New Navigation Tool helps individuals, families, and educators
Find resources and make connections

This spring Stark DD launched the much anticipated Navigation Tool to help individuals, families and educators find resources, information and connections to services.

The need for such a tool was first discussed by a group of local leaders in the disabilities industry. Stark DD staff, educators, community providers and families all agreed there needed to be one place that offered resources for services.

Thanks to a grant given by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities Employment First initiative, the tool is now available on the Stark DD public website www.starkdd.org or directly at www.starkddnav.org

Stark DD does not endorse any of these applications, they

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Superintendent’s Message:
Taking care of resources entrusted to us

Stewardship is defined as the job of supervising or taking care of something, such as an organization or property.

Stewardship is one of our core values that says to us, “we are responsible for the planning and management of resources entrusted to us in order to connect as many people with disabilities with the services they need.” Within our core value is the mandate to use these resources to be “the greatest benefit to the greatest number of people.” This statement is difficult to challenge on how we should be using the resources we receive. Nearly 60%, or $29.4 million, of our budget is funded locally by the citizens of Stark County through property taxes to support the 3,744 people with disabilities in our county.

We want all to know that the resources we receive fund services across the lifetime of a person with intellectual disabilities. We fund services for people for as long as they live and make financial commitments to them that are as short as a year, and as long as 80-90 years. Services are based upon the level of supports a person wants and needs. We are grateful to the citizens of Stark County who give to our agency so generously through the property taxes they pay, so we can fulfill our vision that “people with disabilities will be fully included in the Stark County community.”

We value services that respond to the public need by adhering to what we do best and ensuring that we are using public resources in an efficient and effective way.

If you are interested in learning more about our agency and the program and services we provide to people with disabilities, please visit us at www.starkdd.org, like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/starkdd, or give us a call at 330-479-3932. We are honored to be working on behalf of the citizens of Stark County and we are grateful for the support that we receive.

Week of Service - July 17-21

As part of Always There — a yearlong campaign to recognize the 50th anniversary of Ohio’s County Boards of Developmental Disabilities — the Stark County Board of DD employees will be collecting non-perishable food items and cash donations for the Akron-Canton Food Bank during a Week of Service, July 17 – 21.

“The Week of Service is an opportunity for us to say thank you and give back to residents in Stark County who have supported us and the people and families we serve for more than 50 years,” said William Green, Superintendent.

Collection bins will be available at Stark DD sites during regular work hours. Locations include: Whipple-Dale Centre, Eastgate Early Childhood and Family Center, Higgins Adult Workshop, West Stark Center and the Bus Garage.

For more information about the Week of Service and the county board’s project, contact Katrina Smith at 330-479-3918 and/or smithka@starkdd.org.
Stark County Board of DD celebrated the graduation of three students from Rebecca Stallman Southgate School on May 25. The ceremony took place following the senior high school awards program. The graduates plan to look into day programming in the Stark community.

Thirty-six preschoolers in our Early Childhood program also celebrated "moving on;" six students graduated from the preschool at Taft Elementary and 30 from Eastgate Early Childhood and Family Center. Within these numbers are 19 typical peers who have been a part of the Stark DD preschool programs at both schools.

Thirty-three of these students have returned back into their home school districts for kindergarten, while three are attending specialized programs.

Best wishes to all of the graduates!
Thanks to the efforts of Deputy Chief Oliver and Sgt. Maskaluk of the Stark County Sheriff’s Office, Deputy Sheriff Matthew Hewitt, son of Lora Boyce, Training Coordinator at West Stark Center was able to do his version of “Coffee With A Cop” with the individuals at Higgins and West Stark Center on May 25.

Deputy Hewitt did an amazing job of letting everyone know never to be intimidated by a police officer, but rather that they are there to help. He also supplied replica badges for each person.

Many of the advocates had questions for Deputy Hewitt, including what to do if things get stolen from their home, or if someone is not kind to them.

To top off the day, Deputy Hewitt took everyone out to check out a police cruiser, and this was a HUGE success. THANK YOU to the Stark County Sheriff’s Department!!!
**Initiative to establish Gold Standard Provider Criteria aims to Designate providers exceeding minimum standards**

On June 20, 2017, Stark DD received approval from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities to be able to designate providers who are going above and beyond the minimum standards, as Gold Star providers.

The Gold Star Standards Program was developed through a six county pilot group aimed at developing a statewide system to promote quality providers in the community. Partners in the pilot project were the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA), and Ohio Association of County Boards (OACB).

The Gold Star program is follow-up to recommendations and feedback received by individuals, families, guardians, and the provider community as we developed our new 2017-2020 strategic plan. The charge was to develop provider standards that exceeded the minimum certification requirements to better assist individuals and families make informed choices during the provider selection process.

The program outlines nine Gold Star Standards that providers must meet to achieve this designation. The quality standards focus on the topics of organizational structure, provider stability, health and safety, retention and recruitment of quality employees, staff training, and ensuring a safe transition for people who choose alternative providers.

Overseeing the program will be the Quality Initiative Committee, comprised of the SSA and Investigative Services Director, Investigative Services Supervisor, the Provider Compliance and Technical Support Supervisor, a Compliance Reviewer, one SSA, one family member/guardian of an individual receiving waiver services, one self-advocate receiving waiver services, and the current providers that have met Gold Star Standards. Self-advocates and family members volunteering to serve on the committee will be selected randomly and rotate off the committee each quarter.

The mission of the Quality Initiative Committee is to determine that applicable providers have met agreed upon Gold Star Standards. Committee members also deliver suggestions, networking and peer mentoring to other community providers to promote and enhance the quality of the service delivery system. The committee will meet monthly beginning in July, with the first group of Gold Star Standard providers designated by September 1.

Providers who meet the Gold Star Standards will be listed on our website at www.starkdd.org.

**“This is me. This is us.” video series continues with Stories about making a difference**

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the county boards, the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities is documenting local stories in a video series “This is me. This is us.”

With monthly installments, viewers will get to know twelve people through their unique stories, as well as how Stark DD and other community partners work together to provide a lifetime of support. The video series can be accessed through the Stark DD YouTube channel at https://www.youtube.com/user/StarkCountyDD.

Released in May, viewers met newlyweds Brian and Amy in “This is me. This is us...Amy and Brian Dunnivan.” The June video introduced a local volunteer in “This is me. This is us...Aaron Williams.”

Previously released are “This is us...Carlos Elder.”; “This is me. This is us...Eric Foit.” and “This is me. This is us...Anna Brady.”
are resources available through research and the intent of this tool is to have them all in one spot.

“We think this is a wonderful way for anyone who is confused about how to navigate through the DD system,” said Emily Martinez, Director of Service and Support Administration/Investigative Services. “A family looking at the tool can explore as much or as little as they want. It’s full of phone numbers and links to agencies, videos and articles.”

Martinez stressed that the information will be updated frequently as contacts change and new helpful information becomes available.

The tool has three levels to help the user get to the information that is age-appropriate for them. See the Quick Start Guide to get started.

**Quick Stark Guide**

1. **Launch the tool at** www.starkddnav.org
2. **Level One:** At the homepage, click the red navigation logo in the center to launch a brief introduction of the tool. Or you may click on the icon for your age group.
3. **Level Two:** A brief video explains what’s important at the life stage. Depending on the age range, you may also be able to narrow your search even further. Click on the age range that is appropriate.
4. **Level Three:** Here is a list of helpful “To Do’s”. Click on the plus sign to expand the area you want to explore. Click on the plus sign to collapse the area.
5. **Each “To Do” item contains an explanation, the contact information to get you started, and other helpful resources and links. Some may also include a helpful video.**
resources, connections

3.

First Years of High School

Maintain-good months.

Why | Contact Info | More Info
---|---|---

How Do Students Work and Where Do I Start?

- Mental health and counseling
- Development of Individual Education Plan (IEP)
- Encourage and support students to practice skills in decision-making and self-advocacy
- Participation in school activities
- Employment and work experience
- Family and community involvement
- Transition Planning
- College Exploration
- Graduation Requirements and Path

Try out the Navigation Tool at http://www.starkddnav.org

Find local resources, connections to help you and your family.
The Canton Palace Theatre, Schumacher Homes and Brain Balance of Canton in conjunction with the Love, Andrew Autism Foundation presents the eight-week movie series Sensory Cinema June through August. The movies will begin at 6 p.m., with doors opening at 5:30 p.m.. Admission is $1.00 and group reservations are available by calling 330-454-8172 up until noon on the day of the movie.

The Theatre environment will be tailored to the attendees on the Autism Spectrum and their families. This includes: lower levels of sound and dim lights, dietary sensitive offerings in the concession stand including gluten and dairy free options, trained staff and family restrooms.

“We realized that the experience of attending a movie is something that an increasing number of children and adults in our community are not able to participate in, due to sensitivities caused by Autism and other Sensory Processing Disorders,” said Georgia Paxos, Executive Director of the Canton Palace Theatre.

The remaining schedule includes:

July 24
Rise of the Guardians

July 31
Wizard of Oz

August 7
Sing

August 14
Lego Batman

Groups collaborate to launch
Summer Sensory Theatre

The second annual August 19, 2017
Poker Run

Second Annual Citizens Who Care for People with Developmental Disabilities

The Poker Run is a fundraising event where 100% of the profits go directly to Citizens Who Care for DD. Citizens Who Care for DD is comprised of community volunteers who work to educate Stark County citizens about the services and supports needed for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. (Ultimately, this helps the 3,700 plus individuals with disabilities be apart of our community. Call 330-477-5200 for more information.)

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Special Olympians representing the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities brought home 40 medals from the 48th State Summer Games held June 23-25 at the Ohio State University. Forty athletes competed in bowling and track. The final overall medal count was 30 golds, 20 silvers, and seven bronze for the Stark DD team.

Heavy rains forced the cancellation of Friday’s opening celebrations, but the Games kicked off with a modified Opening Ceremony on Saturday. Stark DD Interim Special Olympics Coordinator Paula Gardner said, “The weekend started out slow and disappointing with our Friday afternoon events and opening ceremonies being canceled due to weather. However, on Saturday and Sunday the weather was beautiful and everyone had a great time competing and enjoying tent town! Saturday evening we enjoyed a movie and a pizza party! The weekend was a great opportunity to bond with friends and meet people from other counties!!”

The track and field team rallied to pull in 20 gold medals, 13 silver medals, five bronze medals, six 4th place finishers and one 5th place finisher.

Head Track Coach Jim Hedrick said, “I was there to help 20 adult athletes in track and field for a single moment in time give all they could to achieve greatness in a venue just for them. All I asked was to cross the finish line and, if they fall, get back up and finish.....and strong. I think we did just that.”

Indoors, the bowling lanes were hot for Stark athletes as ten bowlers nabbed gold medals; seven silvers medals, two bronze medals, and one athlete finished in 4th place. According to head Coach Kris Baughman, “They bowled their hearts out this weekend.”
Volunteer Guardians Needed

Due to the growing needs in our community, we are looking for adults who would be interested in serving as voluntary guardians for people with disabilities living in Stark County who do not have family or supportive others to be qualified as guardians.

To learn more about how you can become a volunteer guardian for someone in our community, call Guardian Support Services at 330-437-3720 or visit their website at http://www.guardiansupportservices.com
Always There - Week of Giving Food/Donation Drive for Akron-Canton Foodbank
July 17-21, daily 8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Collection bins will be available at Stark DD sites for the collection of non-perishable items. For more information call 330-477-5200.

Citizens Who Care for DD Second Annual Poker Run
August 19, 11:30 a.m. at Quaker Steak & Lube, North Canton. This inclusive event includes a 50 mile ride, food and prizes. For information, visit www.facebook.com/ForStarkDD or call 330-477-5200.

Street Fair: Community Resources in Your Neighborhood
October 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton. We will have community organizations, agencies, and providers on hand to answer your questions about services and supports for children and adults with various needs.

Third Annual Autism Summit
October 12, 13, Akron Civic Theatre and Hilton Akron/Fairlawn. Presented by the Autism Society of Greater Akron. Theme: Effective Advocacy. For more information, visit AutismAkron.org or Facebook.com/GreaterAkron.

Family Information Series
September 11, 2017
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. - Cohen Room, Whipple-Dale Centre

What is Remote Monitoring?
Ken Smith, Technology Engineer at Wynn-Reeth Inc.

Remote Monitoring means the monitoring of an individual in his or her residence by remote monitoring staff using one or more of the following systems: live video feed, live audio feed, motion sensing system, radio frequency identification, web-based monitoring system, or other approved device. It is a service that helps individuals live a more independent life, while still assuring health and welfare. Ken will be presenting what remote monitoring is, sharing success stories, and answering families’ questions about this unique waiver funded service.

For more information and to let us know you are coming: Misty McGirr at 330-479-3632 or e-mail at mcgirrm@starkdd.org

Monthly Board Meeting
Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; August 22, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting
Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; September 26, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting
Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; October 24, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.
Mission:
Supporting people with disabilities and their families.

Celebrating the Classes of 2017

Visit us on the internet at www.starkdd.org

Follow us on:

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