

Today's Quote: *"When you like your work every day is a holiday."* Frank Tyger

DDD Turns 50!

No fireworks are planned and there will not be a big party, but DDD marks an important anniversary this month by turning 50.

On December 17, 1959, the Division of Mental Retardation - renamed the Division of Developmental Disabilities in 1985- was created from an office known as the "bureau of Mental Deficiencies." The bureau was established in 1952 and located within the Division of Mental Health and Hospitals.

institution. People were also beginning to recognize that more services were needed to address the needs of these individuals, and their families, in the community. A half-century later, we can see results from that decision in the growing number and variety of services available in the community. DDD, working for 50 years with its many partners, helped to make this possible."

For almost 100 years before the division was founded, the state operated institutions

developmental centers were all created in that model.

By the 1950s, along with a growing recognition that individuals with developmental disabilities deserved more, parents and others in the field were advocating for better services. The state in 1950 also created a Commission to Study the Problems and Needs of the Mentally Deficient. In a report issued in 1954, the commission sharply criticized the existing state of affairs. Among the commis-



DDD: Celebrating 50 years of Service

"We are very proud of this 50th anniversary," said Assistant Commissioner Kenneth W. Ritchey. "The state's decision in 1959 to create a division with the sole focus of serving and supporting individuals with developmental disabilities was a very big step. At the time, there was growing recognition that just having a developmental disability was not sufficient reason for committing someone to spend his or her life in an

where many people with developmental disabilities (usually referred to in the lexicon of the times as "feeble minded" or "mentally deficient") were sent to live out their lives. In 1873, a Report of the Commissioners of the Deaf, Dumb, Blind and Feeble Minded recommended a system of training institutions. The Vineland (1888), New Lisbon (1916), Woodbine (1921) and North Jersey (1928) de-

sion's concern was that not one person or office in the Department of Institutions and Agencies (which became the Department of Human Services in 1976) had responsibility for overseeing services for people with developmental disabilities, or to create new programs, do research, provide training or make public information available for these individuals.

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In 1959, when the new Division of Mental Retardation was founded, the existing system was largely institutional. It provided home to 5,700 individuals, while only 516 individuals were recorded as receiving services in the community. Today more than 40,000 individuals are eligible to receive services, but only

about 2,700 of them live in an institution.

In 2009, DDD administers seven residential developmental centers, although the system has largely been upended. Approximately 10,000 individuals live in a group homes, supported apartments or other types of residential placement. Recent

changes to the division's Community Care Waiver promise to increase the number of individuals who will be able to receive individual supports and other services while still living in their own homes. DDD maintains almost \$1 billion in contracts with approximately 250 agencies that provide services in the community.



How many people have recently moved to the community from developmental centers?

Year One: July 2007 - June 2008 = 121

Year Two: July 2008 - June 2009 = 112

Year Three: June 2009 – December 15, 2009 = 40

Holiday Express Visits Developmental Centers

All seven developmental centers recently received visits filled with music, laughter, fun and gifts from Holiday Express, a volunteer organization that takes "interactive parties" to people in need during the holiday season.

The developmental centers were among about 50 institutions that were visited by Holiday Express in November or December. Each Holiday Express event included a 15-piece rock 'n' roll band, costumed characters who danced in the audience with attendees, choreographed parodies, crafts, games, food, good cheer, gifts and lots of hugs.

Holiday Express, founded in 1993, is a non-profit organization that has four paid staff members and more than 1,000 dedicated volunteers. The organization spends much of the year preparing for the holidays by seeking donations and holding general fund-raising activities. Once November comes, however, Holiday Express goes into high gear as it sends troupes of volunteers out to host parties filled with fun and good wishes for children and adults who are disabled, isolated, ill or homeless.



DDD is happy that Holiday Express includes the developmental centers on its schedule of holiday parties. All the developmental centers look forward to welcoming the organization back again next year.

For more information about Holiday Express, see their website at www.holidayexpress.org.

Workshop:

Navigating the New System -- What Families Need to Know about Major Changes in the Service System for Individuals with Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities

New Jersey's system of service provision for individuals with developmental disabilities is currently undergoing a major shift. Significant changes to services for individuals with developmental disabilities will mean that individuals and their families will need to develop a new set of skills and understand new terminology.

This workshop, developed in partnership with The Arc of New Jersey (Arc) and the New Jersey Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), will provide families with valuable information regarding what it means to be on the Community Care Waiver, the changes to the waiting list, the shift to self-directed services with individualized budgets and other significant changes.

Join other families at this workshop, and learn how to navigate the service system as changes occur for people with developmental disabilities.

Details on the upcoming workshop are below:

Date: Tuesday, January 26, 2010
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: The Arc of Burlington County (Day Program)
Park Plaza, 4313 Route 130 South, Edgewater Park, New Jersey 08010



RSVP: the Arc's main office at (609) 531-0211
or (856) 764-9494, ask for Linda or Charlene.

Assistant Commissioner Congratulates staff at New Lisbon Developmental Center

Assistant Commissioner Ken Ritchey offered congratulations to New Lisbon Developmental Center staff during a December celebration marking the successful end of the five years of monitor by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).

"In five years, you guys have moved mountains," Ritchey told a group of about 30 administrators and supervisors. "I hope you understand how this is significant. What you have done is very hard, especially in a large institution like this one."

Ritchey added that by working so hard to improve conditions at New Lisbon, staff changed the institution's culture and improved living conditions for

"In five years, you guys have moved mountains."

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“the people who call New Lisbon home.” Approximately 400 individuals with developmental disabilities reside at New Lisbon.

Five years of federal monitoring of health and safety conditions at New Lisbon formally ended on August 21, with an agreement between the DOJ and Department of Human Services that the center is now in compliance with all the terms of a 2004 Settlement Agreement. Over the past five years, substantial improvements have been made at the center. These include higher staffing levels, more staff training, better psychiatric care, protection of clients' rights and more programs and services for residents both on and off campus.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DDD Presents County-Based Forums

DDD invites individuals who are in Real Life Choices, Self-Determination, or at the top of the Priority and Priority-Deferred categories of the Waiting List for Waiver Services (formerly known as Community Services Waiting List [CSWL] or Residential Waiting List) to attend a county-based family forum.

These forums are geared toward the family's need to plan and prepare for the well-being of their adult child/children with developmental disabilities. Forums are being held in each state county.

For information, contact Janice Delorenzo at 609-689-1794 or janice.delorenzo@dhs.state.nj.us.

Monmouth County Forum Family Forum:

- Date: Thursday, January 21, 2010
- Time: 6:30 - 9:00 PM
- Location: ARC of Monmouth, 1158 Wayside Road, Tinton Falls, NJ 07712



Upcoming Counties for the Fall/Winter: Burlington and Passaic

"The Family Support Center of New Jersey is re-establishing The Training Calendar, an online resource for information about training opportunities, lectures, and other activities for caregivers and the individuals they are caring for. Please visit www.thetrainingcalendar.org for more information."