



FOCUS



A Parent's Journey Through Early Intervention

My journey through the Early Intervention program started when my son Eli was about 18 months old. Up until then we had no concerns about his development and then almost overnight he just stopped eating and talking. Our pediatrician mentioned that he had some concerns about Eli maybe having Autism, one of the scariest six letter words we had ever heard at that point. We had no idea what it meant, so we did what any parent would do and took to the internet. Our initial reaction was to be devastated and to wonder what the future would look like for this innocent little boy that we loved with all of our hearts. As we moved past the devastation phase, we began to figure out how to maneuver this new world we had found ourselves in.



Eli Hayton at a young age

We prayed, we researched, we made calls, we asked friends, we did whatever we could to make sure that we could get him the help he needed... and that's when we came across the Early Intervention program. We had no clue what EI was or what they did but just figured that we wouldn't qualify. Luckily the nurse at his pediatrician's office made a referral for us and the day they called was truly the day our lives began to change.

I remember getting a call from a Service Coordinator who took the time to answer all the questions I had, and believe me, I had a lot. We discussed exactly what the program would look like and at that time there was an opening for Eli to participate in a play time program where he would go for 2 hours and spend time with people who would care for him like he was their own. They began to work on the speech and sensory issues that he was having with clinical based speech therapy.

When Eli was about 25 months old we received an official diagnosis of Autism from Nationwide Children's Hospital. Our Early Intervention team was there with us through the whole process so we just kept moving forward. When Eli turned 3 years old, he transitioned into preschool. The EI team helped us develop his IEP and even helped us along as Eli eventually transitioned into kindergarten.

The day the Service Coordinator called me to go over the Early Intervention program was the first day in a long time my wife and I felt like we had hope. The day the Developmental Specialist came to the house to meet Eli, he hid behind the couch and only came out for a few minutes. I will never forget her looking at me and saying "Mr. Hayton, we can't wait to work with your little man and help him reach his developmental milestones". She didn't make any promises or guarantees, but she offered not only help, but hope. For the first time in months we had a plan.



Eli Hayton at present day

Eli is now getting ready to turn 17, is a Junior in High School, and just finished his third season as a starter on the High School Soccer team where he is the Goalkeeper. He is a fantastic guitar player for the worship band at church, is a 4.0 student, and is currently learning how to drive. There was a time in his life where I never thought I would hear him talk again and now I can't keep the child quiet, and for that I will forever be thankful for the Early Intervention program.

Our Developmental Specialist once told me something that has stuck with me to this day. After Eli was diagnosed with Autism, she said "One of the worst things we do with kids with Autism is that we try to get them involved in our world as quickly as possible. What we need to do is quickly join their world and then slowly invite them into ours." Thank you, Early Intervention. Words will never express the debt of gratitude that my family feels in our hearts for the work you have done in the life of my son.

Superintendent's Message

Greetings,

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and we are super excited about our scheduled events! Our focus this year and moving forward is to inform the community about the services we provide, and to draw attention to the strengths and challenges of the people we serve and their families. We are thankful to be a part of the Lawrence County community, and hope to see many of you in March. Thanks for reading!

Julie Monroe
Superintendent



DD Awareness Month

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in the United States. The designation, proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan in 1987, who called upon Americans to provide the "encouragement and opportunities" necessary for people with developmental disabilities to reach their full potential, has been commemorated for 35 years.

Locally, the Lawrence County Developmental Disabilities (DD), the public agency responsible for funding and overseeing services to individuals with developmental disabilities across the life span, as well as providing services through its Early Intervention and Open Door School programs, will organize and host events to raise awareness.

"Our annual Chili Fest & Craft Show event, a staple in the community for many years, will be held this year after being cancelled the past two years due to COVID-19", says Julie Monroe, Lawrence County DD Superintendent. The event, which has been downsized to allow for more spacing between chili cookers and vendors, will be held at the Open Door School, located on the Lawrence County DD Campus at 606 Carlton Davidson Lane in Coal Grove on Saturday, March 12, 2022 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Admission is \$1.00 with proceeds going to the Open Door School Boosters, or a donation of a canned food item.

In addition to activities such as a cake walk, raffle drawings, craft vendors and chili contest, information about Lawrence County DD services will be available. There will also be a video presentation that highlights some of the accomplishments of individuals served.

Disabilities Awareness Month will be formally acknowledged by the Lawrence County Commissioners at their meeting scheduled for March 1, 2022, at the Lawrence County Courthouse. The Commissioners will approve a Proclamation declaring March DD Awareness Month in Lawrence County. Individuals served, their families and providers are encouraged to attend. Also, the Courthouse lawn on the 4th Street side will be decorated with purple pinwheels, and the dome will be lit purple for the month, as a reminder of the contributions of Lawrence County residents with developmental disabilities.

"We are extremely grateful for the support shown by the Lawrence County Commissioners, and will collaborate with all of our stakeholders to assure Lawrence County is a place where all people feel they belong and have an opportunity to contribute," said Monroe.

Calendar of Events

MARCH

1st – DD Awareness Month Kick off
10:00 am at Commissioners Mtg with Proclamation
4th - Teacher In-Service Day
8th - 6:00 pm Board Meeting at ODS
12th - 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Chili fest & Craft/Vendor show at ODS
25th - Teacher In-Service Day

APRIL

12th - 6:00 pm Board Meeting at ODS
15th - Teacher In-Service Day
18th – 22nd - Spring Break (No School)

Lawrence County Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Kick-off

If you would like to be a part of this event, please attend the
Lawrence County Commissioner's meeting on March 1, 2022.

Date: Tuesday, March 1, 2022

Where: Lawrence County Courthouse – Commissioner's Office Conference Room (space in the conference room is limited, and overflow will be in hallway – however, door will remain open so visitors can see and hear presentation).

Time: Meeting starts at 10:00 a.m. (please arrive early)



The Commissioners will approve a Proclamation designating March as Developmental Disabilities Month. The proclamation will be presented to Tanner Huff, DD advocate and Lawrence County DD Board Member.

Tanner will say a few words about the contributions of people with developmental disabilities, along with Brian Hayton, DD advocate and Lawrence County DD employee.

Purple pinwheels will be put on the 4th side entrance of the Courthouse along with DD Month Awareness banners, and the Courthouse dome will be lit up purple for the month of March. Pictures and video footage of the event will be posted on the Lawrence County DD FB page and website at lawrencedd.org.

Service SPOTLIGHT

Early Intervention

- Before you can participate in EI, your child must be determined eligible. If you agree, your service coordinator will coordinate the eligibility.
- Eligibility for EI varies by state. In Ohio, some children who have certain diagnosed conditions are automatically eligible. Other children go through an eligibility determine process that will include an evaluation of your child's development using information obtained from many sources, including information from you, an evaluation tool, observations of your child and review of your child's medical records.
- Eligibility for EI is not income based and there is no cost to your family to determine whether your child is eligible for EI.
- For more information please refer to the link below

<https://ohioearlyintervention.org/what-can-i-expect-in-ei>



Are you concerned about your child's development?

Lawrence County DD's
Early Intervention
can help

Serving families and children from
birth to age three



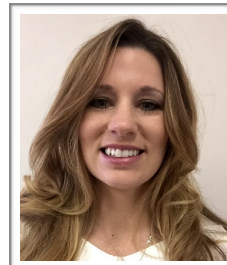
Contact 740-532-0406
To Make A Referral

Lawrence County DD
www.lawrencedd.org

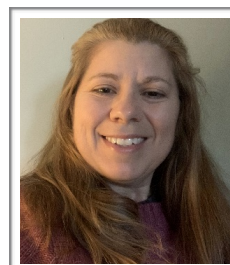
The LCDD Developmental Specialists



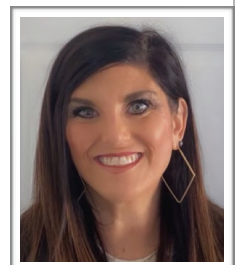
Brian Hayton



Tammy Fennimore



Traci Brace



Mary Ferguson

Virtual Arc Updates

Southeast Region

Monthly updates from the Southeast Region of
The Arc of Ohio offered through Zoom

Two sessions on the last Tuesday of every month*
2:00pm & 6:00pm

Updates on: Rule Changes, Resources, Trainings, and more!

Athens | Perry | Hocking | Morgan | Washington | Pike
Vinton | Ross | Scioto | Jackson | Lawrence | Gallia | Meigs

*These are duplicate sessions that contain the same information.
We offer two sessions to accommodate various schedules of families and individuals.

2:00pm Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85062509422>

6:00pm Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84839736753>

It's **CHILI TIME**

We are excited to be hosting our 21st Chili Fest event as part of Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month. Bring your family and friends and join us on Saturday, March 12 at Open Door School (606 Carlton Davidson Lane) in Coal Grove. Doors will open at 10:00 a.m. for shopping at the craft/vendor show, and our chili contest participants will start serving at 11:00 a.m. Winners will be announced at 1:45 p.m.

In addition to great chili and shopping, there will be basket raffles, and a cake walk for all. Most importantly, visitors will be able to see our newly renovated school building, and receive information about the Lawrence County DD programs.



Contact Us!

Main Board Office: 740-532-7401
SSA department and emergency contact: 740-532-0406
Open Door School: 740-532-1234
Early Intervention: 740-532-0406

www.lawrencedd.org

604 Carlton Davidson Ln., Coal Grove, OH 45638