

# Moving to Adulthood Booster Session

The Role of County Boards of  
Developmental Disabilities  
During and After High School

November 5, 2025





# University of Cincinnati Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCCEDD)

## Our Vision

UCCEDD sees a society where all people, including individuals with disabilities and their families, belong and live healthy, safe, self-determined and fulfilling lives within their communities. This means that individuals with disabilities decide how they want to live their lives.

## Our Mission

UCCEDD's mission is to improve the health, self-respect, equity/equal treatment, and self-determination of all individuals with disabilities and their families. When people can lead the lives they want, everyone benefits. UCCEDD does this through education, training, working with partners, research, guiding policy, and sharing information.

## Inclusion

The UCCEDD is dedicated to inclusion and respect for all. Our work is strengthened by diversity. We support appreciation and respect within communities through our policies, resources, and actions.



and

## OHIO P2P

Ohio Parent to Parent Statewide  
Mentoring & Support Program

**Your Family Support Team**

### Who we are

- We are a grant-funded statewide program to help families of children with disabilities and special healthcare needs.
- We help families navigate the healthcare and other service systems.
- Staff members provide education, training, and 1:1 confidential support and services.

### Our Services

- Are short-term services
- Are offered at no cost. No insurance is needed.
- There are no eligibility requirements other than having a family member with a disability.

## Need Support?



Intake Form

- Offer free, confidential, one-on-one assistance
- Help in understanding and applying for state and local programs
- Guidance on finding helpful resources
- Improve communication and advocacy skills
- Connect to supportive, understanding peers
- Assist with educational needs
- Training on health care, disability services, transitioning to adulthood, insurance, and more



**Amy**



**Jena**



**Meredith**



**Hadia**



**OHIO P2P**

Ohio Parent to Parent Statewide  
Mentoring & Support Program

## Family Support Specialists:

Amy Clawson (Northern Ohio & F2F Program  
Coordinator)

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# Journey into Adulthood EXPO

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

9am – 3pm

Sharonville Convention Center  
Cincinnati, OH

Registration Required

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2025-journey-into-adulthood-expo-tickets-1564099657179?aff=oddtcreator>

**UCEDD**  
University of Cincinnati Center for  
Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

Registration  
Required!



<http://bit.ly/421IDJQ>

We welcome family members/caregivers, youth/young adults with disabilities, educators, support staff, employers, community-based professionals and anyone who helps individuals with disabilities moving into adulthood live a fulfilling life in the community.



**JOURNEY INTO ADULTHOOD EXPO**  
NAVIGATING NEW HORIZONS

**FREE EVENT!**

Come explore the path to adulthood for youth/young adults with disabilities and meet the organizations that can support you and your family.

- VENDORS GALORE!
- Consult the Experts!
- Network!
- Informational Panel Sessions!
- EMPLOYMENT
- VOCATIONAL
- HOUSING
- TRANSPORTATION
- SOCIALIZING
- ACTIVITIES
- BUILDING SKILLS

**NOVEMBER 12, 2025**  
9 AM - 3 PM

Sharonville Convention Center  
11355 Chester Road, Cincinnati,  
OH 45246



# ■ ■ New for families!

FREE, virtual support group for families and caregivers!

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month,  
Noon to 1pm via Zoom

Please Register:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/ev/reg/av5vhmk>



## Family & Caregiver Peer Support Group

A FREE, virtual group for Ohio families and caregivers who have children and youth with special health care needs.

Join Ohio Family to Family to ask questions, get support, give support, and be encouraged by peers in a safe environment.

3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month  
Noon - 1 pm via Zoom

[Please Register](#)

January 21, 2026

February 18, 2026

March 18, 2026

April 15, 2026

May 20, 2026



Questions? Contact: [OhioF2F@cchmc.org](mailto:OhioF2F@cchmc.org)



UCCEDD  
University of Cincinnati Center for  
Specialty and Developmental Disabilities

Cincinnati  
Children's  
Bringing the culture together

University of  
CINCINNATI

OHIO Family to Family

OHIO P2P  
Ohio Parent to Parent Statewide  
Mentoring & Support Program



Save the Date!

## **2026 Northeast Ohio Transition EXPO!**

Saturday, April 25, 2026

Independence Civic Center

Stay tuned!





# The Team

Thank you to our partners!



Disabilities Services Department  
of Cincinnati Children's Hospital



## Logistics:

- Mute & Hide Video: Please turn off microphones and cameras.
- No Screen Captures: Avoid taking screenshots or video clips.
- Access Materials: Recording and resources will be available after completing the evaluation.
- Use Chat for Questions: Submit questions via the chat function.





## Panelists

- Bradley Wyner, Facilitator, Director of Education, Milestones / Lifeworks Autism Services
  - Lisa Comes, Parent and SSA Advisor, Ohio Association of County Boards
  - Leah Dalton, Manager, Support Administration Youth and Transition, Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities
  - Stephanie Stewart, Parent
  - Marcie Brown, Parent
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# The Role of County Boards of DD for Teens and Young Adults with Disabilities in Ohio

Lisa Comes, Mom, and  
SSA Advisor, Ohio Association of  
County Boards of DD

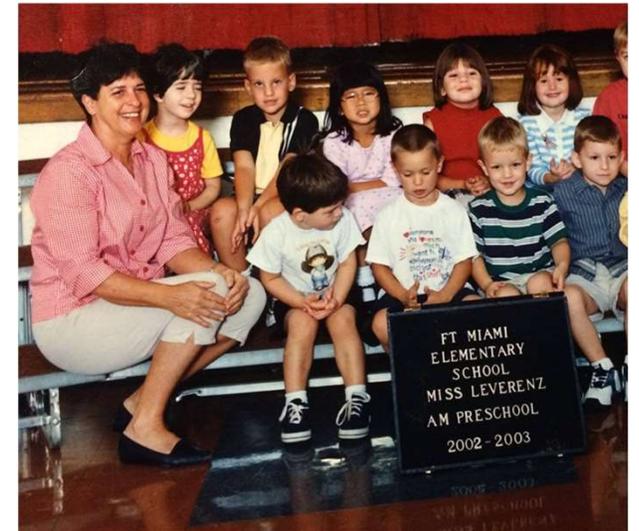


## Meet John Ross and me...



0-3 Will he ever drink from a bottle??? Will he ever sit up??? Will he crawl/walk or talk?

3-5 He's not potty trained! He doesn't talk! He wants to be with his sisters! EEK - I am pregnant again! Will I ever go back to work?



## John Ross and me...

5-9 His speech is so hard to understand - very delayed! He wants to be with his sisters! He is more like other 5 year olds than different! He needs to be around 'typical children'! I need to work!

9-14 He is spending time in nurses office at school. He only has a few friends! He wants to do sports but he's not good! He steals food all the time and is gaining weight? His sisters won't be around forever to help him! What about highschool?





**15-18 He only wants to go to catholic high school! He only has a few friends! He steals food all the time and is gaining weight? His sisters are off to college - he wants to go? What about driving? What kind of job can he get?**



**Nineteen Services, Inc**

May 1, 2022 · 🌐

🌟 Team Member Spotlight 🌟

Our very first monthly Team Member (employee) Spotlight is that of John Ross Comes! John is a wonderful addition to Nineteen Services and is our Provider Support and Billing Specialist.

**19 - ? He still only has a few friends! He steals food all the time and is gaining weight? His sisters won't be around forever to help him! How will he live without me? How to navigate a 'waiver'? What about social security? What about marriage?**





### **Who Helped 15-19?**

Family, Friends, Neighbors, Church, SSA - County Board of DD, School Staff, OOD (Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities), and doctors / PWSA of Ohio and national PWSA and other parents of people with PWS!

### **Who Helped 20-28?**

Family, Friends, Neighbors, Church, County Board of DD, Waiver providers - OOD - Univ. of Toledo - Distracted Haunt - his new work - 19 services - and doctors / PWSA of Ohio and national PWSA. other parents of people with PWS!

### **Who Helped 9-14?**

Family, Friends, Neighbors, Church, SSA - County Board of DD, School Staff, OOD (Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities), and doctors / Prader-Willi Syndrome Association (PWSA) of Ohio and national PWSA and other parents of people with PWS!

# Lessons Learned...

**Connections/  
Relationships**  
brought the most  
benefit to John Ross  
long term.

The county board  
provided much  
support in many  
ways besides the  
SELF Waiver.

The SELF Waiver  
has been very  
helpful. (Age 19)

Family / friends  
make better support  
than DSP's

**NOTHING** happens  
fast.

Always have high  
expectations while  
appreciating baby  
steps.

No one thing or  
support is the  
answer.

People can't HELP if  
they don't know what  
you need.

“IT TAKES A VILLAGE”



# About County Boards of DD

- 1967: Ohio state legislature established County Boards of Developmental Disabilities (DD).
- Purpose: Provide supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Shift in philosophy and public policy:
  - Offered alternatives to state-run institutions.
  - Enabled individuals to live, work, and participate in their local communities.
- Today: Over 107,000 children and adults receive services through local county boards of DD.
- Services are based on available resources and may include:
  - Service and support administration
  - Early childhood services
  - Educational services
  - Supported living and residential services
  - Family support services
  - Job training and employment services
  - Other comprehensive supports

## County Boards Assist through the Lifespan

Young children: birth to age 3 and their families.

<https://ohioearlyintervention.org/>



Children and Youth 3-21

Young Adults and beyond- 21 - 101



How to Find your County Board...

<https://dodd.ohio.gov/your-family/all-family-resources/4-find-your-county-board>



3-5 year old child might receive a wide variety of services depending on many factors in the county

- Information and Referral
- Family support services – (for those people living with family)
- Service Coordination
- Waitlist Assessment / Waiver Administration (very infrequently)
- \*School programs (school age only)
- \*Behavior Support
- And more.....

\* variable by county

# County Board Services: age 6- 21

\*might receive a wide variety of services depending on many factors in the county

- Family support services – (for those people living with family)
- Service Coordination
- Information and Referral
- \*Behavior Support
- \*Self Advocacy Training
- \*Special Olympics
- \*Travel Training (in some counties)
- \*School programs (school age only)
- Waitlist Assessment/Waiver Administration
  - Personal Care and Residential Services
  - Transportation assistance
  - Assistive Technology / Remote Support
  - Respite
  - Environmental Accessibility/ Home Mods/Specialized Medical
  - Participant Directed Goods and Services (SELF and Level One)

And more.....

\* variable by county

# Young Adult / Adult Services:

- 21(or graduation)-
  - Information and Referral
  - Family support services – (for those people living with family)
  - MUI - Reporting Abuse and Neglect
  - Service Coordination
  - Waitlist Assessment/Waiver Administration
    - Employment Support
    - Personal Care and Residential Services
    - Adult Day Programs / Vocational Habilitation
    - Transportation assistance
    - Assistive Technology / Remote Support
    - Ohio shared Living
    - Accessibility with Home and Community
    - Participant Directed Goods and Services
    - Waiver Nursing

## In Some Counties...

- \*Behavior Support
- \*Self Advocacy Training
- \*Special Olympics
- \*Travel Training
- \*Fans Network
- Assistance with driving instruction

# What County Boards Hear...



“I need a waiver.”

“ The doctor (or hospital) told me to get a waiver”

“Someone on Facebook told me to ask for a waiver”

“Why does ..... have a waiver? My child’s needs are more than theirs.”

“I need Medicaid for my son/daughter. Can’t you just get me a waiver”

WHAT  
DO  
YOU NEED



**Ask for  
Help - be  
specific...**

HCBS WAIVERS are a **FUNDING SOURCE** - nothing else...

I need a waiver. - **“FOR WHAT?”**

The doctor (or hospital) told me to get a waiver - **“FOR WHAT?”**

Someone on Facebook told me to ask for a waiver - **“TO USE FOR WHAT?”**

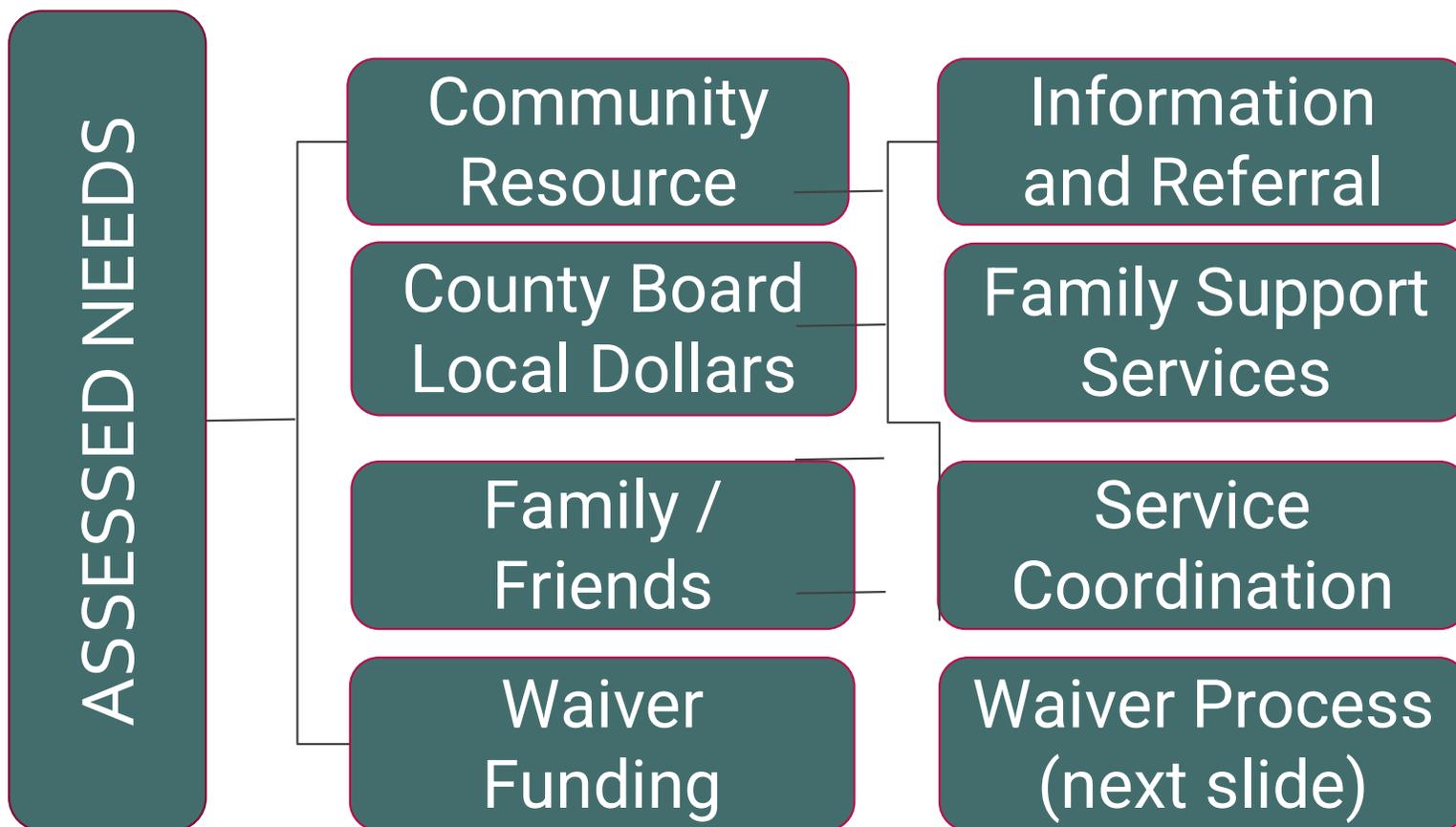
Why does ..... have a waiver? My child's needs are more than theirs. - **“What do you need that you don't have?”**

I need Medicaid for my son/daughter. Can't you just get me a waiver?" - **“No - Giving waivers for Medicaid Healthcare is not legal.”**

**Be ready to talk to the county board about the specific needs your family has.**

Once they know the need they will look at multiple ways to assist you..

# Meeting your Child's Needs has many PATHS...



# Examples of ways county boards might meet the needs...

- Giving you information to navigate community resources.
- Referring you to the correct agency for your specific need:  
Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services, local school districts, local mental health agencies, Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities, Social Security Administration etc.
- Determining Eligibility for County Board Services
- Sharing a locally funded program that your county board offers:  
Family Resources travel training, Special Olympics, Summer Camp programs they work with, a local Center for Independent Living, parent advocacy groups etc.
- Giving you community options that have proven to be successful for others (for example disability friendly community activities and agencies)

After getting to know your family's needs ...  
Maybe the Waiver is Appropriate...



# Waiting List Assessment...

<https://dodd.ohio.gov/county-boards/assessments/assessment-immediate-current-need>

It's important to know...

Waivers are generally considered as an option after other community resources have been explored.

All services listed that county boards do – are considered 'community resources'- along with anything the rest of the community offers - i.e. school, mental health, hospital programs, etc.

Many county boards offer services in limited amounts that 'mimic' waiver services through Family Support Services or local dollars.

# **Waiting List Result...**

Three potential outcomes...

1. **NO Need**
2. **Current Need (“may be a need - within the next 12 months”)**
3. **Immediate Need (need within the next 30 days)**

# Medicaid Eligibility...

- Eligibility determinations in Ohio are handled by the 88 county Departments of Job and Family Services (CDJFS)
- Eligibility must be redetermined at least once every 12 months
- Eligibility is impacted by a variety of factors – age, income, resources (assets), etc
- Eligibility for Medicaid can also be impacted by an individual's need for long-term services and supports (LTSS).

# Level of Care

<https://dodd.ohio.gov/county-boards/assessments/level+of+care>

- A level of care (LOC) assessment is conducted to determine which residential placement the individual is entitled to receive.
- Individuals who have a NF LOC or an ICF/IDD LOC may opt to **WAIVE** their entitlement to institutional residential placement and choose to receive long-term services and supports through a home- and community-based services (HCBS) **waiver**.
  - **For this reason county boards are mandated to explain the option of institutional care for your loved one - this is called Residential Options.**

# More about Level of Care

## STEP 1

- The Level of Care is fundamentally the start of the process.
- The person's level of care determines where they should get their services.

## STEP 2

- It must be reviewed annually; and the county makes a recommendation and submits it to DODD.

## STEP 3

- DODD reviews and makes a final decision.

# Waiver Eligibility...

The Level One Waiver is for people with developmental disabilities who

- are eligible for Medicaid,
- have a developmental disabilities [level of care](#),
- and need at least one Level One Waiver service.

There are no age requirements.

The IO Waiver is for people with developmental disabilities who

- are eligible for Medicaid,
- have a developmental disabilities [level of care](#),
- and need at least one IO Waiver service.

There are no age requirements.

The SELF Waiver is for people with developmental disabilities who

- are eligible for Medicaid,
- have a developmental disabilities [level of care](#),
- need at least one SELF Waiver service,
- can be healthy and safe while using the SELF Waiver,
- and are able to manage money in a budget, manage their support staff for at least one waiver service, or can choose someone to do these things for them.

There is no age requirement.

Unlike the Level One and Individual Options waivers, the SELF Waiver requires the person enrolled in the waiver, or someone they choose, to direct at least one of their services.



## More Lessons learned...



Other people's perspectives bring value to John Ross  
What I am worried about regarding my son will change... ALWAYS.

Trying new things is hard but worth it.

People People People

My son has learned many things from people other than me.

One day at a time. Don't think too far ahead.

People with disabilities are People more than their Disabilities (90%-10%)

John Ross had on his IEP for 6 years + to ask for help - It's really hard.

Being INTENTIONAL about relationships for my son was the best thing I ever did.

THANK YOU





To receive the materials, please complete the evaluation.



**Thank you!**