

Reach Out

2016 October

Quite a stretch of time has passed without formal communication from our group! Still, we're here and have been working through the fluid changes for people who have I/DD). We're fortunate to live in this time and to be part of the developments that finally recognize the value of people who have I/DD. If you've spent more than a decade working in the field, you've seen each year bring great changes. Now, young people—middle to high school age—and their families begin to consider transition around age 14, much like their peers.

We did a casual survey at the end of the last school year to find out what the interests are of high school-aged individuals in the region. The responses were broad and included:

ART ARCHEOLOGY DANCE COOKING ANIMALS WORLD TRAVEL RACING/MONSTER TRUCKS ACTING MUSIC SPORTS SKATEBOARDING HORSEBACK RIDING CROSSWORD ENTREPRENEUR SOCIALIZING SWIMMING GAMES READING MOVIES BICYCLING SINGING WORKING ON CARS IU BASKETBALL VIDEO GAMES SPORTS BASEBALL

The list reflects most of the same interests young people have anywhere in the region.

It's in our common interests that we gain both greater knowledge of a subject and meet others who share our enthusiasm.

The opportunity to meet others with common interests in our own community can unlock doors to meeting diverse people.

The direction our organization is moving is toward the community—the focus of this newsletter.

The past year has been one of great reflection for us. We spent time over the course of three meetings in the spring reviewing our mission, vision and goals.

The words that stood out were that our mission is “to build a truly integrated community.”

Our officers have spent the past couple of years attending conferences, workshops and webinars, reading pertinent material, networking with and learning from others in the field of I/DD. With all of the leaps that have taken place we need to remember each step along the way what it means for someone to be a part of, or included in the community. We've followed what's ahead from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) that includes Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) programs and person-centered planning requirements. The Final Rule for all states' full compliance is March 17, 2019. If you haven't yet become familiar with HCBS, it's likely you'll be hearing about it more and more.

REACH OUT IS A PUBLICATION OF THE ARC OF DEARBORN COUNTY

I/DD, AS SEEN IN THIS PUBLICATION, WILL ALWAYS REFER TO INTELLECTUAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES.

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NEXT MEETING—MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7 AT 6:30PM



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This is an empowering time for many people who've long had their lives directed by others.

TO MOVE FORWARD WE'LL FIRST LOOK AT WHERE WE'VE BEEN.

We've had a number of organizational, funding and personal considerations for our officers and active members that led to the decision to not hold summer day camps this year for the first time since 2008. What this has done has freed us to consider what we could do next to help build an inclusive community.

We've had the privilege of having dear and generous people work with our day camps. But,

TWO THINGS WE'VE ASKED ARE:

- What is already available in "the community" that people can take advantage of according to their interests and how can we make it easier to learn about activities?

AND...

- Can we spread the learning and fun experience that was part of the day camps across the year rather than wait 11 months until the next year's camp?

for those involved from a volunteer or staff standpoint, the details of planning and executing camp are time intensive and often involve months of added responsibility squeezed into family and work life to accomplish.

This year, we're taking a fresh approach and hope to, instead, offer single-day, interest-based activities in which participants both plan and engage with others on a more personal level as they explore interests. Activities will be scheduled according to the coordinators' availability and personal schedules. This will involve people as they wish and are able. It will allow for a variety of experiences; and, it will restore time to those who have dedicated weeks of personal time in previous years.

HOW CAN I FIND A PLACE IN THE COMMUNITY?

If you'd like to learn more and plan an activity we'll soon set a time to get started together.

We'd like to have small groups of at least two people explore, decide upon and plan an activity and we ask for help from all who are interested. Each group will include at least one self-advocate. Participants should be high school age and older with at least one supportive adult for each group.

It would be great to have a variety of ideas from throughout the region that take into consideration some of the activities listed on the first page.

Interested in participating? Contact us at volunteer@dearborncountyarc.org.



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HERE'S A GLANCE AT OUR ACTIVITIES FROM THE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS...

62 individuals took advantage of group music therapy. We offered three one-hour sessions in the evening and three half-hour daytime sessions. In April we discontinued one group and began a new group around DJ equipment operation and percussion.

During March and April, 900 kindergarten-age students were introduced to Accessibility in the Community during presentations at eleven different elementary schools throughout Dearborn and Ripley counties. Twelve volunteers, including four self-advocates read to and shared with students.

During July, seven volunteers served ice cream sundaes to clients and staff of New Horizons in Batesville and Penntown, The Watch Center (part of NHR in Brookville), and at Indiana Mentor.

Twelve new members were added to our membership!

Three classrooms (a total of 32 students) were recipients of classroom assistance with help in field trips funds and classroom instructional material.

Our two annual dances were held last November and in April, 2016. The dances continue to be a popular event and we've had

help from new outside groups to decorate, provide door prizes and add some variety to the evening.

This seems a natural segue to share about the upcoming FALL DANCE SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11.

We're changing things up just a bit this time and will open the doors at 6:00 p.m. The youth group of All Saints Parish has offered to serve pizza for attendees from 6-7:00 before the dance. The dance will commence from 7:00-9:00.

Another change is with admission. There will be a freewill container for admissions with funds to be used to help cover the cost of the dances. Rather than a food pantry donation as with past dances, we will accept an optional freewill gift for those who are able or wish to give.

Other Upcoming Events

2016 STATE CONFERENCE OF THE ARC OF INDIANA

Registration is now open for The Arc of Indiana's 2016 Conference & Impact Awards Luncheon! Join us on Friday, November 18, at the Horizon Convention Center, 401 South High Street, Muncie, IN 47305, as we learn the DDRS vision and plan for the future, and receive key information on the implementation of the ABLE Act.

Attendees will also hear from a provider panel embracing innovative ideas for employment. The Arc will also take the time to honor award winners for their outstanding achievement during the



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2016 Impact Awards Luncheon, and hear from keynote speaker, Scott Wise, President & CEO of A Pots & Pans Production.

Attendees of the annual conference will round out the day with the opportunity to choose from an array of round table discussions on critical issues, led by experts in their fields.

Visit www.arcind.org for more information and to register for the 2016 Annual Conference and Impact Awards! Registrations can also be submitted via email to rcoco@arcind.org or mail to The Arc of Indiana office at 107 N. Pennsylvania Street, Suite 800, Indianapolis, IN 46204.

A room block has been secured at the Courtyard Muncie at The Horizon Convention Center, conveniently attached to the Horizon Convention Center in downtown Muncie! To make your reservation at The Arc of Indiana rate, please call (765) 287-8550.

If you have any questions, please email Rob Coco, Special Events Manager, at rcoco@arcind.org.

GUEST SPEAKERS NIGHTS AND CONVERSATIONS WITH THE ARC OF DEARBORN COUNTY

We've identified four issues as significant and timely for people in our region and are arranging speakers, times and dates to bring subject matter guests to share with you on the following:

On Monday, January 9, we invite **Jeanne Scheets from the Erskine Green Training Institute (EGTI)** to share about the new Muncie training center developed by The Arc of Indiana Foundation whose primary goal is to provide postsecondary vocational training opportunities that successfully prepares individuals with disabilities for employment in the hospitality, food service and health care industries.

This event will be relevant for high school age and older individuals (job training), their parents or caregivers, and educators. It will be held at New Horizons Rehabilitation—Penntown location at 13146 State Road 101 Sunman at 6:30 p.m.

WATCH FOR MORE NEWS ON THESE EVENTS TO BE HOSTED BY US:

- In initial planning, we aim to have a collaborative conversation on the **complexity of support for people who have a dual diagnosis of I/DD and mental illness**. This is such an important and critical matter for many individuals and one that is only in beginning stages of understanding by many people. This event will have a 2017 date to be determined.
- **The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Rule for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and What Does it Mean to Me?** As mentioned earlier, this topic is an evolutionary response to the recognition and value of people with I/DD. It also comes with a learning curve for people who have I/DD, service providers and direct support professionals, families and



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case managers. We will have a date and more information in early 2017 for this topic.

- **Building relationships** is the most important thing we do. This is especially true for people who have I/DD. Is it possible to build a personal social network that will extend over a person's lifetime and how is this intentionally accomplished? We will, again, invite folks from Good Life Networks in Cincinnati to visit and talk about the processes involved and how to begin. This group of caring individuals formed in 2008 with several members who have spent decades learning with the Canadian-based Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network (PLAN) Institute. This date will be set following the CMS/HCBS event.

Direct Support Professionals

Once high school ends, a new life begins without familiar teachers, halls full of same-age people and all that is supported during youth. The role of direct support professionals (DSPs) fast becomes part of adult life.

Presently there are 1,000s of open positions statewide for this position. Virtually every service provider agency seeks new employees full-time, part-time, substitute, weekends—around the

clock help is needed.

Wages for DSPs are funded through Medicaid waiver dollars and are historically low. Training is somewhat inconsistent as there are no federal minimum requirements. Turnover is enormous, costly, and disruptive to services for those with I/DD.

According to the website of the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAIDD), considering care for people who have disabilities and an aging population – "nationally, more than one million new direct support positions will need to be filled by 2022." This shortage is a problem that is not going away six years from now.

Regional DSP shortages reflect what is going on across the board.

Our group understands and takes seriously this shortage and what it means to the future of care for our loved ones. We are putting a group together to explore ways to help address the shortage of DSPs:

- to help educate regional people of the role and the need for caring individuals to understand the aspects (**including the rewards**) of DSP work as a consideration;
- to connect with law makers to heighten awareness of the multitude of issues surrounding caregivers (including economic and regional tax-based issues as households lose incomes when parents are unable to work outside the home); and,
- for the DSPs who are expected to perform jobs with great responsibility for low wages in a competitive job market.

Without ample DSPs, individuals have little hope to become part of the



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community, to work or make friends. Good DSPs are critically important to building relationships and experiencing a sense of security, well-being and a fitting place in the community.

If you are interested in being a part of the DSP exploration group, please let us know at volunteer@dearborncountyarcs.org with DSP Group in the subject line.

Group Music Therapy hiatus

We're a little sad to note, but, effective October 11, we are taking a break from offering all group music therapy sessions. With focus in many other areas we simply haven't had the time to dedicate to fundraising. If there is an interest, we look to you—our friends and members—for ideas to raise funds to possibly restore this program. We ended all day groups effective in August, but simply cannot fund the program further without a boost.

Ideas we may explore for the future are to extend group music in ways that support our goals of inclusion, perhaps offering pre-school groups in addition to previously supported groups.

It's possible we can again submit for the state funds from the Regional Initiative Grant program of the Indiana Arts Commission, but we need someone willing to oversee the grant process which requires

matching funds be raised during the grant period (typically \$4,500+). At present it's uncertain when or how we'll be able to restore group music therapy. In the meantime, Keys for Success owner, Lindsay Menninger, will work with previous participants on some possibilities.

Please email us at musictherapy@dearborncountyarcs.com with thoughts as to how we may raise funds. Ideally, we'd love to have a fundraiser that involves music but are open to all suggestions!

My Community— new on Facebook

We introduced a new program about two years ago with the name MyComm that was developed to use the social media site, Meetup. Sensing it was not ideal for us, we “shelved” the idea but not the premises that we should help find opportunities in the community to share with you.

Thanks to the diligence of one of our new members we are happy to tell you that we've launched a Facebook page with the name **My Community**. Monthly, it will include regional activities listed by county that you might take advantage of as they interest you.

Activities included will often be opportunities to engage directly with others. We will collect information from libraries and other sources.

Festivals, movies and shopping, for instance, won't be included. These are great activities to do once you have established relationships—but less ideal for places to talk directly with others over interests.

My Community is a resource to bring activities to your attention. If there is an



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activity you'd like to share you may bring it to our attention with a post. If you'd like to share pictures of an activity that you participated in and tell others about, you may post this type of information.

We will have a new file uploaded with each month's activities prior to that month.

At least in the beginning, the page will be a closed group, meaning that it is not accessible by the public. Participants are added with administrators' approval. Please allow 24-48 hours for confirmation. When we have the bugs worked out, it's likely we'll make it a public page.

Acceptance is by invitation or referral. This will be a dynamic site and we hope that whether you are someone with I/DD, a family member or direct support professional that you'll learn to use it to find what's going on around and near you.

Administrators may discontinue membership in this group due to, but not limited to, unfriendly or untoward encounters.

A more in-depth flier will be distributed to area high school students, as permissible, and to regional service providers.

The Arc of Dearborn County, its members and affiliates are not recommending your use of Facebook. Your participation in My Community Facebook page is optional and of your choosing.

"IF WE ARE TO ACHIEVE A RICHER CULTURE, WE MUST WEAVE ONE IN WHICH EACH DIVERSE HUMAN GIFT WILL FIND A FITTING PLACE."

~ Margaret Meade

When will the website be updated?

If you've visited our website recently, it hasn't changed much to reflect smart phones and tablets. It's still on the same platform we built it on in 2010 and some of our homepage faces have aged just a bit since our updates a few years ago.

We aim to take time to edit the content, but will not be able to do an overhaul of it until we replenish our funds.

We ask your patience in the meantime and will continue to post under Our News and Upcoming Events as is relevant.

Membership

October is membership renewal month, although, it's never too late to renew or become a member. If you would like to join us, membership is \$20 for individual or family / \$10 for DSPs / \$5 for self-advocates.

Please make checks payable to The Arc of Dearborn County and mail to 13146 State Road 101 Sunman, IN 47041

Additional contributions to The Arc of Dearborn County are always welcome! We are a tax-exempt 501c3 organization.

HELP GROW OUR ENDOWMENT!

Last November, we were pleased to learn that a permanent endowment fund was set up for The Arc of Dearborn County with the Dearborn Community Foundation.

You can help our endowment grow by making contributions, of *any* amount, to the Designated Funds year around. Checks can be made payable to the Dearborn Community Foundation and, in the memo, please note “The Arc of Dearborn County.”

We will receive an annual distribution based on a percentage of the average market value.

As our endowment grows from additional contributions, so our distribution grows.

The Dearborn Community Foundation is a 501c3 tax-exempt organization.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH US!

We are a group of people learning and growing together, exploring our gifts and how we can help make our region one that is inclusive and in which we all have value. The Arc of Dearborn County is here for individuals and their families, friends, educators and the professionals who work in the I/DD field.

Please let us know if your mailing or email address has changed. Email us at info@dearborncountyarcs.org.

Remember that we have a Facebook page “The Arc of Dearborn County” where you can keep up-to-date and informed.

Nothing beats seeing one another face-to-face, so please join us on the first Monday of the month (with some exceptions that will be posted on our website) at 6:30 p.m. at our location in the Penntown location of New Horizon Rehabilitation at 13146 State Road 101 Sunman, IN 47041.