All in the Family

Meet Milo!

Robot offers new therapeutic teaching options for children with Autism

Stark DD Preschool speech and language pathologist, Rebecca Dixon, along with school age SLP Kimm Luckring, attended training in Columbus on March 11 on a new therapeutic approach for teaching children with Autism about emotions and social emotional skills and behaviors.

This new approach involves a 24 inch robot named Milo who is designed to be interesting and approachable for learners with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). He can walk, talk and even model human facial expressions. Milo never gets frustrated or tired. He consistently delivers lessons in a way that learners with ASD respond to. This recurring positive experience creates an environment in which learners can learn and thrive. The lessons are app-based and connected using a student tablet.

Bobby, a preschooler in the Early Childhood Autism program at Eastgate, is introduced to Milo.

Continued on page 5
Superintendent’s Message: Building inclusive communities requires system change

The Board is in good shape.

We secured a three year accreditation. Our preschool has the highest distinction. Our school age program is sought after to educate students with complex needs. We are funding the services and supports of over 1,600 people and looking to do more. We are working closely with providers to ensure people get what they want and need.

Our focus is on community supports and making connections. So what do we do? How do we continue to evolve and change so that we can be the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people? We are working closely with providers to ensure people get what they want and need, and making connections.

Our vision is that “people with disabilities will be fully included within the Stark County community.” We are in the midst of a four year strategic plan to continue to evolve and change so our vision can be achieved. We continue this venture one person at a time because we know that community means different things to different people.

Our plan is about us advocating for more community connections, educating our stakeholders on what community involvement looks like, working with providers to ensure people are getting what they want and need, and lastly that the supports we provide are sustainable.


The change we have been making over the past twenty-five years is to build communities that are inclusive and accepting of people, who may look, communicate, and learn differently.

This is one reason why it is so important for children with and without disabilities to be educated together, whenever possible, from the earliest of ages: because Acceptance Begins with Children. These are the ABCs that are to be embraced. What education is attempting to do is to change a system that not only is about reading, writing and arithmetic; but also about breaking down the barriers that sometimes still separate people. The more people are exposed to those with disabilities from the youngest of ages the more we are able to build acceptance and inclusive communities over time.

Our vision is that “people with disabilities will be fully included within the Stark County community.” We are in the midst of a four year strategic plan to continue to evolve and change so our vision can be achieved. We continue this venture one person at a time because we know that community means different things to different people.

Our plan is about us advocating for more community connections, educating our stakeholders on what community involvement looks like, working with providers to ensure people are getting what they want and need, and lastly that the supports we provide are sustainable.


Our focus is on community supports and making connections. So what do we do? How do we continue to evolve and change so that we can be the greatest benefit for the greatest number of people? We are working closely with providers to ensure people get what they want and need, and making connections.

Our vision is that “people with disabilities will be fully included within the Stark County community.” We are in the midst of a four year strategic plan to continue to evolve and change so our vision can be achieved. We continue this venture one person at a time because we know that community means different things to different people.

Our plan is about us advocating for more community connections, educating our stakeholders on what community involvement looks like, working with providers to ensure people are getting what they want and need, and lastly that the supports we provide are sustainable.


Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities review brings Full Three-Year Accreditation for Stark DD

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities has been accredited by the State of Ohio for the quality services and supports it provides to people with disabilities.

An eleven-member team from the state department completed a comprehensive review in January that included interviews with individuals and families who receive supports. A three-year accreditation was earned, the maximum possible term.

Stark DD Superintendent William Green credited the successful review to the way the board views what it does.

“Relationships with the people are the foundation of what we do,” Green said. “We recognize that each person and family is unique, so that means helping one person at a time to live the life they want to live.”

Green also noted that receiving the full three-year accreditation certificate is particularly fulfilling during this period of change in the DD system of services.

“The accreditation review is a very rigorous and thorough process. The team of surveyors reviewed all areas of county board operations including personnel, administration, services and support and the general efficiency and effectiveness of the county board,” said Green. “Rule changes are constantly happening, yet Stark DD demonstrated that we continually

Honorable Judge Park, Stark County Probate Court appoints Anderson to serve on Stark DD governing board

The Honorable Judge Dixie Park has appointed James Anderson to the governing board for Stark DD beginning in February 2019. Anderson is a retired Canton City police officer.

Anderson joins the other six members on the governing board: Daniel Sutter, president of the Stark County Board; Maria Heeg, vice-president; and Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang , recording secretary. Also serving are Roger Gines, Carleen Harmon and Carmelita Smith.

The governing board is made up of seven community members and oversees the services provided by Stark DD. The board members receive no compensation and volunteer their time. Board members are appointed to four-year terms by the Stark County Commissioners and the Stark County Probate Judge. Learn more about the Stark DD governing board on our website.

Learn more about the Stark DD Board at starkdd.org/Abouttheboard
Meet Milo

Continued from page 1

Milo helps learners improve their social and behavioral skills and gain the confidence they need to succeed academically and socially.

Milos were distributed to a handful of county DD boards by DODD through a grant they received in conjunction with The Ohio State University. Stark DD was fortunate to receive 2 Milo robots, one to be housed at Eastgate Early Childhood Center and one at Rebecca Stallman Southgate School.

Milo’s curriculum is updated every year and after 3 years of use, our current robot will be replaced with the newest version. While there is some cost to be incurred by local boards with the yearly curriculum upgrades and eventual replacement, the cost to Stark DD will be significantly reduced as a result of receiving Milo through DODD.

See more about Milo at https://robots4autism.com/milo/

In 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued their ADIIM autism prevalence report. The CDC indicated that:

- approximately 1 in 59 children is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- 1 in 37 boys
- 1 in 151 girls
- Boys are four times more likely to be diagnosed with autism than girls.
- Most children were still being diagnosed after age 4, though autism can be reliably diagnosed as early as age 2.
- Autism affects all ethnic and socioeconomic groups.
- Early intervention affords the best opportunity to support healthy development and deliver benefits across the lifespan.
- There is no medical detection for autism.

If you are concerned for your child’s development, the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities is here to help.

While there is currently no cure for ASD, research shows that early intervention treatment services can improve a child’s development. Early intervention services help children from birth to 3 years old (36 months) learn important skills. Services can include therapy to help the child talk, walk, and interact with others.

The starting point is an assessment through Early Intervention Services. The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities provides services to the young children in our county in partnership with Stark County Early Intervention (formerly Help Me Grow) and all 17 of our local school districts. To schedule an assessment, contact Stark County Early Intervention at (330)-616-3322.

To learn more about the early intervention services offered you can also visit us at https://starkdd.org/services/early-intervention/.

If your child is three years of age or more, please reach out to your local school district for assistance. Click here http://www.starkcountiesesc.org/Content2/52 to find your school district’s contact information.
During March’s National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities kicked off a year of telling stories: stories about the people who receive services, those who provide the services, and our Stark DD employees.

Feature stories will come from all ages and stages of life, from the beginning when a family is first getting involved with community resources, to the natural integration in the community as an adult. Stories or videos about community providers and Stark DD employees will give a glimpse into why they do what they do.

“We believe that if our community gets to know a person...know their passions, their talents, and their story, then they will have a better understanding that together we are all on the same vision and mission, and that we are all Stark DD,” said William Green, Superintendent of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Look for Know Me...Know My Story...Know Stark DD in local newspapers and on social media. Stories can be found on our website at starkdd.org/news-and-publications/stories/.
Family Mentor Program: 
Mentor Spotlight: Jennie Johnson

In collaboration with the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities, The Family Mentor Program has a varied group of mentors that are ready to connect with you!

What is your connection to the disability community?
I started off working at SARTA in the Proline department. I spoke with lots of people in the disability community daily scheduling rides all over the community. After going into nursing, I then started working in group homes. When my daughter was born with cerebral palsy due to an intrauterine stroke, I was forced to stay home and care for her medical needs. My background with the disability community sure helped me navigate her care!

Why did you want to become a Family Mentor?
I learn a lot from others and love sharing what I know about services and medical care. I am surprised sometimes when I run into people who do not know about certain programs available to them. I like inspiring parents. I let them know that they are not alone and I’ve been there before! It is easy to feel isolated being a special needs parent.

What area/topics of disability services are you interested in helping with?
Empowerment! Sometimes all it takes is: encouraging others to keep going even after receiving a denial letter or past unsuccessful attempts to obtain information; helping the parent find other options or outlets; and educating parents on services available to them, who to call, and how to proceed. I am especially interested in assisting families with smaller children ages birth to 16.

Advocating for a loved one with a disability can be challenging. Do you have a success story you would like to share?
I was recently speaking with someone about a visit that they had just had with their loved one’s SSA. This person was unhappy with the results of the visit, so I let her know that I could help advocate for her family by helping her to understand the waiver system better and that I could be present at her next meeting. It made her feel empowered. She then decided that she was going to invite her SSA to come back for another meeting now that she has a better grasp on what questions to ask and how to better convey her child’s needs.

Anything else you would like to share about your story?
Every day is a learning experience as you navigate the winding road that is the disability community. Asking questions and staying connected with others plays a huge role in being a special needs parent. There may be bumps along the way but there are a ton of people who have traveled this road before who can help guide you along the way!

How does the Family Mentor Program work?
The Family Mentor Program is open to any Stark County resident that is a caregiver or loved one of a person with an intellectual or developmental disability. Once a family calls The Arc of Ohio to request a Family Mentor, they will be matched with someone who has had similar or shared experiences. From there, the participant and the Mentor are able to define how their relationship works best.

Stark Unified 2019

Court Play

For the second year running, Unified Basketball teams took to the court to break down barriers and create inclusive events as part of Disability Awareness Month activities.

The Unified Sports® program was created with the mission to promote social inclusion through sports training and competition experiences.

Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities Unified Sports® program paired 25 Walsh students with 25 Special Olympic athletes for intramural basketball that ran for four weeks at the Walsh University Cecchini Center gymnasium.

On March 18 the Inaugural Unified Basketball Game teamed Stark DD Special Olympians and employees together for a public awareness event also at Walsh University’s Cecchini Center.

Photos by Craig James Photography.
Remote Supports with Tom Vaughn and MUI Overview
2950 Whipple Ave. NW. Topics: Room at Whipple-Dale Centre, May 13, 5:30 p.m. in the Cohen Family Information Series Accounts. SSI, Guardianship, Trusts, Stable covering topics such as Medicaid, Special Needs Planning Workshop Loose Ends or Legacy NW. Topics: Dale Centre, 2950 Whipple Ave. in the Cohen Room at Whipple-August 12, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Family Information Series

Support Services. Reservations free training is hosted by Guardian Stark County Board of DD. This Guardian Support Services and will include representatives from Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; August 27, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton. Stark DD Early Childhood Graduation Ceremony - Taft May 29, Taft Preschool, 10 a.m. Taft Elementary School, 3829 Guilford, Ave. NW, Canton.

Stark DD Early Childhood Graduation Ceremony - Eastgate May 30, Eastgate Early Childhood Center at 11 a.m. in the school gymnasium. 2121 Ashland St. NE, Louisville.

Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; June 25, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; August 27, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; August 27, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; June 25, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

March 14, 5:30 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

April 23, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Developmental Disabilities; Stark County Board of Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; May 24, 7 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

May 30, Eastgate Early Childhood Center at 11 a.m. in the school gymnasium. 2121 Ashland St. NE, Louisville.

5.31.19, 6:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. at Massillon Knights of Columbus, 988 Cherry Rd. NW, Massillon. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

May 13, 5:30 p.m. in the Cohen Room at Whipple-Dale Centre, 2950 Whipple Ave. NW. Topics: MUI Overview with Tom Vaughn and Remote Supports with Elizabeth Bailey, Safe in Home. Contact Misty McGirr at 330-479-3632.

Guardianship Training Session May 15, 5:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at the Goodwill Campus, 408 Ninth St. SW, Canton. Speakers will include representatives from Guardian Support Services and Stark County Board of DD. This free training is hosted by Guardian Support Services. Reservations are required. Call 330-437-3720 or e-mail volunteerguardians@gmail.com

Family Information Series August 12, 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Cohen Room at Whipple-Dale Centre, 2950 Whipple Ave. NW. Topics: Loose Ends or Legacy Special Needs Planning Workshop covering topics such as Medicaid, SSIs, Guardianship, Trusts, Stable Accounts. Please Note: this is a 2 hour workshop. Contact Misty McGirr at 330-479-3632.

Toddler Playgroup Each Friday, 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at Eastgate Early Childhood and Family Center. Play groups are intended for children, birth through 5 years old. For a complete list of activities go to www.starkdd.org/calendar

Adult Social Night May 22, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. at the St. George Serbian Center, 4667 Applegrove St. NW, North Canton. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

Adult Social Night June 13, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. at the St. George Cultural Center, 364 First St. SE, Massillon. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

The Arc Summer Camp Program
For School Aged Children with Developmental Disabilities Ages 6-22 years old Super Bowl Park, Varnumville, Ohio
June 11-15, June 18-22, July 2-6, July 9-13, 2019
For more information contact
The Arc of Stark County, OH 330-477-2370
www.thesummercamp.org

The Arc of Stark County, OH 330-477-2370
www.thesummercamp.org

Stark DD Early Childhood Graduation Ceremony - Taft May 29, Taft Preschool, 10 a.m. Taft Elementary School, 3829 Guilford, Ave. NW, Canton.

Stark DD Early Childhood Graduation Ceremony - Eastgate May 30, Eastgate Early Childhood Center at 11 a.m. in the school gymnasium. 2121 Ashland St. NE, Louisville.

Stark County Exceptional Olympics May 10, 9 a.m. at Perry High School, 3737 13th St. SW, Massillon. Student athletes, elementary through high school from area districts, compete in both field and indoor style events.

Canton Challenger Baseball Opening Day May 11, 10 a.m. at Barr Elementary School. Nine Regular Division (ages 4-18) and two Senior Division teams (ages 18+) kick off the league season. 2000 47th St. NE, Canton.

June 16, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

May 25, 9:45 a.m. at North Canton High School Stadium. Track and Field events and Bocce competition will take place. Individual or groups of volunteers needed. Contact Paula Gardner, 330-479-3750 to volunteer.

Special Olympics State Summer Games June 28 - 30 at The Ohio State University.

Special Olympics North Canton Jaycees/Stark DD Invitational Track Meet May 25, 9:45 a.m. at North Canton High School Stadium. Track and Field events and Bocce competition will take place. Individual or groups of volunteers needed. Contact Paula Gardner, 330-479-3750 to volunteer.

All in the Family
Published by the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities Whipple-Dale Centre 2950 Whipple Ave. N.W. Canton, OH 44708 Phone: 330-477-5200 E-mail: info@starkdd.org Fax: 330-477-2545

The All in the Family is a quarterly publication of the Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities. News releases, story ideas, comments and suggestions should be addressed to All in the Family at the Whipple-Dale Centre, 2950 Whipple Ave. N.W., Canton, OH 44708. Circulation is currently 4,500.

The Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities
• Accredited by CARF, NAEYC, DDOD
• Equal Opportunity in Employment, Access and Services, M/F/H.
• Ohio Self Determination Association member (OSDA)

Citizens Who Care for People with Developmental Disabilities Presents

Glenmoor Country Club Friday, May 17, 2019

Join us for a Great Day of Golf. Help Support People in Our Community

Stark DD Adult Social Night
July 25, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. at the Massillon Knights of Columbus, 988 Cherry Rd. NW, Massillon. Must be 18 years of age and over to attend.

Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; May 28, 6 p.m. at 2950 Whipple Ave. NW, Canton.

Monthly Board Meeting Stark County Board of Developmental Disabilities; May 24, 7 p.m. Rebecca Stallman Southgate School, 3057 Cleveland Ave. SW, Canton.

Stark DD High School Commencement Ceremony May 24, 7 p.m. Rebecca Stallman Southgate School, 3057 Cleveland Ave. SW, Canton.

Order your Today! For more information contact
The Arc of Stark County, OH 330-477-2370
www.thesummercamp.org

9th Annual Golf Outing
April 27, 8 a.m. R.G Drage Career Technical Center, 2800 Richville Drive SE, Massillon. . Registration required. Visit http://www.sst9.org/
Board Members
Daniel Sutter, President
Maria Heege, Vice President
Dr. Jessica Falvo Lang, Recording Secretary
James Anderson
Roger Gines
Carlene Harmon
Carmelita Smith

Superintendent
William Green

Visit us on the internet at www.starkdd.org

Follow us on:

Facebook
YouTube