



The Cable

Employment First Newsletter Now Available

Employment First In Erie County, a new newsletter designed to highlight achievements and possibilities in community employment opportunities, saw its inaugural edition hit the streets in January.

The newsletter will be published every two months. The editor is Employment First Advisor Jennifer Yingling.

The newsletter will include articles of importance around Ohio and locally.

If you would like to receive the newsletter, contact Jennifer at 419.626.0208 or jjyingling@eriecbdd.org.

Would you like to receive our newsletter electronically? If so, email newsletter@eriecbdd.org with "subscribe" in the subject line, and we will add you to our email distribution list.

Project Stir Graduates Class of 15



Project Stir - Steps Toward Independence and Responsibility - recently graduated 15 individuals from its program.

Project Stir is a training program for self-advocates designed to provide individuals with the tools to advocate for themselves, mobi-

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Help Me Grow's Home Visitation Program Helps First-Time Mothers



Danae Hindel, left, and daughter Selah had developed a lasting relationship with Erie County Help Me Grow Home Visitation Specialist Angie Roth.

Danae and Dustin Hindel have a perfect baby. Selah is a seven-month-old with blue eyes, a quick smile and developing physically right on target.

Still, Danae enjoys a little help as her baby develops and is thrilled to have the support of the Home Visitation program offered to first-time mothers by Erie County Help Me Grow.

"It helps me be more aware of Selah's developmental needs," Danae said of the Home Visitation program. "There are things I know about my child's development, but it's nice to have the additional support and have someone there to remind me of where my daughter should be developmentally."

Help Me Grow is a statewide program designed to ensure Ohio's children receive a healthy birth and the resources to warrant a healthy and productive start in life. Help Me Grow provides resources and supports from prenatal to a child's third birthday. Erie County DD holds the grant in Erie County.

There are two components to Help Me Grow - Early Intervention, which provides services to children with developmental delays under the age of three, and Home Visitation, which defines its mission as to improve, support and strengthen:

- Maternal and child health;
- Child development and school readiness; and
- Safe and connected families.

Home Visitation offers voluntary services that are strength based, family centered, relationship focused and culturally competent.

Angie Roth, a Home Visitation specialist, makes weekly visits to see Danae and Selah in their

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PCP = MVP

ERIE COUNTY DD'S MOST VALUABLE PROCESS

The Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities has developed a new Person Centered Planning process. We wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our plan for implementing this process with the people we serve, their families, and the providers we partner with. In some of the team meetings that you attend, you may have noticed that SSAs have begun to ask different questions, use new tools to gather information, and begun developing outcomes. These are examples of the new planning process SSAs will be doing moving forward. Below we will outline what you can expect with our plan for the implementation of Person Centered Planning at the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

- Beginning August 1, 2015 all annual ISPs will be completed in the new Person Centered Planning (PCP) format. This means that an ISP that begins 8/1/15 or later will be in the new format. Our SSAs begin working on annual plans 90 days before the start of the span year, so you can expect to see this new process in the coming weeks.
- All initial ISPs with the start date of May 1, 2015 or later (ex. someone new to SSA services) will be in the new format.
- If the person served chooses to, the SSA may use the new ISP format for annual ISPs that begin before 8/1/5.
- Our ISP is now titled "My Vision Plan". Our Assessment is now titled "Exploration". These are two separate documents. This is different in that we have previously incorporated the ISP and Assessment into one document. As a provider, you can expect to receive copies of both the "My Vision Plan" and the "Exploration".
- You can expect to have more than one planning meeting. With the new Person Centered Planning Process, the SSA's will be gathering information in a new way. This new way takes more time and truly focuses on what the person served wants and needs for their life.

- There are still questions that the SSAs will need to ask, but the SSAs will be using tools that we have historically not used before. The SSAs have a toolbox of tools to use. These tools will be used during the annual planning process, but can also be used anytime through the year.
- Our Monitoring Process will now be titled "Reflections". The person served, along with their team, will define how many times the SSA will complete this process during the person's ISP span year. The SSA will be reviewing the progress on the identified outcomes and action steps.
- The SSA will be completing a "Commencement Review" (formerly the "10 day check") with providers within 30 days after the start of the ISP span year to ensure that the provider feels comfortable with the implementation of the ISP. For those people that have a provider handling their finances on their behalf, the SSAs will be reviewing that twice per ISP span year. For providers that directly contract with ECBDD for Individual Supports practice, the SSA will continue to check documentation as they currently do. For providers that provide waiver services, the SSA will not be checking documentation.

If you have any questions regarding the new Person Centered Planning process, please contact Megan Etzel for people 3-13 years old or Felicia Zendejas for people 14 years old and above.

Megan and Felicia can be reached at:
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HELP ME GROW

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Milan home. They work on developmental techniques - communication, grasping, controlling and motor development - and make sure Selah is "on time."

She is, for the record, doing spectacular.

"It's also fun because Selah has gotten to know Angie," Danae said. "Selah and I enjoy the visits and we both benefit. And, it's reassuring to know that Selah is right where she should be developmentally."

Danae is a stay-at-home mom and Dustin is an IT specialist at the EHOVE Career Center.

Angie described her visits as part of a "partnership," between herself, Danae, Dustin and Selah. They plan to work together until Selah's third birthday.

The Home Visitation program is available to:

- First-time pregnant women;
- A first-time parent with a child under 6-months old; or
- A child under age 3 with one parent in active military duty.

For more information, contact Erie County Help Me Grow at 419-502-4174.



Danae and Selah play at home.

Kids Strut Their Stuff at A Night to Shine

Lights, cameras, action!

Well, it wasn't exactly a movie premier, but 23 children receiving services from the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities played the role of a celebrity on March 13, strutting down the red carpet at the annual A Night to Shine gala at the Cedar Point Center at BGSU Firelands.

It was the third year for the event, which puts the spotlight on children no older than three who are involved in the Early Intervention Program at Erie County DD.

"A Night to Shine has quickly developed into one of our premier events at Erie County DD," said Superintendent Carrie Beier. "The kids really get a kick out of being celebrities for a night. But, to tell the truth, I think the parents, grandparents and caregivers get just as much enjoyment out of the night as the kids."

There were 150 admirers in the crowd.

The evening began in a green room backstage where the kids gathered before making their appearance on the red carpet. When they made their appearance from behind the curtain, the crowd cheered loudly.

Josie Myers enlightened the crowd by performing the song, *Shine*.



Some of the stars enjoy the red carpet after the event.



Jax enjoys his walk down the red carpet.



Josie and her mom sign *Shine* for the audience.



Connor started off the night by being the first star to walk down the red carpet.



Frankie smiles for the camera as she walks the red carpet.



Hayley is happy to have her big brother walk with her down the red carpet.

PROJECT STIR

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lize others in advocacy and gain leadership experience. The program uses a train-the-trainer model.

Four former graduates taught the class. They were Harry Miller, Carly Sabo, Lisa Bilger and Mike Metzger. It was the first time Mike taught a class and he was recognized for doing a fine job.

The graduation ceremonies were held in conjunction with a pizza party at Ability Works on Feb 20.

Viola Walker also attended as a substitute trainer.

The graduates are: Sally Carney, Amy Edwards' Mary Ann Sartor, Eugene Paden, Susie Wilhelm, Roy Lamson, Kwanita Paden, Charles Lemons, Aaron Kennedy, Sherry Lanier, Jesslyn Hill, Chris Melvin, Melvin Devese, Donnie Brown and Mark Swain.



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Alex Heilman Finds His Niche While “Serving” Our Veterans



Alex Heilman has found a home away from home with some of America’s veterans.

Since February, Alex has begun volunteering once a week at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky. Every Tuesday, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., he works behind the counter at the convenience store at the Home.

“I really like it here,” Alex said. “It’s a good place to be.”

Alex, 27, lives in Milan. He also works one day a week at a grocery store, the Huron Market. He enjoys interacting with customers and was seeking a volunteer opportunity where those skills could be put to good use.

Community Support Specialist Pam Litzenberger, who helped find Alex the opportunity at the Home, said he specifically requested a store setting. “Alex is a people person,” Pam said. “He likes dealing with people and this is a great place because there are people in and out of here all day. It gives him a chance to make friends and have relationships.”

Alex stocks shelves and cabinets, assists customers, cleans and works the cash register. “At first, he didn’t want to work the cash register,” Pam said. “I said, ‘Here, you can do this.’ And, he’s learned how to work the cash register and he does a good job at it. I’m very proud of Alex. He has blossomed here.”

“He’s a good worker,” said Emily Thorn, a fellow volunteer at the Ohio Veterans Home. “He is very diligent.”

Along with working at the Huron Market and volunteering at the Home, Alex is a talented artist and enjoys drawing Looney Tunes characters. His favorite character is Bugs Bunny.

