



A newsletter about Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities programs, supports and staff

Work site offers training and experience

Our Annual Action Plan includes goals to help individuals find employment. One way we are supporting high school graduates so they can become employed is through a work experience program at the Liz Claiborne Distribution Center in West Chester. The transitional employment opportunity



was developed to bridge a critical gap between school and work for young adults as they graduate from high school.

All of the individuals participating on the crew are in the job search process and most are receiving support from a supported employment provider to help them navigate their way toward a job. At the Liz Claiborne Distribution Center enclave site the young adults are responsible for folding various size boxes and labeling them.

They receive job coaching support from one of the Board's contracted agencies to help them learn the job and stay focused on their employment goals.

After a 90-day rotation, all of the crew members are expected to obtain jobs at other businesses in the community which will allow others the opportunity to access this bridge to employment.

Most of the young adults are taking the new Butler County Regional Transit Authority's county-wide Job Shuttle to get to and from work, which drastically reduces the Board's transportation costs compared to other transportation methods.

Andrew Schwind works at Liz Claiborne in West Chester.

October: National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Each October is designated by Congress as National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The effort is aimed at educating the public about the benefits of employing a person with a disability and encouraging diversity in the workplace. Assisting individuals to obtain and keep jobs in the community is one of the Board's top goals. In 2009, 25 people got new jobs. Today, 150 people are working in the community, plus an additional 55 young adults work at job work sites, such as the Liz Claiborne site, Avon, Goodwill Easter Seals of the Miami Valley and Meander Thrift in Middletown.

Bridges to Transition Project: Developing employment opportunities

The Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities is partnering with the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission (RSC) to offer students with special needs, ages 14-22, the opportunity to develop employment goals and gain invaluable work experiences while in school.

The new program, called "Bridges to Transition" focuses on assisting students in acquiring the needed skills to obtain employment upon graduation from high school. The program allows the Board to obtain federal matching funds. For every dollar the Board invests into the project, an additional \$3.69 is received through federal funds. The additional funds help to pay for career exploration services and to increase the likelihood that students will become employed after high school.

Unstable economy impacting revenues & services

These tough economic times are impacting revenues to the Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities, for a variety of reasons. First, lower collections in property taxes have created revenue loss. Secondly, state funds are projected to decrease in the next two-year budget, which is due June 2011. Third, federal funds are unpredictable.

Levy fund projections prior to the nationwide financial collapse showed an increase in revenues each year. Current trends indicate that future collections of tax levy funds are going to drop significantly. Seventy three percent of the agency's operating budget comes from local tax levies.

As a result, budget cuts will need to be made and services will be delivered differently over the next couple years. The goal is to maintain supports to families and individuals as much as possible. However, there may be waiting lists for services that haven't had them in the past. Families may be expected to pay for some portion of non-Medicaid services and some services and supports may be delivered differently.

Budget information is available online at www.butlerdd.org/news.

Attend a budget meeting to learn more

A public meeting is scheduled to discuss the budget on Tuesday, October 19, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Liberty Center, 5645 Liberty-Fairfield Road in Hamilton. Respite care will be provided on site and transportation is available. Call (513) 867-5962 ext. 27 for more information.

Fall Conference: October 21

This year's Fall Conference for families and individuals is October 21 from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Wilks Center at Miami University Hamilton. Come to the conference to learn about local providers and vendors.

Training sessions will be offered for families of individuals receiving services and for parents of transition students, as well as trainings for staff and individuals on social boundaries, privacy in the workplace, positive culture and the power of language.

For questions regarding the conference, contact Mark Miller (513) 867-5960 ext. 106, Heida Powers (513) 867-5618, or Robin Thomas (513) 867-5602.

Below, Mike Steinberg from G.E. talks with Lisa Keiser about her resume during the G.E. Fun, Food and Education Day held in August.



PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FAIRFIELD, OH
PERMIT NO.
160