

**Richland County Board of
Developmental Disabilities**

Vision 2022 - 2024

Strategic Plan 2023



Mission: Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities is dedicated to supporting people to be valued members of their community and to live the life they desire.

Vision: Richland County is a community that values and respects the abilities of all people.

**Richland County Board of
Developmental Disabilities
Board Members:**

Stephen Swank, President

Richard Otto, Vice-President

Amanda Chapman, Secretary

Michael J. Howard

Tera Myers

Mike Ziegelhofer

Regina Jefferson

Michele Giess, *Superintendent*

Planning

During the planning process for 2022 - 2024, the Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Richland Newhope) developed a three-year strategic plan that set priorities for the agency. This year, we reaffirmed the five values central to the achievement of our mission: Dignity & Respect, Personalized Service, Community, Excellence, and Accountability. During the planning cycle for 2023, we revisited each of the goals established in the prior year. Some goals were slightly altered while a few new goals were added to the annual plan. This document represents the product of that effort and will guide our priorities into the coming years

As a funder of services for people with developmental disabilities, Richland Newhope continues to connect people to paid providers and natural supports in the community to meet their individualized needs, as stated in their person-centered plans. We continue to be a direct service provider for individuals ages birth to three as a part of our Early Intervention program. We also provide extensive residential supports to those that live in our licensed homes.

"Newhope staff helped us through the application process for both independent provider and agency provider processes. The availability and flexibility to meet at times that were most convenient for us was appreciated. Newhope staff didn't hesitate to dig deeper to find answers; whether that was researching or networking, they left no stone unturned. Our family appreciates the staff, and we are fortunate to have them as a resource for IP and agency needs."

-Parents of enrolled children

Person-Centered Excellence (PCE)

Three key outcomes have been identified as priorities for Newhope's Person-Centered efforts:

For the Individuals:

Individuals are valued members of the community through chosen, meaningful connections, and relationships.

For the Employees:

Employees are empowered to support individuals to live, work, and participate in their community.

For the Organization:

All aspects of Richland Newhope will be engaged in supporting a balance between what is important to and important for individuals to have meaningful lives.

Person-Centered Excellence

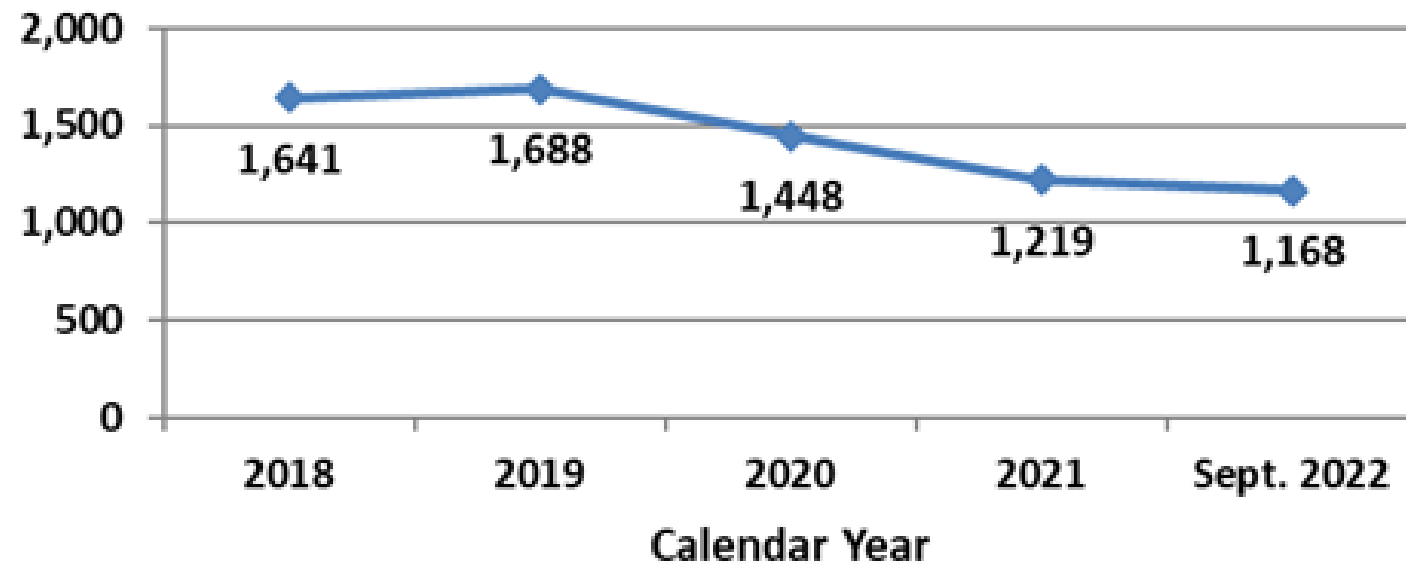
Beginning in late 2010, Richland Newhope invested in the goal of truly becoming an organization that exhibits Person-Centered Excellence (PCE). Newhope invested in training for its Leadership Team and Individual Consultants in the principles, skills, and techniques on which person-centered thinking and planning are founded. Newhope continues to invest in this goal by expanding Person-Centered Training to Direct Service Providers, Independent Providers, Provider Agencies, and Community Agencies. Our goal is to use person-centered thinking and planning skills to learn what is important to those we support and to help them live the lives they choose. We continue to use stories about those we support to celebrate their successes across the agency and highlight their strengths and value in their relationships and community.

"Just apply yourself and keep looking. If you don't think there's a job out there for you, there definitely is. There's a job out there for everyone."

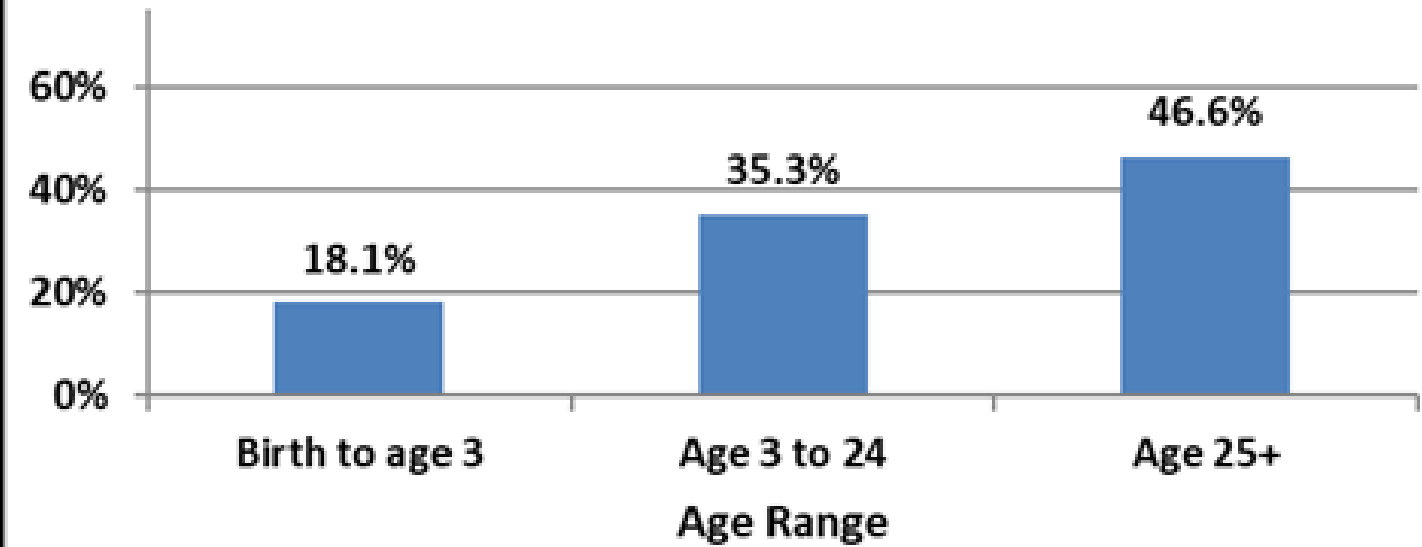
- An individual served

Data

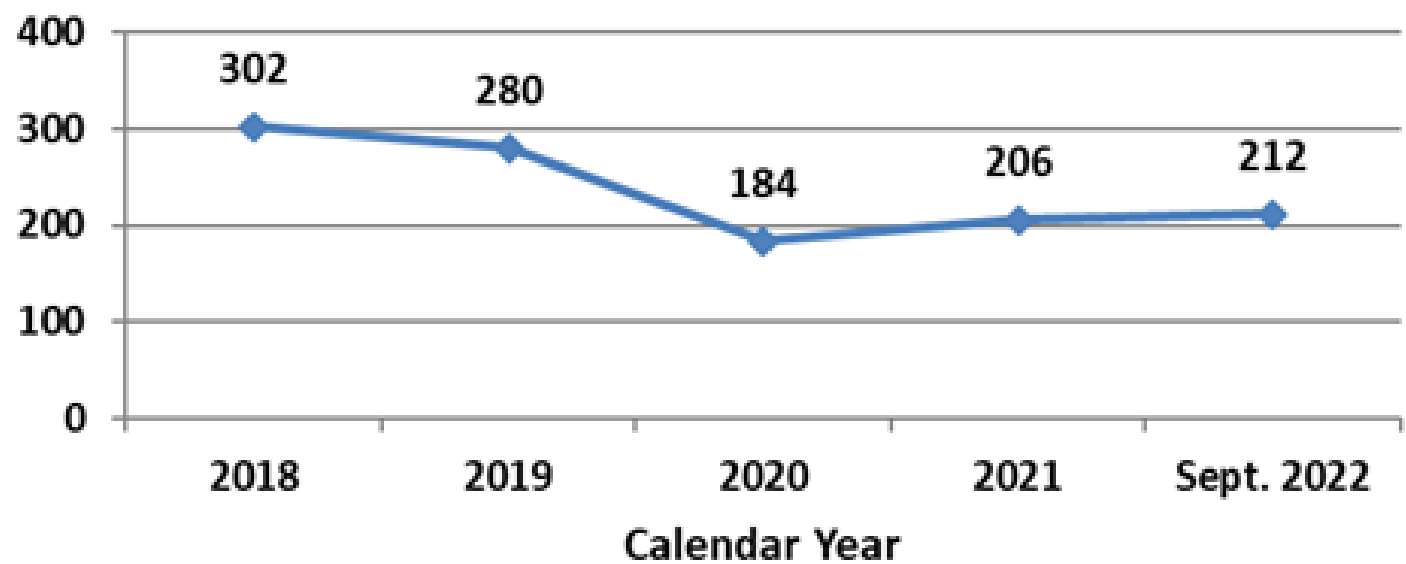
Individuals Served by the Richland County Board of DD (YTD)



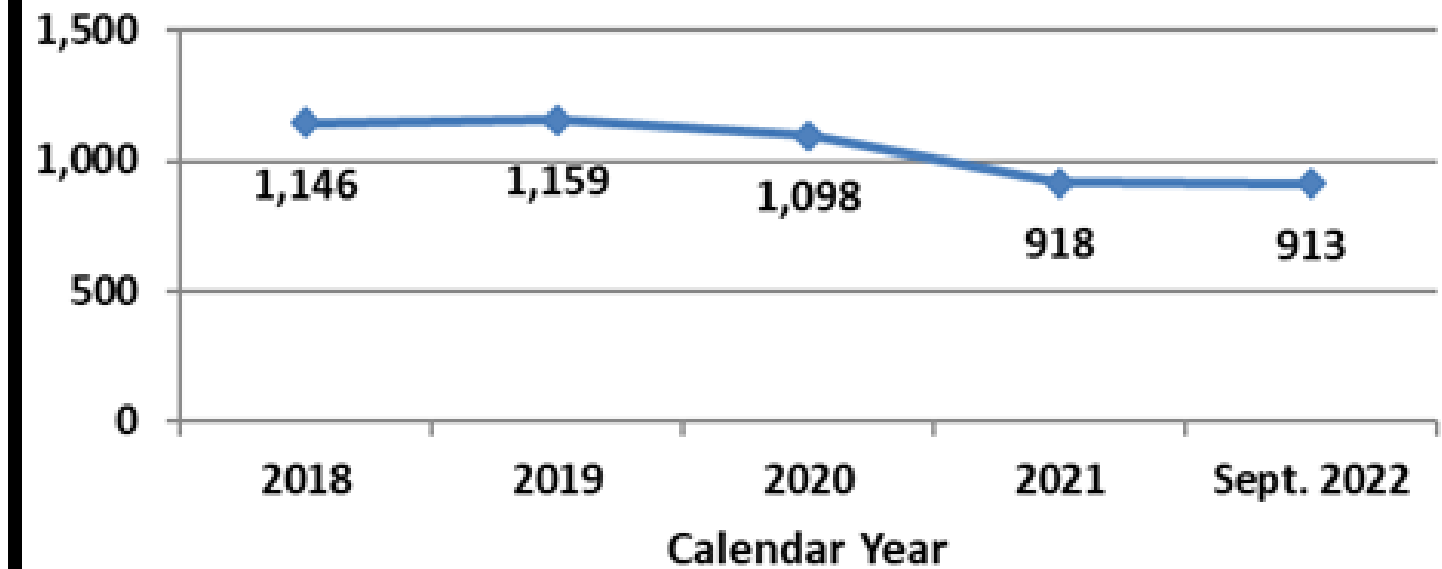
Individuals Served by Age Range by the Richland County Board of DD
(1,219 Individuals were served in 2021.)



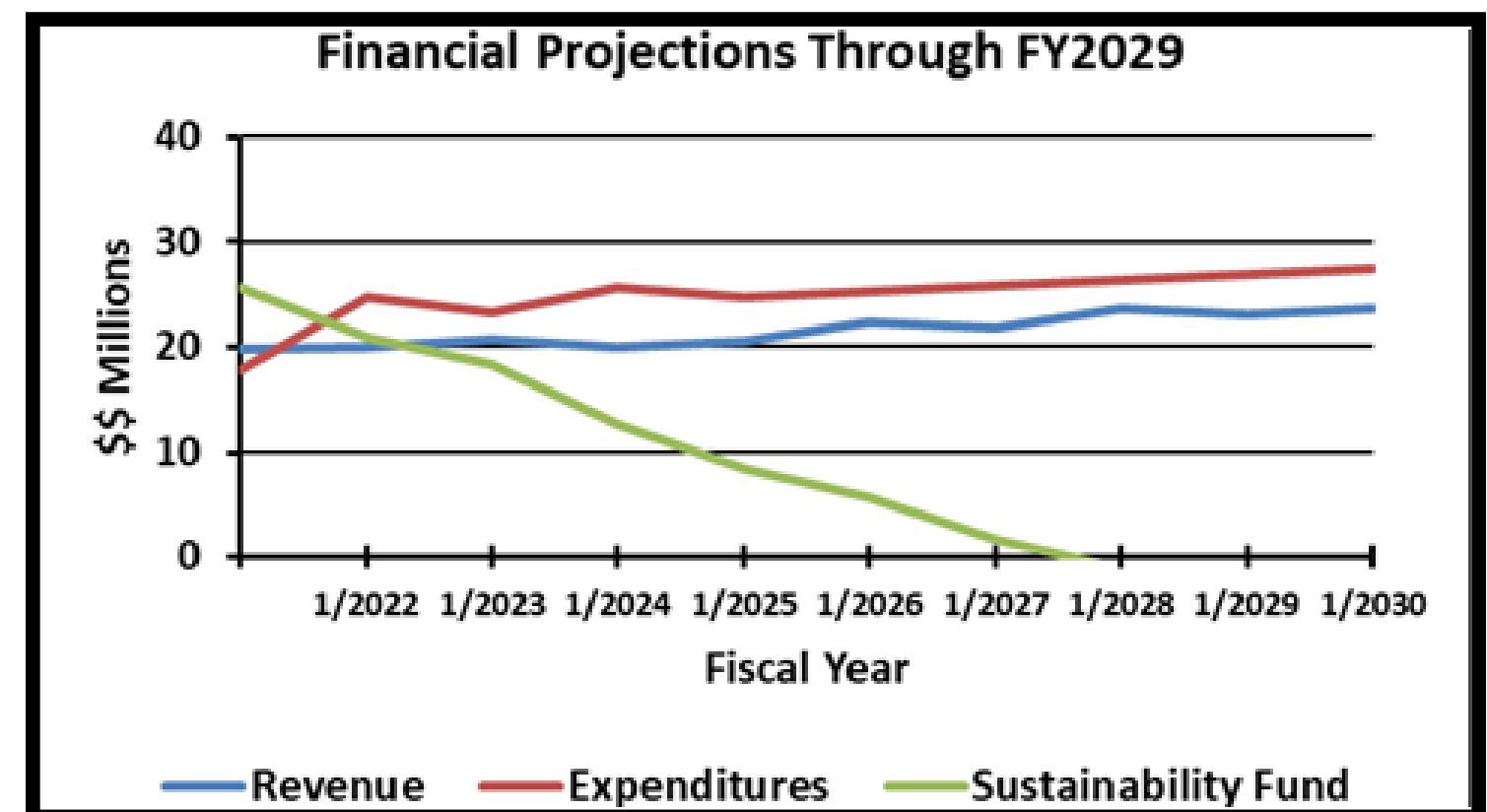
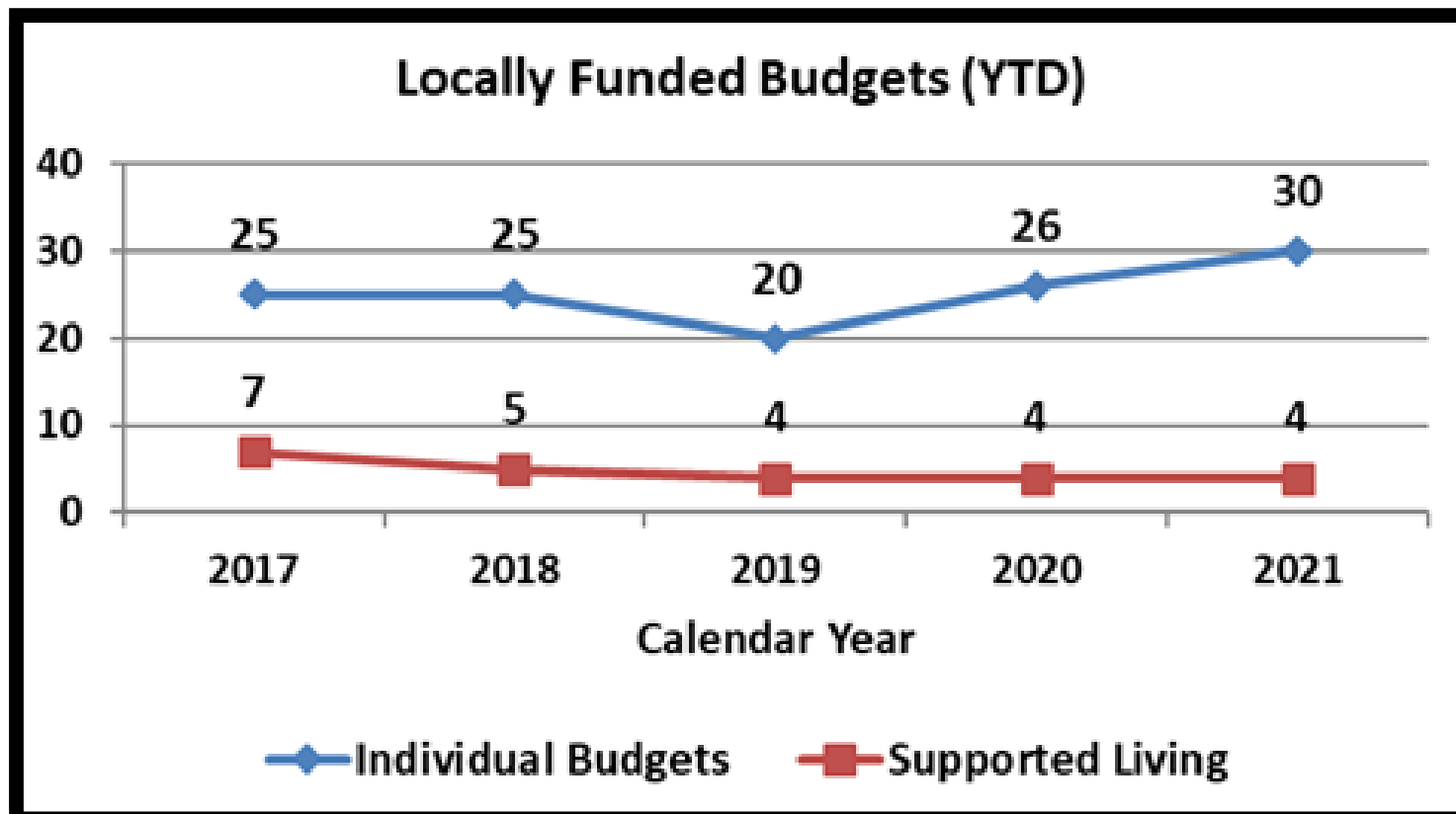
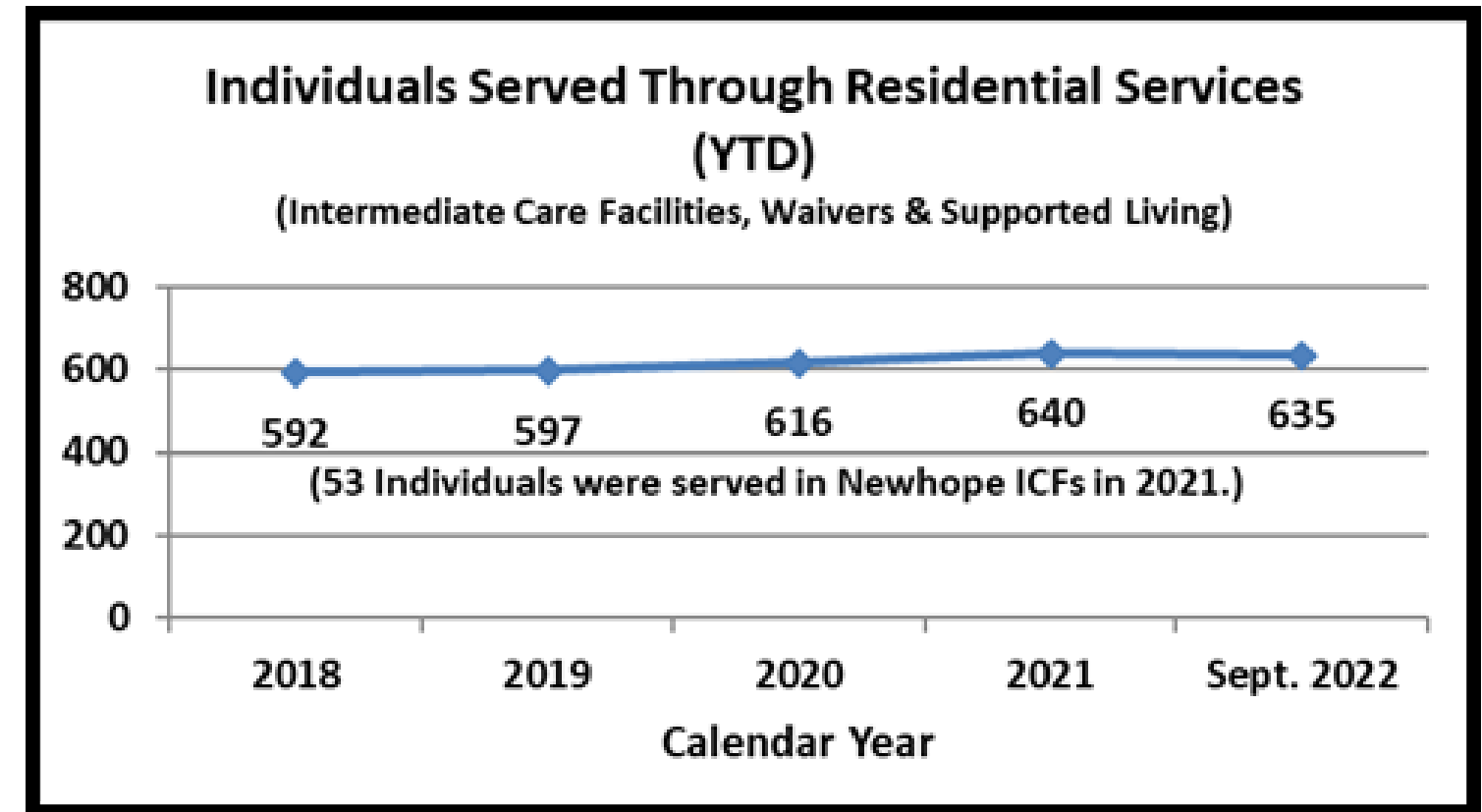
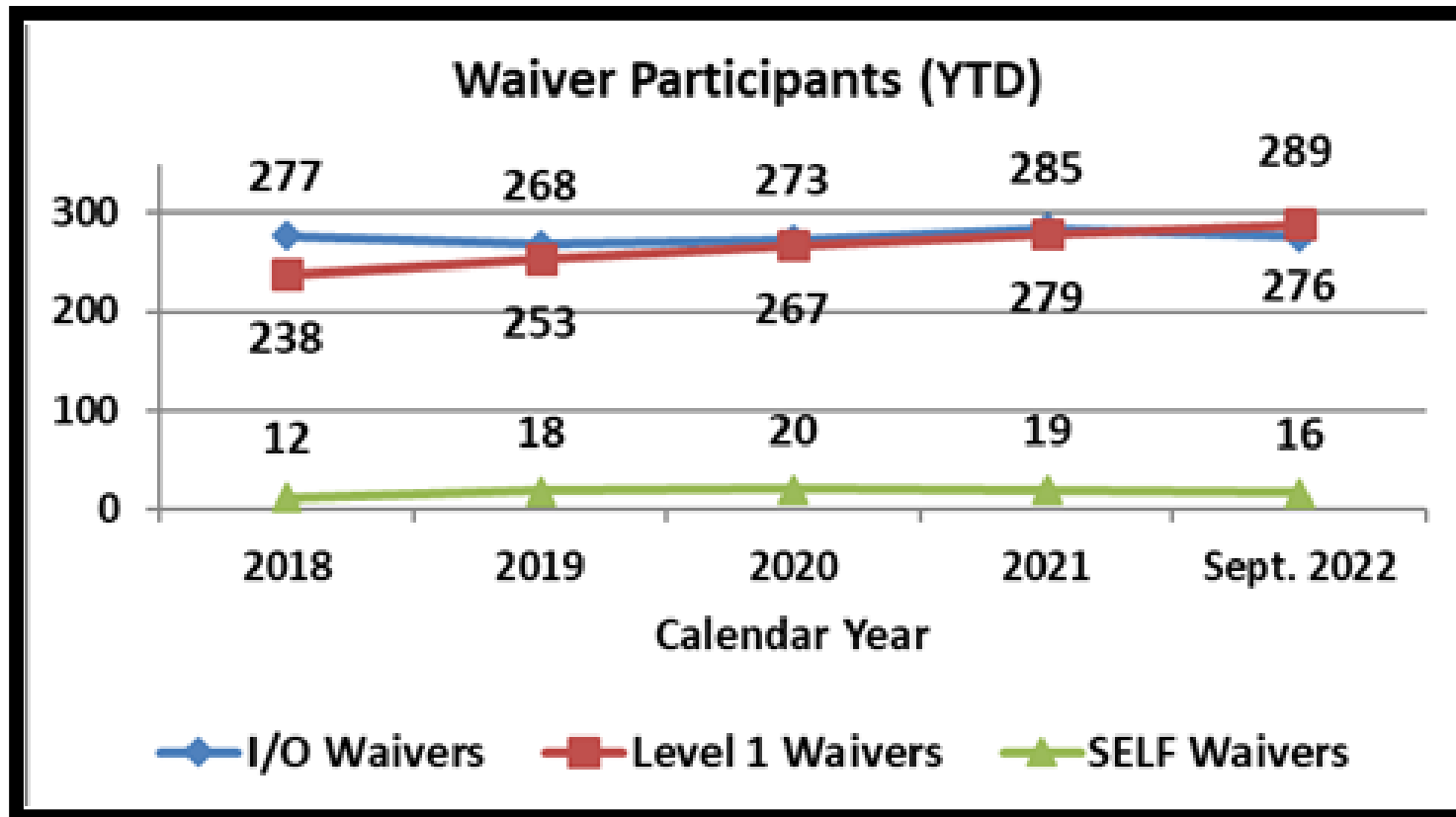
Individuals Served by Early Intervention (YTD)



Individuals Served by the Service & Support Administration Department (YTD)



Data



Values

Dignity and Respect

- All individuals have an inherent right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- The agency values its employees and promotes a positive working environment.



Community

- Individuals are encouraged to be engaged in the community.
- Agency partnerships improve the quality of supports and provide opportunities for individuals and families.



Accountability

- As individuals take control and authority over their lives and resources, they assume greater responsibility for their decisions and actions.
- The agency utilizes resources in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

Personalized Service

- Individuals have the power to make decisions to truly control their lives.
- The agency fosters an environment that nurtures growth, discovery, creativity, and collaboration.



Excellence

- Individuals have access to high quality services to help them live the lives they choose.
- The agency continues to be a leader in its industry.



Individual Needs and Services

Goals

1. Review internal processes to remove unnecessary barriers to accessing resources for individuals served.
2. Ensure that all individuals are engaged in the person-centered process to the best of their ability and are supported to achieve their desired outcomes.
3. Continue to increase self-advocacy efforts throughout the county.
4. Ensure that all service coordinators are trained in the available opportunities and resources for the individuals/families. Make sure these are explicitly communicated to the individuals, families, and guardians we support as a part of the person-centered planning process.
5. Identify the many types of barriers to community participation and work to eliminate these barriers.
6. Allocate resources based on those available to address the needs of those on the waiting list.
7. Identify gaps in services and supports for individuals/families and work to eliminate these gaps.

Provider Development and Support

Goals

1. Evaluate and expand support to providers to promote quality care.
2. Continue to attract providers of desired services to Richland County.
3. Continue to find ways to positively impact the provider community.

Staff Recruitment, Retention, and Development

Goals

1. Continue to implement best practice approaches for staff retention and morale. Ensure staff appreciation occurs on a regular basis to infuse these methods into the everyday working environment.
2. Establish a clear path for advancement within the organization, encouraging professional development and succession planning opportunities and compensation.
3. Provide education and training to management and agency leadership to support professional development and future advancement opportunities.
4. Review and define the agency's telecommuting policy and practice.
5. Determine the most appropriate telecommuting accountability measures and adopt them to our practice.
6. Provide customer experience training to include interpersonal skills and conflict resolution.
7. Ensure mechanisms are in place to create a direct pathway to enter the workplace at Richland County Board of DD/Newhope.
8. Maintain progressive hiring practices to ensure a timely process.
9. Continue to evaluate and provide tools and resources for staff to complete their work functions in the most efficient way possible.

Communication (Internal and External)

Goals

1. Increase transparency through consistent delivery of internal messaging.
2. Develop comprehensive external communication programs that include brand enhancement and messaging to drive the mission, vision, and identity of the Richland County Board of DD/Newhope.
3. Foster, cultivate, and grow community relationships and collaborative community partnerships with civic/service organizations, local businesses, and other stakeholder groups.

Operations and Fiscal Accountability

Goals

1. Continue to utilize financial resources in the most efficient manner possible.
2. Seek alternative funding sources and potential collaborative funding partnerships.

Technology

Goals

1. Support individuals to maximize the use of assistive technology where appropriate.
2. Maximize the use of technology to make employees more efficient in their day-to-day work.

Facilities

Goals

1. Evaluate current facilities and assets to determine present and future needs.

Early Intervention Services

Purpose: Early Intervention (EI) is designed to promote family competence and confidence by assisting families to learn and apply strategies that will help them meet the special needs of their children with delays and/or developmental disabilities in natural environments. Each family has an Early Intervention Service Coordinator who is the primary point of contact for the family. Once a child is eligible, and services are determined, a Primary Service Provider provides regular support to the family. The Primary Service Provider is backed up by a team of other professionals who can provide services to the child and family through consultation and/or joint visits. The frequency and intensity of visits depend on the child and family's needs and the resources available. The scope of services provided by the RCBDD is specified in its plans and resolutions. Early Intervention services are provided to families with children who have been determined eligible under ORC 5123-10.

Child Assessment: A Child Assessment is completed by the child's team to determine the child's strengths and needs in the family's everyday routines. The family identifies their priorities and their routines to focus on the intervention services. The family and members of the Early Intervention team then develop an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), which identifies parent-driven outcomes. The IFSP includes services necessary to meet the outcomes. The IFSP is reviewed at a minimum of every six months to assure that outcomes are achieved and modified as needed. Annually re-determination of eligibility (if applicable) is completed to determine if the child continues to be eligible for Early Intervention. A child assessment is completed annually to obtain information about the appropriateness of current services, determine if there are other needs to be addressed, and/or if the child has reached age-appropriate skill levels and no longer needs EI services. When families exit the program, they are asked to complete an Early Intervention Survey. This gives us feedback to assure that we are successful in following the key principles for providing Early Intervention services in natural environments and that evidence-based best practice is achieving the outcomes desired.

Services: Services available from the Early Intervention program include: 1) service coordination 2) special instruction by certified Developmental Specialists who assist families in learning and applying various approaches that will help families meet the needs of their children, (3) other professional services as identified as part of the plan and (4) coordination of other EI services needed to meet outcomes not provided by RCBDD EI program.

Early Intervention Services (Cont'd)

Projected Number Served: Based on previous data, we anticipate for Calendar Year 2023, more than 200 referrals will be scheduled to determine eligibility for Early Intervention services. The average enrollment ranges from 115 to 120 at any given moment since families are entering and exiting the program continuously throughout the year.

Resources Available During 2023: Services provided by the Early Intervention program areas are outlined in RCBDD plans and Board resolutions. For 2023, the Board can allocate up to three fulltime equivalent (FTE) Service Coordinator positions and up to three Developmental Specialists. They are typically the primary service providers. The RCBDD will support the families to prioritize their own needs and identify outcomes desired within the parameters established in applicable law, the RCBDD plans, and the resources available.

Organization Structure: Under Federal and Ohio law, the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities is currently responsible for implementing and overseeing the Early Intervention program throughout Ohio. The RCBDD provides specified Early Intervention services in accordance with Board resolutions and available resources.

Public Relations Activities/Schedule of Events: The Early Intervention program is represented on local and state committees, including Maternal Child Health Network and DODD Early Intervention Stakeholder Advisory. The EI program participates in various events for families throughout the year and at different community locations in collaboration with Richland County's Youth and Family Council. We attend Family Council as part of the community of providers of services for children in Richland County. In 2023, outreach will be collaborated with Ohio Outreach Specialist and have available information for local childcare providers, Early Head Start programs, physicians, and community events. In addition, local collaboration is made with school districts to improve transition supports for children transitioning from Early Intervention to preschool.

Service and Support Administration/Medicaid

Service Coordination: In the fall of 2022, Ohio transitioned to using the Ohio Individual Service Plan (OISP). Each individual and/or family will now be assisted in developing the OISP. Previously each county used their own version of a person-centered plan (PCP) that described what is important to and important for the individual. The OISP is one plan for all of Ohio. The OISP places the needs of the person receiving services in the center of the planning process. The person leads the planning process by making choices, setting goals, and deciding how they want to live their life. The OISP can easily transfer from one county to another county if the individual and their family moves within Ohio. The OISP shall specify the person responsible for service coordination and service monitoring as well as delivering the services. Plans shall be written in accordance with the Service and Support Administration (SSA) and Behavior Support Rules 5123-4-02 and 5123-2-06.

Technology First: In the spring of 2022, the state of Ohio developed a technology-first policy within the Ohio Revised Code (section 5123.024) to ensure that individuals with disabilities have access to technology solutions. The Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities developed their own local policy to help ensure that technology solutions are explored and documented throughout the planning process; used to the greatest extent possible to support an individual's outcomes; establish benchmarks to increase the number of individuals who are accessing and benefiting from technology solutions; increase staff's skill and ability to assist individuals with technology solutions; collaborate with community partners to increase usage and awareness of technology solutions, and review on a regular basis.

Employment Navigation: RCBDD employs two-full time Employment Navigation Specialists. An Employment Navigation Specialist specializes in knowledge about specific employment-related supports and services. They assist students, adults, parents, teachers, and schools through transitional career pathways and community connections. Employment Navigation Specialists build relationships and partnerships with businesses that would benefit students and adults on their path to employment. Through these partnership opportunities, students gain experiences surrounding their transition goals. Building relationships with the area schools is a key component of developing a successful program.

Emergency Response System: Emergency response is available 24 hours per day, seven (7) days per week through the SSA's on-call system.

We will meet with each newly certified independent provider within 60 days of the provider being selected to provide services to an individual to confirm the provider understands the individual's person-centered plan and the provider's responsibilities. The meeting also ensures that the provider has contact information for the appropriate County Board staff.

Service and Support Administration/Medicaid (Cont'd)

Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs): The MUI Unit in the SSA department manages all MUIs involving Richland County residents with developmental disabilities. Reported incidents are reviewed as potential MUI's and those incidents that rise to the level of being an MUI are investigated as appropriate. All issues involving abuse, neglect, or misappropriation are reported to Law Enforcement and/or Children's Services as appropriate.

Free Choice of Provider: Individuals will be supported to select providers of their choice from the list of all qualified and willing providers in accordance with the Service and Support Administration Provider Selection Procedure and the Home and Community-Based Services Waiver Providers Rule 5123:2-9-11. An adequate pool of providers will be maintained to meet the needs of all individuals in Richland County.

Waiting List: DODD Rule 5123-9-04 sets forth the process to administer the waiting list assessment to determine if an individual has no need, a current need, or an immediate need. As part of this process, the Individual Consultant talks with the family about their needs and various ways to address those needs, including local resources, waiver services, and the option of seeking admission into an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF). Upon completing the Waiver Waiting List Assessment, a copy of the waiting list assessment, Due Process, and the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities "Residential Options Counseling Pamphlet" are sent to the individual/guardian/family. The "Residential Options Counseling Pamphlet" outlines the differences between ICF services and waiver services. The Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities website also has a link to find ICF openings in the state of Ohio and the "Residential Options Counseling Pamphlet."

The Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities will continue to pursue all feasible options to address individuals with an identified need, including local funding, community resources, waiver services, and natural supports. Each year's waiver enrollment projections will be identified in the Level of Care component of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) Customer Relationship Management platform. Waiver expansion shall be based upon the availability of matching funds and individual need within the county. For CY 2023, we project requesting 25 Level One Waivers and 5 Individual Options Waivers to address the waiting list need.

Exit and Diversion Waivers: All individuals considering moving to an Intermediate Care Facility (ICF) with eight beds or more must be presented with alternative options, including but not limited to a state-funded Diversion Individual Options Waiver slot.

All individuals wishing to move from an Intermediate Care Facility ICF will be offered an opportunity to receive a state-funded exit waiver.

Multi-System Youth Services

Children are the future of our society. They are the building blocks of tomorrow. Children served by multiple systems in Ohio with developmental disabilities and behavioral health challenges are in desperate need of our services. County Boards have always been a beacon of hope for individuals with developmental disabilities. In partnership with the state of Ohio and our provider partners, we believe we need to enhance the resources and supports available in our communities to invest in these children today.

The county has been seeing an increase in youth who are in jeopardy of out-of-county placement due to varying needs. These youth traditionally receive services from multiple local agencies; however, their support teams are at a crossroads with figuring out how to appropriately serve them while keeping them in Richland County.

In November 2019, Newhope developed a partnership with I Am Boundless, Inc., which took over the Cherry Hill Intermediate Care Facility operations. To date, they have the capacity to support up to four young women residing in this home, receiving wraparound supports and maintaining their relationships with family and their community.

Building on the success of the first Multi-System Youth/Intermediate Care Facility, Newhope and I Am Boundless opened up a second Multi-System Youth /Intermediate Care Facility at the Evelyn Road home. There are currently four young males residing in this home.

In 2021, Newhope worked with I Am Boundless and opened a transition-age waiver home for individuals with multiple needs. This home is located on Curtis Drive and currently has two individuals residing there.

In 2022, Newhope partnered with the Clearwater Council of Government and Merakey Behavioral Health to begin offering in-home treatment to individuals that are in crisis. This system is referred to as the Dual Diagnosis Treatment Team.

In 2022, Newhope entered into a contract agreement with provider agency McElvain Homes to provide intermittent respite care for families.

In late 2022, Newhope entered into a contract with provider Adu's Care to develop a permanent respite location for individuals and families in need. This respite house will meet the needs of both individuals and families who require temporary planned and emergency respite services. It is projected to open in December 2022.

Richland County Board continues to have a strong working relationship with the local Youth and Family Council to support youth across multiple systems with complex needs. The Board has committed \$80,000 in the 2023 budget to support the youth with complex needs to access services and supports.

Employment First

Like all young people, youth with disabilities should grow up expecting to work and succeed. Employment First requires a partnership with these young job seekers and other adults with disabilities, their families, employers, providers, the government, and the community. Richland Newhope is committed to fostering this partnership while raising expectations for people with developmental disabilities.

The Employment First Initiative, established in 2012 in Ohio, makes community employment the preferred outcome for adults with disabilities. Community employment can lead to greater independence, wealth, and self-esteem. Employers benefit from having a more diversified workforce. Our communities become stronger when all citizens are able to participate and contribute in all the ways they can.

There are efforts underway throughout Ohio to expand community employment services for people with developmental disabilities. The Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) have a statewide job counselor initiative, allowing the state to support more people on a path to community employment.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed by the President in 2014, sought to update and improve the nation's workforce development system while providing supports to people with disabilities to enter and remain in competitive, integrated job settings. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act prohibits individuals age 24 and younger from working in jobs that pay less than minimum wage unless they first try vocational rehabilitation services. This Act includes exceptions for those deemed ineligible for vocational rehabilitation and allows individuals who already earn less than the minimum wage under a special minimum wage certificate through the Department of Labor to continue to do so.



Provider Recruitment and Development

An adequate pool of providers will be maintained to meet the needs of individuals in Richland county. The ability to recruit and retain a sufficient pool of quality providers is critical to give individuals a choice and to meet the growing demand for all services.

The Coordinator of Provider of Recruitment and Development position was added in 2017 in an effort to better support existing providers and actively recruit new providers to Richland County. We plan to expand this role by adding a second position in 2023 in order to help meet the growing needs in the provider community. This position helps those interested in becoming a provider by offering numerous training opportunities, help with certification requirements including CPR and first aid, ongoing provider meetings, and support with navigating the DODD system.

Self-Advocacy

Richland County's People First is a chapter of People First of Ohio. People First of Ohio assists people with disabilities who are self-advocates to talk about their needs and rights with people in their communities. Self-advocates make sure that people with disabilities have the right to do what they want in their lives, are responsible for their own choices, and have the right to live and do things in the community like every other citizen. Four self-advocate officers lead Richland County People First. The officers are voted in for a two-year term and meet on the first Tuesday of every month. During this time, speakers are brought in to train and educate on topics important to them. Five self-advocates from People First to attended the annual Synergy Conference in Sandusky, OH.

Project STIR (Steps Toward Independence and Responsibilities) is a train-the-trainer program. During the training, participants are taught communication, problem-solving, self-knowledge, self-determination, and rights and responsibilities, all through hands-on skits and role-playing techniques. The seven-week curriculum ends with a celebration of completion, leaving with a life course portfolio to use in planning meetings as a tool to voice future dreams and goals. Classes are taught at different day hab facilities and local high schools throughout the year. We currently have two certified trainers to teach the Project STIR curriculum in Richland County.



Special Olympics

The Richland County Special Olympics program provides year-round sports training and competition opportunities for children and adults with developmental disabilities. Participants gain more than just physical fitness training. By being part of Special Olympics, athletes can build friendships, sharpen their skills and talents, and gain confidence that translates into their everyday lives. Athletes and volunteers will take on new challenges and celebrate victories together!

The Board supports the Special Olympics program through the Community Education Department and with financial resources. Sporting events are primarily overseen and organized by an extensive network of community volunteers.

Richland County Special Olympics offers year-round athletic programs, including golf, track, bocce, volleyball, bowling, softball, basketball, and swimming.





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THE RICHLAND COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Richland Newhope Table of Organization

Individuals

