



Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board
314 East McPherson Street
Kirksville, MO 63501

Postage
Information

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Developmental Disability Board

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DD Resource Center
314 E. McPherson Street
Kirksville, MO 63501
(660) 665-9400
sb40@sb40life.org

Community Learning Center
1107 Country Club Drive
Kirksville, MO 63501
(660) 660-9400
clc@sb40life.org

Website: <https://sb40life.org>

April 2025

Sean's Scoop!



Autism and Neurodiversity Acceptance

Happy early Spring, or ongoing Winter (depending on the day). By the time you read this, the 16th Annual Community Engagement Conference will have been held. The theme this year was "Imagine The Possibilities", and it was a great success with our community being able to come together to learn and grow, and we're appreciative of our keynote speaker, Letisha Wexstetten. I hope all who were able to attend found the information helpful! If you have any suggestions or comments about the conference, please make sure that you email us at clc@sb40life.org. Your input is important to us.

March was Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, and there was some excellent advocacy from our people and their support staff for the ongoing advocacy needs of people with disabilities. Now we're going into April, which is known as Autism Acceptance Month. With April 2nd coming up, which is World Autism Awareness Day, some helpful thoughts on Autism and Neurodiversity seem appropriate, especially with many misunderstandings and myths often getting more attention than they deserve.

What Autism Is:

- 1. Autism is a brain condition:** Autism is a way the brain works differently. It affects how someone communicates and interacts with others.
- 2. It's a spectrum:** Autism is called a "spectrum" because it affects people in many different ways. Some people need a lot of help, and some need less.
- 3. Challenges with communication:** Many people with autism find it hard to talk to others or understand social cues like body language or facial expressions.
- 4. Repeating behaviors:** Some people with autism like to do the same actions over and over, like rocking or lining up toys.
- 5. Sensory differences:** People with autism might be very sensitive to sounds, lights, or textures, or sometimes they might not notice things others do.
- 6. Special talents:** Many people with autism have special skills, like being really good at math, art, or remembering details. But not all do, everyone with autism is different in this area.
- 7. It lasts a lifetime:** Autism doesn't go away, but people can learn to manage their challenges and use their strengths.

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You can help support activities and classes at the Community Learning Center by donating to the [Adair County DD Link](https://sb40life.org) Visit <https://sb40life.org> or scan this QR Code



Adair County DD Link

Come Join Us!

Spring has come and the weather is getting warmer! This is the perfect time to get out and visit Melissa and Angela at the Community Learning Center (CLC). The Center is a great place to meet new people, learn new skills, learn how to be your own best advocate, and meet your sensory needs while having fun. The CLC is open to the community, as space allows, for most classes and activities. You can visit the Center Tuesday - Friday from 8AM-5PM and take part in the many scheduled activities and classes available, use the Sensory Room, or just hang out. You can also make an appointment to visit on a Monday by contacting Melissa at the CLC by calling 660-665-9400.

**SB40 Community Learning Center
Activities for April 2025**

Check out the Activity Calendar for more information and times

Tuesdays - Coffee & Cards
Scavenger Hunt (4/1)
Guided Painting (4/8)
Dance Aerobics
Back to School Basics
Nature Time (4/15)
Project STIR *Registration Required
Movie Party (4/29)

Wednesdays - Crafts
Storytime (Special Activity on 4/9)
Bring Your Lunch to the Center! (4/23)
Get Fit
Circles Level 1 *Class Full

Thursday - Science Fun
Get Fit

Fridays - BINGO

For questions or more information: 660-665-9400x4 or clc@sb40life.org

In April, the CLC has some fun activities, in addition to regularly scheduled activities and classes, lined up for you! On Tuesday, April 1st come use your sleuthing skills in a fun indoor scavenger hunt. Tuesday, April 8th join us for an Easter guided painting class. Each Wednesday, Miss Bre with the Adair County Public Library will be here for story time to share stories and a craft, which is fun for visitors of all ages. On Wednesday, April 9th the library will host a very special activity during story time in observance of National Unicorn Day! They have partnered with the Kirksville Horse Center to bring horses to the Center for us to visit with. And, National Picnic Day is Wednesday, April 23rd and we invite you to bring your lunch to the Center and eat with us. If there is nice weather, we will eat outside and enjoy the Spring.

If you would prefer to receive this mailing as an email, please contact Melissa (clc@sb40life.org)



March's Spotlight Award - Community Partnership Spotlight

Adair County SB40 has selected long-time Board member, Don Crosby, as the **Community Volunteer Spotlight Award Recipient** for his service on the Adair County SB40 Board. After 20 years of volunteer services to the Board, Don will be leaving his role this Spring, where he has impacted our people and our community so significantly.

Jeff Silvernail, Vice-Chairman of the Adair County SB40 Board, who nominated Don for this award, declared "Don more recently was instrumental in brokering

the integration of sheltered workshop resources into current DD employment resources in our community, further assisting the integration of employment of the DD employed in Adair County. Don was with Alliant Bank, but has retired from that position to my knowledge & I believe is the current HR Director for the City of Kirksville, which he is retiring from soon. He helped to grow the organization into taking over targeted case management, which significantly increased funding and services in our county for the people with developmental disabilities."

Previous Adair SB40 Executive Director, Crystal Amini-Rad, who is a co-nominator of Don for this award, enthusiastically stated, "Don is one of the silent heroes of our community, who sacrifices his time and energy to support many agencies and services for community members everywhere. Adair SB40 has been incredibly blessed to have Don involved from our beginning, as our leader and our guide. His efforts have assured that SB40 operations are efficient, trustworthy and entirely focused on our mission. The staff, Board and the people with developmental disabilities, which we serve, have felt the enormous impact of Don's commitment to SB40. We are so grateful to him for all that he has achieved."

Nancy Pennington, Adair SB40 Director before Crystal, shared: "Don Crosby is one of the most kind, humble, intelligent leaders I've had the privilege to know. His dedication to the Adair County SB40 board has been admirable, taking us through leadership changes, growth, and transitions. His knowledge of regulations, policies, Sunshine Law, and Robert's Rules of Order have kept things running smoothly. His heart for service has helped to improve the lives of so many, especially those with developmental disabilities. I wish him all the best in his next adventure!"

Another previous Adair SB40 Executive Director, Deb Wohlers, agreed emphatically, "The Adair County SB40 would not have achieved all that it has done since its inception without the leadership of Don Crosby. He was there from the very beginning, providing the professional knowledge of non-profit organizations and how they function, as well as the vision of making the world a better place for people with developmental disabilities. His dedication, his hard work and his commitment to doing the right thing, set an example for the whole organization."

The original Adair SB40 Executive Director, Nan Davis, shared: "I want to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for Don and his selfless service in helping establish the administrative business practices for the Adair County SB40 Board. His expertise in budgeting and unwavering commitment to the responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars have been invaluable to the board's success. His dedication to ensuring that public funds are managed wisely has made a lasting impact on our community and the individuals this board serves. The time, effort, and leadership he has invested have set a strong foundation that will benefit Adair County and our citizens with Developmental Disabilities for years to come. As he steps away from this role we hope he realizes that his contributions are deeply appreciated. His public service has made a meaningful difference, and I am honored to have worked with him to launch the SB40 Developmental Disability Board in its early beginnings."

Sean Jacob, current Adair SB40 Executive Director, who also co-nominated Don, stated, "Don 100% deserves this recognition for all he has done for our people and our community. He has been a strong voice and advocate for people with Developmental Disabilities. I want to echo how deserving he is of all the comments above, and want to especially iterate the massive gap that is left behind by Don not being on our board in the near future. He will be greatly missed, and we did not want his time and dedication to our community to be underestimated."

If you would like to nominate a great candidate for a monthly Spotlight Award, Adair County SB40 accepts nominations. Anyone can make a nomination. Nominations can be made in any of the four following categories:

- Kids Inclusion Spotlight Award for children in kindergarten - 8th grade
- Youth Leadership Spotlight Award for youth in grades 9-12
- Community Volunteer/Partner Spotlight Award (any age)
- Entrepreneur or Employee Spotlight Award (any age)

In March 2026, all monthly Spotlight Award winners will be recognized at the annual awards banquet. Nominations can be made throughout the year by visiting the Adair County SB40 website or by contacting an SB40 staff member to assist you at (660) 665 - 9400. You can also find more information about the four nomination categories by visiting Adair County SB40's website, <https://www.sb40life.org>.



Sean's Scoop Continued

What Autism Is Not:

1. **It's not a sickness:** Autism is not a disease or something that needs to be cured. It's just how some brains are different.
2. **It's not caused by bad parenting:** Autism is not caused by how someone was raised. It happens because of how the brain works.
3. **It's not the same for everyone:** Every person with autism is different. If you've met one person with autism you've met one person with autism. Some may talk a lot, others may not talk at all, and some may need more help than others.
4. **It's not about intelligence:** People with autism can be very smart, but they think and learn in different ways.
5. **It's not a mental illness:** Autism is not a mental illness. It's a different way of experiencing the world.

The Importance of Early Support:

1. **Start early:** Getting support early, like therapy or special teaching, can help kids with autism learn important skills.
2. **Help with communication:** Early support can help kids learn to talk, understand others, and make friends.
3. **Building routines:** Kids with autism often feel better when they have predictable routines. This helps them know what to expect every day.

Signs to Look For:

1. **Hard for them to talk or interact:** A child might not talk, have trouble understanding what others say, or not look people in the eye.
2. **Unusual behaviors or interests:** They might focus on one thing all the time, like a certain toy or topic, or do the same thing over and over, like spinning in circles.

How to Support Kids with Autism:

1. Schools, families, and communities can support kids with autism by accepting them for who they are, not trying to "fix" them.
2. Encourage their strengths and help them learn new skills in a way that makes sense for them.
3. By understanding and supporting people with autism, we help them feel included and accepted, and they can live happy, fulfilling lives.

Neurodiversity vs. Neurotypical:

1. **Neurodiversity** means that there are many ways for brains to work. People with autism are part of neurodiversity—they think and process information differently.
2. **Neurotypical** refers to people whose brains work in a more common way. But just because someone is neurotypical doesn't mean they are better or smarter than someone with autism.
3. **Everyone is unique:** It's important to accept that everyone's brain works differently, and that's okay. We all have our own strengths.

Adair SB40 is here to support people with developmental disabilities like Autism with the planning process, which can be challenging, those who fall within the autism spectrum or have some neurodivergence, as well as those who are neurotypical. If we don't know the answers, we certainly will work to find the answers for our people and their families.

According to the
National Autistic
Society—

8/10
of autistic people
experience mental
health problems.

Only 26%
of autistic pupils
feel happy at
school.

Only 30%
of autistic people
are in any type of
employment.

