

- Our History -



1953

In an effort to meet the educational needs of children with disabilities living in Medina County, a small group of parents and friends met during the Spring of 1953 and formed the **Society of Handicapped Children (SHC)**. After overcoming several financial and logistical hurdles, the first classes were held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and in a storage room at Garfield Elementary School in Medina. Traveling from all corners of the county, students were transported to school in refurbished funeral limousines, equipped with safety lights and school bus signs.

1956

By 1956, enrollment had increased and the classrooms at the church and school were no longer able to accommodate the students. Coincidentally, it was at this time that Weymouth School on Remsen Road was being closed as a result of a merger with the Medina City Schools. Once again, the SHC pooled their resources, talents and energies.

The organization successfully convinced the school board to allow them occupancy of this old school building. After much remodeling, redecorating and refurbishing, the newly named **St. Nicholas School** was dedicated on December 8, 1956.



1967

In 1967, Ohio passed a state wide law instituting County Boards of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities in all 88 counties in Ohio. The administrative and financial responsibility of the training center and school would now be assumed by the newly created **Medina County Board of MRDD**. Governed by a body of seven community volunteers, appointed by county officials, the Board continued to offer quality programs and services to local individuals with disabilities.



1992

The Board opened the doors to a new 80,000 sq. ft., state of the art facility in January 1992. Known today as the **Medina County Achievement Center**, the building houses a school, work center, case management and administrative offices.

2007

In January of 2007, the Medina County Board of MRDD celebrated the **Fifteenth Anniversary** of the Achievement Center by burning the bond that financed the building's construction. To commemorate this occasion, two time capsules were compiled that contained items from the agency's past. The first capsule is buried in the building's courtyard. The second capsule in the attic of the building. The capsule holds memorabilia donated by the staff and clients. Both capsules are marked to be opened in 2057.

2009

On July 7, 2009, Governor Ted Strickland signed legislation changing the name of the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities. The bill had its origin when a group of advocates from Athens County expressed their concerns with the term "mental retardation" to their local board. A state legislator from Athens County, Jimmy Stewart, was moved by what they said and began the process that culminated with the signing of the bill. On October 4, 2009, we officially became the **Medina County Board of Developmental Disabilities**.

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2015

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) issued a decision that Ohio County Boards of DD could not operate as both a case management entity and provide waiver funded services. Committed to assuring a place in the community for all of the individuals served, the MCBDD creates a multi-year plan and restructuring of the agency. This plan reinforces the need for community inclusion through social and occupational services.



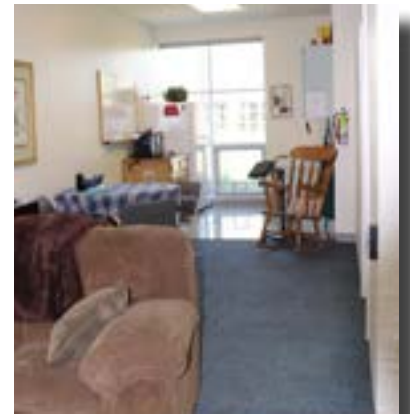
2017

Ohio becomes one of the first states in the nation to receive federal approval to add technology to its Home and Community-based waivers. In 2017, Ohio Governor John Kasich signs the Technology First Executive Order, which makes Ohio the first state in the country to emphasize expanding access to technology for people with developmental disabilities.



2019

In accordance to our mission of promoting and empowering individuals to live, learn, and work and socialize as citizens in the community, the agency opens a Smart Home at the Achievement Center. The Smart Home is a mockup "home" and functions as an education and visitors center. It demonstrates a variety of technologies that can be used to help a person be more independent in their home, and features many technologies including smart home devices, remote-controlled doors, a Remote Monitoring System, and more.



2020

As a part of the multi-year plan and restructuring of the agency which began in 2015, the MCBDD creates the Community Supports and Development Department. This department is aimed at supporting increased community inclusion for people with developmental differences by developing and creating local collaborations and partnerships which provide new support and resources to families, providers, and community members. This department also plays a large role in maintaining basic life needs during the Coronavirus pandemic by coordinating local assistance for individuals and their families while also addressing other pandemic related concerns that faces many provider agencies during this time.

2023

In an effort to help combat the DSP workforce crisis, the Medina County Board of DD joins in legislation advocacy efforts by engaging with local and state legislators in Columbus to address the state budget, with a goal of increasing wages for DSPs. Through Ohio Governor Mike DeWine's 2024-2025 budget proposal, a historic \$579 million will be invested into provider rates for the primary purpose of increasing direct care wages and stabilizing the workforce.

We have experienced tremendous growth over the past seventy years, and we continue to adapt and grow while striving to provide quality educational, occupational, and social opportunities to individuals with developmental differences in Medina County.

