DARKE COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

Philosophy

Darke DD exists to help people live their best lives. We recognize that everyone is important, and every person is a valuable member of our community.

Mission

Our mission is to use our time and resources to help people with developmental disabilities live, work, and succeed in Darke County.

Values

- **Integrity & Respect**: we work openly, honestly, and sincerely, valuing everyone and treating people with dignity and professionalism
- **Excellence**: we are satisfied with nothing less than the very best in everything we do
- **Employment Development & Unity**: we are stronger when we invest in our team and work together to improve services

Guiding Principles

- **Honesty/Trustworthiness**: being real with yourself and others about who you are, what you want and what you need
- **Responsiveness**: timely decisions that lead to timely actions
- **Open-mindedness**: thinking critically and rationally, being receptive to a wide variety of ideas and being free of judgment or preconceived ideas
- **Open Communication**: readily sharing information in a transparent, honest, consistent, and dependable way
- **Dedication**: following through on promises and pushing through challenges to achieve goals
- **Mindfulness**: take care of ourselves, each other, and the space we share
- **Positive Attitude**: doing what it takes and inspiring others to do the same
- **Compassion**: bringing kindness and understanding towards whatever we find in ourselves and others
- **Resilience**: have determination, belief, and a willingness to never give up
- **Adaptability/Flexibility**: to do something different, overcome problems, face fears and inspire change
- **Professionalism**: speaking kindly and treating others with dignity and respect
- **Accountability**: take responsibility for our actions, conduct, time and resources

Adopted by Board of Directors: November 21, 2024

Focus Areas and Goals

The following focus areas have been identified as the primary concerns to Darke DD and align with those identified by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and other county boards across the state as well. The Board recognizes that uncertainty exists and that changes may develop over time that could alter the decisions made in this plan.

Sustainability

Sustainability includes making decisions that consider both the long-term and immediate impact of those decisions. The Board needs to maintain fiscal responsibility while staying focused on the philosophy and mission, ensure people are supported appropriately and maintain a strong community connection to ensure services continue long into the future. To address sustainability, the Board will:

- Continue to ensure that federal, state, and local financial resources are available to maintain long-term sustainability; maintain a ten (10) year cash forecast for all funds.
- Continue annual planning regarding home and community-based services waiting list and meet the needs of people with immediate and current needs including community inclusion activities. Manage and monitor Medicaid waiver services to maximize federal and state dollars.
- Creatively support a system that recruits, develops, and retains a quality workforce.
- Continue to promote, educate, and utilize technology and innovative solutions whenever possible to increase efficiency for individuals, families, providers, staff, and community connections.
- Continue to improve employer outreach and engagement to ensure that the community is aware of the benefits of hiring people with developmental disabilities.
- Maintain an internal culture that is focused on positive customer experience and expert service delivery.
- Develop a plan to prepare for influx of individuals who have ADHD and/or Autism and the impact to future service needs.

Advocacy and Empowerment

Darke DD encourages all individuals to strive for greater independence by helping people have a greater voice over events and actions that impact their lives. To support advocacy and empowerment for individuals and families served by the Board, we will:

- Continue to promote a culture of person-centered planning and continue to use Charting the LifeCourse tools as a community of practice; provide training and awareness to all stakeholders as a central person-centered planning tool across all life ages.
- Increase the use of remote support services to provide greater independence.
- Support people to live fully integrated lives in their community. Monitor accessible and affordable housing options with a proactive assessment of future housing needs.
- Continue to develop opportunities for individuals to participate in their communities through partnerships with other agencies, local businesses, employers, schools, and civic groups.
- Continue to support a person with lived experience serving on the Darke DD Board of Directors.
- Use technology to provide a variety of options for families to access early intervention services and resources across the state.

Community Awareness and Engagement

To help people live their best lives, the Board needs to help people truly become a part of their community. The Board should be proactive in maintaining a strong community presence through transparent operations and open and honest communications with all constituents. To support community awareness and engagement, the Board will:

- Implement community education and awareness activities to communicate the role of Darke DD as a resource regarding intellectual and developmental disabilities services in our community – schools, county agencies, community members.
- Update the agency website with current information, photos, videos and other relevant information on a regular basis.
- Develop opportunities for individuals served and their families to interact with the community and share their own successes and challenges.
- Plan and execute at least 3 community events per year to bring families, individuals, and the community together in fun and creative ways.
- Explore ways to increase access to community transportation to provide stable, responsive transportation to community events, health-related appointments, and employment.
- Continue to promote the utilization of Birchwood Training & Senior Center for meetings and trainings across all constituent groups.
- Create awareness around the importance of accessibility to promote community inclusion.
- Continue to partner with the Darke County Health Department & Darke County Educational Service Center to provide socialization and educational opportunities for children and families.

Provider & Partner Support

Darke DD truly values the partnerships created to support individuals with developmental disabilities. As the system continues to evolve, the Board will seek to enhance these relationships to help solve mutual issues that affect individuals served. To improve provider and partner support, the Board will:

- Recruit and retain providers and quality staff to facilitate community engagement and advocacy opportunities. Meet with each newly certified independent provider within sixty calendar days of selection regarding service plan.
- Continue to collaborate with the Darke County Health Department to provide early intervention services to families.
- Engage in ongoing recruitment efforts to increase all provider options in Darke County, including transportation.
- Improve relationships and collaboration efforts with Medicaid waiver providers which will enhance services to eligible individuals.
- Assure progress reports from providers are received on a regular basis for outcomes monitoring.
- Develop a plan, in partnership with OOD and employment providers, to address the needs of people supported based on their path to employment.
- Initiate and participate in planning to address needs of youth in crisis/multi-system youth, including behavior support, housing, and residential respite.
- Develop new local work skills and/or work experience initiatives for transition-aged youth.