



# Board Talk

A Pickaway County Board of Developmental Disabilities Newsletter

Winter  
2014

## What's New

### Superintendent's Corner

This December I attended a conference where a presenter discussed diversity in the workplace. During the course of this session he proposed a contrast between viewing diversity through a lens of "tolerance", versus embracing diversity with a sense of "welcoming". In our society, the judicial system has mandated integration when environments lacked diversity, and this forced exposure has brought about some very positive changes in the way we think about people who are "different" from us. Integration dispels myths and breaks down stereotypes or preconceived notions about others, and we recognize that we live in a culture that is much more accepting or tolerant of diversity.

But, as the speaker discussed, we must make progress towards creating an environment that is welcoming of diversity. We are ALL different, and our differences only enrich our lives and our environment. As a County Board, we continue to encourage and support our schools, workplaces, and community centers to embrace diversity with a spirit of enthusiasm. While we continue to support people with disabilities to become fully included in their communities, we look forward to a time when people of diversity are WELCOMED as part of our society.



-Mike Pelcic,  
Superintendent

**-PCBDD held a "Provider Match" night at the Circleville Library.** The purpose of this event was to connect providers with families who were actively looking for services. A mix of agency and independent providers participated, and pizza and drinks were provided to all attendees.



**-At the end of January, Brooks-Yates School begins a Strategic Planning process** to clarify the direction of the school, moving forward. Committee representatives include parents, teachers, school district representatives, and county board staff. The process is expected to conclude in May.

**- DODD's Family Advisory Council has initiated a listserv called "Family Chat"** to encourage communication of families to support other families. For purposes of confidentiality, families wishing to join this email list must be approved by simple verification of their information. To join the listserv, send an email to [join-family-chat@list.dodd.ohio.gov](mailto:join-family-chat@list.dodd.ohio.gov).

**-The Early Intervention Department is now offering enhanced assessments** to rule out autism in children ages birth to three. For more information, contact the EI department at (740) 474-1124.

**-PCBDD is gearing up for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month** in March, and is hosting several events and activities, including our annual March Madness basketball games and "I Can" story-times. Please see "Upcoming Events" for details.

## Resource Information

### Pickaway County Board of Developmental Disabilities

200 East High Street  
Circleville, Ohio 43113  
Phone: (740) 477-3353  
Fax: (740) 477-6772  
www.pickawaydd.org

### Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

www.dodd.ohio.gov

Find us on [Facebook](#) at:

Pickaway County Developmental Disabilities

### Board Members

Jessica Mullins (President)  
Cathy Leatherwood (Vice President)  
Denise Kuhnheim (Secretary)  
Greg Miller  
Jeff Rawlins  
Barry Burns  
Gwen Wolford

## Upcoming Events

### **NCCAA Basketball Clinic**

March 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Pickaway County YMCA

### **NCCAA All-Stars Game**

March 12<sup>th</sup>  
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM  
Ohio Christian University

### **Developmental Disabilities Awareness**

#### **March Madness Event**

March 20<sup>th</sup>  
First Game: 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM  
Second Game: 6:45 PM – 8:00 PM  
Circleville High School Gym

#### **“I Can” Story-Time**

March 5<sup>th</sup> 10:30 AM – 11:30 AM  
Pickaway County Library (Circleville)  
March 24<sup>th</sup> 6:30 PM -7:30 PM  
Pickaway County Library (Ashville)  
March 29<sup>th</sup> 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  
Pickaway County Library (Circleville)

**For more information on upcoming events, including Early Intervention playgroups, visit the PCBDD website.**

## Looking Beyond

When Stephen Russell was initially diagnosed with autism in November of 2012, his mother Stephanie began to look for resources to support not only her son, but herself as well. While a variety of programs and support systems exist for newly diagnosed families, Stephanie Russell came across an opportunity to participate in a study on autism, conducted by the Nisonger Center at The Ohio State University. To participate in the study, families had to make a significant time commitment, but were rewarded with the opportunity to work closely with specialists in the field. Ms. Russell met once monthly, one on one, with a doctor of psychology who helped her identify goals for Stephen, and then execute a plan for success. For the Russell family, goals included decreasing episodes of “elopement”, and tackling toilet training. As part of the program, Stephanie had to answer many questions about Stephen’s progress, as well as complete various homework assignments. Because participation involved many trips to Columbus, the program paid for gas, parking and childcare during sessions. The result – Stephen achieved his goals with 24 weeks.



Stephanie says that the program wasn’t easy, but was very beneficial, and notes that her own stress decreased once she had the proper tools to help Stephen. As the study wrapped up, Stephanie also became involved in a support group called Parent Advocacy Training (PAT) that helped her further identify resources for Stephen. In addition, she became linked with a program called Youth Build, which provided a family YMCA pass so Stephen could participate in swim lessons. Stephanie says that Stephen is all smiles when he is in the water. She describes her experience as a learning process, but feels she is rewarded by Stephen’s progress, and her newfound sense of community.

## Pickaway County People First

The Pickaway County People First chapter is reconvening meetings, and is moving forward with new leadership and a fresh perspective. People First is a statewide self-advocacy organization that encourages people with disabilities to speak for themselves and have a voice in local issues affecting them. Service and Support Administrator Sam Lutz agreed to work with the group as their People First advisor, and is helping the chapter through a transition period, including preparing for the election of new officers. The group discussed a variety of critical issues in their first meeting, including scheduling upcoming meetings, reestablishing fundraising efforts, and preparing for the much anticipated People First conference in March. People First is also interested in recruiting new members. Groups are open to anyone with a developmental disability and is interested in self-advocacy. Meetings are typically held monthly on Wednesdays at 5:00 at the Circleville Public Library.



If you are interested in participating in the Pickaway County chapter of People First, please contact Sam Lutz at 740-477-3353 ext. 21 or [slutz@pickawaydd.org](mailto:slutz@pickawaydd.org).

People First members Joey Lovensheimer, Sherrie MacFadden, Carol Rubadue, and Chris Boysel, along with Advisor Sam Lutz.

To submit story ideas, news releases, or suggestions, please contact:

Marie Wilbanks, SSA Director  
[mwilbanks@pickawaydd.org](mailto:mwilbanks@pickawaydd.org)

Amy Miller, Service and Support Administrator  
[amiller@pickawaydd.org](mailto:amiller@pickawaydd.org)