

A quarterly publication of the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Gaining water safety skills

Y partnership offers free, adaptive Safety Around Water classes to LCBDD families!



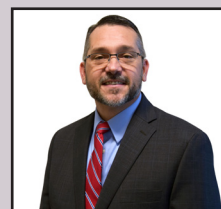
Harvey Fenner, 4, enjoyed the Y's adaptive Safety Around Water classes and now has more confidence. For more information on upcoming sessions, turn to page 4.

Harvey Fenner loves to go swimming! Whether it's his grandparents pool or the pool at the Licking County Family YMCA, he can't wait to jump in the water and play. And thanks to the Y's adaptive Safety Around Water program, Harvey now has the skills and confidence to stay safe and have fun while swimming. "He's a stronger swimmer since taking the class," said his mother, Allison Fenner. "That's worth its weight in gold." The Y has had a long history of providing both adaptive aquatics classes and water safety education to children, said Kylie Orr, the Y's lead adaptive instructor. The Y currently offers free Safety

Around Water classes to Licking County first-grade students during the school day. Kylie suggested adding an adaptive version of the class that could be offered in a smaller group, to new swimmers with disabilities. She and Aquatics Coordinator Mackenzie Brune began working with Diane Dodson, a developmental specialist at the Licking County Board of Developmental Disabilities (LCBDD) to plan and spread the word about the class. Classes are now offered free to families of children supported by the Board, age 5 to 14, even if they were not Y members. Since the first class started in

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A message from our Superintendent Jason Umstot



Every new year brings the potential for new opportunities, but the beginning of 2024 has been especially exciting. We were thrilled to learn that LCBDD is one of 67 Ohio counties to receive American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. By infusing \$14.9 million into Ohio's DD system, our state is making a clear statement – that when Ohio is more accessible and inclusive to people with disabilities, it is a stronger state for all of us. LCBDD applied for, and received, \$458,000! In the coming months we will share more about the projects and partnerships that will be made possible through these funds. Because county boards support people for their entire lives, from birth throughout adulthood, we will be looking at ways to utilize these funds to increase safety and accessibility for all ages – from toddlers in our Early Intervention program to senior citizens. You'll see changes to our county that will have benefits far beyond the 2,500 people with disabilities that we support. When we eliminate barriers to accessing the community and strengthen partnerships, everybody wins. I am proud to be in a county with so much opportunity and thankful for our caring staff and community who make this important work happen every day. In 2024, we will certainly continue our mission as we build bridges to brighter futures.

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

Upcoming events

- **4:45 to 6 p.m. Feb. 21, March 20, April 17:** LCBDD Board meetings will be held **IN PERSON** at the E.S. Weiant Center, 116 N. 22nd St. Newark, Ohio.
- **10 to 11 a.m. March 12: DD Awareness and Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse:** In-person registration is closed but the presentation can be watched virtually. Visit ddohio.wordpress.com for more information.
- **1 to 4 p.m. March 23: Pataskala Egg Hunt:** Thomas J. Evans Foundation Park, 10255 McIntosh Road, Pataskala LCBDD will be assisting with this inclusive community event.
- **12:30-1:30 p.m. March 20: The Hottest Tech Toys:** Downtown branch of the Licking County Library, 101 W. Main St., Newark.
- **4 to 7 p.m. May 4:** LCBDD Summer Kickoff, Canal Market District, 36 E. Canal St., Newark. **SAVE THE DATE** for this fun event!

LCBDD News



Celebrate DD Awareness Month

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month and we will be celebrating all month long! If you have the opportunity, check out the virtual broadcast of DD Awareness and Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse at 10 a.m. March 12. You might also catch LCBDD radio ads, billboards and a video advertising campaign on Spectrum channels, Youtube and social media accounts throughout the month. We will be reaching out to our county municipalities to share information about DD Awareness Month and donating an inclusive children’s book to every third grade classroom in our county.

Keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram pages (@lcountydd) to find out more!

Explore fun (and functional) assistive tech!

We are excited that the Licking County Library is offering a free session on some of the hottest tech toys – that can also help with learning, planning and meeting sensory needs.

All are welcome from 12:30-1:30 p.m. on March 20. Just in time for DD Awareness Month, this is an informational program for adults with developmental disabilities and caregivers of all ages.

Did you know?

The library also offers assistive technology options that can be used while in the library including a desktop computer on an adjustable desk with an adapted mouse, keyboard and various accessibility software. For more information about these options check out their

website: lickingcountylibrary.org/services-research/computers-and-printing.

The Library also has Techsperts, who offer expert guidance and answers to common tech questions for all skill levels!

To schedule a free appointment at any LCL location, call 740-349-5509 or email: techspert@lickingcountylibrary.org. Zoom appointments are available.

Save the Date: Summer Kickoff 2024

The Summer Kickoff is back for the third year in a row – featuring fun and games, animals, food trucks and many amazing community partners. Join us from 4 to 7 p.m. on May 4th at the Canal Market District. You won’t want to miss the fun!





Shout Outs!

A huge thank you to **Betsy McPherson and CSS staff** for helping in an emergency situation

–Kristen Morris

Assistant Director of Service Coordination

Shout out to **Layton Construction** for their professionalism.

–Bud Rudin

Facilities Maintenance Specialist

To Victor Musewe of Heritage Community Care: He works 60 hours a week and he is very dedicated to helping a person he supports make progress on their goals. He has been an absolute asset to the person's team, and I have an overwhelming appreciation for how much support he has given this person.

–Kim Waldren

Service Coordinator

Edward Malcolm with

Goodwill is working two DSP jobs and rarely has a day off from work. He is extremely dedicated and we appreciate him over here in the Transition Supports Department.

– Samuel Clark

Transition Specialist

To CSS, Bloom, Fuse, CDS, CLE, Spark and Goodwill: Thank

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.

you for sending your employees to OADSP Leadership training!

–Hannah Rebb

Provider Workforce Support Specialist

Lisa Diss is absolutely fantastic. She goes above and beyond for every single person she has. She is a great person to work with and we are all lucky to have her!

–Megan Harter

Service Coordinator

Annette Duke from Licking County Transit gets a huge shout out for being extremely patient with new employees that are learning and never failing to amaze me with how quick she can make things happen!

–Darian Tupuola

Service Coordinator

To Catherine Stuck of Bon Appétit Management Company, the team at Curtis Hall dining hall and Denison University: Thanks for allowing us to come write a story about a longtime employee.

To Denison Professor Alan Miller: Thank you for inviting me to speak to a class of journalism students.

To Melissa Owens of Licking County Aging Partners: Thank you for organizing an important meeting about digital inclusion in Licking County. **To the Licking**

County Library: Thank you for your willingness to partner on programs and other opportunities to get

information to the people we support.

To Licking Memorial Health Systems: For your willingness to collaborate on a video project. **To Logan Phillips and Jen Crabtree from Resch, Root, Philipps & Graham, LLC:** Thank you for giving us the opportunity to film a vlog about Animal Adventures and talk about an awesome program. **Thank you to Lisa McCutcheon and Adrienne Anderson** of Licking County 4-H for joining us for filming. We always appreciate working with you.

To United Way of Licking County and LCAP: Thank you for organizing and hosting an excellent Nonprofit Expo! **To Licking County Transit:** Thank you for visiting our building during Ohio Loves Transit Week!

–Anna Jeffries

Public Information Officer

Thumbs up to Annette, Chris, and the Transit Team for their care for our folks and their families, and for double checking when things seem off!

–Theresa Selfe

Service Coordinator

Thank you to **Sylvia Friel, Heather Berry, Melanie Fling and Ashley Palmer** for your continued support, collaboration and partnership in serving Licking County Families.

– Cheree Nelson

Director of Early Childhood

Water safety cont.

September of 2023, the program has reached 13 young swimmers.

Before each session, Kylie works with the students and their families to discuss skills and set goals for their progress. Often they work on those by playing fun games and practicing with flotation devices.

Their goal of helping students feel more comfortable in the water goes far beyond recreation.

Drowning is one of the leading causes of accidental death in children and those with disabilities are especially at risk.

That’s one reason Allison and her husband Scott signed Harvey up for the class.

“He was so drawn to water and if he fell into a body of water, knowing that he would at least be safe, that was our biggest motivator,” Allison said.

“Having the safety class available to literally get our toes in the water to practice being safe and learn some basic skills, that was huge!” Harvey had done swimming lessons in the past, but the Fenners liked that one of them was able to be in the water to support their son.

“Parents know their child best and how to give them directions and how to help

them pay attention, so that was really helpful,” Allison said.

Harvey especially liked playing with the Y’s giant orange floating mat. The instructors were able to give Scott and Allison suggestions on using pool noodles and flotation devices that they hadn’t thought of before.

Harvey loved hearing them cheer him on in the water, Scott said.

“He actually could swim for the first time and he was very proud,” he said.

The Y will continue offering the adaptive Safety Around Water classes to families supported by LCBDD at 5:30 p.m. on Fridays, throughout 2024. After class, the Y also offers a 30 minute sensory-friendly swim, from 6 to 6:30 p.m. that students can enjoy.

Since he’s started swimming, Harvey has seemed more relaxed, has been talking more and has shown improvement in his gross motor development. The Fenners have used their LCBDD Family Support Services (FSS) funds to get a Y membership so Harvey can continue practicing and having fun. They are interested in signing him up for another Safety Around Water session.

2024 Safety Around Water Sessions

March

Registration opens: Feb. 18
Session dates: March 8- 29

April

Registration opens: March 18
Session dates: April 5-26

May

Registration opens: April 15
Session dates: May 3-24

June

Registration opens: May 20
Session dates: June 7- 28

July

Registration opens: June 17
Session dates: July 5-26

August

Registration opens: July 15
Session dates: Aug. 2-23

September

Registration opens: Aug. 19
Session dates: Sept. 6-27

October

Registration opens: Sept. 16
Session dates: Oct. 4-25

Nov. (Mini-session due to holiday)

Registration opens: Oct. 14
Session dates: Nov.1-15

Dec. (Mini-session due to holiday)

Registration opens: Nov. 11
Session dates: Nov. 29-Dec.13

Sign up using the QR code or email MacKenzie.Brune@bvfymca.org for more info!



“I hope other people will take advantage of this,” Allison said. “I can’t say enough good things, Harvey loved it!”

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.