

# THE MESSENGER

THE LOGAN COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL RETARDATION/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

*"Enabling persons with developmental disabilities to realize and enjoy the quality of life they desire and can achieve."*

January 2009

## COLLABORATION EFFORTS WORK FOR ISAIAH

Isaiah is a lucky little guy. He was living in a situation where he needed help. Both Isaiah and his sister were not receiving the care they needed until their grandmother, Sierra, stepped in and was granted custody. In her care, Isaiah has been connected to many programs that are of assistance to him.

Isaiah loves to ride his bike and play outside like all little boys. He enjoys being active. At times, Isaiah's level of activity is so high that he needs extra assistance to stay in his area, follow instructions, and be safe. Extra support was put in place with the Family Resource Service Program at Logan County Board of Mental Retardation Developmental Disabilities (LCBMRDD). This fund assisted in paying for respite services and assistance in his child care setting. Some of the funding was shared with the Logan County Family and Children First Council as well. This

support allowed Isaiah's grandmother to work and to get some respite from the daily care of an energetic grandson.

Isaiah also had the opportunity to participate in the Summer Academy this summer. This was a 7 week program to assist students with maintaining structure over the summer break from school and to provide respite to care givers. The Academy was a collaborative effort between Logan County Board of MR/DD and Family Children First Council, the local schools and the Mental Health Board. Isaiah enjoyed his summer and did well in the program.

Another support Isaiah and his grandmother access is assistance with transportation to out of county appointments. Isaiah has seen specialists



at Children's Hospital and that can be a tiring trip. Transportation is coordinated so the family can concentrate on the appointment and not worry about the drive, directions, or finding parking.

Sierra states that she is "extremely happy with the services and help from everybody".

## RTC INDUSTRIES, INC. RECYCLING FOR LOGAN COUNTY BUSINESSES



Joe Oldiges and Eric Easley represented RTC Industries as they accepted a \$4000 check from the Logan County Commissioners to assist with RTC's new recycling project. The funds came from a grant obtained by Alan Hale of Logan County Solid Waste. The \$4000 will be combined with \$1000 that came from another grant from the PPG Foundation and will be used to purchase a bailer for cardboard and paper.

RTC Industries is pleased to be taking on the task of recycling items from Logan County businesses. They operate pick ups along the route that was first established by Logan County Solid Waste. The route has grown from nineteen businesses to forty-four. This project has provided numerous jobs for the associates of RTC and is helping to keep Logan County beautiful.

# Kindergarten Here I Come!



Starting kindergarten is a big transition, for little ones and their families. For parents of children with disabilities, the move into kindergarten can be filled with mixed emotions. Although they are happy to be entering this phase of their child's life, they face concerns with leaving the Discovery Center- a place they have come to know well, often since their child's infancy. Parents anticipate new challenges as they are introduced to and learn to navigate the public school system.

The Discovery Center and the local school districts work closely to ensure this transition is smooth for all of the children. The local schools are already aware of the children, as the two hundred preschoolers who attend Discovery Center are not just "Discovery Center students" but also preschool students of their respective districts...Riverside, Indian Lake, Bellefontaine City, Benjamin Logan and West Liberty-Salem.

A thoughtful and well-planned transition to Kindergarten process is in place. Local school representatives, including special education directors, principals, school psychologists, kindergarten and special education teachers, and guidance counselors are regular participants in the planning. School therapists, including speech, physical therapy and occupational therapy are also active members of the team. The process involves various meetings between the sending and

receiving staffs, as well as visits to the preschool classrooms by receiving staff and visits to the elementary building by preschoolers, parents and Discovery Center staff.

A typical process or chain of events would begin with a meeting in January. Parents meet with representatives from their school district and plan what is needed to ensure success. The evaluation process is explained including information on the assessments that will be given to the child to gather information that will help in the design of an effective individual education plan for kindergarten.

This process was definitely successful for Josh and his parents. Josh was born with Down Syndrome and began working with staff from the Discovery Center as an infant. Due to the syndrome, Josh has low muscle tone which affects his entire body, as was evidenced by eating difficulties and the need for specialized seating. As an infant, he also experienced treatment for leukemia, which remains in remission. Josh attended 3 years of preschool at the Discovery Center before beginning the transition to his elementary school. Luckily, he had an older brother already in school, so his parents knew the staff and were familiar with the school. Still, they were anxious about how this would work out for Josh.

They needn't have worried. The staff observed Josh in his preschool classroom. During the summer prior to kindergarten, the new teacher researched teaching strategies and methods of learning that are more appropriate for children with Down syndrome. She even had her husband make special pencil grips for him from golf balls.

Much like other children, Josh enjoys computers. Because of his low muscle tone's impact on his ability to write, the kindergarten teacher and occupational therapist realized the importance of a computer in his daily learning. As a first grader, he now has his own laptop, which he uses daily. Throughout his day, he continues to access the modified curriculum of the regular first grade classroom. Although a classroom assistant is available to assist him, her time is not devoted entirely to him, as the team does not wish for him to become dependent upon another person.

The focus of inclusion has been successful. The elementary staff truly fosters a sense of community. Supports, natural to a young student, are offered to him throughout his day by his classmates. At lunch, he has a lunch buddy who assists with opening his containers, when needed. When going out for recess or home, his classmates may assist with helping him to zip his coat, tie his shoes or organize his supplies. Although the children offer supports, they also offer encouragement and praise when he demonstrates independence in his daily living skills.

Josh is part of his school community- a place where he is accepted, encouraged, and supported. A place where he, like the other children, can truly belong. This transition was carefully planned by all concerned with a very positive outcome for Josh. There is no doubt that Josh and his parents truly felt welcomed to Kindergarten!

# DISCOVERY CENTER FUN!



## MOVING ON UP!!

Paul has a smile for everyone these days. This constant state of happiness began on April 23 of 2008 when Logan Housing board opened the door to independent living by handing Paul a key to a custom designed board owned home. This is attributed to Paul's self advocacy and persistence. It was also made possible by grants applied for and received to remodel a home and a special waiver that was granted to the Logan County Board of Mental Retardation/ Developmental Disabilities to assist Paul with his daily needs. Paul lived in a group home for 13 years where he was safe and successful but he desired the challenge of being more responsible and independent.

Paul's mother supports Paul with teaching him to pay his bills and going grocery shopping to help offset the cost of services for Paul. He also accesses a waiver that pays for people to assist him in the morning and evening. Paul strives to be on time for his van driver in the morning and his providers help him meet that goal. He enjoys the socialization that he has on the van as he and his co-workers journey to their jobs at RTC Industries. Paul is working on employment skills necessary for obtaining and keeping a job in the



community. Paul also accesses case management services and is a member of the 'Human Rights' council at the Logan County Board of MR/DD which helps to look out for the rights of people who are on behavior support plans.

Paul remains ecstatic and positive and will attribute it to his mantra, "Everyday in every way I am growing." Paul has started a memo board and will write what he discovers he is able to do independently to use as a reminder that he is devoted to being as independent and positive as possible.

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### ANNOUNCING...

**The Logan County Board of Mental Retardation / Developmental Disabilities has a new web page as of December 2008. We are glad to announce we have a total new look and encourage everyone to take time to visit our web site at [www.co.logan.oh.us/mrdd/](http://www.co.logan.oh.us/mrdd/).**

**If you have comments or suggestions, please contact Pamela Hickman at 937-592-0015, ext. 3011 or send an email to [phickman@mrdd.co.logan.oh.us](mailto:phickman@mrdd.co.logan.oh.us).**





# Holiday Happenings and Special Events



## Calendar of Events

### JANUARY

- 15 LCBMRDD meeting @5:30 pm
- 19 Martin Luther King Day  
All programs closed
- 22 Parent Ed Event - Discovery Center
- 23 Parent Ed Event - Discovery Center

### FEBRUARY

- 6 Discovery Center Staff Development Day  
No students
- 16 President's Day - All programs closed
- 19 LCBMRDD meeting @5:30 pm
- 27 Adult Program Staff Development Day

### MARCH

- 3 Parent Conference - Discovery Center
- 5 Parent Conference - Discovery Center
- 6 MRDD Awareness - Elected Officials  
Breakfast@8:00am
- 19 LCBMRDD meeting @5:30 pm
- 30 Discovery Center Spring Break Begins
- 31 Discovery Center Spring Break

### APRIL

- 1-3 Discovery Center Spring Break



## THE LOGAN COUNTY BOARD OF MENTAL RETARDATION / DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

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PROGRAM ENROLLMENT	
Early Intervention	60
Preschool	219
Adult Services	120
Community Employed	55
Case Management	
Adults	155
Children	52
Residential Services group Home/apt.	74