

Direct Connection

MISSOURI DIVISION OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES



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Adair County Senate Bill (SB) 40 Board staff members are recognized for their achievements.

From left: Val Huhn, DD Director, and Adair County SB40 staff members: Toni Detwiler, Deb Wohlers, Executive Director, and Tonya Bailey, Virgie Scharn, and Connie Johnson.

Helping Individuals Achieve

EMPOWERING THROUGH EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

Individuals have expressed a desire to become members of the community workforce; however, the disparity between those who desire community employment and those who are employed in the community continues to widen. The employment rate of Missourians with intellectual and developmental disabilities has steadily climbed to 14% over the past six years (which is 5% below national average). However, according to the National Core Indicators (NCI) [Adult Consumer Survey 2014-15 Final Report](#), 51% of Missourians receiving supports and services through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD) who were randomly chosen to be interviewed said they were interested in being members of the community workforce. Yet, of these surveyed individuals, only 23% of them have employment as a goal in their Individual Support Plan.

In October 2016, DD launched the Empowering through Employment Initiative to address this disparity. The initiative has set a two year goal that 35% of all individuals receiving services and supports are afforded the opportunity to participate in employment services to explore employment choices, address myths about earned income, and assist with becoming employed. "Individuals with disabilities want jobs where their skills and strengths are recognized and valued," said Division Director, Valerie Huhn.

Progress towards achieving this goal will be measured monthly. Recognition awards (red, blue, and purple ribbons) for assisting individuals with accessing employment services will be given to DD staff and Targeted Case Management (TCM) providers. To date, there has been an increase of 80 individuals accessing supports and services related to community employment. The Kirksville Satellite Regional Office is the first to be awarded the Red Ribbon Recognition. Davies, DeKalb, Madison, Perry, Pike, and Taney Counties also are Red Ribbon recipients. Blue Ribbon award recipients are Adair, Macon, and Monroe Counties.

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CONNECTING WITH THE DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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Mental Health

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MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH



Helping Families Prepare for Employment

Pre-planning for any event begins with a vision of a desired outcome. The process can seem overwhelming at times. However, the right tools and resources can make planning less challenging and assist in identifying the necessary steps to take. Families of children and young adults with disabilities are not exempt from pre-planning. In fact, they often encounter additional considerations that increase the steps in the process. One targeted area that requires planning for everyone is employment. Employment goals often begin subtly when asking children, “What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Parents and family members are instrumental in initiating the development of skills in their children that can eventually lead to employment. It is important that families help their children gain necessary pre-employment skills by helping them explore interests, by assigning them responsibilities, and by helping them follow directions and complete tasks. Sometimes, families of children with disabilities unintentionally focus on disability factors rather than strengths and abilities. Therefore, families need appropriate tools, information, and resources to help them create and sustain a vision of employment for their child or youth. The following list of links provides resources that may help families learn about preparing for transition to employment:

Resources for Families Preparing for Employment

<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/repository/transition-starters/>

<http://www.lifecoursetools.com/wp-content/uploads/EMPLOYMENT-GUIDE-FINAL.pdf>

<https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/ParentGuide.pdf>

<http://www.missouriparentsact.org/transition-to-adulthood/>

<http://disability.mo.gov/employment.htm>

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/tool-kits/transition-tool-kit/why-transition-plan>

<http://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/planning/preparing-employment.asp>

Additional tools and resources pertaining to employment can be located on the Division’s Youth Transition and Employment Services webpage at:

<http://dmh.mo.gov/dd/progs/employment.html>

Journey to Adulthood

Family members of individuals who are beginning to embark on the transition into the adult world are likely looking for resources and information to help guide that journey and make the process less overwhelming. Transitioning into the adult world is something every adult has experienced in some manner. The process can be confusing and scary due to all the changes that occur during this time period, but it can also be exciting, fun, and filled with opportunities for growth and learning. Family members and youth should first have a vision of where they want to go and what they want to accomplish in their future. The next step is to begin building a plan that identifies the elements needed for a successful transition.

While there are many resources available to families and individuals to help guide the transition process, some families don’t know where to begin or how to get started. Therefore, a very important step is finding user-friendly materials that prompt thought and discussion about desired outcomes. One transition guide that was developed by Missouri Family-to-Family at UMKC-IHD in partnership with Show-Me Careers is available free to families and individuals who are beginning the planning process for transition to adulthood. The guide can be downloaded at: <http://www.lifecoursetools.com/wp-content/uploads/transition-4-pager-232x300.png>. Additional planning guides can be downloaded at: <http://www.lifecoursetools.com/learning-materials/>.





Disability Awareness Event in KC



Tammera Davis, FRAS, and Tim Wholf, Director, enjoy the comradeship the event brought.



K.C. Wolf, mascot of the Kansas City Chiefs, greets families.



Vendors display informational brochures at their tables.

Supporting individuals with developmental disabilities and their families is not always about paid supports and services through various programs. Families also feel supported when they are welcomed and accepted into their communities, can share experiences with other families, and can get needed information on a variety of disability-related topics.

Tammera Davis, Family Resource and Autism Specialist (FRAS) of the Kansas City Regional/Albany Satellite Offices, with the support of her supervisor, Lesa Tracy, and other staff, created an opportunity for families to participate in awareness activities in a fun and accessible environment.

Tammera, who has a family member with a disability, understands the stigma that can sometimes follow people with developmental disabilities. She wanted to create an awareness event that would help eliminate stigma and promote more acceptance and understanding about autism and other developmental disabilities. Tammera also recognized the need for families, individuals, and community members to be aware of the services and supports that are available through the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DD)/Regional Offices, the area SB40 Boards, and other organizations that work to support families while also promoting self-determination, employment opportunities, and independent living for people with developmental disabilities.

The awareness event for individuals and families took place at the Kansas City Regional Office in the spring of 2016. Activities included photo opportunities with K.C. Wolf (official mascot of the Kansas City Chiefs), face painting, visiting with vendors from service agencies, getting to know a local Community Intervention Team (CIT) officer, free health checks, arts and crafts, and haircuts.

The awareness event was so well received and attended by families and individuals that Tammera and her co-workers hope to host the event annually.

"The question isn't who is going to let me; it's who is going to stop me." Ayn Rand

Community Calendar

March 7, 2017 – Save the Date – Evidence for Hope Conference

Hilton Garden Inn, 3300 Vandiver Dr., Columbia, MO 65202

For more information, click on: <http://dmh.mo.gov/dd/files/evidenceforhope.pdf>

March 7 – 9, 2017 – Save the Date – Citizen-Centered Leadership with Carol Blessing, St. Louis, Columbia, and Kansas City

For more information, click on: <http://mogaidd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Save-the-Date-Carol-Blessing.pdf>

April 19- 20, 2017 – Save the Date – Tiered Supports Training

For more information you may view the [flyer](#) or visit the website at: <http://dmh.mo.gov/dd/tieredsupports.html>

April 21 - 23, 2017 – Save the Date – People First of Missouri Conference 2017, “Spring Into Action” – Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach, MO

For more information, click on: www.missouripeoplefirst.org

May 22 - 23, 2017 – Save the Date – 27th Annual Aging with Developmental Disabilities Conference

More information will be available soon on AADD’s website: <http://agingwithbdd.org/>

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Improving lives THROUGH
supports and services

THAT FOSTER self-determination.

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Fostering Self-determination



Supporting Families



Facilitating Individualized Services and Supports



Developing Accessible Housing



Promoting Employment First

www.dmh.mo.gov/dd

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