

UPDATE

*Wayne County Board of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
266 Oldman Road, Wooster Ohio 44691*

Wayne County Board
of MRDD

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Community teamwork really can make a difference

For many students at Ida Sue School, daily communication is difficult. Some simply cannot tell their teachers, parents or friends what they want or need. If they are thirsty, they may not be able to ask for a drink. If they have fallen, they cannot tell another person where it hurts. Because of this inability to communicate, often times a student's health or safety is at risk.

Autism is one cause for this lack of communication. Many students with autism cannot make sense of all the information they receive (what people are saying to them, what their body is saying to them, what their surroundings are saying to them), and then are unable to speak what they need or want. Different ways of 'talking' to people are necessary for students with autism.

The Wayne County community recognizes this need. Shayne Stormer, a student with autism, has trouble speaking. Speech therapist Patti Dolges promotes augmentative communication devices for students to help them talk in a different way. Patti worked hard, along with fellow therapists Judy Thompson and Jessica



(back row) Barry Romich, Prentke Romich Company; Cameron Maneese, Council Coordinator, WCFCFC; Daniel F. Iceman, Past Grand Master, Grand Lodge F.&A.M. of Ohio; Bryant Chambers, Worshipful Master, Ebenezer Lodge #33

(front row) Amy Stormer; Shayne Stormer; Amy Sonntag, Regional Consultant, Prentke Romich Company

McMillan, to find money to buy a device for Shayne. Regular paths for funding were exhausted. Turning to the community, Patti found three organizations and agencies willing to help Shayne get a device.

Cameron Maneese, Council Coordinator of the Wayne County Family and Children First Council, was responsible for donating a portion of the cost of the device. With this start, a request was made to the local Masonic group. Kevin Phipps, Worshipful Master of Ebenezer Lodge #33 came through with local money, and also requested funds from the Grand Lodge F. & A.M. of Ohio. The Grand Lodge Charity Foundation also donated a portion of the cost.

Having two thirds of the money needed to buy the device, Patti turned her focus on the Wayne County Crippled Children & Adults, Inc. This last piece of generosity provided enough money. Shayne would get his augmentative communication device, and would be purchased from a local business – Prentke Romich Company, the manufacturer of these devices.

On Tuesday, June 26, 2007, three of the donors along with Shayne and his mother Amy Stormer gathered at the Prentke Romich company picnic to publicly thank the community teamwork that made a difference in his life.

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As Summer Heats Up...

Parent to Parent, along with Nick Amster Workshop and Ida Sue School, is well along in its planning for the Eighth Annual Benefit Auction. The auction is scheduled for Saturday August 18th beginning at 10:00 A.M., and this year it will again be held in Kidron at the Sprunger building in the auction complex. The event this year will feature a chicken barbeque, in addition to the traditional quilt drawing and bake sale. We are hoping to make this the biggest year yet for the Auction and are counting again on your support. Any donation of a new item, hand made item, "theme basket", or gift certificate would be greatly appreciated. You need not wait until August to make your donation. If you have something that you would like to donate, call Joe at (330) 264-7682. We can arrange to pick the item up or you may drop it off at the school or workshop at any time.

Thank you for all that you do to support your school and workshop



A Quilt Raffle will highlight the 8th Annual Benefit Auction on August 18, 2007.

Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift.

Cindy Holland Returns to Nick Amster Workshop

MRDD Consultant Cindy Holland provided an inservice to the entire Ida Sue and Nick Amster staffs back in February. The topics for the two day inservice focused on sensory (vision, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching) modalities, stimulation and activities designed to engage individuals in order to improve their physical and mental quality of life.

Individuals with autism, severe mental illness and retardation and those with dementia are the most difficult to determine which sensory modality stimulation will have the most significant effect. Cindy was invited to return to the Oldman facility in June to work with supervisors who have individuals who have been a challenge to assess which are their primary sensory modalities and then which activities will be effective in their treatment. This effort can be described as trying different keys to see which one will unlock the door.

When Cindy arrived at Nick Amster, she brought with her several large

plastic bins with dozens and dozens of items that she has accumulated over the years that she uses to work with individuals. She worked with six supervisors during the day and nearly twenty individuals attempting to find activities that would be effective in positively altering mood and behavior.

Cindy also provided survey forms that will be used to observe, document, and ultimately aid in assessing the type of treatment that would be most effective with each individual. Cindy also made suggestions how to improve our workshop environment as a whole and ideas how to create whole facility schedules to improve our environment. "Down time" has been taken out of our Nick Amster vocabulary.

We hope to have Cindy come back to Nick Amster in the Fall and visit our Hillcrest facility and assist supervisors develop activi-

ties for the individuals there. Overall, the individuals at Hillcrest are involved in more of a work environment, but still need to develop more effective life skills when work is not available.

As we seek to permanently implement the suggestions and activities that Cindy Holland made to us, we have asked supervisors to continue to assess the individuals in their groups and acquire those items that will be effective in their sensory stimulation.

We are reviewing our operation to implement more habilitation activities into our daily schedule to augment the production work that our individuals do for over 20 companies in the Wayne County area.

Nutrition Update: Benefits of Gluten-Free and Casein-Free Diets

Human digestive systems have not evolved on a diet containing high amounts of wheat and dairy products. Humans are the only animals who drink milk as adults, and the only animal to drink the milk of another animal. Cows' milk is a perfect food for baby cows, but not for humans, especially past the age of nursing. If you add additives and others ingredients that may become part of our food chain such as growth hormones and pesticides, much of our food has unwanted additives that affects our bodies.

Over the last several hundred years, wheat has been bred to greatly increase its gluten content, and a typical US diet contains far higher amounts of wheat than humans were eating 1000-10,000 years ago. Gluten (in wheat, rye, barley, and possibly oats) and casein (in all dairy products, including milk, yogurt, cheese, ice cream, caseinate) can cause two problems:

1. They are common food allergens, especially in children and adults with autism.
2. Certain peptides from gluten and casein can bind, to opioid-receptors in the brain, and can have a potent effect on behavior (like heroin or morphine), causing problems including sleepiness, giddiness, inattention/"zoning out," and aggressive and self-abusive behavior. Like opioids, they can be highly addictive, and a lack of them can cause severe behaviors.

These problems appear to be due to a failure of the digestive tract to fully digest the gluten and casein peptides into single amino acids and inflammation of the gut, allowing the gluten and casein peptides to enter the bloodstream and reach opioid receptors in the brain.

Treatment includes total, 100% avoidance of all gluten products and all dairy products. Even small amounts, like a bite of cookie, can cause allergic and/or opioid problems. Many foods have a trace contamination with gluten, such as dusting French fries and raisins with wheat powder to keep them from

sticking, so it can be very difficult to avoid all foods and contaminated foods. Many children with autism also benefit by removing corn and/or soy products.

Since this process is somewhat trial and error, finding the cause of food allergy resulting in positive change may take some time. It may be best to eliminate one food group at a time, so you can determine which change creates the improvement. Children who most crave dairy, especially ice cream and/or wheat, and who eat are most likely to benefit. Casein (dairy)-free diets usually produce benefits within a month, and sometimes within a week. Gluten (wheat) - free diets usually take 1-3 months to produce benefits. In some people there is a worsening of symptoms for a few days (similar to drug withdrawal) followed by improvement. In a study by the Autism Research Institute, with a sample of 1446 individuals, 65% of the sample saw improvement while on gluten and casein free diets. It is also important that a calcium supplement be taken while on a dairy-free diet unless a child has an ex-

ceptionally nutritious diet rich in calcium.

According to studies by Reichelt and Cade, a high correlation appears to exist between autism and allergies to gluten and/or casein. Cade studied 70 autistic children who followed a gluten-free and casein-free diet for 1-8 years, and found that 81% improved significantly by the third month, with improvements continuing over the next 12 months. Large improvements were observed in social isolation, eye contact, mutism, learning skills, hyperactivity, stereotypic activity, and panic attacks.

Several other diets are being investigated currently, such as one which involves avoiding all carbohydrates and most sugars (except monosaccharides in fruit). Clearly there are correlations to improved health and diet with handicapped as well as non-handicapped individuals.

Taken in part from *Summary of Biomedical Treatments for Autism* by James B. Adams, Ph.D., April 7, 2007 version of ARI Publication 40 – see <http://autism.com>

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

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| August 21 | First Day of School for Ida Sue School students |
| September 3 | Labor Day—Program Closed |
| September 10 | Fair Day—Program Closed |
| October 19 | Staff In-Service—Program Closed |
| October 30 | Workshop Inservice—3:30—6:30 |
| October 31 | Transportation Inservice—9:30—2:30 |
| November 5 | Workshop Inservice—3:30—6:30 |
| November 8 | School Conferences |
| November 9 | School and Workshop Closed |
| November 22 and 23 | Thanksgiving Break |

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SUPERINTENDENT'S CORNER - NATIONAL ACCREDITATION TEAM REVIEWS IDA SUE SCHOOL AND NICK AMSTER WORKSHOP OPERATIONS

On July 23, 24, and 25, 2007, the Council for the Accreditation of Residential Facilities sent three individuals to review our program operations for the purpose of issuing an accreditation. The reviewers inspected our practices in the following program areas: Community Services; Case Management/Service Coordination; Community Integration; Community Employment Services; Job Development; Job Supports; Job-Site Training; Employment Services Coordination; and Organizational Employment Services.

At the exit conference, the reviewers stated that we have a well run program that we should be proud of. They did have several recommendations for improving our services. Some of those areas include writing a status report on the accessi-

bility plan, creating a performance report that affects the outcome of our program containing those things that are beyond our control such as a business shutdowns, changes in legislation; developing a policy on ethical behavior in marketing, business, and human resources; ensuring that the ISP is based on performance assessments; adding a time limit to the release of information document; identifying employment services information and including it in the ISP; increasing natural supports for the clients; and increasing opportunities to achieve goals and increase choices.

We received one commendation related to the behavior support plans developed for the purpose of improving a persons quality of life. Mr. Joe Leeper was responsible for this area of the program and has demonstrated

a high level of quality in regard to addressing the behavioral needs of individuals.

David Ashley, Workshop Director, led the preparation of the process and did an outstanding job organizing the information and providing easy access to the different areas of the program that were reviewed. Thank you, Dave, for your leadership and dedication to the Wayne County Board of MR/DD.

We will receive a formal report about the outcome of the review within the next six to eight weeks.

We are proud of the services provided by all of the staff at the Nick Amster Workshop and Ida Sue School. Congratulations to all of you for a job well done.
