

Highland County Board of Developmental Disabilities



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Annual Report 2021

From the Desk of Superintendent

Debra Buccilla



Welcome to our 2021 Annual Report. The past year has gone by very fast, however, reflecting, some days seemed to never end. Who would have thought that at the writing of this report we would still be dealing with a global pandemic? We have learned a great deal about science, adaptability, patience, and productivity. We have watched folks we serve adapt to a “new normal”, and in some situations, questioned our wisdom related to past practice. I would like to say that we are better for the experiences, however it seems many, both those we serve and our wonderful staff and community partners, might still be trying to stabilize.

Despite it all, you will see personal stories throughout this report which demonstrate creativity and perseverance. We are so proud of individuals hard work and all who helped make dreams come true. Bobby, Travis, and Nate are on their way! Braelynn and Nate are beginning their journeys with a solid start thanks to their parents, families, and a little help from their friends...our staff! These stories are heartwarming and give a glimpse into the lives of individuals we serve, their challenges and successes.

In 2021, the Highland County Board of Developmental Disabilities (HCBDD) served over 750 individuals and families; employed approximately 82 staff; worked with local school districts and community partners; had an annual budget of approximately \$5,300,000. Despite obstacles, those we serve were able to thrive.

We look forward to a bright and healthy 2022 for our community.

Stay safe, stay healthy

Deb Buccilla, Superintendent

Service and Support Administration



Bobby began working at White's Bakery in July of 2021. Bobby is thrilled with his job and his employer is pleased with his work. Bobby obtained his job through collaboration with HCBDD SSA services and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD). When not working at the bakery, Bobby attends day habilitation services at Highco. Bobby is doing really well and is stable in his employment.

Bobby lives in Hillsboro with his provider. He graduated from Lebanon High and attended Warren County Career Center the last two years of high school.

Technology is a helpful tool to assist individuals with physical limitations. Travis utilizes technology in his home to assist with daily tasks. He has Alexa devices, which allows him to control his lights, radio, and the heater in his bathroom as well as making calls on his phone. He has an electric door opener that requires a simple button push to operate. With the assistance of his SSA, Travis was enrolled in an IO waiver in the spring of 2021 and has since purchased a Ring doorbell, which provides more security in his home and allows him to see who is at his door prior to letting them in. Recently, he purchased a drawing tablet that he plans to use to create his own designs that he can work on at the art studio weekly. Travis is a graduate of Wright State University and has a Bachelors in Rehabilitation Services.



The Service and Support Administration (SSA) Department provided eligibility determination and service coordination to 225 people in 2021, with 125 of those supported by home and community-based waivers. We continued our commitment of ensuring that people receive services which enhances the quality of their lives while promoting person-centered choices. This work was accomplished through services provided including assessment, person-centered planning, referrals, payment authorization, linkage, and monitoring. Bobby and Travis are two success stories of coordinated services through the work of the SSA department.

The SSA department was instrumental in collaborating with the Highland County Health Department to set up vaccination clinics for individuals, providers, family members and community members. A total of four clinics were held at the Highland County Board of DD, with over 150 COVID vaccines and boosters being administered. The SSA department, along with other county board staff, volunteered at the community vaccination clinics held at the YMCA under the supervision of the Highland County Health Department.



Community First



Nate has always enjoyed farm life. He was a member of his local FFA chapter in high school and knew he wanted to work in the agricultural field. Nate took part in the Summer Youth Work Experience and the Pre-Employment Transition Services through HCBDD. Nate, along with his Transition Manager worked together to secure employment at Rural King. Nate stated "I like working at Rural King. It lets me use my strengths to get the job done". Nate is a hard worker and customers often request his assistance with their purchases.

The Community First Team provided students like Nate, valuable work experience and skills. In 2021, 67 students participated in Pre-Employment Transition Services through partnership with local school districts, including Hillsboro, Bright Local, Fairfield, Greenfield, Lynchburg-Clay, Hillsboro Christian Academy, two CTC schools, three Clinton County Schools, home schools and specialized schools. Fifteen students participated in the Summer Youth Work Experience. Nine students utilized job development services, with six having successful outcomes.





Special Olympics



The Wildcats hosted Bocce outings in May and June. There were 30 athletes who participated in this new sport, and it was a huge success. The annual golf outing was held on September 18th. The unified golf tournament was held on August 8th. While some practices were held for basketball, many activities and events were limited due to safety concerns related to the pandemic.



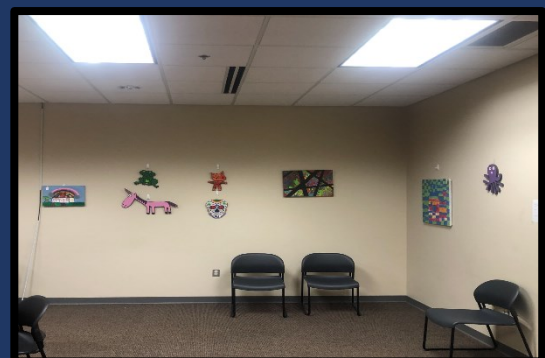
People First of Highland County

The People First Advocacy Group made a mark in the community during 2021. The group volunteered at the Highland County Animal Shelter, walking dogs, and providing social interaction. They also collected and donated items to the Highland County Humane Society. Two of our advocates participated in the People First board meeting in November.



Up and Beyond Art Studio

Thirty-three artists participated at the Up and Beyond Art Studio in 2021. The group set up at two festivals this year as well as offered artwork for sale on Facebook and through appointments at the art studio. In addition, unique pieces were on display at the Highland County Health Department and were available for viewing and purchase.



Hills and Dales Preschool



Nate successfully graduated from the Highland County Early Intervention program and began attending Hills and Dales Preschool in the fall of 2021. Nate is in Ms. Becky's class. Nate is a joy in the classroom – his eyes light up when he's interested in the subject matter. Nate is learning through hearing and touch due to having limited vision. He loves circle time, listening to songs, counting and rhythm games. Nate has made many friends in his classroom. Big things are ahead for Nate!

Nate is one of 64 students enrolled in Hills and Dales Preschool for the 2021-2022 school year. Hills and Dales is an Ohio Department of Education (ODE) licensed special needs/inclusion preschool program, which helps both children with and without special needs learn from each other, develop social skills, and create friendships. There are 32 students with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), which may include supports such as occupational, physical, behavioral and speech therapy. The HCBDD nurse participates in IEP development and completes state mandatory hearing and vision screenings on preschoolers.

During the 2020-2021 school year, 33 students graduated from Hills and Dales preschool.

Transportation was provided to requesting students and family. During the first half of the 2021-2022 school year, 51 students utilized school transportation. Fifty students rode the preschool buses for the last half of the 2020-2021 school year.



Early Intervention and Help Me Grow

Braelynn received services from the Early Intervention (EI) and Help Me Grow (HMG) team. Born premature, Braelynn overcame many struggles to develop into a strong little girl. The EI and HMG teams provided support to the family and specialized services for Braelynn, including service coordination, speech, occupational, physical, and developmental therapies. Braelynn's mother shared her appreciation with the teams and in part stated "EI and HMG has helped me, from helping Braelynn grow into the sweet and smart girl she is now, to helping us prepare for a new addition to the family. They have grown to be a part of our family. I would highly recommend their services to anyone. They go above and beyond daily."



Early Intervention (EI)

Early Intervention provided service coordination for 168 families in 2021. Of that, 119 families received direct services from the EI team. The services provided were through virtual and home visiting methods. Early Intervention had several young ones successfully "graduate" from the EI program in 2021. Early Intervention works with children and their families to enhance the child's development through everyday learning opportunities and routines. EI serves and supports infants and toddlers, birth to 3 years of age. The EI team consists of Service Coordinators, Developmental Specialists, Occupational and Speech Therapists and a contracted Physical Therapist.

Help Me Grow (HMG)

Help Me Grow continues to provide services in five counties: Adams, Brown, Clinton, Highland and Pickaway. HMG is funded through the Ohio Department of Health. HMG served approximately 200 families in 2021. During this past year, HMG services expanded to include the Child Welfare Protocol Program (CWP), which provided referrals from Child Protective Services and serves children and families referred by age 2 for 36 months (up to age 5). HMG staff completed the Growing Great Kids curriculum to provide quality services to this new age group.

In addition, HMG was awarded the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) grant in October of 2021 for Highland and Adams County. This grant provided services to a total of 30 families.

*In June of 2021, Highland County Board of DD was awarded a three-year accreditation (highest level possible) from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. This was based on a review of services and supports provided, which showcased the work and dedication of staff who ensure all rules and requirements were met.

*During 2021, Highland County Board of DD supported providers with personal protective equipment, COVID vaccine clinics and rapid tests, as well as support as needed covering direct care services to those we serve. The county board nurse provided training to providers and county board staff throughout the year. Forty-seven people completed American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR/first aid or Healthcare Provider Certification. Twenty-one people completed the 14-hour Medication Administration Certification class and ninety-four people completed the 2-hour recertification class. Four providers completed the initial 4-hour G-tube certification course and one provider completed the initial 4 hours insulin course. Recertifications were issued to twenty people for G-tube training.

*To ensure individuals receive medications as prescribed, Medication Administration Quality Assurance (MAQA) reviews were completed by the board nurse. Individuals living in their own home require this review and 15 reviews were completed in 2021.

Highland County



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