



MurrayRidgeCenter  
HELPING PEOPLE...FOR A LIFETIME

# The Murray Ridge Courier

September 2014

## A Message From The Superintendent



As we head into the final stretch of summer, there is much discussion about change within Ohio's developmental disabilities service system.

First, there is great emphasis on Community Employment and, in particular, on creating

opportunities for job exploration by individuals with developmental disabilities prior to and upon their graduation from school.

Second, there is an expectation and, in the case of our Medicaid funding, there will be a requirement that individuals with developmental disabilities have opportunities to receive services in community settings, as an alternative to settings like our Opportunity/Vocational Centers. (Some background on this topic is provided in shaded box, right.)

Finally, the agency that is in charge of all Medicaid services in the United States (CMS) has recently passed a rule that applies to Medicaid waiver programs like the Level 1 Waiver and the Individual Options Waiver. In part, this rule prohibits providers for an individual from also providing "case management" or developing the service plan for the individual (which are functions of our SSA department). Currently, Medicaid waivers fund the services provided in five of our group homes (East College, South Professor, Liberty Lane, Academy Court, and East 9th St.) and, for those enrolled on Medicaid waivers, the services provided at our three adult Opportunity/Vocational Centers and through our Supported Employment program. **This means that, in the future, Murray Ridge may not be allowed to continue to both provide Service and Support Administration (SSA), and directly operate its group homes and Adult Services programs. At its August meeting, our Board unanimously adopted a position on this topic; it can be accessed on the home page of our website.**

I will provide updates as more information becomes available. In the meantime, please know that at Murray Ridge Center the top priority will be to sustain, expand and enhance choices and opportunities for people with developmental disabilities.

### Some Background on the Community-Based Services Movement

Often referenced in the discussion about community-based services is a lawsuit called **Olmstead v. L.C.** which resulted, fifteen years ago, in a ruling that requires "states to eliminate unnecessary segregation of persons with developmental disabilities and to ensure that persons with disabilities receive services in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs." Five years ago, the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) initiated an "aggressive effort to enforce the Supreme Court's decision in Olmstead v. L.C." Although the original lawsuit involved residential services, the ruling has more recently been applied to settings in which people with developmental disabilities receive day services.

In July of this year, Disability Rights Ohio (DRO), an advocacy group previously called Ohio Legal Rights Service, sent a letter to Governor Kasich and several state officials expressing its concern that parts of Ohio's service delivery system for people with developmental disabilities are not in compliance with the Olmstead decision. The DRO letter addressed both residential facilities and adult day services sites, like our Opportunity/Vocational Centers. The DRO letter went on to call for the Ohio Department of DD to begin to implement changes that better allow people with DD to receive needed services and supports in "integrated community settings."

Similarly, a recent rule adopted by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) requires that services and supports funded through Medicaid waivers (like the Individual Options Waiver and the Level I Waiver) be provided in "community-based" settings. All states that participate in the federal Medicaid waiver program will need to submit transition plans explaining how they will ensure that Medicaid waiver services are provided in community-based settings. It is expected that public commentary on a proposed transition plan will be solicited in several month's time.

## Exceptional Service at Murray Ridge Center

On August 29, the Lorain County Board of DD honored Shelley Stipe, teacher's aide at Murray Ridge School, with the Exceptional Service Award for the second quarter of 2014.

The nomination was made by Sarah Kitchen, whose daughter, Aneesa, has been a student of Murray Ridge School since 2010.

In the letter, Ms. Kitchen details a 'Pass It On' program that Shelley has organized for many years. Shelley washes and sorts donated gently-worn clothing, and then provides it to Murray Ridge School children. In addition to the 'Pass It On' program, Ms. Kitchen shared how Shelley purchases book bags and bicycle helmets, with her own money, to pass out to students in need.

Speaking about Shelley, Beth Fetzer, another aide, stated that Shelley is loved by all who know her, and described how she constantly thinks about the students at the school by going to garage sales and

using coupons to get good deals on items for their use.

Board President Michelle Hunt also spoke highly of Shelley, sharing how she contributed to the success of her son who participated in the MRS preschool program.

Shelly thanked the Board for the recognition, stating that everyone at the School works together as a team for the benefit of the students. She shared some of her personal challenges, and encouraged everyone to 'think outside of the box,' and to always smile.

Congratulations, Shelley!



## Welcome Back, MRS Students!



Murray Ridge School welcomed back students and staff for the 2014-2015 school year on August 25! This year, MRS welcomes 125 students back, and eight new staff members! Good luck to all on a successful school year!

Pictured left: Evie Rodgers gets off the bus, ready for her first day back! Right: Shawn McAllister greets staff members on his way into school!



## MRC Represented at the Lorain County Fair!

Volunteers, including adult and children from our program, staff, family members, and caregivers, once again, represented Murray Ridge Center at our booth throughout the week of the Lorain County Fair! Volunteers were on-hand to speak with community members about the exceptional programs and services we provide to individuals with developmental disabilities. Thank you to all who volunteered to make this another very successful year!

Right: Linda Herman and her daughter Kim (who attends the Elyria Opportunity/Vocational Center) volunteer each year to work the booth!





# DD Awareness Night at Lake Erie Crushers!

Murray Ridge and the Lake Erie Crushers hosted a Developmental Disabilities Awareness Night at the All-Pro Freight Stadium on August 19. Murray Ridge Special Olympics softball players were announced prior to the start of the game during the Crushers "Field of Dreams" event—with one player, Stephen Locurto, throwing out the first pitch! Two MRC adult program participants also joined in on the fun! Tim Danmeyer yelled "Play Ball" after the National Anthem, and Jesse Frisch announced the first inning with Crushers staff.

More than 200 tickets were purchased by Murray Ridge attendees, staff, family, and friends for the big game!

Thank you to all who attended and participated in this very fun evening!



Above (top): Athletes from the Murray Ridge Raiders softball teams took part in the Field of Dreams event, where team members were announced alongside Crushers players and were allowed to take the field!

Above (bottom): Stephen Locurto threw out the first pitch!



Above (top): Jesse Frisch sat in the announcers' booth and called the first inning alongside a Crusher's announcer! Above (bottom): D'Ronda Fleming stands alongside the Crushers player with whom she shares a position on the field!

# Annual Transportation Safety Instruction

Murray Ridge Center wants your ride into our program sites to be a safe one. These are guidelines that students, adult program participants, and their caregivers should be aware of when utilizing transportation services provided by Murray Ridge Center.

## WAITING FOR THE BUS

- Wait for the bus at least 10 feet from the road.
- Dress properly - winter clothing, hats, mittens, and boots will help keep you warm in the winter.
- Watch for the bus' red lights.
- Wait until the bus has stopped and door opens before stepping into the roadway.
- Wait for the driver to signal to cross. Cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus.
- Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
- If you use a wheelchair, it must be equipped with a functioning seat belt. The wheels should lock as well.
- Store all belongings in a backpack so nothing gets dropped.

## BUS SEAT SAFETY RULES

- Follow all of the driver's instructions.
- Speak softly so the driver will not be distracted. At railroad crossings, be quiet.
- Stay seated until your stop and keep the aisle clear.
- Never put head, arms, or hands out of the window.
- Never do anything to distract the driver.
- Keep aisles clear and free of tripping hazards.
- Never throw things on the bus or out the windows.
- Tell the driver or monitor if you are being bullied.
- If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.
- Do not eat on the bus, as this could present a choking hazard.

## GETTING OFF THE BUS AT HOME

- If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
- Make sure that the driver can see you.
- Wait for the signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
- When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
- Do not cross the center line of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
- Stay away from the bus' rear wheels at all times. If you drop something near the bus, leave it. If you leave something on the bus, never return to get it. The driver may not see you come back and start to move the bus. If you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver before you pick it up so he/she knows where you are.

Some of our consumers are also able to travel about the community through the use of public transportation. We want your trips to be safe ones!

## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- When you enter or leave a vehicle, watch for slippery or uneven pavement and other hazards that could cause you to fall.
- Have your LCT ID, bus fare, ticket, or pass ready to avoid losing your balance while looking for it.
- Do not carry too many packages – always leave a free hand to grab a railing.
- Allow extra time to cross streets, especially in bad weather.
- If it's dark outside, wear light-colored or reflective clothing.
- Do not talk to strangers. If you are being bothered by someone, tell the driver immediately.
- If you use a stop assistance card, remember to show it to the driver as you board the bus.
- Most LCT stops are not sheltered. Dress appropriately for the winter weather, and utilize sunscreen in the summer.
- Whether you are in a bus, car, or van – **ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SEATBELT IF THE VEHICLE IS EQUIPPED WITH ONE!**





## Strides for Struggles Raises \$2700 for Friends of Murray Ridge

On Saturday, August 16th, local non-profit group Strides for Struggles held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual 5k Walk/Run at Day's Dam in Lorain.

Strides for Struggles was started by Amherst resident and Southview High School graduate Sergio Hernandez. After facing significant challenges in his own life, Sergio decided to "pay it forward" by helping those within Lorain County who might be facing their own struggles. His goal in creating the organization was to bring the community together to support those who need the most help, as noted in the Strides for Struggles motto, "Changing The World One Walk at A Time."

This year's race brought out more than 200 runners, and raised just over \$2,700 for Friends of Murray

Ridge, a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote public awareness of the mission and work of the Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities, more commonly known as Murray Ridge Center, the Murray Ridge Production Center, Inc., and the Murray Ridge Housing Corporation.



Murray Ridge School student Patrick Boey cuts the ribbon at the race, with Strides for Struggles founder Sergio Hernandez helping out.

## Scary Good Fundraiser!

Help us raise money for Murray Ridge School!! This year, Lake Eerie Fearfest is giving back in support of education everywhere. When you purchase a 5-Haunt Pass (see website below), you will receive \$5 off your admission price AND \$5 will be donated to Murray Ridge School. And, if we get 1,000 participants, they will write Murray Ridge School a check for \$5,000!! Please fill in Murray Ridge School in the white box located on the coupon and enjoy the Lake Eerie Fearfest! Visit <http://www.lakeeeriefearfest.com/> for more details.

A coupon for Lake Eerie FEARFEST. The background is dark with a spooky, foggy scene. The text "Lake Eerie FEARFEST" is prominently displayed at the top. Below it, it says "AT GHOSTLY MANOR RATED 'TOP TEN' BY FORBES". A box contains the text "5-HAUNTED HOUSES! OPEN 9/26 - 11/1 FRI - SAT 7:30PM - 11:30PM SUN 7:30PM - 9:30PM". To the right, another box says "Present this coupon & get \$5.00 OFF ADMISSION\* & \$5.00 TO YOUR ORGANIZATION:" followed by a white box for the organization name. At the bottom, the website "www.lakeEERIEfearfest.com" is listed, along with a disclaimer: "\*Only valid towards 5 Haunt Pass. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Expires 11/1/14". A barcode is on the right side.

Come walk with us at the  
**Woollybear Festival Parade**  
in Vermilion September 28.

If interested, contact Jennifer Judkins at (440) 329-3734.



# Triumph through the Challenges Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

## Who should attend?

This course series is for nurses, social workers, counselors, physicians, educators, parents and caregivers who work with individuals that may have had prenatal exposure to alcohol/drugs.

**Learn** about Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and how to best work with those affected in order to reach his/her fullest potential.

**Gather** useful tips and local resources!

**Discover** ways to succeed!

## 2014 Fall Course Series

### Evening Sessions:

**September 9, 2014:** Section 1, 6-9 p.m.

**September 11, 2014:** Section 2, 6-9 p.m.

**September 16, 2014:** Section 3, 6-9 p.m.

**September 18, 2014:** Section 4, 6-9 p.m.

### Location:

Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities Service & Support Administration Bldg.  
9740 Murray Ridge Road, Elyria, 44035

\*Evening parking available at Murray Ridge SSA lot. Please enter in back door.

## Register

[www.loraincountyhealth.com/fasdcourse](http://www.loraincountyhealth.com/fasdcourse)

Contact: Natalie Karn, R.N., M.S.N.

440.284.3272, [nkarn@loraincountyhealth.com](mailto:nkarn@loraincountyhealth.com)

No fee to attend. Space is limited.

Bring your own personal refreshments and food.

### Facilitators:

Natalie Karn R.N, M.S.N.

Lorain County General Health District Public Health Nurse

Kathleen Bevaque, M.Ed.

Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities

### Sponsor:



@LorainCoHealth



Lorain County General Health District

## Series Details

- **Section 1:** FASD Basic Facts; Characteristics; Chronological vs. Developmental Age
- **Section 2:** Neurological Issues & Behaviors of FASD; Coping Skills
- **Section 3:** Developing Effective Strategies for FASD; Advocacy & Finding Resources
- **Section 4:** Advocacy in Schools; Discipline; Daily Living & Future Planning for Individuals with FASD




## Contact Hours Available

- Nurses; provided by Lorain County Community College Department of Allied Health and Nursing
- Social workers, counselors, and chemical dependency RCH; provided by the ADAS Board of Lorain County
- Developmental Disability hours provided by Lorain County Board of Developmental Disabilities.
- Certificate of Attendance for contact hours given.



# September 2014

## Activities & Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
1	1 	2 	3	4	5	6	9/1 - Agency closed for Labor Day
7	8	9	10	11 	12	13	9/2 - First Day of school for preschool students
14	15 	16	17 	18 	19 	20	9/11 - Murray Ridge Support Group Meeting, 4:15 p.m. at the EOVC
21	22	23	24	25	26 	27	9/15 - Murray Ridge Ninth Annual Golf Classic, Golf Outing begins at 11:00 a.m., dinner begins at 5:00 p.m. at Avon Oaks Country Club, 32300 Detroit Rd., Avon
28 	29	30					9/17 - Family Support Parent Committee meeting, 6:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
							9/18 - LCBDD Finance Committee meeting, 12:00 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road, Elyria
							9/19 - Murray Ridge Parent Support Group Dance, 7-9 p.m. at the Murray Ridge School
							9/26 - Regular Meeting of the Board and Ethics Council, 12:30 p.m., Administration Bldg., 1091 Infirmary Road in Elyria
							9/28 - Woollybear Festival, Vermilion, OH

**October is  
National Disabilities Employment Awareness Month  
and Autism Awareness Month!**

### BOARD ROOM BRIEFING

**The Lorain County Board of DD convened at 12:30 p.m. on August 29, 2014:**

An Exceptional Service Award was presented by Board Member Dan White to Murray Ridge School teacher's aide Shelley Stipe. Strides for Struggles founder Sergio Hernandez spoke and made a donation of \$2,726 to Friends of Murray Ridge; the donation was raised through the 5k Walk/Run on August 16. Dr. Fisher presented and the Board approved revisions to the following policies in the Management/Confidential Policy Manual: Separation; Holidays and Holiday Pay. The Board discussed the recent Superintendents'/Board Member Conferences and unanimously adopted a Position Paper on the Provision of Direct Services. The Murray Ridge Support Group reported that it had funded a back-to-school luncheon for the Murray Ridge School teachers, and an ice cream social for each of the OVCs. In other news, the Board was updated on the Murray Ridge Golf Classic, a levy fundraiser to occur on September 15.



Lorain County Board of  
Developmental Disabilities

Murray Ridge Center  
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Elyria, OH 44035

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Visit our Web site  
[www.murrayridgecenter.org](http://www.murrayridgecenter.org)



### Further News You Might Use...

We are often in receipt of information from external sources on offerings designed for people with DD. Some examples include summer camps and special interest classes. Many such offerings have an associated cost to the participant. Although we are not in a position to "vouch for" or promote such offerings, we recognize that these opportunities may be of interest to our consumers, their families and/or guardians. If you are interested in learning more about such consumer-oriented events and opportunities, please contact Jeff Neal, Director of Service & Support Administration. You may reach him by telephone at 440-324-2366.

—The Editor

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by email, please visit  
**[www.murrayridgecenter.org](http://www.murrayridgecenter.org)**  
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*Sign Up for Our Email Newsletter* link.

