

Lake County Board of DD/Deepwood

Superintendent's Report – March 2026



Community Awareness/PR Opportunities/Collaborations

February's focus was healthy relationships, and the Community Advocacy group were thrilled to welcome special guest presenters from Forbes House, who brought both expertise and incredible enthusiasm to the group. The guests led an engaging and interactive presentation, complete with a PowerPoint packed with valuable insights about boundaries, communication, and recognizing signs of healthy—and unhealthy—relationship behaviors. The highlight of the morning was the Red, Yellow, and Green Flag Activity! Each advocate received three flags and was presented with real-life scenarios. Participants held up their green flags for healthy behavior, yellow for questionable or borderline situations, and red for clear unhealthy patterns. The room buzzed with energy as advocates discussed their choices, learned from one another, and gained confidence in identifying relationship red flags. The group absolutely loved this hands-on experience. It sparked great conversations, laughter, thoughtful reflection, and a sense of empowerment. The group was truly honored hosting Forbes House and deeply appreciated the meaningful, practical information they shared.

The February Art Around Town event was held at the Wickliffe Public Library on February 19, 2026, from 10 – 11 am. The session brought together individuals from four different programs—a fantastic turnout and an even better opportunity for connection. This month's creative focus was preparing artwork for submission to the Willoughby Art Walk in celebration of DD Awareness Month. Participants worked with air-dry clay, shaping their own unique creations that were transformed into colorful magnets. They also crafted "All About Me" art pieces, complete with attached Polaroid photos, giving each project a personal touch. These and many more beautiful works of art can be seen displayed at the Willoughby Art Walk going on now!

The Community Relations Department ended February by collecting more than 120 incredible art pieces created by the individuals we serve. Artwork was made during our group art sessions, independently, or with materials we delivered. The art will be proudly displayed throughout Downtown Willoughby for the 2026 Art Walk. Local businesses along Erie Street are showing their support by displaying artwork, posting DD Awareness signage, or donating gift cards for our upcoming reception. We are truly thankful for their partnership!

Pick up a 2026 Art Walk Passport at LCBDD or participating businesses, then visit local spots such as 1899, Ballantine, Barktown Willoughby, Daved Jewelers, Etc. on Erie,



Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities/Deepwood

EMPOWER individuals with developmental disabilities to ENGAGE in activities that
ENRICH their lives and contribute to their community.

www.LakeBDD.org



Finestra Gallery, Frank & Tony's, Geraci's, Kleifeld's, Sage Karma Kitchen, Sol, Sweet Geeks, The Viridian Bookshop, Westel's, and more to view the artwork. Join us for the Art Reception on March 24 from 4 – 6 pm at The Viridian Bookshop to turn in your completed passport to receive a free tee shirt! Also, at the art reception our individuals, families, staff, and community members can enjoy refreshments, stroll the Art Walk, and hear presentations from artists and supporters. We are grateful for a community that celebrates inclusion, creativity, and the talents of those we serve!

February 23-25, Investigative Agents (IAs) Craig Snook and Jasmine Melendez-Zippert completed the first step of becoming certified forensic interviewers by taking the Beyond the Silence: Forensic Interviewing course at the Department of Children and Youth Northeast Ohio Regional Training Center. The purpose of conducting a forensic interview is to assess safety and determine whether a crime has occurred. Sound forensic interviews are essential for the successful completion of sexual abuse investigations. This two-and-a-half-day workshop focused on the fundamental skills needed to conduct child interviews that are forensically appropriate and emphasized team building with law enforcement and child welfare. IAs Snook and Melendez-Zippert are now eligible to take the higher-level courses that will bring them closer to their goal of certification as forensic interviewers, ultimately strengthening the mission of the MUI Unit to continue providing the highest quality MUI investigations. IA Steve Foglio will be starting his journey to certification in the fall.

The Aktion Club met in February and was full of purpose, creativity, and heart! This month, members came together with one mission in mind: helping animals in our community. To put that goal into action, the group rolled up their sleeves and made homemade dog treats that will be donated to the Lake Humane Society. The treats were crafted from a simple but delicious recipe featuring peanut butter, banana, and oats—a wholesome, nutritious mix that our four-legged friends are sure to love. They also held the Member of the Month drawing, and this month's winner was Mike S.! We're so excited to celebrate Mike and can't wait to learn more about him when he shares his All About Me spotlight at an upcoming meeting. Congratulations, Mike! Looking ahead, we're gearing up for one of our biggest and most anticipated events of the year: Pull Tab Palooza – March 25, 5-6 PM at VGC. This celebration honors the incredible effort our members have put into collecting pull tabs for the Ronald McDonald House over the years. A representative from RMH will be joining us to pick up the huge collection of tabs we've gathered. This is truly a party you won't want to miss!

On February 25, Willoughby Works (WW) hosted the Agency's Annual Chili Cook-Off.





Community judges attended along with our very own: Capt. Mike Majernik, Mentor Police; Chief Todd Unger and Assistant Chief Mike Dorsey, Willoughby Fire; Mitch Berman, Executive Director DI Board; Rob Launer, Baker Bands (DI customer) Bob Fratino, Agency Programs & Services Director. The judges had their work cut out for them, tasting 10 chilis from other program area winners and staff at WW. It was a blast! In the end, the winners were.....1st place Andi Bumbarger (WW Procurement Specialist, 2nd place Dawn Korb, WW Secretary, and 3rd place went to Jay McDonald, Operations Director, LCBDD. Congrats to all the winners and a HUGE thank you to all the Agency program areas for providing the chili and fun for this event! A very special thank you to Mike Shubert for being such a fantastic MC!

VGC started off the month with a Movie Day in the Brown Room, then a Super Bowl Tailgate Party along with a retirement party for Steve in Maintenance. February birthdays were celebrated, and the individuals had a baked potato bar and sweet treats for Valentine's Day. There was an outing to Playhouse Theater and an outing to the Broadmoor Arts Fair. A few individuals went with the Recreation Department to swim, played bingo, and went to the History Museum. Banjo Dave put on a show and Theresa comes once a week to read to the individuals, and everyone has lots of fun on Wednesdays with music therapy. Everyone also enjoyed the Chili Cookoff at VGC, and a few individuals went to the Willoughby Chili Cookoff.

Broadmoor's Perry Service-Learning volunteers have been enriching Adapted Physical Education (APE) classes each week. As a part of their service goal, they are doing things to make the gym even better. They have made four interactive pieces that are going to add so much to the APE program. Broadmoor is very grateful for everything these volunteers continue to do for our students.

On February 14, Lake County Treasurer, Mike Zuren, and the Birthday Club came to ARC and celebrated Valentine's Day with a party. Individuals had a pizza party and Movie Day. One of the guardians donated hot chocolate and staff created a hot cocoa bar.

Special Events

The Recreation and Early Childhood Departments are having a "Spring into Spring" concert on March 12 at 5 pm at Auburn Career Center. Children from Broadmoor's Early Intervention and Preschool Programs will be performing that evening.

Alternate Assessment Testing (AASCD) began at Broadmoor on the 23. Students will be tested through April 17 in the areas of Social Studies, Science, English/Language Arts





and Math.

The Recreation Department held their Silly Fun Saturday event at the movie theater for families in EI and Preschool. This event was sponsored by the Deepwood Foundation.

Preschool had an assembly with Jungle Terry which was sponsored by the Broadmoor Family Network.

Enrichment Trip outings continued in Broadmoor's LEEP Program and included bowling and grocery shopping trips.

Willoughby had their own Super Bowl party complete with pizza, salad, and fun football-related activities. We had a dance for Valentine's Day with "DJ" Allison Basta, CSS, at Willoughby Works. The Willoughby Hot Shots played the Broadmoor Bobcats and Broadmoor brought the win continuing to be undefeated! The DI Board again offered an art class at WW with Stella's. Individuals from Willoughby and Imagine were able to create a fun winter art piece to take home.

Agency Resources

During the month of February, 33 children were evaluated and 28 qualified for Early Intervention Services. Primary Service Provider assignments were as follows: 14 children were assigned to a Developmental Specialist, 11 were assigned to a Speech Therapist, and three were assigned to Occupational and/or Physical Therapy services.

Featured Success Stories

<https://lakebdd.org/2026/02/when-words-finally-found-their-way-williams-speech-therapy/>

"With the help of the Early Intervention services through the Lake County Board of Developmental Disabilities, our son William has made tremendous improvement with his speech over the last year. He is able to communicate his basic needs and wants, such as telling us foods that he likes to eat, toys that he likes to play with, and books that he likes to read. He can identify and tell you all his letters, numbers 1-10, most colors, and all the basic shapes- even hexagon and trapezoid!

Our Speech Therapist, Pallavi, did a fantastic job helping William and guiding our family by giving us a few specific skills to practice between visits, then followed up on William's progress with those skills at the next visit. After only a year of EI services, William met his





outcomes and no longer qualifies for Speech Therapy. Lastly, thank you (Broadmoor School) for planning the various EI activities that we attended during the past year.

Tim, one of the individuals who works at CPL, received an award for 14 years of service at that site. Congratulations Tim! CES also acquired a new work site: Tabletop Linens in Wickliffe. This business provides linen service (aprons and bar rags) to high-end restaurants in the Cleveland area. There are five individuals working at that location five days a week for various hours.

