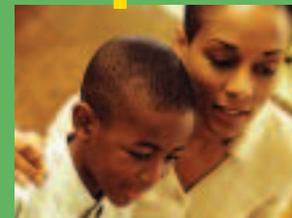


# Positive Living for Spec



## OUTCOME TEAM ROSTER

### Amy Luttrell

Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley  
Co-Champion

### Emmett C. Orr, MPA

Wright State University  
School of Professional Psychology  
Co-Champion

### Alan Cochrun

Access Center for Independent Living

### Mark Gerhardstein

Montgomery County Board of  
Mental Retardation/  
Developmental Disabilities

### Sharon Honnert

Parent

### Douglas McGarry

Area Agency on Aging

### Dennis Moore, Ed. D.

SARDI-WSU School of Medicine

### Joseph Szoke

ADAMHS Board for  
Montgomery County

### Joyce Young

Ohio Rehabilitation  
Services Commission

## STAFF:

Diane Luteran, OFCF

Donna Nettles, OFCF

## DEFINITION OF SPECIAL POPULATIONS:

People of any age with significant disabilities who need assistance with basic daily living skills to live in the most appropriate, least restrictive community setting possible and avoid inappropriate institutionalization. This group includes people who are frail and elderly; adults with severe and persistent mental illness; children with severe emotional disabilities; persons with alcohol and other drug dependency; persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities; and others who cannot perform basic life functions without assistance.

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for in-depth  
data analysis



## VISION

With support from the community, special populations have the opportunity to participate in every aspect of community living that they desire. People with significant disabilities live, learn, work and participate in typical accessible community settings. The community respects and protects their rights and includes them as contributing members.

## POSITIVE LIVING FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS (PLSP) OUTCOME TEAM REPORT

The Positive Living for Special Populations (PLSP) Outcome Team concentrated on the following items during 2007:

- a new task force to address alcohol and other drug abuse;
- legislative and regulatory advocacy;
- community education / awareness; and
- systems navigation.

### New Task Force to Address Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse

The issue of untreated drug and alcohol dependency was identified by the PLSP Team as a top priority early in its work. Team members agreed that this issue requires a multi-team focus, since the effects of substance abuse impact all FCFC outcome areas. With PLSP input, a Family and Children First Council meeting in April 2007 was

# Special Populations



devoted entirely to discussing the issue of substance abuse and its impact on our community. The PLSP Team was very pleased that a new initiative subsequently was approved by the FCFC Executive Committee. It will be implemented as a task force co-chaired by Montgomery County Commissioner Dan Foley and Jim Pancoast, President and CEO of Good Samaritan Hospital. The initiative will help assess how our community addresses substance abuse prevention and intervention needs in Montgomery County. The task force will be appointed by the Montgomery County Commissioners and will begin working in 2008 to tackle this important community issue.

## Legislative and Regulatory Advocacy

State and federal requirements dictate many of the choices that are available to special populations. During 2007, PLSP Team members actively monitored federal and state legislative initiatives, including the state biennial budget bill, which included Medicaid buy-in and mental health parity provisions.

The Team also facilitated FCFC letters of support for Ohio's Money Follows the Person application to the federal government, as well as Access to Better Care (ABC) state grant applications for mental health services. The PLSP Team will continue to monitor the progress of federal mental health parity legislation, an Ohio bill introduced in late 2007 that calls for parity coverage for addictions, and efforts to develop a more comprehensive state mental health parity law for all types of mental illness.



There were several positive legislative developments of interest in 2007:

### • Money Follows the Person initiative, now called HOME Choice (Helping Ohioans Move, Expanding Choice).

Ohio was one of 17 states chosen to receive a Money Follows the Person grant from the Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid. Ohio will receive \$100 million in enhanced federal matching funds over five years to help relocate 2,200 seniors

and persons with disabilities from institutions to the community and to rebalance funding for long-term care services and supports. PLSP members have been working on state planning committees for HOME Choice implementation.

### • Medicaid Buy-In.

The employment rate for persons with disabilities is less than half that of persons without disabilities. One disincentive has been that persons with disabilities have faced the prospect of having to choose between employment and their Medicaid coverage. That will change soon. The PLSP Team was very pleased that during 2007, Ohio

joined 34 other states to expand Medicaid eligibility for working residents with disabilities. Ohio's Medicaid buy-in law will allow workers with disabilities to be employed while also being allowed to buy in to Medicaid on a sliding scale, so that they can maintain needed health coverage. In the past, these workers could not have been covered by Medicaid because their incomes were too high. State implementation of Medicaid buy-in (originally scheduled for January 1, 2008) has been postponed to April 1, 2008.

☉ **Mental Health Parity.** Parity refers to having the same health insurance coverage for mental illness as for physical illness. Lack of insurance for mental health services can impact needed treatment for special populations. In late 2006, Ohio joined 37 states when mental health parity (only for certain specified mental illnesses) became law. In 2007, mental health parity bills were introduced in Congress, as well as a parity bill introduced in Ohio to cover addictions.

### Community Education/Awareness

The PLSP Team believes that prevention of delays and disabilities is a very cost-effective strategy. During 2007, the PLSP Team developed and implemented a campaign to help prevent fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. The Team also had dialogue with representatives from the medical, mental health, and early intervention communities as it investigated how our county can prevent developmental delays and disabilities in young children and help those who need early intervention assistance as soon as possible.

☉ **Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).** In 2007, the PLSP Team received Human Services Levy funds through the FCFC to implement a county-wide FASD educational campaign, targeting women in Montgomery County of childbearing age.

The campaign's message was to avoid drinking while pregnant, as there is no safe time or level of alcohol that can be consumed. FASD is a lifelong condition that is 100% preventable if the mother does not drink during pregnancy.

Utilizing ads and video that were produced by NotASingleDrop.org, a local informational FASD prevention campaign ran during Fall 2007. TV and radio public service announcements, billboards, DVDs and print materials were developed and distributed throughout Montgomery County. Also, the faith community was encouraged to participate in a bell-ringing at 9:09 a.m. on September 9th, International Fetal Alcohol Awareness Day, to reinforce the message that not a single drop of alcohol should be consumed during the nine months of pregnancy. FASD prevention materials continue to be available for distribution in the community by calling Help Me Grow at 937-208-GROW(4769).

☉ **Heighten community awareness/access about early intervention for infants and toddlers.** A child's brain goes through incredible development during the first five

years of life. Research shows that approximately 85% of this growth happens during the first three years of life. Parents, grandparents, caregivers, daycare workers, and other significant



people in a young child's life help develop a young child's brain through everyday activities.

The PLSP Team had dialogue in 2007 with local early intervention experts and representatives of the medical, mental health, and early intervention communities about how the PLSP Team can help educate the community regarding:

- the importance of developmental milestones for children under age 3 and
- whom to contact if there are concerns.

The PLSP Team will be refining this work in early 2008. The Team learned that communication concerns are the top presenting condition for early intervention. Parents and caregivers can help young children acquire the building blocks of speech. Social-emotional development of young children, including developing empathy, anger management, and impulse control, also are important contributors to school readiness and school success.

### Systems Navigation

For some persons with disabilities, it is easy to find a service system to help them. For others, their needs may overlap service systems, or there is no obvious service system to help. Without a roadmap to the confusing maze of systems that may be able to assist special populations, persons in need of services (and their loved ones) require help in navigating systems serving special populations. Case managers and other professionals who work with special populations also need to be trained about services available. Working through the FCFC Agency Director's Committee, a "No Wrong Door" Policy and a community resource guide was developed in 2007 to link people to the services they need. The PLSP Team will continue to work on this systems navigation issue in 2008.

- **Veterans.** With the significant number of veterans returning to our community after deployment in war zones, the PLSP Team felt it important to have dialogue with staff of the Montgomery County Veterans Service

Commission, as some veterans are returning with brain injuries or mental health needs, including post traumatic stress disorder. The Veterans Service Commission has now become a member of the FCFC Agency Director's Committee, which will enhance coordination among systems in Montgomery County to help returning veterans.

### Two Local Businesses Recognized for Promoting Positive Living for Special Populations

Employment is a key ingredient to full participation in the community; however, persons with disabilities have a much lower rate of employment than the general population. (See "Behind the Numbers" on page 46.) As a way to recognize successful employment of people with disabilities in our community, the PLSP Team nominated the following businesses for a 2007 Better Business Bureau Eclipse Integrity Award. The PLSP Team congratulates 2007 nominees:

**McGregor Surmount Corp., Brookville** – McGregor has hired persons with disabilities since 2004. Currently, 22 workers assemble refrigerators at the McGregor plant, and 55 workers assemble additional parts for McGregor at MONCO Enterprises. The quality of the work has contributed to the company's bottom line and has earned McGregor Surmount Corp. the Whirlpool Supplier of the Year award for two years.

**Kroger stores throughout Montgomery County** – Kroger sets a very visible example in our community by employing persons with disabilities at six of its stores. Kroger is welcoming to special populations, and these workers are treated with respect and fairness.

## HELP ME GROW

### HELP ME GROW CENTRAL INTAKE & REFERRAL 937-208-GROW (4769)



*Help Me Grow is a state and federally funded early intervention initiative for eligible Montgomery County children under age three and their families. Services focus on infant and toddler health and development to give children the best possible start in life. The program is guided by the Ohio Department of Health and*

*locally administered by the Montgomery County FCFC through local providers.*

Participation in Help Me Grow is entirely voluntary. Services are based on the needs and desires of each family. Services include: providing information and referral to families; child find and outreach activities; conducting a home visit of newborn and mother; and service coordination, family support, and other ongoing services for children under age three at risk for, or with, a developmental delay or disability.

In 2007, 2,430 referrals to Help Me Grow were received, including 819 from potential clients, family members, or friends, and 724 from community screenings and hospitals. Help Me Grow nurses made 1,173 home visits to check on the health and physical status of mothers and their newborns (many were seen within the first two of weeks after the birth). As of December 31st, 1,372 Individualized Family Service Plans (ISFPs) were in place daily for young children and their families being served by ongoing Help Me Grow services.



#### CHILDREN RECEIVING ONGOING SERVICES

(DAILY COUNT AS OF 12/31/07)

■ Under 12 months (includes prenatal)   ■ 12 – 23 months   ■ 24 – 35 months

**AT RISK FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY OR DISABILITY. TOTAL 690**



**SUSPECTED/DIAGNOSED DELAY OR DISABILITY. TOTAL 682**



#### IN 2007, HELP ME GROW SERVICES WERE PROVIDED BY:

**CENTRAL INTAKE, REFERRAL AND ONGOING SERVICES:**  
Greater Dayton Area Hospital Association (GDAHA)—  
Help Me Grow—Brighter Futures

**NEWBORN HOME VISITS:**  
GDAHA Brighter Futures  
Fidelity Health Care  
Kettering Medical Center—Precious Beginnings  
Home Care

**DEVELOPMENTAL EVALUATIONS:**  
Montgomery County Board of MR/DD—  
PACE Program

Source: Ohio Department of Health Early Track

## HELP ME GROW SUCCESS STORIES

*Success Stories – The work and impact of Help Me Grow is best explained through the stories of clients (names have been changed):*

While completing the maternal portion of the newborn home visit, the Help Me Grow nurse, Tina, noted that the mother had a very low heart rate. Tina phoned the physician who recommended that the new mother come into the office immediately. The physician, finding the same results as Tina, promptly sent the mother to the hospital, where she was later admitted for a medical problem. The nurse's excellent skills and judgment helped this new mother receive prompt care and avoid any negative outcomes.

Terri's son, Justin, was born ten weeks premature. Terri had both postpartum depression and trouble bonding with her newborn. After Justin came home, the Help Me Grow Service Coordinator provided weekly visits and made referrals to Terri's doctor to address postpartum depression and to YCATS (Young Children's Assessment and Treatment Services) to help with bonding issues. Justin, now 11 months old, is thriving. He receives MRDD PACE (Parent and Child Enrichment Program) services as a result of a delay due to his premature birth. Terri has developed a loving and supportive bond with her child.

Jennifer, the Help Me Grow service coordinator, received a referral from The Children's Medical Center for two year old Latisha, who has cochlear ear implants. While Latisha continued to receive services at The Children's Medical Center, the service coordinator also linked the family with the Regional Infant Hearing Program and a speech therapist. In the months before the child turned age three, Jennifer also worked with the family and school district on transition to special education services. Latisha recently turned three and has made a successful transition to her school district. She is communicating at the level of a 4-year-old using her voice, sign language, and gestures. The family is very satisfied with their daughter's progress and could not be happier with their journey through Help Me Grow and positive transition to their school district.

Tim and Sara's son, Daniel, was diagnosed with autism. Karen, the Help Me Grow service coordinator, referred the family for infant mental health services. The mother participated in the sessions, but the father was uncomfortable about participating. Karen kept encouraging the father to attend one of the sessions until he finally did. After Tim saw Daniel's interaction with the infant mental health counselor, Tim became more engaged with Daniel. He learned how to play with his son and became more comfortable showing affection. At the end of a session, Tim said he was happy that he had decided to go. He later taught his brothers and other male relatives what he had learned to successfully interact with Daniel.

Two year old Brianna was referred to Help Me Grow with feeding and communication problems (due to a severe speech delay) and aggressive behavior towards her family. Her service coordinator, Sonya, connected the family with YCATS, which worked with the family to manage Brianna's behavior. Sonya also linked the family with Public Health's BCMH (Bureau for Children with Medical Handicaps) program, which helped the family with resources to pay some of the child's medical bills, and to MRDD's PACE program, which provided Brianna's occupational, physical, and speech therapy services. Brianna now can eat some solid foods and is walking. The mother commented positively on the successful strategies she learned for working with Brianna. She also was very appreciative that some of the financial burden of medical costs was reduced through her family's participation in Help Me Grow.

