

'Just try it' Assistive tech can take many forms

When you think of assistive technology, what's the first thing that comes to mind?

For some it might be wheelchair technology or an assistive communication device. Others might think of remote supports.

All of those are aspects of assistive technology. But people with disabilities have so many additional options that can help them live more independently.

Technology doesn't have to be expensive or overwhelming. And many everyday devices, including our phones and tablets, can be used in new ways.

This year, Ohio was declared a Technology First state, meaning that the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and county boards will work together to make sure technology is one of the first options offered during the service planning process.

As the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities fully embraces this new initiative, we dedicated an entire month to raising awareness about some of the different kinds of technology available. The possibilities are almost endless. Here are just a few examples of ways county residents have used technology:

Elena

Elena Selfinger, 2, loves her family's Amazon Echo, which her parents use to play her



favorite music.

She also has started using an iPad with the Go Talk NOW app, to ask for the toys, songs, TV shows and food she wants.

Her parents, Mandy and Chris, were able to borrow several assistive communication devices and cases through lending library programs before deciding what would be the best fit for Elena.

Mandy said she's excited to see what technology Elena will use in the future to communicate.

She encourages other families to see what options are out there.

"Don't be afraid," she said. "Just try it."

Marissa

Marissa Diamond, 17, has been using an Octopus Watch, which gives her reminders about her schedule and more independence to complete tasks on her own.

She and her family are also using technology to plan for her

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A message from our Superintendent Jason Umstot



At the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities, we strive to be proactive leaders beyond our community.

So it's always exciting when we get to share our experiences on a statewide level.

On Sept. 27, I was offered one of those opportunities at Bridge2Equality, a rally at the Ohio Statehouse that brought stakeholders together to raise awareness of the critical need for direct support professionals, or DSPs.

I was honored to speak on behalf of the Ohio Association of County Boards – sharing the story of how I started my career as a DSP while discussing the current workforce crisis.

Over the past five decades, we have seen dramatic changes in supports for people with disabilities. We have shifted to a person-centered focus allowing people to live in less-restrictive settings, take control over their decisions and live fulfilling lives based on what they want.

This is possible because of

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Upcoming events

- **4:45 to 6 p.m. Nov. 14, Dec. 19 and Jan. 16:** LCBDD Board Meeting, Suite B2 of the Newark Commerce Center, 195 Union Street, Newark, Ohio.

LCBDD News



LCBDD Superintendent/CEO Jason Umstot speaks during the Bridge2Equality advocacy event on Sept. 27 at the Ohio Statehouse.

LCBDD receives Hendrickson donation

Last spring, Hendrickson employees participated in a weight loss challenge which gave three teams the opportunity to participate in fun wellness activities while raising donations for causes of their choice.

One of the teams decided the money they raised should be donated to help people supported by LCBDD.

The challenge wrapped up at the end of August with their team of 25 losing 190 pounds! They were able to donate \$980, which will go toward the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities' Endowment Fund.

Managed by the Licking County Foundation, the endowment was established in 2005 to ultimately help provide respite care, adaptive equipment, home modifications and recreational experiences to the people we

support.

We are grateful to Hendrickson for its generosity!

Fix the List efforts continue with assessments

LCBDD is in the process of contacting each person on the Medicaid waiver waiting list in Licking County.

Once contact has been made, LCBDD will schedule an assessment of each person's current needs, or incorporate the assessment into their next individual service planning meeting.

Once the assessment has been completed, a person or family member can set up a portal account through the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities' website. There they will be able to view their assessment, once it has been completed.

To watch videos on how to create a portal account and view your assessment, go to [youtube.com/user/DODDOhio/videos](https://www.youtube.com/user/DODDOhio/videos).

Additional information on the new waiting list rule can be found at fixthelist.info.



The renovation of the E.S. Weiant Center is ongoing. Visit our Facebook page at [facebook.com/lcountydd](https://www.facebook.com/lcountydd) to see more photos of the progress.



Shout Outs!

To Buckeye Home Health Care:

Thank you for making a parent comfortable with her son going out in the community. He has been able to learn about safety and develop more natural supports. BHHC always returns calls and emails and reaches out to me with updates. I am very thankful for the relationships they are building.

–Patricia Luning
Service coordinator

To Mary Thompson-Hufford and the FUSE Network:

The FUSE Network did not let the fact that a woman is 70 and uses a walker prevent her from trying a new opportunity at THK. Thank you for looking past the things that are typically considered barriers. She seems to be very excited about her new job!

–Karla Lust
Service coordinator

To Courtney Taylor of CSS:

Thank you for allowing the people you support to be as independent as possible and showing you care. You provided support with such a sweet attitude and patience that really impressed me.

We can't do our job without the support of the community! LCBDD staff members are using this space to express our gratitude to providers and members of the community who have gone above and beyond.

–Connie Bryant
Administrative specialist

To Lew Mitchell:

He consistently goes above and beyond what is expected of him in supporting people. Lew, in sometimes what is a thankless job, I want you to know, you are appreciated.

–Robin Bussey
Service coordinator

To Donna Lee from Mental Health America:

For providing Getting Ahead classes to a great group of DSPs.

To Matt Dawson from MPW:

For generously donating your time to teach us about effective leadership.

To the Main Place:

For agreeing to host an upcoming event for Getting Ahead.

To Hospice of Central Ohio:

For sharing their space with us for Getting Ahead and leadership trainings.

–LCBDD Provider
Relations department

To Dale at CSS:

For all his help assisting a person in passing apartment inspections, grocery shopping and going bowling. Great job!

To Doug Price:

For his advocacy and assistance in volunteering his time to help someone we serve. Thanks!

–Daryl Waterman
Service coordinator

To Dave Doney and WNKO:

Thank you for going above and beyond to give a woman the opportunity to share her story on the radio. It was an awesome collaboration.

–Anna Jeffries

Public information officer

To CDS:

For helping a person in a crisis situation.

To Allen Carpenter at CDS:

For going above and beyond to support someone.

–Lynn Parry
Service coordinator

To the FUSE Network:

Thank you for working with LCBDD service coordinators to get things right on the provider portal side of the Imagine IS. It has had many positive results.

–David McManus

Provider support coordinator

To Kim Spears of Ultimate:

Thank you for assisting a woman during a stressful situation, being respectful and valuing her opinion. You are an amazing advocate.

–Teresa Whipkey

Provider support coordinator

Guest shout out:

To the staff at KICKS:

Kimmie, Shane and Jordan are always smiling and helpful! It's always a joy to stop by and see them having fun with the folks they are assisting. We appreciate all they do!

–Meagan Hickman
Newark Resident Homes

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future as an artist.



Her family is hoping to start an Instagram page for her work and an online store on Etsy.com where she can sell her pieces and work as an "artist for hire."

Even a few years ago, the idea of starting an art business would have been difficult for Marissa. But because of technology, like social media and Etsy.com, she has the chance to earn money and pursue her passion for art, her

mother, Kate Diamond said.

Coral

Coral Meza wasn't interested in technology when she was younger.

But as she got older it seemed like the time was right to introduce an assistive communication device.

Coral is still getting used to her ProSlate10. But she recently used it to tell her parents she was not feeling well and had pain in her mouth. A visit to the urgent care revealed she had strep throat.

Coral's mother, Laura said she would encourage families to



keep talking about technology.

"Just because they don't have an interest today, doesn't mean they won't be interested later," she said.

How to learn more about technology:

- Talk to your service coordinator!
- Use the "Technology that works for you" board on the LCBDD Pinterest page.
- Search #techttober on the LCBDD Facebook page.
- Check out statewide technology resources at dodd.ohio.gov/TechnologyFirst.
- Test some tech at a lending library. Find one at: ddc.ohio.gov/ohio-at-lending-libraries.
- Check out the resources offered by the Ohio State University Nisonger Center: nisonger.osu.edu/adult/resources/technology-project.
- Visit the Accessible Technology Coalition's website: atcoalition.org.

Umstot cont.

the commitment from DSPs who are supporting people at home, helping them find employment and connecting them with their communities.

Nationwide, we are seeing a shortage of DSPs and Ohio is no exception. So I was thrilled to see supporters from across our field come together at Bridge2Equality to work toward solutions.

Since the rally in September, Bridge2Equality has continued to gain strength,

evolving into a grassroots movement that will continue to advocate for DSPs and raise awareness about their important work.

I was thrilled to be asked to serve on its newly formed board and look forward to seeing how this new organization can form partnerships around the state.

If we all work together, I truly believe that we can strengthen the foundation of our system.

To learn more about Bridge2Equality, go to bridge2equality.com or check out their Facebook page.

If you are interested in learning more about becoming a DSP, contact the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities at 740-349-6588 and ask to speak to DSP Eligibility Specialist Brandi Body.

Contact Superintendent/CEO Jason L. Umstot by calling 740-349-6588 or email: Jason.Umstot@lcountydd.org.

Momentum is created and edited by LCBDD Public Information Officer Anna Jeffries.

If you have ideas for future publications, or would like to get on our mailing list and receive this electronically, contact Anna at **740-322-6911** or anna.jeffries@lcountydd.org.

The Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD) has been proudly funding services and supporting people with developmental disabilities for more than 50 years.

LCBDD can be reached by calling 740-349-6588 or by visiting our website, lcountydd.org.

Follow us on social media using @LCOUNTYDD. If you are a family member of someone we support, don't hesitate to visit our family support page by searching "LCOUNTYDD Families" on Facebook.