



JEFFERSON COUNTY BOARD
OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

256 John Scott Highway
Steubenville, Ohio 43952

www.jcbdd.com

Michael J. Zinno
Superintendent

Early Intervention
School Age Services
(740) 264-7176
(740) 264-0399 Fax

Adult Program
Day Services
(740) 266-6167
(740) 266-3839 Fax

Community
Employment
(740) 266-3840
(740) 266-3839 Fax

Service & Support
Community
Integration
(740) 266-4291
(740) 266-4293 Fax

Shaffer Plaza
(740) 264-7111
(740) 266-2924 Fax

Transportation
(740) 266-2923
(740) 264-5977 Fax

Contact: Superintendent Michael Zinno

For Immediate Release

Transportation, Transitioning Opportunities Eyed in Community

STEUBENVILLE-Transportation and other opportunities are on the agenda to assist special needs individuals as they transition into adult services as well as the community as a whole.

Cookie West, employment navigator and community facilitator for the Jefferson County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and the county Youth Transition Team have connected with local community leaders in an effort to increase mobility within the county. The team is comprised of parent representatives, schools and area agencies with the goal to improve community transition youth services for individuals with developmental disabilities.

“It will be one year for the Jefferson County Transition Youth Team and we’re moving forward with tackling barriers that were identified. Transportation barriers are top on the list and it’s not just individuals with special needs that are affected, but it affects all residents countywide,” West said. “Our main focus for the last year has been on transportation and we’ve connected with county and statewide groups such as the Ohio Mid-East Governments Association, and we’re working on approval for the plan from the proper personnel.”

She said conversations have been held with community stakeholders and other vested partners, including the Brooke Hancock Jefferson Metropolitan Planning Commission and local transportation providers from Checkered Cab to the Steel Valley Regional Transit Authority (SVRTA). The transition youth team’s core working group includes a dozen members from school districts and county Children’s Services to the Community Action Council.

“We are hoping to gain approval for the plan by March that will help in future transportation opportunities,” she continued. “The team was able to obtain funding from J.B. Green Team to post bus stop signage and revise bus route schedules which aren’t necessarily user-friendly.”

She said people may not be aware of how debilitating the transportation barrier is for so many in the county and the team is dedicated to helping people gain access to work and access their communities more frequently.

“There’s an urgency for us to connect with what’s already in place and how we can increase the capacity and providers in the area.”

Meanwhile, West added that officials involved with the Student Empowerment Tour wrapped up the first portion of the program after visiting schools throughout the county this fall. JCBDD, in conjunction with Eastern Gateway Community College, led a program where representatives traveled to area schools and addressed students in grades 7-12 about employment and academic services available to them as they transition into the community. Officials plan to return in the spring, but first they were gathering information to determine the next course of action when preparing for adulthood.

“We are debriefing and discussing the pros and cons and how to increase student awareness on employment and academic pathways to success,” she noted, adding that the employment department will be conducting surveys with county transition youth families. “We want to assess the gaps in transition to adulthood services and how we can fill in those gaps, and make families aware of the various county and statewide services available. We also want to educate and inform our families on all the great opportunities available for families who have children transitioning into adulthood.”

For more information about the programs, contact West at (740) 264-7176, Extension 2118.