

**THE MICHAEL DUNN CENTER
STAFF BULLETIN**

NOW YOU KNOW

Volume 1; Issue 4

February, 2004

edited by Roger Richmond

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Kyle Hauth

Waste Not, Want Not

I used to get tired of my dad recanting this old adage when I was a kid. I can also remember him telling me I could leave all the lights on in the house and keep the air-conditioner down as low as I wanted it, when I started paying the bills. Of course now that I have teenage daughters, I occasionally catch myself saying the same thing. It's amazing how our philosophy changes when we are directly affected by our actions or the lack thereof. When wasteful

activities result in less income in our pockets our behavior usually changes.

We at the Michael Dunn Center are one big family trying to survive on limited resources from state, federal and local dollars. Thankfully for the past two years we have managed to stay within our budget and pay out the longevity and retirement benefits. I credit this success to everyone who works



diligently to lower costs and work more efficiently. This year we faced some very impressive increases in our operating costs (insurance, gasoline, utilities, etc.) and now we are in need of an even more

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TRAINER'S MOMENT

Roger Richmond

Whose Life Is It, Anyway?

If you've ever seen the television program, "Whose Line Is It, Anyway?", you know that it is the comedy improv show on which, as the host says "everything's made up and the points don't matter". Wayne Brady is a master of improvisa-

tion, who can put any given situation into song, most often done as a dead-on impersonation in the style of some celebrity performer. This makes for good entertainment, but, in our world of "reality" (as opposed to manufactured

"reality" TV), we must always remember the program becomes "Whose *life* is it, anyway".

Have you ever given thought to exactly who benefits, or, adversely,

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Do you remember...

- You must report alleged or suspected Abuse, neglect, or mistreatment to the Investigators within 4 hours.
- You may not discuss an on-going investigation with anyone except the Investigator.
- Reportable incident forms must be submitted within on working day (must be within 4 hours for ANM report)

THE VALUES THAT SUPPORT LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY reprinted

The following article comes from the Virginia Department of Mental Retardation Staff Guide.

Part 1 of a series

Normalization

The principle of *normalization* holds that persons with mental retardation should be supported in leading lives which by daily routine, opportunities, expectations, and treatment are as much like other people in their community and their age as possible. Wolf Wolfensbarger, an early advocate for community services for persons with disabilities, developed the term *normalization* in 1980.

Wolfensbarger recognized that people with mental retardation are not all alike. They have needs, interests, and abilities that are *more like* those of people without disabilities than different. An individual's life experience is strongly affected by how others see him or her. Adults with mental retardation who are supported in doing regular and valued things that other people do in the community in which they live are viewed in a positive manner.

What's Your Role?

Ways in which you can implement the concept of normalization include:

- Assisting the individuals you support in buying a well-fitting, attractive and affordable but fashionable clothing which is appropriate for their age and gender.
- Assisting people in going- individually- to a neighborhood beauty salon or barber shop for a haircuts or even a manicure.

Community Presence and Participation

All people with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities belong in the community- in the same schools, neighborhoods, stores, and jobs where other people spend their time. John O'Brien, another advocate for people with disabilities, has described Community Presence as the experience of sharing the ordinary places that define community life. Without focused effort, people with severe handicaps will be separated from everyday settings by segregated facilities, activities, and schedules.

Taking people out to ordinary places is the first step, but unless you make the effort, it is possible for the people you support to be present but not actively involved. As program staff, you must take steps to help each individual get involved in activities he wants to do. Partial Participation is better than sitting on the sidelines watching others, and means changing parts of a task or materials used to perform a task to allow an individual with disabilities to participate to the fullest extent that is individually possible. Your role may include breaking a task into manageable steps that the person can complete. An example of partial participation in making the breakfast might be pushing the handle down on the toaster or holding the glass while someone else pours the juice.

Both persons with disabilities and their peers without disabilities are more enriched by the challenge

and opportunities of living, working and playing side-by-side. The principle of Community Presence and Participation should guide the selection of sites for homes, the placement into jobs, the development of Consumer Service Plans, the program operation and staff scheduling.

What's Your Role?

You can help an individual experience full participation in the community by:

- Convincing your minister or rabbi that adults with mental retardation should attend regular church or temple services and adult classes, not "special classes" for the disabled.
- Find out what a person likes to do and make arrangements for him to participate with your support.
- Avoid taking people out in large groups because this is not how most people participate in the community.
- Assist an individual in becoming a volunteer at a local museum, the SPCA, or other community agency, such as Meals on Wheels or the AIDS Ministry.
- Help an individual get a membership to the YMCA where he or she can participate in regular classes for swimming, aerobics, or weight training.

Nonrestrictive Program Alternatives

When individuals with mental retardation live and work in places which show respect for their rights as human beings, they have a better chance of expressing them-

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Waste Not, Want Not

(Continued from page 1)

aggressive cost savings approach to our operation. I urge you to look around you and observe ways that we can eliminate waste and lower costs. Often you will see something that nobody else has seen.

The other day a staff member came to me and stated that we were

spending almost twice the amount of money on adult briefs because we were purchasing them directly from the pharmacy rather than a local retailer. After a few inquiries I confirmed her analysis and that same day we decided to begin purchasing the briefs from Wal-Mart. As she suspected our costs went down drastically and the product

was as good and maybe better than what we were paying for with the pharmacy. This one employee made a difference in our efficiency, simply because she spoke up.

Please take a look around and ask yourself, "if I were paying for this, would I do it this way"? If you can't answer yes, then please give me a call.

Who's Life Is It, Anyway?

(Continued from page 1)

who is harmed, by your actions? Are you doing things that the person you support enjoys and benefits from, or do you base the things you do upon what is easiest and the least amount of trouble for you to do? Are you going places because that person wishes to go there, or because it was on the list your supervisor gave you? If your supervisor gives you a list of places to go, and you know the person you support gets upset when you go there, do you go back and discuss that site with your supervisor?

So, whose life *is* it, anyway? Most direct support staff are employed to do just what the job title suggests—provide *direct support* for one or more people with developmental disabilities. Staff are employed to provide assistance as needed to allow people to maintain as independent a life as possible. Our responsibility is to provide training and assistance for people to allow them to do as much as possible for themselves. Most people like to feel good about themselves. Allowing individuals to experience a sense of accomplishment can be just the thing that person needs to enjoy feeling good about themselves— that warm feeling that accompanies doing something for yourself that you maybe didn't think you could do.

Are people with developmental dis-

abilities second class citizens? We all say "of course not— they should be treated as equals with everyone else". However, sometimes our actions speak otherwise. How many ways do we treat people poorly, or send wrong messages in our behavior and in our actions? Have you ever seen a consumer with food from the previous meal on the front of their shirt? Did you look to see if the shirt was even changed today?

Are people with developmental disabilities second class citizens?

Is it acceptable to change an adult consumer's brief in a parking lot? *Of course not!* (But it has been done). Would *you* like to be sent out in dirty clothing, or have your underclothes changed in a public place? What about staff who eat out in a restaurant, but don't provide the same dining experience for the people who they support? Do those folks carry in their brown bags, or do they order from the menu? What kind of messages are you sending to that person and to the community? Do you address people with mental retardation in a condescending manner? Do you talk to them as if they were "eternal children"? Do you talk around an

individual, as if he were not even present?

We consider some of these examples to be mistreatment and will take appropriate action when we become aware of them. However, you should do the right thing— *because it is the right thing to do.*

In our jobs, the situations are real and the "points" *do* matter. So, exactly what kind of "points" do we get? Those of us who have worked in this field for any length of time, most certainly during recent years, will be well aware that we aren't necessarily talking about a *monetary* reward! If you are a person of religious faith, you might say the points are not even necessarily an *earthly* reward. What about the "points" that you get from being a person of good character, who has compassion for other people? How about the points you get when you help someone accomplish something. Does the person you support have an opportunity to feel good about *themselves* for a job well done, no matter how small or insignificant the task may seem to you? I'd say *those* are the points that *do* matter!

Give forethought to your actions and motivations when you provide care and support for people. Ask *yourself*, "*Whose life is it, anyway?*"

VALUES THAT SUPPORT

(Continued from page 2)

selves, reaching their goals, and making choices. "Nonrestrictive programming" means supporting people in natural settings and with families and friends by providing flexible supports that work well for that person. People with mental retardation, should live in comfortable homes in safe neighborhoods, not in "homelike facilities" in a business district or isolated from other people. They should have the

option of working a regular job or as part of a small group of people with disabilities (sometimes called a crew or an enclave).

What's Your Role?

As a staff person, you can provide nonrestrictive program alternatives by:

- Developing a creative way to support an individual in a part-time job despite his "reputation" as a difficult person.

- Allowing an individual the opportunity to assist in meal preparation for himself and his three roommates rather than doing it yourself because it's faster.
- Being open to the idea that an individual who has shared a dormitory with eleven other people for fifteen years in a state facility may be a very different person after he moves to a house in the community with his own bedroom and the opportunity for more choices.

EXERCISING THEIR FAITH

Anita Richmond

Most current MDC employees were not involved with the agency back in the early and mid-seventies when our programs were located at the Bethel Presbyterian Church, in Kingston. In fact, many of you weren't even *born* at that time in the history of MDC. At that time, our adult program, which provided services to 40 individuals, was located in the Fellowship Hall of the church's educational building and the pre-school program, serving about 20 children, used the Sunday school rooms on the second floor. Offices were located on the top floor. All restroom facilities at that time were located on the second floor and we didn't even have a ramp!

The Michael Dunn Center has come a long way since those early days, but Bethel Presbyterian Church (USA) remains an important part of the lives of several of the individuals that we serve. Mike Skinner and his wife Sharon are active members of Bethel, as are Justin Trivette and his foster parents, Bill and Jean Plummer.

Bethel Presbyterian is a fairly small church, with about 200 members. As a result, most members know each other fairly well, and various natural supports have developed for

Mike, Sharon and Justin. There are a number of adult Sunday school classes from which they may choose. There are no "special" classes for individuals with cognitive disabilities, but there are many open hearts and willing friends to provide any needed additional guidance in understanding the study materials and helping anyone with special needs to be an active participant.

If you attend church regularly, you probably know that many folks have their regular spot in the sanctuary every week. This is the case with Mike and Sharon, as well as with Justin and his family. These

individuals regularly participate in the routine church service rituals such as ushering and helping with offering. In fact, Justin has recently begun helping with the offering on occasion, with the assistance of a member of the youth group who pushes his wheelchair and helps to pass the plate.

Justin loves attending worship services at Bethel, but like many of us, he expects the service to end promptly at noon. He can frequently be heard saying "bye-bye" on the dot of noon, a reminder to the preacher that "it's time to wrap things up!" Luckily, the minister has a good sense of humor and has been known, on occasion, to take Justin's suggestion to heart. When Justin is unable to attend church he listens to the service as it is broadcast over the radio at 12:30. According to Jean he gets a little irritated when we have a substitute for the minister. Marc Sherrod who is the minister has become a good friend to Justin and even attends his ISP meetings. It is just not right when Marc is away and someone is substituting. "Preacher's not here; might as well not have attended", is probably what Justin is thinking. Does that sound like anyone *you* know?



TEN WAYS TO BE MED WISE

article reprinted

The following article is reprinted from *Hot Spot*, published by Tennessee Division of Mental Retardation.

The more than 100,000 over-the-counter drugs that can be bought without a prescription all have one thing in common: they are serious medicines that need to be taken with care. That is why it is important to be Med Wise every time while buying and using an OTC drug. Here are ten simple ways to get the most from OTC medicines:

1. **Always start by reading the label.— all of it.** Reading the label will help you decide if the right product has been selected for the symptoms, the dosing instructions are clear, and there are any warnings that may apply.
2. **Look for an OTC medicine that will treat only the symptoms.** The formulations of OTC drugs are very specific and should not be mixed and matched.
3. **Know what to avoid while taking an OTC medicine.** Like prescription medicine, some OTC medicines can cause side effects or reactions. Read the label to see what to avoid while

taking the medication.

4. **When in doubt, ask before you buy or use an OTC medicine.** Taking an OTC medicine safely is too important for guesswork. If you have questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
5. **Take the medicine EXACTLY as stated on the label.** When it comes to OTC medicines, *more is not better!* Taking too much of a non-prescription drug can be harmful. Only take the recommended dosage, and at the exact intervals stated on the label.
6. **Use extra caution when taking more than one medicine at a time.** Many OTC medicines contain the same active ingredients, which means a person may be getting more than the recommended dosage without even knowing it. Always compare active ingredients before taking more than one OTC medicine at the same time.
7. **Do not combine prescription medicines and OTC drugs without talking to your doctor first.** Sometimes, combining drugs can cause adverse reactions or one drug can interfere with the other drug's effectiveness. Always ask the doctor

or pharmacist, to be safe.

8. **Make sure that each of the person's doctors has a list of all the medicines being taken by that person.** This includes not only prescription medicines, but also OTC drugs, herbs, and dietary supplements that the person may be taking.
9. **Always give infants and children OTC medicines that are especially formulated for their age and weight.** Unless labeled otherwise, adult-strength products should not be given to children; doing so could result in accidental overdosing. To be safe, do not cut adult tablets in half or estimate a child's dose of an adult-strength liquid product.
10. **Do not use OTC medicines after their expiration date.** Dispose of all medicines promptly after their expiration date and be careful not to throw them away where children or pets may find them.

Editors note: Remember that consumers may not be given any OTC medication without a doctor's order. You must routinely check expiration dates and dispose of any out of date OTC medications.

Your comments are requested! You've had a few issues to see what this thing called *Now You Know* is all about. We want to make this newsletter as useful and effective as possible, and would like to get your input. Please use the form below to provide us with your feedback. Note: The size of this form is *not* an indicator of how much feedback we *really* want from you! (It's all the room that was left when your fearless editor thought about a providing a feedback form). So, now that I've used up what little space was left available for your input, please provide me with you thoughts and comments. Any old sheet of paper will be fine, as long as it doesn't come on a roll in small squares! (Hopefully, that will not be your opinion of this publication!). By the way, feel free to submit potential articles for consideration.

Name (optional): _____	If I were editor, I would _____
What I find useful about NYK _____	What needs to be added: _____
What I'd like to see discussed in a future issue: _____	What should be omitted: _____
Other comments: _____	Complaints _____

Send your comments to Roger Richmond

CHANGING ATTITUDES WITH INVOLVEMENT! Paula Anthony

Steven Wright continues to make progress in his laundry business. He's typically unsure of entering new places, always wondering if there is a doctor somewhere near. Staff have been working with Steven on entering Brooks creative hairstyle salon and delivering and picking up towels.

Steven has always gone to Brook's Creative Styles, but just watched as the towels were carried into the salon by others. After a few weeks, and then months, we felt Steven understood that this was a salon just like Shelia's salon, which he was used to. We started putting the dirty towels right outside his car and asking him to get out and put them in the car. As time went on the basket full of dirty towels got closer to the door of the salon and further from his car.

Once we got Steven to the door of the salon to pick the dirty towels

we felt it was time to see if he would be willing to take the clean towels into the salon, instead of relying on Ann. A few weeks ago Steven went in and put the towels down right inside the door. The hairstylist, along with one of their customers, was there to praise him and tell him how proud of him they were. Today, Steven went in, placed the clean towels inside the door and sat in one of the chairs just inside of the salon.

I asked him if he wanted to see where they were stored. He shook his head no. I told him I would be right back. I brought the empty basket back into an adjacent room in which some dirty towels were stored in a small wastebasket. Steven could see me. I asked him if he would come and put the dirty towels in the basket like he does at the other salon. He got up and came into the room and put the dirty

towels in the basket and then went outside to gather the other towels in the larger storage bend.

Steven also had an opportunity to socialize with Phyllis Brooks and Louise, hairstylists from Brooks Creative Hair styles. Phyllis pulled me to the side and thanked me for the opportunity of getting the chance to see just what we do with the people we serve.

I think somehow not only have we empowered Steven and his employees but also we have somehow empowered his clients. Steven and his employees, I feel, have changed how people in their community see them. They no longer have the title or label of being disabled but are now considered and seen as friends, coworkers and members of the elite group of people that make a difference in their community.

COMMUNICATION IN TRANSIT

Sally Wilkerson

For years the Michael Dunn center worked diligently to get a means of communication for all the vans. Finally we were successful in getting cell phones for the vans. We just knew that by having the cell phones we had remedied the problems that we were having with communication while the out in the community.

For one thing, in case of emergency staff could reach the Center, Police or Transportation Department for assistance. Also, in case of an emergency, we could reach staff via the cell phones. Well, as we all know, our plans sometimes have kinks in them, as this one does. Staff forget to charge the phone, in bad weather don't take them into the places of business with them, or simply forget to turn on the phones.

Please remember they are on the van for emergency purposes. Should bad weather be on the horizon, please have the phones charged and ready for use, should they be needed. While out in the community, please have them turned on and with you, should you need to be reached by the Center for emergency purposes.

Staff also need to let Janet Bain know the number on the phone that is in your van. This is a tool that could be a great asset to us if it is used properly. Always remember that you may not use them while you are driving; you must pull your vehicle to a safe place and stop, if you need to contact someone at the center, or if someone from the center should be trying to reach you while you are driving.

BULLETIN BOARD

- **THE C.G. SEXTON HOUSE IS PLANNING AN AUCTION TO RAISE MONEY FOR A TRIP TO DISNEY WORLD. YOU CAN HELP BY DONATING ITEMS THAT CAN BE AUCTIONED. PLEASE CONTACT THE HOUSE AT 590-1418 TO ARRANGE A PICK-UP.**
- **ROBERTS HOUSE IS PLANNING TO MOVE INTO A NEW HOME SOON, AND IS IN NEED OF BOXES FOR PACKING.**
- **PLEASE REMEMBER TO USE THE NEW RECYCLE CONTAINERS CONVENIENTLY LOCATED AROUND THE CENTER.**
- **DIVERSIFIED SCIENTIFIC BLOOD DRIVE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24TH, 6:30 AM TO 4:00 PM
EMERGENCY NEED FOR ALL TYPES!**

Note: *The following article is reprinted from Building Community, The Quarterly Newsletter of the Housing Development Corp. of the Clinch Valley*

TEENS EARN SMILES, PRAISE FOR HOME REPAIRS

Donavan Willis has smiles and praise for the teens from Group Workcamps who replaced deteriorating porches at his Harriman home last summer.

Willis, though developmentally disabled, has been able to continue living in the home he inherited from his mother, thanks to assistance from the Michael Dunn Center and the gift of time from these teen volunteers.

He keeps a photo of the teens in his living room.

"They did a good job for me," Donavan said of the six teens and their adult supervisors who spent five days working on the one-story house. With donated materials, they replaced his porches and built a bench for him on one porch.

"He was just tickled to death with it", said his sister, Marcella Willis.

This was the second visit Donavan received from the Group Workcamps teens. In the summer of 2002, another group painted the home exterior, put new floors

in the kitchen and bathroom, and made other repairs.

The teens were among about 700 who came to Roane County last July, paying their own way there to do free home repairs on 150 homes for homemakers.

They were part of Group Workcamps, a summer mission experience for church youth groups. The program is sponsored in Roane County by the Housing Development Corporation of the Clinch Valley (HDC), a non-profit organization serving five counties from its Oak Ridge headquarters.

Group Workcamps plan to send More youth here next July, and HDC is seeking contributions to purchase materials for the repairs, according to Carlotta Spurling, HDC Housing Counselor and Community Relations Specialist. Call Spurling at (865)-482-7345 for information on making a contribution to the next workcamp in Roane County.

Spurling said Scandlyn Lumber Company in Roane County has been especially helpful in Roane

County has been especially helpful to the Group Workcamps program. "John Sublett at Scandlyn helped us with whatever we asked of him. Scandlyn Lumber has really gone above and beyond", she said.

The repairs came at a good time for Donavan, helping him make improvements that would allow him to stay in the home. When their mother died in 2001, Donavan wanted to continue living there on his own, and his sister wanted to help him accomplish that goal. "I wanted him to learn to take care of himself, without saying, 'call my sister', Marcella said. "The more he knows how to do on his own, the better off he is going to be".

Her brother, who is 59, makes friends easily and has a support group of friends throughout Harriman. An assistant from Michael Dunn Center works with him each week on independent living skills, helping him to learn the skills he needs to live on his own.



Phone Numbers:

BIT Crisis Beeper..... 909-5593
Poison Control.....1-800-222-1222
Kyle Hauth pager.....602-9611
Abuse Investigator....1-800-579-0023

Our Mission:

Empowering individuals with disabilities to pursue their choice of livelihood by providing them with opportunities to increase their contribution to the community in which they live.

When it comes to practicing good ethics, saying no to a vice is not good enough. A quality life is never achieved by focusing on the elimination of what is wrong. True success requires you to focus your mental, emotional, and spiritual energies on pursuing that which is right and good. Trying to become virtuous merely by excluding vice is as unrealistic as trying to cultivate roses simply by eliminating weeds.

--Gary Ryan Blair (Mind Munchies : A Delicious Assortment of Brain Snacks!)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

submitted by Anita Richmond

- Only 5 recycled soda bottles make enough fiberfill for one ski jacket.
- If the aluminum cans sent to the landfills were stacked, in only five weeks it would reach the moon.
- Americans throw away enough trash every minute to fill a house.
- At least 38% of the U.S. waste stream is *PAPER!*
- Each year, we make enough plastic film to shrink-wrap Texas!
- It takes almost 400 gallons of oil to produce one ton of paper.
- Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to light a 100 watt light bulb for four hours.
- Americans throw away enough glass every two weeks to fill a tower 1,350 feet high.
- Every year, the U.S. saves enough energy by recycling to supply Los Angeles with 10 years worth of energy.
- Americans throw away the equivalent of 400 million trees in newsprint each year!

Renew, Reuse, Recycle