


# Partnering with Warren County Handicapped Services...what a BLAST!



A landscape photograph featuring a white wind turbine on the left side. In the foreground, there is a gravel-covered area and a wooden fence. The background shows rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

It's not about rescuing people with disabilities.  
It's about investing in removing the physical,  
cultural, economic, communication, mobility,  
and attitudinal barriers  
that impede people with disabilities.

# Encouraging Physical Activity 😊

- Participants are provided a discounted rate to participate in any of our group exercise classes, as well as for an open gym pass that allows access to all of our exercise equipment.
- They pay out of their **own** money and the only way that is possible is due to the discounted rate. But it also shows how much they enjoy it, because it is a choice and they **CHOOSE** to pay the fee so they can come to classes and use the gym!

# Hesitant to join in the fun...



- In the beginning, we let participants try out the facility for free. Many of the individuals would watch, but not participate in the exercise classes or open gym unless their attendant accompanied them.
- The agency itself nor the attendants had the ability to pay for their own passes to the fitness center, so we came up with a solution to this barrier.

# Solution

Attendants are allowed to exercise for FREE with the WCHS participants.



# Feedback from Executive Director, Kelli

**“This program has been absolutely amazing and life changing for our consumers! It has allowed our crew to get on a regular workout schedule and have fun while doing it.”**

**“We have certainly utilized the fitness center and have seen a great improvement with our clients weight as well as their energy!!!!”**

**“Thank you so much for making this possible! I attached a pictures showing our guys and gals loving the program!”**

# Gym Buddies



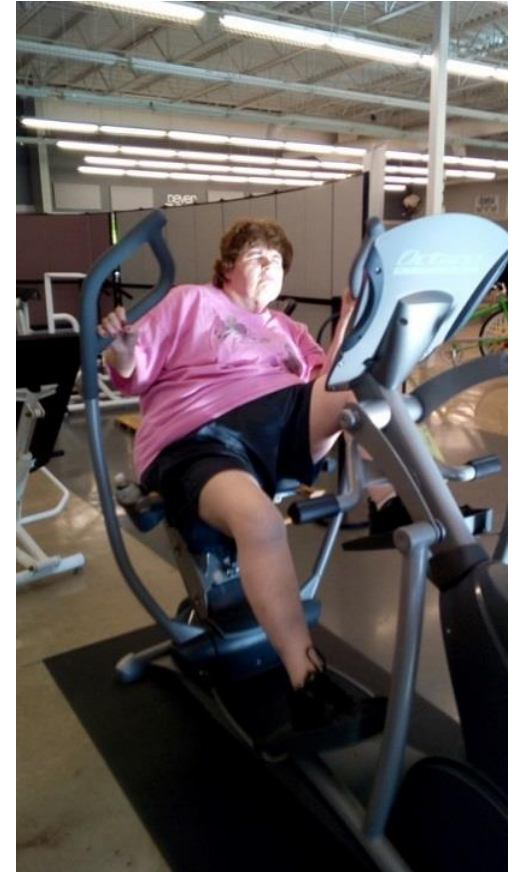
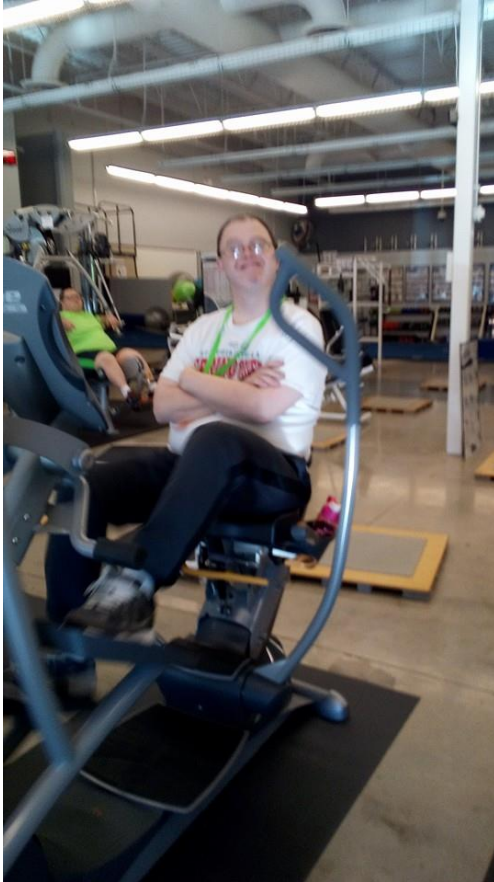
# Video of Troy working out

[Troy on the Universal Machine](#)



# Open Gym Time

This has been amazing for the individuals in this program. They LOVE coming to the gym and getting to work out on the machines with everyone else in the community.



# Zumba Class

Everything is completely **integrated**. We do not have special hours or classes for the IDD (intellectual and developmental disabilities). This has been an **important** aspect of this partnership!



# The ladies in Zumba class!





## Expanding our reach...

- Working with the ISL (Independent Supported Living) participants went so well that the agency asked if we could work something out for the **Day Program** participants.
- The Executive Director wants to incorporate more physical activity and will focus on our senior classes and chair exercise classes for this group.
- We created a swipe card that would allow any of the day program participants to attend either an exercise class or open gym. The Day Program budget will pay for this vs. the individuals and we only charge \$1 per visit. The staff are allowed to participate with the Day Program consumer at **NO COST** to encourage participation.

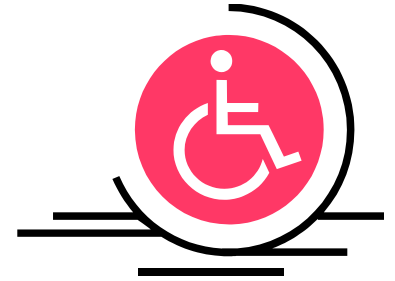
# Community Garden Site & Eating Healthy 😊

The Executive Director contacted us after a “Strengthening Community Ties” luncheon the health department hosted.

This has been our most successful way of starting “out of the box” partnerships with people, agencies and organizations we already work with!

Neat concept – we used to do it annually, but the benefits were so great we have expanded to twice a year.

# Garden Accommodations



- First discussed just placing two regular 4 X 8 raised beds at the WCHS office.
- Talked about where to place them- in that conversation we decided why not make them wheelchair accessible so everyone could get their hands in the dirt and participate.
- We built 4 beds, instead of 2 and stacked/reinforced them and they are perfect height.
- BUT....that means more dirt! Community to the rescue. The dirt was donated by The Warren County Sheltered Workshop and Green Gardens in Truesdale provided garden soil at a discounted price!

# Feedback from Executive Director, Kelli...

Here are a few pictures of the garden as well as some meals we cooked with the goods we grew this year. We were successful in growing zucchini, peppers, and tomatoes!

“I think we had an amazing 1<sup>st</sup> year and we can't say thank you enough!

“We post on our Facebook page showing our success and our amazing meals we have prepared in day program to allow the community to see how awesome it is to have the raised bed gardens here!”

“It has allowed our consumers to take care of a garden, pick the garden and cook the wonderful harvest it produced!!!! Looking forward to next year!!!! Thank you all so much!”

# Wheelchair height raised beds





# Harvest Time



# Cooking with FRESH Veggies!



# Zucchini Bread of course!!





- We all **know** this...but it's HARD, don't make assumptions.
- Think about agencies and organizations that you **already** interact with, is there something different or MORE that you can do together?
- **ASK**- I can't stress this enough. Regardless if it is for donations, ideas, help or a simple "can we...?" You don't know if you don't ask and that is often the ONLY thing in the way----no one asked!
- Talk to the target group and OFTEN– we tend to make decisions with the "we know what works best" mindset and we can really miss the mark.

# The big WHY!

- Research has indicated that adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities experience poorer health outcomes than the rest of the population.
- Due to the barriers that many individuals with developmental disabilities face, including limited access to resources (particularly health and wellness services and programs) this population suffers from health disparities disproportionately.
- Decreased physical and intellectual functioning, as well as reduced independence with daily living skills, cause many individuals with developmental disabilities to rely on caregivers for support.
- For this reason, **caregivers play a vital role in the success of health interventions while promoting confidence and encouraging ongoing healthy lifestyle habits in the areas of nutrition and physical activity.**

The University of Cincinnati University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities

ucedd



# Knowing this...what did they do?

Conducted a study with a method to educate and support caregivers of a small residential care home in aspects of nutrition and physical activity utilizing the Health Matters curriculum to improve their ability to impact health and wellness outcomes of their residents with IDD.

Health Matters is a published curriculum used to educate persons with developmental disabilities on ways to promote a healthy lifestyle through improving nutrition and physical activity.

**Conclusion:** There is a potential benefit for integrating caregivers into health and wellness programs to improve health outcomes of adults with IDD.

(We found that out...the long way- now you can take the short-cut!)

<https://www.ucucedd.org/improving-health-and-wellness-adults-idd-through-caregiver-education-physical-activity-nutrition>

<https://www.facebook.com/UcUcedd> LINK to great FB page.