

**Williams County Board of Developmental Disabilities
Strategic Plan
2020-2022**

Mission: Supporting people living the life they choose

Vision: A community where everyone belongs

Strategic Priorities:

1) PROMOTING SELF-ADVOCACY BY INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY THE COUNTY BOARD THROUGH THE PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING PROCESS, ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.

WCBDD is committed to identifying opportunities for increased community involvement for individuals served. Connections will be fostered through existing relationships of board members, staff and the WCBDD community. Individuals participate in a variety of community events in small groups or on their own. Many volunteer to support community events, and participate in fundraising efforts as well. As community relationships are established, individuals rely less on WCBDD supports and begin to develop friendships on their own. With each connection, confidence grows and barriers disappear.

WCBDD encourages individuals served to find their voice and make decisions in their lives. Individuals are supported to identify what is important to them and for them through the planning process. Voices of the People, the WCBDD self-advocacy group, meets at least monthly. Individuals make Dream Boards as a way to visualize their goals.

WCBDD recognizes that the Special Olympics program is missing opportunities to expand the sports offered, as well as skills development. Children as young as age 6 can participate, and begin competing at age 8. Although Special Olympics is a segregated activity, the benefits of this go far beyond sports and teams. Athletes learn how to work with and listen to others, how to support each other, and to display perseverance in the face of winning or losing. These physical and social skills carry through to all areas of life.

2) ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS RECEIVE SERVICES IN THE MOST INTEGRATED SETTING APPROPRIATE TO THEIR NEEDS.

Where an individual lives must be a personal choice based on unique wants and needs. WCBDD recognizes the need to link individuals to appropriate housing options in the least restrictive setting where their health and welfare can be supported. The use of assistive technology and remote supports can increase independence for individuals based on their strengths, and bridge gaps that might otherwise exist to living independently.

Youth who are served by multiple systems (JFS, court systems, mental health services, etc.) present a unique set of challenges. WCBDD is committed to collaboration with its human services partners to support this population during developmental years and beyond.

3) REDUCING THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE COUNTY WAITING FOR SERVICES.

The traditional waiting list was misleading with individuals waiting decades to receive a waiver. The Fix the List initiative was implemented on 9/1/2018 to give county boards a mechanism for identifying individuals' current unmet needs. WCBDD has diligently worked through the statewide Transitional Waiting List. To date, 86 out of 136 individuals on this list have been assessed. To date, 8 of people have been enrolled on the HCBS waiver most appropriate to meet their needs. 78 people have been assessed to have no current unmet needs or have voluntarily removed themselves from the list. 50 people remain on the list to date.

4) INCREASING THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS OF WORKING AGE ENGAGED IN COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT.

Every person will have the opportunity to explore community employment options and receive the necessary supports to be successful in this endeavor. Adults need to explore community employment options. It is also important for students in high school to experience community employment options as part of school curriculum. WCBDD is committed to working with area schools and pre-vocational programs to offer these experiences to transition-age youth. Community employment is the primary goal for all students with sheltered settings accessed only as a support toward the goal of community employment.

5) TAKING MEASURES TO RECRUIT SUFFICIENT PROVIDERS OF SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES IN THE COUNTY.

WCBDD recognizes the Direct Service Professional (DSP) workforce crisis and is committed to maintaining the current pool of providers. WCBDD will also recruit new DSP's through community education and outreach. WCBDD is committed to a highly-competent DSP provider pool and understands the commitment required to achieve this.

6) MEETING WITH EACH NEWLY-CERTIFIED INDEPENDENT PROVIDER WITHIN SIXTY CALENDAR DAYS OF THE PROVIDER BEING SELECTED TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO AN INDIVIDUAL, FOR PURPOSES OF CONFIRMING THE PROVIDER UNDERSTANDS THE INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PLAN (ISP) AND THE PROVIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND ENSURING THE PROVIDER HAS CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE COUNTY BOARD.

WCBDD is committed to ensuring that all providers understand the unique needs of each individual that they serve. Collaboration of SSA staff, providers, families/natural supports and the individuals is a necessity to ensuring the protection of health and welfare through service provision. This collaboration must include ongoing communication to address changing wants and needs as well as crisis communication and support from and for all parties. Documentation of these activities is crucial for implementation.

7) PROVIDING THERAPEUTIC, EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INDIVIDUALS FROM BIRTH THROUGH SCHOOL AGE.

Early Intervention is crucial to achieving the best outcomes for a child with DD and the family unit. Education of child care professionals in all service areas is crucial to identifying developmental delays in infants and toddlers with referral to WCBDD to begin services. Service Coordination provides a unified goal and education for all providers including schools, medical staff, therapists and families. Summer Enrichment programs extend social learning and enhances skills learned in the school setting.

WCBDD recognizes the gap in recreational opportunities for school-age children. Special Olympics Ohio is available beginning at age 6. Youth recreation can provide additional opportunities to develop friendships outside of the school setting.

DD is a diagnosis that impacts the entire family unit. Siblings within the family might become isolated from their peers, feeling that friends do not understand the unique challenges within their family. Bringing these siblings together offers them a safe place to talk to each other. Today's young sibling has the potential to become tomorrow's natural support, advocate, provider and/or guardian.

2021 Priorities and Action Steps:

- 1) **PROMOTING SELF-ADVOCACY BY INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY THE COUNTY BOARD THROUGH THE PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING PROCESS, ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS.**

2021 Action Steps:

Provide youth recreation opportunities to encourage social connections across school districts

Person(s) Responsible: Special Olympics/Recreation Coordinator, Children's Services Director

Timeline: 9/30/2021 (carryover from 2020 due to COVID)

Increase media releases to area newspapers to supplement social media presence.

Person(s) Responsible: Community Education Specialist, Superintendent, Director of Community Services, Director of Children's Services

Timeline: 3/31/2021 and ongoing

Update 6/2021: Responsible parties are submitting media releases to Community Education Specialist for submission to newspaper and social media on an ongoing basis.

Increase Special Olympics sport offerings including skills development and competitive events

Person(s) Responsible: Special Olympics/Recreation Coordinator

Timeline: 9/30/2021 (carryover from 2020 due to COVID)

- 2) **ENSURING THAT INDIVIDUALS RECEIVE SERVICES IN THE MOST INTEGRATED SETTING APPROPRIATE TO THEIR NEEDS.**

2021 Action Steps:

Continue to promote collaboration with human services agencies through role as Administrative Agent for Williams County Family and Children First Council (FCFC) in an effort to serve Multi-System Youth.

Timeline: 3/31/2021

Update 6/2021: We have formed collaborative relationships with partner agencies including Jobs and Family Services, ADAMhs Board (mental health), Probate Courts, and multiple school systems.

Identify ways to get technology to each person who wants to connect via zoom. Help people enhance their experiences through accessing better technology when possible.

Timeline: 6/30/2021

Update 6/2021: We continue to assess needs, and implementation of technology where it is deemed appropriate to meet those needs. People in Williams County currently use a wide array of technology, personalized to meet specific needs in order to increase independence.

- 3) **REDUCING THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE COUNTY WAITING FOR SERVICES.**

2021 Action Steps

Begin implementation of the Locally-Funded Community Supports Policy through the development of procedures that aims to meet needs in a fiscally responsible manner. Develop financial assistance guidelines to implement this policy.

Timeline: 4/30/2021

Update 6/2021: We have established financial qualification guidelines to implement this policy.

Collaborate with partner agencies to identify community resources such as: Managed Care case managers, Mental Health Agencies, Schools, OOD, etc.

Timeline: 6/30/2021

Update 6/2021: Regular communication and partnerships exists between the Board of DD and mental health agencies, schools, OOD and Williams County JFS as applicable to serve people comprehensively.

4) INCREASING THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS OF WORKING AGE ENGAGED IN COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT.

2021 Action Steps

Participate in community transportation efforts for the 4-county area led by Maumee Valley Planning Organization.

Person(s) Responsible: Superintendent and Community Services Director

Timeline: 9/30/2021

Update 6/2021: Williams County Board of DD is well represented in the 4-county transportation efforts with both staff and a person served attending meetings and giving feedback to the committee.

Increase efforts to connect adults to OOD and other employment supports in response to lost employment due to COVID.

Person(s) Responsible: Community Services Director, SSA's

Timeline: 12/31/2021

Update 6/2021: All individuals whose employment was impacted by the pandemic are either back to work or are connected with the proper supports to pursue employment.

Update 6/2021: Children and adult SSAs will ensure that schools and OOD are communicating about resources for students to begin considering work and independent living skills. Refer to the Ability Center, School to Adult Life Transition (SALT) series so people can get information about transition services.

Timeline: 6/30/2021

Update 6/2021: SSAs refer individuals to partner agencies as appropriate to boost independent living skills. Summer Youth Program expanded to include independent living programming for 13-17 year-olds provided by the Ability Center.

5) TAKING MEASURES TO RECRUIT, TRAIN AND RETAIN SUFFICIENT PROVIDERS OF SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING SERVICES IN THE COUNTY.

2021 Action Steps

Recruit: Speaking at job fairs/high schools, education on shared living, use of social media, assist independent providers with certification process, using technology as needed. Increase awareness of the career opportunities in the DD field.

Person(s) Responsible: Community Services Director, SSA's

Timeline: 9/30/2021

Update 6/2021: County Board administration is in regular communication with provider agencies and independent providers to determine what type of support would best help with the unmet need.

Retain/update: Recognize DSP's, monitor provider support and resource offerings from other agencies and fill any identified gaps.

Person(s) Responsible: Community Services Director, SSA's

Timeline: 6/30/2021

Update 6/2021: Efforts are ongoing to assist with DSP recruitment and retention in practical ways. SSA's are timely in response to provider questions and billing needs. The agency recognizes a "DSP of the Month" with small gifts to show appreciation.

- 6) MEETING WITH EACH NEWLY-CERTIFIED INDEPENDENT PROVIDER WITHIN SIXTY CALENDAR DAYS OF THE PROVIDER BEING SELECTED TO PROVIDE SERVICES TO AN INDIVIDUAL, FOR PURPOSES OF CONFIRMING THE PROVIDER UNDERSTANDS THE INDIVIDUAL SERVICE PLAN AND THE PROVIDER'S RESPONSIBILITIES AND ENSURING THE PROVIDER HAS CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE COUNTY BOARD.

2021 Action Steps

We will continue to recruit new providers and meet with them within sixty calendar days, per rule above.

Person(s) Responsible: SSA's

Timeline: Ongoing as people become certified providers

Update 6/2021: SSA meets with newly certified provider to train on individual service plan and confirm they understand their responsibilities and ensure they have County Board contact information.

- 7) PROVIDING THERAPEUTIC, EDUCATIONAL, RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES TO INDIVIDUALS FROM BIRTH THROUGH SCHOOL AGE.

2021 Action Steps

Referrals: We will continue to reach out to our referral sources to provide support and education on appropriate Early Intervention referrals. Community screenings are being provided virtually at this time. We will be exploring ideas on how to reach families in underserved demographic group.

Timeline: 3/31/2021

Update 6/2021: Central Coordination reached out to all potential medical partners in April 2021. They provided boxes with information about EI and promotional items to physicians, community health partners, and therapy departments. In March 2021, our HMG Home Visiting partners were trained on developmental milestones and appropriate Early Intervention referrals.

Special Olympics: As allowed by Ohio Special Olympics, offer participation at age 6 and competition at age 8 Children beginning at age 6 will be encouraged to participate in Special Olympics to build their skills for competition when they reach age 8. Opportunities will include basketball, bowling, and track and field and will be broaden as individual interest dictates. In addition, 4 recreational activities will be offered to school age children throughout the year.

Timeline: 9/30/2021

Update 6/2021: Special Olympics is offering all sports to ages 6 and older such as: skills building for 6-7 year olds; track and field day at Bryan City Schools; softball skills; and basketball cheerleading. Under COVID restrictions, activities were offered to all athletes of any age. School-age activities are being held in person again.

Summer Enrichment Program: Expand to serve children with intense behavioral needs who qualify for DD services. Explore ideas on how to best serve these children.

Timeline: 7/31/2021

Update 6/2021: We did not have any children with intense behavioral needs register for our Summer Enrichment Program, but were prepared to hire staff trained in behavioral needs. This year, we are

partnering with the Ability Center to offer a Summer Skills Camp for children 13-17 years old. This partnership allows us to serve 16 and 17 year olds this summer.

Offer a Sib-Shop for siblings of people with DD as support, socialization and education in conjunction with the monthly Saturday Program.

Person(s) Responsible: Director of Children's Services and Community Services Director

Timeline: 12/31/2021

Update 6/2021: We attended an OACB session on Sib Shop in May 2021. Two staff have been identified to potentially lead our siblings group in Williams County. Williams County needs to decide if they want to be an official Sib Shop or simply offer a group for siblings.