

## Lake County Board of DD/Deepwood Superintendent's Report – May 2026



### Community Awareness/PR Opportunities/Collaborations

Preschool staff attended the Preschool Spring Regional Training hosted by SST4. The training focused on best practices for family communication, including how to effectively share classroom priorities and learning goals with families and provide practical strategies to support carryover of classroom learning into the home environment.

The EI Department attended a training at Crossroads Health that focused on Trauma Informed Care in the Early Childhood years.

The April Advocacy meeting was held on Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at the Vocational Guidance Center (VGC) and focused on Stress Management. We had a great turnout, with individuals attending independently and representatives from several day programs, including both ViaQuest programs (Ashley's Moon Shadow, and Willoughby Works). April is Stress Awareness Month, and we were happy to welcome Nikki from Purple Lotus Yoga Studio in Mentor to lead our discussion and activities. We began by sharing common stress triggers, such as running late, favorite coworkers being absent, and even the weather. Nikki then taught us several helpful breathing techniques, including belly (or balloon) breathing and bee breathing—that we can use in the moment when we feel stressed. She also guided us through a meditation practice for times when we have a little extra time to relax and reset. We learned that stress often builds up in our bodies, so we wrapped up the session with chair yoga poses that can be done throughout the day or in the evening to unwind after a long day. Samuel M. shared that his smartwatch tracks his heart rate, which helps him recognize when he may be feeling stressed. He plans to use the techniques from this session to help manage stress when his heart rate rises. The next Community Advocacy Meeting is Tuesday, May 26, at Willoughby Works and will focus on taking care of our mental health in observance of Mental Health Awareness Month.

The Lake County Aktion Club celebrated Earth Day on April 22, 2026, at Garfield Park with a day full of service, laughter, and community pride. Members walked through the park picking up trash and debris to help keep the area clean and beautiful. With beautiful weather and great company, the cleanup felt more like a fun gathering than a chore. It was a wonderful reminder that giving back to the community can be both meaningful and enjoyable.





The Lake County Aktion Club's next meeting will be held at Texas Roadhouse on Wednesday, May 27, from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. In addition, Texas Roadhouse is hosting a Dine and Donate fundraiser to benefit the Lake County Aktion Club on May 27 from 4:00 - 9:00 p.m. for both dine-in and take-out orders. Simply mention the Lake County Aktion Club Dine and Donate or submit the fundraising slip when ordering, and Texas Roadhouse will donate 10% of total food purchases back to the club to support future community service projects. Please consider dining at Texas Roadhouse on May 27 to enjoy a great meal while supporting the important work of the Lake County Aktion Club.

As Mother's Day and Father's Day approach, this season can stir complex and tender emotions for those grieving the loss of a parent, relative, or caregiver. LCBDD is hosting an upcoming Grief Support Session thoughtfully created with care, compassion, and understanding. This gathering provides a calm, supportive, and judgment-free space where participants can come together to listen, reflect, and honor their loved ones, with the option to share feelings and experiences at their own comfort level. Participants will also complete a craft designed to serve as a meaningful reminder of their loved ones. The grief support session will take place on Tuesday, May 19, from 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. in the VGC Training Room and will be guided by caring facilitator(s) in a welcoming and confidential environment. Whether the loss is recent or if it occurred many years ago, we want the individuals we serve to know they are not alone, their feelings matter, and their presence is truly valued.

Willoughby Works individual, Garry P., had an outstanding showing at the Art Walk in Downtown Willoughby, where three of his original pieces were proudly displayed—and all three were sold. One piece was purchased by community member Margie C., another by LCBDD staff member Allison B., and JT at Ballentine's was so inspired by Garry's artwork that he chose to keep the piece displayed permanently in the restaurant. In appreciation, Garry received a total of over \$300 in cash and gift cards for his beautiful work. We are truly delighted by the incredible support and admiration shown by the community. Seeing Garry's talent recognized and celebrated in such a meaningful way was incredibly special, and the joy and disbelief shared by his family made the experience even more heart-warming. This moment served as a powerful reminder of how art can connect people, celebrate individuality, and create lasting impact.





VGC individuals enjoyed many Easter activities such as walking through A Building to meet the Easter Bunny and then had an Easter brunch on April 2. Individuals celebrated the Guardians Home Opener. A few individuals had a Spa Day at the Auburn Career Center with the Recreation Department. The Craft Club made a beautiful Spring craft with several individuals. Each week VGC has Music Therapy with the Fine Arts Center on Wednesdays, Story Time with Theresa on Thursdays, and April birthdays were celebrated. Excited to share that the ducks are back at VGC – the individuals very much enjoy watching the ducklings swim around in their pool.

Deepwood Foundation's "Living the Dream" had a very special Season Opener with our very own Lacey J. throwing out the first pitch at the Lake County Captains Game on April 2. Lacey received her own jersey and was SO excited to have this opportunity...thank you to all of those who came out to see Lacey Living the Dream!

### Special Events

The Recreation Department hosted its monthly Silly Fun Saturday event. Preschool and Early Intervention (EI) families visited Penitentiary Glen, where they explored the outdoor Nature Playground and the Nature Center, providing families with opportunities for hands-on learning and community engagement.

At ARC, residents celebrated April birthdays. Asa's Angels donated beautiful Easter baskets to ARC for everyone. Staff took some of the residents out bowling and to lunch. The residents did the Easter walk through at A-building. All residents colored Easter eggs. Also, residents went to the Natural History Museum, and a few attended Craft Night at VGC. One of our residents enjoyed his day out shopping at Walmart. Our residents are excited about starting Miracle League in the Summer.

### Agency Resources

Broadmoor students in grades 3 through high school age have successfully completed their Alternate Assessment testing. The content of the assessment is aligned to Ohio's Learning Standards and designed to allow students with significant cognitive disabilities to demonstrate knowledge and skills in typical areas of curricular focus.





During the month of April, 41 children were evaluated for Early Intervention services, and 38 children qualified for services. Primary Service Provider (PSP) assignments were as follows:

- Developmental Specialists: 24 children
- Speech Therapy: 7 children
- Occupational Therapy/Physical Therapy (OT/PT): 7 children

### Featured Success Stories

Noah has been receiving Early Intervention services for almost a year after being diagnosed with Tuberous Sclerosis Complex (TSC) and epilepsy. As he grew, delays in his speech and development became clear.

Through Help Me Grow (EI), Noah and his family have received strong support from his provider, Gabby Kramer. Gabby provides speech therapy (specialized instruction), shares activities to use at home, and supports the family during medical and developmental challenges. Noah's family is very thankful for her care and support.

Willoughby Works' Learners and Earners will be starting a new skills training program at CES/Imagine where they will be honing their cleaning skills in a different location.

One of our CES sites, Center for Pastoral Leadership (CPL), received a 2026 Health Inspection Award – for the THIRD time in a row!! The CPL kitchen is inspected every year for cleanliness and due to the diligent hard work that our individuals complete regularly at this site, we pass this inspection for high standards in cleanliness and food preparation.

Theresa R., one of the CES/Imagine/WW substitutes, received her one-year Employee Award for LCBDD – congratulations Theresa!

A new individual started employment with us at Imagine in April: Elizabeth. She has been transitioning nicely into the program and seems to be enjoying herself. Also, Imagine has a new job called Nova Manufacturing where they are assembling keypads, with a circuit board and placing keypads on the board so that numbers can be entered onto the keypad (for example, an alarm system).

