STRATEGIC PLAN

Mercer County Board of Developmental Disabilities

2026 ◦ 2027 ◦ 2028

VISION:

The vision of the Mercer County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to coordinate and ensure quality services are being provided to the residents of Mercer County with developmental disabilities throughout their lifespan, while being good stewards of public funds. Board services often begin by providing excellent Early Intervention Services to children and their families. The Mercer County Board of DD continues its services to eligible individuals by developing person-centered plans, and then working with providers of educational, residential, vocational, and recreational opportunities to assist those we serve in pursuing their dreams, goals, and desires in their home and community.

MISSION:

Our Mission at the Mercer County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Cheryl Ann Programs) is to partner with and support individuals and their families to discover, pursue, and achieve maximum independence in their community.

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EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES

"The Board of DD is committed to acting as the single point of contact that promotes family-centered programs for expectant parents, newborns, infants and toddlers, including those with disabilities, and their families. This includes the ODH funded Home Visiting program and the DODD Ohio Early Intervention program. Staff and the Board of DD feel strongly that identifying and addressing developmental delays in children from birth through age three are vital. Of the same vital importance is supporting and educating parents and families so that infants and toddlers throughout the community are able to learn and thrive to their fullest potential in a safe, supportive environment."

Ohio Early Intervention:

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Service Coordination and EI Therapies will be provided in natural settings.
2. Children will exit Early Intervention with improved social-emotional skills, use of knowledge and skills, and use of appropriate behaviors. Program will participate and track these targets as a part of DCY's Compliance and Performance Indicators.
3. Maintain a minimum of 130 children served annually through a combination of evaluation, assessment and intervention. Should the program serve 170 children or more annually through a combination of evaluation, assessment, and intervention, needs will be examined for consideration of additional staff.
4. Maintain a minimum of 150 children served annually through service coordination. Should the program serve more than 220 annually through service coordination, needs will be examined for consideration of additional staff.
5. Maintain 100% compliance annually with state compliance indicators for timely receipt of services, IFSP completion, and transition.
6. Gather annual satisfaction surveys to be completed by families.

7. Maintain a local Help Me Grow Facebook page. Update Board of DD Early Intervention website and/or Help Me Grow Facebook page to include links on various developmental support strategies, educational materials and resources for families whose child has a developmental delay or disability.
8. Continue to build relationships with potential referral sources and other community stakeholders by facilitating and/or participating in public awareness or outreach activities, such as Healthy Kids Day events, health fairs, and the county fair.
9. Maintain at least quarterly connections with community stakeholders through various outreach activities, such as mailings or face-to-face meetings as requested.
10. Request face-to-face meetings with local daycares/preschools to educate them and build relationships as a location for services to take place for families and children served through Early Intervention. These will take place throughout the year.

Help Me Grow Home Visiting:

<u>2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks</u>

1. Provide Home Visiting program supports to up to 40 families with a weighted intensity of no more than 30 points per full time home visitor. Additional families may be placed on a wait list. Should the wait list reach 10 families, needs will be examined for consideration of additional staff and a request for an increase in program capacity from the State.
2. Attain a minimum number of 12,000 billable units (15 minute increments) annually.
3. Maintain a local Help Me Grow Facebook page. Update with information that can be a guide for local families on general parenting needs (i.e., home safety, play, general child development) and links for community resources and supports.

4. Assess programming needs based upon family input received from annual satisfaction and exit surveys. Implement any changes as determined necessary based upon these results.
5. Attain affiliation with Healthy Families America (HFA) as the Board of DD's Evidence-Based Home Visiting model and fidelity to that program's model and the required timelines.
6. Maintain parenting education curriculum with Growing Great Kids (GGK) and fidelity to that program's model and required timelines.
7. Work with HFA, GGK, and Ohio Department of Children and Youth (DCY) consultants to ensure fidelity to programs and their required timelines.
8. Continue to build relationships with potential referral sources and other community stakeholders by facilitating and/or participating in public awareness or outreach activities, such as Healthy Kids Day events, health fairs, and the county fair.
9. Maintain at least quarterly connections with community stakeholders through various outreach activities, such as mailings or face-to-face meetings as requested.
10. Request face-to-face meetings with local agencies/physicians working with expectant mothers to build relationships and educate them on the benefits of Home Visiting. These will take place throughout the year.

SCHOOL-AGED / TRANSITION

"The Board of DD acts as a partner with the ESC and all county schools. The Board is committed to preparing students for life after school and accomplishes this with specialized staff that attend IEP Meetings, educate school faculty, and empower students to make life choices that best serve them."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Work in concert with school staff and supervisors to identify areas of needed education and exposure for educational staff to better assist children with developmental disabilities.
2. Assist county schools in their ability to access Teaching PLAY services for autistic students
3. Strengthen relationships with parents and children 3-14. Set up a method of on-going communication, blog, etc. to follow up to the SALT meetings.
4. Increase availability of school age SSA services by maintaining a dedicated SSA for 0-16 year olds.
5. Increase availability of transition age SSA services by maintaining a dedicated SSA for 16-22 year olds.
6. Continue providing summer community exposure to youth ages 14-16 and provide such opportunities.
7. Continue providing work exposure program for youth ages 16-18 and provide such opportunities.
8. Continue providing summer work opportunities for young adults ages 18-22 and provide such opportunities.
9. Explore Agency collaboration when possible (behavior support services for school aged children, IDT team).

COMMUNITY INCLUSION / INTEGRATION

"The Board values every opportunity for community inclusion. We feel our clients and the community are enriched by everyone's involvement in their community, to the extent they desire."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Continue to expand the social media footprint.
2. Participate in community speaking engagements.
3. Increase the visibility of housing services and monthly activities provided by the Arc of Ohio in Mercer County.
4. Increase availability of unified sports offered through Special Olympics in Mercer County.
5. Hold a multi-county Special Olympics event in Mercer County.

EMPLOYMENT

"Mercer County has a culture that places a high value on employment. The Board values this culture and has relationships with providers that create opportunities for individuals to be successful at working within the community."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Assist individuals to advance in their Path to Community Employment.
2. Maintain at least three Medicaid providers of employment services.
3. Provide annual education on benefits/financial/special needs trust for parents and those interested in competitive employment.
4. Complete administrative review of those receiving vocational services for potential referral to the employment first partnership.
5. Increase variety of jobs available by educating employers to the benefits of employing people with disabilities.
6. Provide recognition for employers of people with disabilities.
7. Develop at least 2 videos annually to celebrate local employment success.

TRANSPORTATION

"Transportation services are vital for community integration and integrated employment. It can also be the largest barrier to overcome for individuals with disabilities. It is the Board's intent to provide multiple options for transportation."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Increase the NMT transportation provider pool total to seven (7).
2. Continue to encourage natural supports of individuals we serve to provide the transportation services to and from employment by providing a mileage reimbursement. This is the most cost effective way of service delivery.
3. Explore if community is able to help meet any transportation needs.

ADVOCACY / EDUCATION

"The Board values and encourages self-advocacy and believes each person is the author of their own destiny. Staff work with every individual we serve to find their voices and express their wants and desires."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Continue to support the efforts of the Aktion Club and provide notification of meetings through social media.
2. Continue to support the efforts of People First of Auglaize, Mercer, and Allen counties.
3. Continue to support the efforts of the Arc of Ohio in Mercer County.
4. Sponsor a "Speak Up ~ Stay Safe" event.
5. Promote the "Park 4 All Abilities" in Coldwater.
6. Explore self advocacy conference opportunities and sponsor attendance of local clients.
7. Have at least one Board Member that is a person served.
8. Develop and promote leadership opportunities for clients to organize events that may be open to the public.
    a. Walk Fit Program
    b. Dan's Game Night

PERSON CENTERED PLANNING

"Writing a person centered plan is paramount to identifying and ensuring people are receiving the services they want to assist in achieving their lives' goals. The Board values quality relationships between individuals, their loved ones, and their SSAs."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. As a team, the SSA department will review the ISP template and assessments to continue moving more toward a person centered plan.
2. Utilize the OhioISP and assure that individuals receive services in the most integrated setting.
3. SSAs will continue to receive training on person centered planning.
4. SSAs will meet requirements of rule and stay on top of changes in rules.
5. SSAs will be utilize virtual technology platforms to maintain flexible schedules to meet client's needs.
6. Caseloads and weighting will be monitored on a semi-annual basis to keep track of rise/fall of caseload intensities.
7. Complete annual satisfaction surveys / needs assessments to address gaps in services.

PROVIDER RELATIONS

"As we move forward from being a provider of services we will need to find best ways possible to support our providers in delivering quality and consistent services to our clients."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Explore providing education opportunities for provider staff to be kept abreast of rule changes, etc.
2. Through quarterly provider round tables - discuss needed training, education, and opportunities; explore ability to meet these needs.
3. Meet with provider agencies to understand gaps in service/service delivery within the provider community.
4. Continue to support DSPs by honoring all direct care staff.
5. Educate independent and agency staff regarding trainings and opportunities.
6. Increase Independent provider pool to address assessed gaps such as drop-in services, respite services, and transportation.
7. Continue to support DSP Ohio efforts.
8. Continue to engage in Statewide searches and support the local provider portal within the COG.
9. Increase awareness of DSP opportunities among local high school and college students.

FISCAL MANAGEMENT

"The Board of DD receives the majority of its funding from local taxpayers. The Board takes this responsibility very seriously."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. The Board will annually complete a thorough review of its Medicaid Match responsibility and develop a direction of future budgetary needs.
2. Continue to invest money into capital projects for aging facilities.
3. Maintain a carryover balance equivalent to at least twelve months of ongoing expenses.
4. Maintain at least 10 provider agencies of Medicaid services with $100,000 in allocated costs in Mercer County.
5. Increase the number of independent and agency providers of Medicaid services.
6. Maintain a ten (10) year cash forecast for all funds.

WAIVER PREVALENCE

"The Board of DD provides the funding for services from local funds and/or Medicaid. All DD eligible individuals have access to SSA services and varying levels of local services."

2026-2027-2028 Benchmarks

1. Educate families regarding their residential rights and options (including ICF).
2. Educate families regarding each DD Waiver (Level 1, SELF, and IO)
3. Upon the conclusion of school based services, every DD eligible individual that has Medicaid will be offered the minimum of a Level One waiver. Those needing more services than can be afforded with the Level One Waiver will be educated to select the SELF or IO Waiver.
4. Maintain a waiver waiting list of 0, or less than 6 months for those searching for providers.
5. As a part of the annual budgetary process, develop a list of the youth that will likely be in need of a Medicaid waiver due to increasing needs and/or turning 18.