

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT**

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## **Safety First!**

### **MCBDD Provides Safety Town for Children with Special Needs**

**Medina, Ohio, July 26, 2018** – The Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities (MCBDD) hosted its seventh annual Safety Town Plus program at the Medina County Achievement Center from July 16-20.

Children with developmental disabilities from across Medina County participated in the five-day program, with each day focusing on a specific safety lesson: traffic safety, fire safety, gun safety and calling 911, bus safety and animal safety. Throughout the week, the MCBDD worked with Sgt. Beverly Fraser of the Medina County Sheriff's Department, the Granger Township fire department, Akron Children's Hospital, University Hospital and a variety of other volunteers to present this unique program. The week concluded with a graduation ceremony on Friday, July 20 to recognize all children that participated in the program.

The specially designed program is one of only a handful of Safety Towns offered across the nation which caters to children with special needs. Typical Safety Towns are realistic, child-sized towns designed to provide complete hands-on safety education for children. MCBDD's program offers all the regular fun "PLUS" the extra help some children with developmental disabilities may need. Designed for children in grades K-3 with special needs, this program offers activities, games, stories and hands-on demonstrations to encourage learning (in a fun way) how to stay safe and make good choices during emergencies. "Safety Town teaches students how to remain safe in a variety of situations that they may face throughout their young and adult lives," said MCBDD Children's Services Director, Dr. Kaye Stanley Bryson. "MCBDD is the ideal place to host this program to help children with developmental disabilities fully understand the importance of each topic."

The original idea for Safety Town+PLUS came from parents of children who attend the MCBDD's Windfall School. These parents found that local Safety Towns were too overwhelming and did not provide a tailored learning environment for their children, many who are on the autism spectrum. MCBDD's Safety Town+PLUS modifies instructions and creates multi-sensory activities to give students the best chances to practice important safety skills. "We are thrilled to provide Safety Town+PLUS at the MCBDD," says Ms. Bryson. "It is so encouraging to see so many volunteers come together to make sure all children have the opportunity to learn how to be safe and how to react in an emergency. We know this was an excellent learning experience for all involved."

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### **About MCBDD**

The MCBDD's Windfall School provides individual support and educational opportunities to help students with disabilities achieve success in our community. MCBDD is the lifeline which connects The Medina County Board of DD is the community resource responsible for connecting, coordinating and funding services for individuals of all ages with developmental disabilities. We help with everything from

early intervention and education opportunities for children to employment and community inclusive living for adults. The mission of the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities is to promote and empower over 1250 individuals with developmental disabilities, from birth to death, to live, learn work and socialize in their communities.

**Photos Attached:**

**MCBDD Safety Town 1** – Sargent Bev Fraiser (c), from the Medina County Sheriff's Office explains important traffic safety signs to Polly Parente (r), 5, during the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities' 2018 Safety Town Plus program.

**MCBDD Safety Town 2** – Nolan Kelly, 5, takes a break on the University Hospital Life Flight Helicopter during its visit to the Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities' 2018 Safety Town Plus program on Wednesday, July 18.