

Our mission - "We support people with developmental disabilities to discover, pursue and achieve what is important to them."

Administration office moves (continued from page 3)

the E.S. Weiant Center. The Early Intervention department also operates the Ann Davino Center in the former Jersey Elementary School near Pataskala, serving babies and toddlers who live in western Licking County.

The previously-vacated E.S. Weiant preschool classrooms are now utilized as office spaces for the LCBDD Administration staff. The Licking County Commissioners are now leasing the former LCBDD Administration office at 65 W. Church St. for use as additional county offices. Those with questions about our services are encouraged to visit our Web site at www.LCountyDD.org or call (740) 349-6588.



*From left to right, LCCO employees
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Possibilities

We see the possibilities in people with disabilities



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The year 2009 is far from over, but already it has brought many changes to the Licking County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. Not only has our main office moved from downtown Newark to our flagship building -- the E.S. Weiant Center, formerly known as Starlight School -- but we also have changed our name. Read inside for complete details.



**New name,
same great service
to the community**

LICKING COUNTY
BOARD OF
DEVELOPMENTAL
DISABILITIES



Picture the Possibilities

Elizabeth Streets

The Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities is helping children and adults pursue their dreams, and building a community of caring people who see the possibilities in people with disabilities.

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What is a developmental disability?

This fall is an exciting time for the local agency formerly known as the Licking County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities. Not only is the Administration staff settling in to its new home office at the Eleanor S. Weiant Center (please see related story on page 3), but we are also gearing up to let everyone know about our new name.

Ohio Senate Bill 79 becomes law on Oct. 5, and directs the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (ODMRDD) to shorten its name to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD). The law also requires all of Ohio's 88 county boards of MRDD to drop 'mental retardation,' or 'MR,' from their names. This change aligns Ohio with most other states in the way we identify and discuss citizens with developmental disabilities and special needs.

The Licking County board recently elected to adopt the "name change law" earlier than the October date to reflect the wishes of the families we serve. It also allows us to begin the process of increasing awareness within the community.

At the newly-named Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD), we see the "name change law" as a springboard to educating the public about developmental disabilities.

"Many people may not be aware that mental retardation is, in fact, a developmental disability," says LCBDD Superintendent Nancy Neely.

The term "developmental disability" covers a wide range of conditions that can affect an individual's ability to learn, communicate, care for personal needs, live and work independently. Developmental disabilities are present at birth or manifest in early childhood. The early years are known as the "developmental" period, which is why these conditions are known as developmental disabilities.

"Developmental disabilities cannot be cured in the traditional sense," Neely explains. "They are lifelong conditions, although they can be treated. We know that children and adults with developmental disabilities are capable of much more than previously thought."

Before the advent of local county boards of MRDD more than 40 years ago, no special education or formal programs existed to support children and adults with developmental disabilities and their families.

"Now, our expectations for what individuals with develop-

mental disabilities can achieve are much higher, especially with special education provided by local schools and other specialized services, supports, and training provided by the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities," Neely says. "Some men and women with developmental disabilities can learn to live on their own, work and contribute in various ways to their communities. Others will always require a significant amount of support."

State law, as well as rules written by the Ohio Department of MRDD, determines eligibility for services from local county boards. To receive services, adults must have a qualifying diagnosis. Very young children (birth to age 2) do not need a specific diagnosis to receive Early Intervention services, however they must experience a delay in their development, or have a substantial risk for a delay -- perhaps because of a premature birth -- to be eligible for services.

"The good news is that many children who receive Early Intervention Services from the Board 'catch up' developmentally because of the intervention and no longer require any specialized services when they go on to school," Neely says. "Other very young children with diagnosed developmental disabilities are better prepared for school because of their participation in the LCBDD's Early Intervention programs through the E.S. Weiant Center in Newark and



Above, LICCO employee Brenda Kirk (seated) with Workshop Specialist Angie Watson. LICCO Inc. is operated by the Adult Services staff of the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

The term "developmental disability" covers a wide range of conditions that can affect an individual's ability to learn, communicate, care for personal needs, live and work independently.

In addition to mental retardation, other common forms of developmental disabilities can include, but are not limited to:

- Down Syndrome
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Traumatic Brain Injury
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Spina Bifida

the Ann Davino Center in Pataskala."

The process of the statewide name change began more than two years ago when a group of people with developmental disabilities attended an Athens County Board of MRDD meeting to explain that they don't like being called "retarded," and wanted the Board to take out the words "mental retardation" from its name.

Ohio Senator Jimmy Stewart of Albany attended that particular meeting. From there, he began the process of changing the name of the Ohio Department of MRDD and all 88 county boards.

"After listening to my constituents, I decided to sponsor this legislation because I knew in my heart that it was the right thing to do," Stewart says.

In June, both the Ohio House of Representatives and Senate unanimously voted to pass the "name change bill."

Neely stresses that families of those who are served by the local Board should expect to see no changes in services now that the name has changed to the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

"Dropping 'mental retardation' from our name is a step in the right direction for individuals we serve and their families, but it will not change the high-quality services that we provide," Neely says.

Do you have questions and/or comments about the new name? Please call Superintendent Nancy Neely at (740) 349-6588, or (800) 325-2848. You may also send an e-mail message to: admin@LCBMRDD.org. Look for our agency-wide e-mail addresses to reflect our name change in the coming months.

LCBDD Administration offices now at E.S. Weiant Center

In an effort to maximize resources -- primarily space and valuable taxpayer dollars -- we have moved our Administration offices from 65 W. Church St., in downtown Newark, to the Eleanor S. Weiant Center, 116 N. 22nd St.

The E.S. Weiant Center also houses the agency's Early Intervention program, which served nearly 300 children last year.

The Weiant Center has a rich history in the community. It opened in 1967, educating school-age children with developmental disabilities. In its early years, it was known as Starlight School. Years ago, it also housed the former Starlight Workshop, the predecessor to LICCO Inc., now located at 600 Industrial Parkway, Heath. LICCO provides important work experiences for adults who have developmental disabilities.

More recently, the Weiant Center was home to the Early Childhood/Preschool program for children ages 3 through 5 with developmental disabilities and their typically-developing peers.

At the end of this past school year, the preschool program consolidated with the Newark City Schools' and Licking County Educational Services Center's Flying Colors preschool programs.

The Administration office telephone numbers will remain the same. To reach LCBDD Administration staff, please dial (740) 349-6588, or (800) 325-2848. The Administration fax number is now shared with the E.S. Weiant/Early Intervention program -- (740) 344-2787. The Early Intervention program retains its telephone numbers -- (740) 344-6921, and (800) 443-4805.

As noted earlier, the Early Intervention program for babies and toddlers continues to be headquartered at
(continued on back page)

Background photo:

The E.S. Weiant Center is home of the LCBDD's Early Intervention programs and Administration offices.