



## MRDD Name Change

Intense discussions have been under way across Ohio regarding the term 'Mental Retardation' and if these words should remain in the title of the Ohio Department of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities and the 88 County Boards it governs. Knox County was randomly selected, among 14 other counties, to participate in a survey of individuals served by MRDD, family members, and registered voters. These interviews were conducted September 29. The results of the survey are intended to inform a vote on Oct. 27 of the Ohio Association of County Boards of MRDD about removing the words "mental retardation" from its name. It may also provide additional support for legislation that has been proposed to change the name of the Ohio Department of MRDD and the Ohio County Boards of MRDD.

## The New 2-1-1

Have you ever wondered how to find help or a community service for yourself or someone in need? For the millions of Americans needing help every day (from locating financial assistance during a family crisis, to finding adequate care for an aging parent, or searching for the highest-quality child care) 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember number connecting them quickly to community resources and volunteer opportunities. No more wasted time trying to find the right resource. You will reach a trained, caring professional 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. It's efficient, fast and easy to use. And it's all free and completely confidential.

## Emergency Preparedness

The Knox County Board of MRDD is collaborating with many other agencies, health care and social services providers to distribute awareness material about the need to be prepared for emergencies. As the recent windstorm has shown, emergencies can strike at any time and have lasting effects on the safety and well-being of individuals in the community. Though some people feel it is impossible to be prepared for unexpected events, the truth is that taking preparedness actions helps people deal with disasters of all sorts much more effectively. Make a kit, make a plan and be informed. The Knox County Board now has Emergency Preparedness kits available at our Administrative offices. For more information about how you can be prepared visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or 1-800-BE-READY.

## Flu Season Foresight

The Flu season is fast approaching and yearly flu vaccinations have begun. In America every year more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications and 36,000 people die from the flu. There are important precautions that you can take to protect yourself. Some of these precautions are simple, such as washing your hands frequently to avoid getting sick. Anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu can also get vaccinated. For more information on flu prevention or the flu vaccine, contact your doctor or the Knox County Health Department at 740-392-2200.

## Parent Mentoring Group

The Knox County Board of MRDD is sponsoring the formation of a parent mentoring group. We are in the process of recruiting parents interested in sharing their experience and receiving specialized training to provide support and guidance to other parents of school-aged children with disabilities. Parents, with the support of the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Knox County Board of MRDD, will have access to a Parent Mentor network. For more information contact Jeffrey Williams at 740-397-4647

## Partners In Justice Community Training

The Knox County Board of MRDD recently partnered with Ohio Partners in Justice Coalition to provide a training for Mental Health professionals, MRDD staff, justice system and law enforcement professionals, and Adult Day Service providers. Over 40 professionals attended this event intended to foster collaboration to benefit individuals that receive services across the Mental Health, MRDD and Justice systems.

## Give Us a New Name

We need your help! You can help us choose a new name for our *other* newsletter, the "Ambassador." It has had that name for many years, and we think it's time for a change!

While this newsletter is meant to reflect agency happenings, our other newsletter is our opportunity to share the stories and highlight the many great accomplishments happening in the lives of individuals with disabilities every day. If you have a name that you feel fits our 'individual' newsletter, you can drop it by our office, or call: 397-4656 or e-mail it to [aperry@knoxmrdd.com](mailto:aperry@knoxmrdd.com),

**We will choose the winning name and award them a prize on October 30th!**



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### **Community Food Drive**

The Knox County Board of MRDD recently partnered with ten Knox County agencies and businesses to hold a Community Food

Drive Competition. In a

ceremony on October 3, Knox MRDD honored the Food Drive Leaders. The People's Bank and the Knox County Health Department tied for first place, each providing food worth an estimated \$331. The Knox County Board of MRDD came in second and Body Basics came in third.

The ten agencies and businesses that acted as collection points for donations to benefit Interchurch Food Pantry for the week of September 22 were Opportunity Knox, Hospice of Knox County, WMVO/93Q, Knox County Health Department, Knox County Head Start, Knox County Board of MRDD, Allison's Finer Diner, Knox County Sheriff's Department, The People's Bank and Body Basics.

Joy Harris of Interchurch estimated that this drive provided over \$1300 worth of food to help

replenish Interchurch's empty pantries. Harris explained that Interchurch has seen an almost 10% (ten percent) increase in the amount of families that they serve over the last few months and they expect the need to continue to grow. Knox MRDD recognizes that this is an ongoing need, and so we plan to continue to sponsor food drives on a regular basis in the coming year. (Pictured left to right: Brian Benick of the Health Department, Joy Harris of Interchurch, Tessa Selby and Deb Kirk of The People's Bank and Steve Oster of Knox County Board of MRDD accepting their awards for the Community Food Drive).

### **Fond Farewell**

Congratulations to Mark Kohlman (pictured right) who recently accepted the position of Chief Business Officer for Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. Mark has served as the Director of Business Operations at the Knox County Board of MRDD for six years. He has been recognized for providing consistent guidance and foresight concerning the agency's finances. His last day will be November 7th. His duties will be distributed internally until his position is filled.

