



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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New website helps Warren County adolescents with disabilities prepare for adulthood

(Lebanon, OH) – Since 2017, The Warren County Board of Developmental Disabilities (WCBDD), Warren County Educational Service Center (WCESC), Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD), and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), have worked together to provide families, agencies, educators, and businesses with transition tools to better prepare and support individuals with disabilities. Recently, the team was pleased to announce the launch of the Warren County Transition Network website, intended to help Warren County adolescents navigate their transition to adulthood.

Utilizing grant monies through the Ohio Center of Autism and Low Incidence (OCALI), the website is the product of Multi Agency Planning (MAP), a collaborative process through Employment First. After hours of planning and consulting with educators, parents, agency personnel, and community businesses, the team is hopeful the website's resources will provide students and families with an accessible way to identify their needs and set goals towards a brighter future.

The main objective when creating the website, was to ensure it was accessible and easy to navigate. "We wanted to make it user-friendly," said Brittany Conner, Transition Manager for WCBDD. "Some students really are doing this on their own."

To create a user-friendly navigational experience, the website incorporates four different visual icons to assist users in identifying with what topics the website links can help. Topics include: Community, Education, Employment, and Living. By clicking each icon, users are directed to a variety of links that provide information pertaining to the corresponding icon topic.

Another helpful feature of the website is a series of checklists for parents and students to follow depending on age level. "At school meetings, there is a lot of stuff to remember. We wanted to provide checklists so they could make sure they were on track," added Conner. By selecting the student's age, the user is provided with a list of suggested activities to consider completing as they transition into adulthood.

"This is an overwhelming process for parents, and it can be scary," said Amanda Pennix, Transition Supervisor for Warren County ESC. "When school services end, it's a huge change for everyone involved. Our hope with this website is to make this a smoother transition for everyone." Pennix, Conner, and the rest of the collaborative team are optimistic the website resources will empower families, and remind them that they are not alone.

The Warren County Transition Network website is a live document and will be updated as new information is received. For more information, visit <https://www.warrencountytransitionnetwork.com/> or contact Amanda Pennix, Transition Supervisor for the Warren County Educational Service Center at Amanda.pennix@warrencountyesc.com

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