



The Lake County Board of DD “Imagine Program” officially opened its doors on October 13th, 2015 with 10 adults. All of the participants transitioned to the program from the Vocational Guidance Center and the Willoughby Branch.

The program design is based upon the research methodologies of TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication related handicapped Children) as well as ABA (Applied Behavioral Analysis) to meet the needs of individuals with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. The TEACCH based environmental design of the program provides a structured learning environment to maximize the development of skills needed for individuals to reach their full potential.

As a part of the structured learning environment, all individuals utilize daily visual and written schedules. Throughout the day individuals participate in training in the areas of job skills, daily living skills, functional academic skills, and communication and social skills. All program participants are employees of Deepwood Industries and currently receive paychecks, while continuing to receive job training for further areas of employment.

Each day the program participants transition between each area with the specified skill focus and have the ability to receive 1:1 assistance from staff members as they work towards greater levels of independence within each area. The skills taught are focused on preparing program participants for meaningful community engagement and employment.

All staff members are trained and experienced in ABA and TEACCH methodologies and provide 1:4 ratios to meet the needs of the individuals. The Imagine Program offers a full-time speech pathologist who works with all individuals in group as well as 1:1 scenarios to develop functional communication skills as well as meaningful social skills.