

A DAY OF ENRICHMENT

How Choice-Based Programming Promotes Whole-Person Wellness



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— Lisa Kristosik

Individuals living with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) are not defined by what they cannot do. They represent a diverse community of people with unique interests, talents and strengths. Adult day programs play a vital role in supporting these individuals who deserve access to programs that reflect that rich diversity.

“Day programs that emphasize personal choice, growth and inclusion play a crucial role in promoting dignity and purpose for participants,” says Lisa Kristosik, president and CEO of Blossom Hill, which operates residential care homes, respite services, in-home care and an adult day program called Abilities Enrichment Center. “We know that when individuals have a say in the direction their day takes, they are more prepared to relax, be comfortable, and enjoy themselves. It’s true for them just as it would be for anyone. And when they have that degree of self-determination, it makes them more open to and accepting of the enrichment they can derive from an activity.”

At Abilities, for example, each day has at least one outing scheduled away from the center, as well as a full slate of on-site activities. An outing



Working in the greenhouse at Abilities Enrichment Center

might include a trip to a zoo, museum, nature center, amusement park or baseball game. On-site activities can include crafts, games, ability-appropriate physical exercise, visits from therapy animals, music therapy, karaoke, bingo, sensory activities and movie days.

Many day programs encourage social engagement and offer tremendous value. Participants have the chance to interact with peers in a structured, supportive setting, which can lead to the development of long-term friendships. Group activities such as games, outings or collaborative projects help participants develop essential social skills — such as listening, empathy and cooperation — that are key to successful community integration.

Additionally, community outings and partnerships allow participants to engage with the broader public, helping to break down societal barriers, challenge stigmas and promote a culture where individuals with IDD are recognized as full participants in society.

True enrichment comes from the meaningful choices that enable individuals to craft their own experience. It’s important to research a day program that best fits the needs of the individual. Whether it’s gardening in a greenhouse, dancing in music therapy, exploring during a community outing or enjoying adaptive physical activity, programs should be designed to engage the whole person. Personalized, choice-based day programming can foster growth, independence and joy, one individual at a time.

Ultimately, the main goal of any adult day program should be to help individuals live as independently as possible on their own terms. Whether that means managing personal tasks more effectively, making decisions about their own schedule, or navigating their communities with greater ease, the right day program can become a foundation for greater autonomy.

The more individuals are empowered to make choices and develop skills, the more confident they become in directing their own lives.

There is beauty in every life.



Abilities Enrichment Center is a day program designed and built by Blossom Hill, which has more than a half-century of loving care in Northeast Ohio. We designed Abilities to offer nurturing opportunities to individuals across all levels of care, from those with the least to the greatest level of independence. Our facility has an on-site nurse to care for individuals with medical needs. We believe every individual can benefit from a variety of activities, and should be able to take part in them. Opportunities for experiences, peer and community interaction, enrichment ... and fun.

For more info, call (440) 389-3490, or visit blossom-hill.org/abilities-enrichment-center and take our virtual tour.



A Day Program by Blossom Hill