of inclusion with sports and people with disabilities in our area," says Clark. "We are trying to not only include our individuals to make them live the best and most normal lives possible but also in hopes of getting the community involved and raising awareness for

DD in Lawrence County."

Jonathon Simpson plays on the Easterseals team and is hoping that he can improve his performance with the physical activities offered.

"Basketball is my favorite sport, and I hope that I can improve my skills while playing," says Simpson. "I'd really like to play as often as I can."

Clark says that the formation of the league is a reflection of the types of services and commitment that Lawrence County DD offers to achieve personal growth and inclusion for people.

"Lawrence County DD provides so many services for individuals in our county with disabilities and we want the community to see how valuable and needed these services are. The disability community often times gets left out of similar events and we are hoping to bridge that gap and raise community awareness and support for LCDD and individuals we serve."



Players in the DD Sports League square off at Open Door School. Teams meet once per month.



What do you feel is the most important part of your job?

Without question, the most important part of my job is serving those in our programs. Without our support, these individuals would face much more difficult situations than they already have to deal with. We are there for the individual's whether it be to find housing, organizing staff for daily living tasks, and even ensure proper medical staff are available to assist the individual with their medical needs.



What is your biggest accomplishment at LCDD?

I don't really have any accomplishments but am so proud to work for our agency and to tell people about us. It truly is a hidden gem that many people are unaware of. LCDD changes the lives of so many in our community who are often overlooked.

What advice would you give to anyone when they meet someone with DD?

Simple – look past the disability and to the person. A disability does not define someone. I tell people that individuals who have some form of developmental disability are just like everyone else – they want to be included and respected – it's that simple.

What advice would you give to families seeking LCDD services?

I would encourage anyone who believes they can benefit from our services to contact our department to begin the intake process. The sooner you receive help, the easier your life will be.

County developmental disabilities association appoints new CEO

(OACB) — The Ohio Association of County Boards of Developmental Disabilities has announced that— following a national search in which 85 applicants from 18 states were considered for the position—the organization's board of trustees has selected Adam Herman, the association's former chief operating officer, to serve as its next CEO.

Following the trustees' announcement, Herman reflected on the many challenges that county boards must overcome to maintain the long-term viability of Ohio's DD system, which include securing additional state funding to increase wages for direct support professionals (DSPs), adopting new technology solutions that promote greater personal independence and increase provider capacity, and implementing regulatory reforms to reduce overall bureaucracy in the system.

Herman, who joined OACB in 2011 as communications director after working on behalf of various state and local elected officials, managed all internal and external outreach efforts on behalf of members and served as the organization's chief spokesperson for nearly a decade. After assuming greater levels of day-to-day operational oversight for key association initiatives, including many strategic advocacy efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, he was appointed chief operating officer in January 2021.

A Canton native, Herman is a graduate of Kent State University in Kent, OH. He lives in the Franklinton neighborhood of Columbus.



Announcement: DODD Waiver Redesign Initiative

(OACB) – Redesigning Ohio’s system of waiver services that support people with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve their vision of a good life.

The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to bring in expertise to work with DODD and partners to modernize and simplify the funding system for DODD waiver supports. The result will be the redesign, modernization, and simplification of current processes related to assessments, funding, rate setting, data collection, and establishing individual budgets for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services Waivers administered by DODD.

All of this will be done with the primary goal to create a system of services that support people with developmental disabilities and their families to achieve their vision of a good life.

A waiver is a foundational and widely used option to receive that support. Over 42,000 people with developmental disabilities in Ohio receive services through waivers while living on their own, with family, with a roommate, or with a paid caregiver. Through investment and policy improvement as well as the changing needs, wants, and expectations of people with developmental disabilities, the processes and systems we have in place have become overly complex for all involved. Although these changes were well intended to better assist the system, duplication of efforts and resources, additional requirements, incremental changes to numerous systems and applications, and a host of other modifications have resulted in this complexity. It has been over 15 years since Ohio has had a holistic review and modernization of the DODD waiver funding system.

Stakeholders have collectively identified many of the issues and frustrations that exist with the current structure and we used that input to outline the opportunities and benefits of redesigning the system to improve Ohio’s support for people with developmental disabilities. Now is the time to ensure that the robust support system Ohio has built for people with developmental disabilities is in alignment with the needs and preferences of the people who are receiving those supports.

Several changes were made to DODD waivers effective July 1, 2022, that took steps toward aligning services available and allowing more flexible access to services and supports. This RFP represents the commitment to further simplify and improve the foundational systems of DODD’s waiver programs.

Through this work our goal is to:

- Create a simpler and more streamlined funding system built on fair and logical payment systems;
- Continue to be good stewards of limited public resources by incorporating sustainable structures;
- Provide quality outcomes by establishing processes that are flexible enough to meet the diverse needs and preferences of people receiving services;
- Be responsive to choices made by the people served, in alignment with community supports; and
- Develop a system-wide vision and long-range strategic plan by listening to those we support, funding partners, and stakeholders.

We are appreciative of the work and input from our community and partners that has resulted in the RFP posted. A great amount of work will be required to develop solutions and see these changes realized. This is a massive undertaking that will take time and effort of many people. As we have in identifying the necessity of this work and the development of the RFP, DODD will listen to your challenges, wants for the future, and ideas on how to get us there. There will be opportunities in the coming months to contribute and stay up to date on progress.

Back to School Tips



Set a bedtime that meets everyone’s recommended sleep requirements and stick to it. The National Sleep Foundation recommends **11-13** hours of sleep for kids aged **3-5** and **9-11** hours for kids aged **6-13** per night. Don’t forget that you need plenty of rest too! Getting enough sleep is essential for starting the day refreshed and alert.

Sticking to a daily routine is the best way to make your morning routines stress-free and take care of time-consuming activities the night before. Write down an evening to-do list on the refrigerator or near the family calendar.

Relieve those back-to-school jitters. Talk to your child about exciting new classes, activities and events that they can participate in during the new school year.

Anything can be an opportunity to learn. While you’re at home with your kids, take the opportunity to have fun learning. Every experience can be a lesson if you want it to be.



Contact Us!

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