

Pipeline . . . direct from the state . . .

Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities

Ted Strickland, Governor

John L. Martin, Director

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Information pertaining to the State Budget has been released in *Pipeline Extras* during the past week, and is archived at

<http://odmrdd.state.oh.us/topics/budget.htm> and <http://odmrdd.state.oh.us/publications/pipeline.htm>

The Movers & Shakers – Family Advisory Council

1. Dayton-Area Families Tell It Like It Is

Following a tried-and-true format of regular meetings involving interested families from throughout Ohio, the Family Advisory Council (FAC) gathered January 21, 2009, at the Columbus Developmental Center. They did not know that ‘The Advocates Video Diary’ would start the meeting with such a solid dose of in-your-living-room reality ... and they loved it.

Wynema Mebane, parent advocate, long-time FAC member, and Dayton area resident, brought some of the The Advocates family members with her, and they spoke compellingly following the documentary-style video. Wynema stated,

“We put this video together with a grant from the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council as a way to tell legislators and others with a need-to-know, how we deal with issues that affect our families every day. Issues such as residential opportunities for our adult-age children, the need for therapy and respite services, and other issues and challenges that we face every day – the video shows the reality of these things.”

Three families were featured in the production: April Plummer and son JC; Nathaniel and Holly Dull and their three children; and Arthur and Sherry Stauber, with son, Russell, each displayed

an unvarnished approach to sharing their lives. (For more information about this video, contact The Advocates at TADV110@sbcglobal.net)

Director Chats

The meeting also included the ever-popular ‘Director’s Chats’ with ODMRDD Director John Martin. He spoke candidly with FAC members, responding to questions and comments ranging from ways the ODMRDD can be more efficient, to what kinds of things they would be most concerned about not having if dollars were unavailable.

As the FAC provided yet another venue for ‘budget conversations’, Director Martin stated,

“We want to run things by you and be vigilant, to be sure we link into what your’re dealing with day-to-day. You’re the people ‘on the ground’ – Your voices are incredibly important to us. We are listening, and making careful decisions. Indeed, we have a great responsibility to make good decisions.”

Following the Director’s discussion was Tracy (Williams) Plouck, Deputy Director, Office of Budget and Management (OBM) who provided an interesting look at the impact of the state’s Budget on agencies and services. She shared information illustrating the historic challenges of budget cuts, and a glimpse at what the FY2010-2011 Operating Budget might look like.



April Plummer and son, JC

April illustrates the fact that she and JC are a matched set when it comes to fashion, as well as lots of other more important things.

“When it comes to understanding families like ours, you either get it or your don’t. Luckily, my boss, Bob, gets it!”



Sherry Stauber explains her initial reaction to participating in the video diary.

Sherry and Arthur Stauber, and their son, Russell, were a part of The Advocates Video Diary. She noted their initial nervousness about participating, and the natural way it all turned out.

“I guess I’d say we just decided to be as natural and comfortable as possible in telling our story, and it looks like we accomplished that.”



Wynema and son, Todd

Wynema Mebane and son, Todd, are movers and shakers in the Dayton area, reminding The Advocates and others to ...

“Use your gifts to help other people! The Advocates Video Diary is inspirational. I hope it helps us to reach people who can make a difference – who can change what needs to be changed.”

The primary purpose of the Family Advisory Council is to provide information to policy makers who impact direct services for children of all ages. The FAC also provides an opportunity to exchange information about programs, services, and options available to families who have children with disabilities.


Rippling out from the FAC, the resulting family network hopes to reach many other families in Ohio, and provide them with information and education regarding changes in our system. Members also share what resources have been developed in their County that could benefit others. Collaboration between the ODMRDD and the FAC will continue to improve and enhance services, statewide.

For more information about the FAC, contact [Peggy Martin](mailto:peggy.martin@dmr.state.oh.us) at peggy.martin@dmr.state.oh.us; or phone (614) 466-8706. Peggy says,

“To be the best advocate possible for your child, stay informed! Here's a way to do so ... become a part of the Family Advisory Council (FAC), and get updated information and announcements. Join our listserv at: join_family_advisory@odmrdd.state.oh.us .



2. Positive Culture Initiative ODMRDD to Lead Effort on Development of State Policy

The Cleveland Plain Dealer and many other Ohio newspapers last week picked up an article via the Associated Press on the subject of prone (face-down) restraint, that authorities say contributed to the death of a teenager at an Ohio treatment center. The ODMRDD had banned usage of the restraint position in November 2008, before 17-year-old Faith Finley died at a Cleveland-area facility in December. The notice issued by ODMRDD in November (08-11-03  Prone Restraint), banned the face-to-the-floor restraint, saying that "overwhelming findings support the belief that its use poses an unacceptable risk to health and safety." A coroner ruled the teen's death a homicide, saying she choked on vomit and suffocated.

Governor Ted Strickland has called for the development of a state policy on the use of physical restraints, due to concerns about how Faith Finley died. In addition, agencies in at least 14 other states have severely curtailed or banned some restraints, most commonly the face-down position.

The ODMRDD has been asked by Governor Strickland to lead the effort to develop a standard policy, in the hope that the Department's ban will be adopted across Ohio.

Currently, Ohio is among the many states with 'piecemeal' regulations and tracking mechanisms on the subject of the use of restraints. Ohio leaves it up to individual agencies to set their own regulations for how the restraints -- blamed for at least 40 child deaths in the U.S. since 1993 -- should be used. There also is currently no single state agency that collects reports of all injuries or deaths caused by restraints.

This inter-agency committee, to be lead by ODMRDD, will study and make recommendations on the use of prone restraints, and will move toward banning dangerous restraints by sharing ODMRDD research on the subject, according to Michael Rench, Deputy Director of Community Services, who will be leading the group along with Pam Berry.

Development of a policy that explores the use of other intervention methods to phase out the use of prone restraints will be an important step in the new policy development, as well.


Six other state agencies will be asked for input in crafting the policy:

- Department of Youth Services
- Department of Mental Health
- Department of Job and Family Services
- Department of Education
- Department of Alcohol and Drug and Addiction Services
- Department of Health

The Children's Health Act of 2000 limited the use of restraints, and asked states to create their own policies -- http://www.samhsa.gov/legislate/Sept01/childhealth_Title31.htm -- but many states have not complied. According to one practitioner who works with agencies that care for children with physical and cognitive disabilities, "There are more regulations on how to humanely treat animals than there are on (how to humanely treat) people."

Tom Hemmert, of the Ohio Legal Rights Service (OLRS), notes that the agency hopes the state creates a definitive ban on the restraints, adding that it is not something that can be managed quickly. "It will take time. It's a culture change, and not something that occurs overnight," he said, adding, "It's important to have alternative procedures and options in place, so that service providers have other effective ways to deal with difficult situations."

Positive Intervention Culture Initiative

According to Michael Rench, ODMRDD's Positive Culture Initiative (PCI), introduced in September 2008 (08-09-02  Positive Intervention Culture), is essential for building an environment that enhances the quality of life for the individuals we support throughout the state. He notes,

"The ultimate goal of statewide training, which is scheduled throughout 2009, is to encourage the field to examine the current culture of supports, and make a commitment to a positive approach. The Positive Culture Initiative essentially will work toward the reduction and eventual elimination of aversive interventions with individuals – especially time-out and restraint – except when there is imminent risk to health and safety."

ODMRDD Community Services staff member and Senior Policy Advisor, Pamela Berry, drives the Positive Culture efforts throughout the agency, working with staff and service providers to support positive interactions with all people. According to Michael Rench, "Pam will continue to lead this initiative from the perspective of facilitating statewide collaboration across systems; organizing and leading community based networks; supporting the work of the statewide advisory and regional behavior support committees; researching similar efforts in other states, and overseeing policy decisions at ODMRDD."

Through this initiative we will identify system changes necessary to move the field toward an overall more positive culture, and organize support for making those changes throughout Ohio.

Pam explains,

“If we change the way we see people, then we will change our approach to supporting them. The focus must be on building relationships and helping people feel safe, rather than seeing only challenging behaviors or focusing on compliance.”

With all of this in mind, the original terminology of Positive *Intervention* Culture Initiative will be streamlined as *Positive Culture Initiative*, emphasizing the overall ideology. In this effort, when you see this simple logo, it will symbolize our collaborative efforts:

PCI

What do you think? Please email Pam.Berry@dmr.state.oh.us with any feedback.

Look for more information on the Positive Culture Initiative in future issues of Pipeline and on the www.mrdd.ohio.gov website in the coming months.



3. Young Adult Transition Corps (YATC) Camp Opportunities

Applications are now being accepted for the first-ever YATC summer camp, offering sessions in the Columbus, Ohio area on Tuesdays and Thursdays beginning June 16, 2009. Two sessions will be offered -- a morning session, 9 a.m. – noon, and an evening session, 6-9 p.m. Both are six-week sessions.

Young Adult Transition Corps is a unique AmeriCorps program of the [Ohio State University Nisonger Center on Excellence in Developmental Disabilities](#). YATC is dedicated to serving young adults with disabilities and their families, and promoting successful transitions to adulthood.

AmeriCorps/YATC members collaborate with high school students with disabilities to develop ongoing service learning projects. Members also engage young adults with disabilities in educational and community-based programs in the Columbus area that promote community service, community access, and social skill development -- three areas critical to successful transition.

YATC's summer camp is designed to help young adults with disabilities develop life skills for independent adult living. Session topics will include community resources, healthy lifestyles, healthy relationships, professionalism, building employment skills, and financial skills. The program is free and registration is limited, so early sign-up is encouraged. For more information about summer camp, call (614) 292-9894 and ask for Allison or Chris.



If you would like more information about Young Adult Transition Corps, visit their website at <http://yatcohoio.org>



www.mrdd.ohio.gov

4. ODMRDD Website Updates Include Agency Overview, New Futures Waiver Information

An ODMRDD Primer featuring priority goals, strategies, and Division functions is now posted at <http://mrdd.ohio.gov/about/> (click on 'About Us' at the top left of the ODMRDD homepage.) The Department's Office of Policy and Constituent Support prepared the document as a basic agency overview, and will update it periodically to reflect major changes as they may occur.

While it is not exhaustive in description, the Primer provides a simple and current snapshot of responsibilities in each Division area:

1. Audits
2. Community Services
3. Fiscal
4. Human Resources
5. Information Technology Services
6. Legal and Major Unusual Incident (MUI) Services
7. Medicaid Development and Administration
8. Office of Policy and Constituent Support

Public Information Officer, Sherry Steinman, notes that several County Boards of MRDD have requested such a document to assist new staff, new Board members, and others in learning more about the ODMRDD in general. "I'd like to credit Barb Luce at the Licking County Board of MRDD for providing the final push in getting this Primer completed. We've been fine-tuning it for a while, and when Barb's recent Licking County Board Meeting deadline loomed large, it was the extra nudge we needed to clean up the final details."

Due to budget constraints, ODMRDD will print no paper copies of the Primer, however user downloads of the pdf document <http://odmrdd.state.oh.us/about/docs/ODMRDD-Primer09.pdf> will print a clean, 5-page/ 2-sided document.

New Futures Waiver

In addition to posting the new Primer, the website has been updated with a direct link from the homepage under 'Learn More About' featuring information on the proposed New Futures Waiver. Direct: <http://mrdd.ohio.gov/futures/NewFuturesWaiverFeedback.htm>

As ODMRDD continues the development of the New Futures Waiver, we are asking for feedback on the current plans, as outlined. If you have any feedback, click on the "Contact Us" button, and e-mail your comments to us at futures-feedback@odmrdd.state.oh.us



Looking to the Future



5. Legislative Advocacy Day Slated for March 31, April 1

A Legislative Advocacy Day, sponsored by The Arc of Ohio, the Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, the Ohio Autism Society, and other disability organizations will be held March 31-April 1 2009, at the Hyatt on Capitol Square in Columbus. The schedule includes trainings on March 31 from 9 a.m.- 8 p.m., with legislative visits scheduled for April 1, 9 a.m. - noon at the Ohio Statehouse.

According to organizers, the purpose of Legislative Advocacy Day is to allow parents of children with disabilities, individuals with disabilities, MRDD professionals, self advocates, and other interested parties to attend a coordinated single advocacy day to allow all to attend specific training, and meet with their legislators on policy issues to impact public policy and effect system change.

Assistance will be provided for lodging and transportation expenses on a request basis only, as limited funds are available.

Contact Carmen Shelton, Advocacy Coordinator at (740)505-8337 with any questions.



6. People First of Ohio, Annual Meeting March 7, 2009

You do not have to have a People First chapter in your area, or be a member, to attend this meeting. According to organizers, it is about advocacy and training and if you are interested you may attend.

“YOUR VOICE, YOUR CHOICE, YOUR LIFE”

Saturday, March 7, 2009

Where: Robert's Convention Center

123 Gano Road

Wilmington, Ohio 45177

Registration: 9:00 a.m.
Meeting begins: 10:00 a.m.
Adjournment: 5:00 p.m.

Guest Speaker, Ollie Cantos, is Special Council to the Assistant Attorney General in Washington D.C., Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. He will address issues involving advocacy in today's environment. The meeting also will include the election of new Board Members.

Event cost is \$15.00 per person, and includes a pizza buffet, salad, dessert, and beverage. A dance will directly follow the annual meeting, training, and elections.

For more information, contact Rhonda at (740) 397-6100.



7. *Solidarity 2009 Celebrates 10th Anniversary, April 14-16*

Solidarity 2009, billed as, 'Ohio's leading conference by and for people with disabilities' returns April 14 -16, 2009 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Columbus. The tenth anniversary celebration will continue *Solidarity's* tradition of bringing vital information to people with disabilities so that they, their friends and families, may be more aware of -- and better advocates for -- issues important to the disability community.

Governor Ted Strickland is scheduled to address the *Solidarity* attendees, as well as:

- Joyce Bender, host of "*Disability Matters*," the internationally-acclaimed radio program about employing and empowering people with disabilities;
- Matt Roloff, star of The Learning Channel's "*Little People, Big World*"; and,
- Actor Chris Burke and *The Chris Burke Band*

Solidarity 2009 also will include legislative training, and more than 30 practical workshops. According to Dayton resident, Shari Cooper, Ms. Wheelchair Ohio 2008,

"Solidarity is well organized, and one of the best tools for people with disabilities to network, and help them to become employed, tax-paying citizens."



Vendor displays and a Health and Wellness Fair also will give participants an opportunity to explore the newest technology, and receive health screenings.

Solidarity '09 sponsors include the ODMRDD, the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission, Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council, Buckeye Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Invacare, Ohio Legal Rights Service, and others.

The conference fee of \$175, includes three days of workshops and activities, a meal each day, snacks, and entertainment. Scholarships covering the conference fee are available to eligible people with disabilities on a first-request basis. Registration materials are available at www.dnos.org or, see below:

*Solidarity is a project of the Disability Network of Ohio—Solidarity, Inc.
Sue Willis, Conference Manager
249 E. Cooke Rd., Columbus, OH 43214
(614) 262-8124
axiscenter@aol.com*



8. MRDD Awareness Month, March **Annual Kickoff Event Gearing Up with Statewide Support**

The beautiful Ohio Statehouse Atrium will again host the annual *MRDD Awareness Month Kickoff Event* in Columbus, March 5, 2009, from 10 a.m. - noon. The ODMRDD and Ohio Public Images (OPI), in collaboration with other statewide organizations, develop the event spotlighting Ohioans with disabilities who are exploring and creating opportunities for success in their communities.

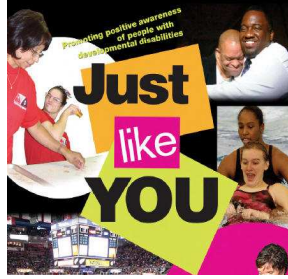
Included will be groups of self-advocates and organizations representing ideas in action from across the state. In addition to a short structured program, attendees to this free public event also are encouraged to take time to tour the Statehouse and meet their legislators.

While the program is not yet complete, Governor Ted Strickland has been invited to attend, as will legislators with a specific interest in the MRDD community.

Space for information/display tables to promote positive opportunities for people with disabilities will be available, and is limited. Contact ODMRDD Public Information Officer, Sherry Steinman, at (614) 644-0262, or email sherry.steinman@dmr.state.oh.us. Tables will be assigned on a first-come/first served basis.

Among those sharing ideas from throughout the state this year will be representatives of organizations including self-advocates with the (Belmont County) Freedom Readers, People First of Ohio, the Ohio Self-Determination Assn., Kiwanis International AKTION Clubs, and the Ohio Association of County Boards of MRDD.

Visit the Ohio Public Images website at www.publicimagesnetwork.org for materials supporting this year's MRDD Awareness Month theme, "*Just Like You.*"



Toll-Free Hotline

ODMRDD Hotline for Reporting Abuse, Neglect, and other Possible Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs)

The ODMRDD toll-free hotline number for reporting abuse/neglect and other MUIs is **1-866-313-MRDD (6733)**. Please note that MUIs are to be reported to the local County Board of MRDD, however, it is understood that there may be times an individual, staff member, or family member may feel it is a conflict -- or that, potentially, a County Board may be involved in the allegation. In those instances it is important to remember that the hotline number exists, and is to be used for reporting concerns in these situations.



1-866-313-MRDD (6733)

Pipeline feedback ... direct from you to the state ...

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