

HOPE HAPPENINGS

MARCH 2026 EDITION

Seeing Potential - Inspiring Opportunities

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HOPE Services is making the switch to a digital newsletter, and we don't want you left behind! Going digital means you'll get updates faster, access links easily, and never worry about missing an issue.

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- Follow the link:
<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/uTHCLmJ>
- View online anytime:
www.henrydd.org/resources/newsletters
- Follow us on Facebook: [HOPE Services – Henry County Board of Developmental Disabilities](#)



Join us online and keep up with the latest news, events, and stories from HOPE Services – Henry County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

Click, scan, or follow—just don't miss out!

March is Developmental Disabilities Month

March is Developmental Disabilities (DD) Awareness Month, a time to celebrate inclusion, promote understanding, and recognize the many contributions of individuals with developmental disabilities in our community.

Throughout the month, HOPE Services will be out and about spreading awareness in fun and meaningful ways! Keep an eye out for our DD Awareness billboards around the county, and you may even spot us reading to 3rd-grade classrooms, sharing messages of kindness, acceptance, and inclusion with our youngest community members. We'll also be attending city council and county commissioners meetings, where official proclamations will recognize March as Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

The next Board Meeting will be held
Wednesday, March 18, 2026 at 4pm
HOPE Services Activity Center

Want to help spread the message even further? Stop by the HOPE Services office to pick up a DD Awareness magnet—perfect for your car, fridge, locker, or anywhere you want to show your support! Magnets are available for a suggested donation of \$5.00, with proceeds supporting awareness efforts and programs.

Together, we can build a more inclusive community—one conversation, one classroom, and one magnet at a time.

☛ Be sure to check out Page 2 for a full list of upcoming March events!

March is DD Awareness Month!
 Promote Inclusion • Celebrate Abilities • Support Awareness

WATCH PARTY
 ADVOCACY DAY
 at the
 STATEHOUSE

Join us for a Watch Party and Livestream of Advocacy Day at the Ohio Statehouse, where individuals, families, providers, and advocates from across the state come together to raise their voices for people with developmental disabilities. Advocacy Day is an opportunity to learn about important issues, hear from state leaders, and speak up about the services and supports that help individuals live, work, and thrive in their communities. Whether you're new to advocacy or a longtime supporter, this is a great way to learn, connect, and be part of the conversation—no travel required!

Snacks Provided.

Wednesday, March 4th, 2026
 10:00 - 11:00 am
 HOPE Services Activity Center
 135 E Maumee, Ave., Napoleon, OH

All are cordially invited to attend and be a part of this moment. Please RSVP to Keri Bunke 419-599-2892 or kbunke@henrydd.org

thanks for your support
Magnets - \$5.00*
 HOPE SERVICES
 *Proceeds go to Voices of HOPE - Self-Advocacy Group

Show your support for Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month with our Orange DD Awareness magnets!

Every magnet makes an impact.
 Magnets: \$5.00

Stop in at HOPE Services front desk to grab one (or a few!) and stick them everywhere to help spread awareness all month or forever long!

135 E Maumee Ave, Napoleon, OH
 Mon-Fri 8am-4pm



World Down Syndrome Day 2026
 Together Against Loneliness

WE WANT EVERYONE TO KNOW THAT MARCH 21ST IS WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY. BUT HOW?

THE ANSWER IS SOCKS!! ON 21 MARCH, WE WEAR OUR BOLDEST, BRIGHTEST, MOST EYE-CATCHING SOCKS.

GO GREEN FOR CP!
WEAR GREEN MARCH 25TH
TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR CEREBRAL PALSY
#GOGREEN4CP

Parent Support Meeting
Tuesday, March 24th at 6:00pm
 Hope Services Activity Center

Parent Support Meeting: Special Documentary Viewing
 for parents, caregivers or family members of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities
 Feature Presentation: "Unseen" – A Documentary Screening

Join a supportive community of parents and caregivers for individuals with developmental disabilities for an evening of connection, understanding, and shared experiences.

This special meeting will include a viewing of the powerful documentary "Unseen", which sheds light on the realities, challenges, and resilience of families navigating life with developmental disabilities.

Event Highlights:
 Screening of "Unseen" Documentary
 Group discussion and reflection
Who Should Attend:
 Parents, guardians, providers, caregivers, and family members of individuals with developmental disabilities.
 Please RSVP to harc43545@gmail.com



March Calendar 2026 Adult Calendar Ages 16 and Up

Contact Randy Barnes at 419-591-6798 or 419-599-2892 to sign up and pay **ONE WEEK** prior to the event.



Sunday, March 8, 2026	Indy Fuel @ Toledo Walleye Hockey	3:30 p.m. - 10:00 a.m.	\$30.00	Huntington Center--Toledo
Wednesday, March 11, 2026	Cook Night	5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.	\$5.00	HOPE Activity Center
Saturday, March 14, 2026	Monster Jam 2026	10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.	\$50.00	Huntington Center--Toledo
Wednesday, March 25, 2026	BINGO	6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.	\$5.00	HOPE Activity Center

Kids Calendar Ages 6-15

Saturday, March 7, 2026	Giraffes Can't Dance	12:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	\$50.00	The Crosswell--Adrian, Michigan
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Reminder



All HARC events can be found on <https://www.henrydd.org/events/category/harc/>
The 3 month calendar of events will show the 1st of each month on the Events Page as well.

Or follow Rec and HOPE on Social Media!

HARC: <https://www.facebook.com/harchenrycounty>

HOPE: <https://www.facebook.com/HOPEservicesHenryCountyBoardofDD>

2026							MARCH						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
							8	9	10	11	12	13	14
							15	16	17	18	19	20	21
							22	23	24	25	26	27	28
							29	30	31				



Let's get COOKING

**Cook Night sponsored
by HARC Inc.**



Our recent Cook Night was a delicious success! Participants worked together to prepare a hearty lasagna soup, learning kitchen skills like measuring, chopping, seasoning, and safe food handling along the way. To top it off, everyone enjoyed a sweet treat – strawberry angel food dessert – the perfect ending to a fun and flavorful evening.

Beyond the food, Cook Night is all about building independence, confidence, and connection. It was great to see teamwork, creativity, and plenty of smiles as everyone shared in the process and the final meal.

We're already looking forward to our next Cook Night and more opportunities to learn, cook, and enjoy time together!

This month's Cook Night was a hit as everyone came together to prepare a delicious down-home meal featuring a creamy copycat Cracker Barrel hashbrown casserole, fluffy scrambled eggs, savory sausage links, and golden biscuits coated with cinnamon sugar for the perfect sweet crunch.

Participants worked together to measure, mix, and cook each dish – filling the kitchen with mouthwatering aromas and plenty of smiles. The evening wrapped up with a shared meal that everyone was proud to have made from scratch. It was a fun and tasty way to build cooking skills, teamwork, and confidence in the kitchen!

If you are interested in joining the group sign up by contacting Randy Barnes at 419-591-6498 or 419-599-2892. Hope to see you next month!



THE 9th ANNUAL FILLING HOME

BUDDY BUMPER BOWLING

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2026

RIVER CITY BOWL-A-WAY
380 INDEPENDENCE DR. • NAPOLEON, OH

9:30 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M.

JOIN US FOR A FUN FILLED MORNING OF BOWLING WITH FRIENDS
FOLLOWED BY A PIZZA LUNCH!

EMAIL PARTICIPANT NAMES & STAFF COUNT TO
SARAH JACKSON AT
sjackson@fillinghome.org
BY MARCH 13th.

TO COVER THE COST OF 2 GAMES OF BOWLING AND PIZZA,
\$10.00 PER PARTICIPANT AND \$5 PER STAFF MEMBER
(PIZZA ONLY)

PAY PRIOR TO OR ON THE DAY OF THE EVENT!

DON'T FORGET TO WEAR GREEN!

SNOWBALL FIGHT



Voices of HOPE Annual Snowball Fight Brings Advocates Together

Our Voices of HOPE Annual Snowball Fight was a huge success and a whole lot of fun! Advocates from Henry, Fulton, Williams, Putnam, and Paulding counties came together for an evening filled with laughter, connection, and friendly competition.

We were also excited to welcome Heather Leader from SafeInHome, who shared helpful information about remote supports and assistive technology. Her presentation highlighted ways technology can increase independence, safety, and choice for individuals in our communities.

Events like this remind us how powerful it is when advocates come together sharing ideas, learning from one another, and building friendships along the way. Thank you to everyone who joined us and helped make the night such a memorable one!



What Is Voices of HOPE?

Voices of HOPE is our self-advocacy group made up of individuals who are passionate about speaking up for themselves and others. The group focuses on building confidence, developing leadership skills, and creating opportunities for members to make their voices heard in the community. Through meetings, activities, and special events, Voices of HOPE encourages independence, inclusion, and positive change for people of all abilities.



Voices of HOPE Celebrates “Our Voice, Our Strength”

Voices of HOPE recently enjoyed a pizza party provided by NOWAC after winning the 2026 theme contest with Our Voice, Our Strength. The celebration recognized the creativity and strong advocacy of our self-advocates.

During the event, members reflected on what advocacy means and how our voices are stronger when we work together. Advocates also completed a community project by assembling Calming Kits to support individuals with sensory needs.

The kits are now being prepared for distribution to local law enforcement and throughout the community to promote understanding, safety, and support. Thank you to NOWAC and to everyone who helped make this event meaningful and successful.





2026 State Games

Special Olympics

February Wrap-Up: A Month of Championships, Milestones, and Hard Work

February was a busy and exciting month for Henry County Special Olympics as we wrapped up the winter sports season for competition cheer, basketball, and swimming—all leading to the 2026 Special Olympics Ohio Indoor Winter Games held February 20–22 in Columbus. Our athletes, coaches, and volunteers represented Henry County with incredible sportsmanship, determination, and pride.

Cheer Exhibition With Defiance County Special Olympics

Early in February, our Competition Cheer Team held a joint Cheer Exhibition with Defiance County Special Olympics. We were fortunate to have several cheer competition judges join us and provide both teams with valuable feedback as they prepared for their road to State. This exhibition allowed the athletes to perform in a supportive environment and receive constructive notes on what to improve. We extend a sincere thank you to our friends at Defiance County for attending and to the judges who donated their time and expertise. The goal is always continuous improvement and building confidence, and both teams should be incredibly proud of their hard work and growth.

State Competition Cheer – GOLD!

The weekend officially kicked off on Friday, February 20, when our Competition Cheer Team took the mat and brought home 1st place in their division. Their energy, precision, and team spirit truly shined. Athletes: Caty Kuehner, Jordyn Beilharz, Hannah Damman, Dallas Cupp, TJ Stover, Jessica Clapp, Bishop Nieto, Joey Kuehner, Adrienne Gerken, Breckin Maas, Jacob Parry, Caitlin McCafferty, and Linda Baser Coaches: Kendyl Burkey, Amanda Seiler, Carley Beman, Krysta Delgado, Lydia Kuehner, Zach Parcher, and Anthony Delgado

Swimming at OSU – A Beloved Experience

On Saturday, February 21, our swimmers competed at the McCorkle Aquatic Pavilion—an inspiring venue used by many elite athletes.

Our team achieved excellent results: Krysta Delgado: 3rd – 25 Freestyle; 4th – 50 Freestyle, Shyann Roehrs-Hale: 3rd – 50 Freestyle; 4th – 25 Freestyle, David Rose: 1st – 25 Backstroke; 3rd – 25 Freestyle, Phillip Brown: 2nd – 25 Freestyle; 2nd – 25 Backstroke, Savannah Rose: 6th – 25 Backstroke; 2nd – 25 Freestyle, Jaeson Donnett: 1st – 25 Freestyle; 3rd – 25 Backstroke

Division 3 Basketball – SILVER in Their First State Appearance

Also on Saturday, our Division 3 Team White played their way into the championship after defeating Medina County 45–41. On Sunday morning, they faced Miami County, working hard but ultimately falling short with a score of 56–37, earning Silver. This was Team White's first-ever appearance at State, making their accomplishment even more special. Their hard work, teamwork, and perseverance throughout the season were outstanding. The D3 Men's team consists of Brett Mason, Anthony Delgado, Skylar Miller, Jacob Heath, Tyler Silveous, Tracy Rose, and Zach Parcher

River Rivalry – Basketball & Community Spirit

On February 4, we joined Defiance County for the annual River Rivalry. It was a fantastic night filled with fun, friendship, and basketball pride. Henry County looks forward to hosting this event next year.

Powerlifting Success at Mercer County's Sweetheart Meet

On Valentine's Day, our powerlifting team competed at the Sweetheart Meet, bringing home impressive finishes and several new personal records: Jacob Parry – 6th; PR in deadlift, Anthony Delgado – 4th, Zach Parcher – 3rd, Tyler Silveous – 2nd; PRs in deadlift & bench, Job Knepper – 1st; PR in bench, Krysta Delgado – Gold & Best Female Lifter, Lydia Kuehner – 3rd; PR in deadlift This growing team continues to gain strength—physically and mentally—and they are excited for future competitions.

Spring Sports Are Beginning!

As we transition into spring, several sports are already underway or beginning soon, including volleyball, powerlifting, track & field, and esports. If you have not signed up or received practice schedules, please reach out to Zach (zmeister@henrydd.org / 419-260-2176) or Renita (rkuehner@henrydd.org / 419-601-2372) right away. There's still time to join as an athlete or volunteer!

We hope everyone has a wonderful and warm beginning of spring!

COACH ZACH AND COACH RENITA

Congrats!



CONGRATULATIONS ON EARNING YOUR DRIVER'S PERMIT!

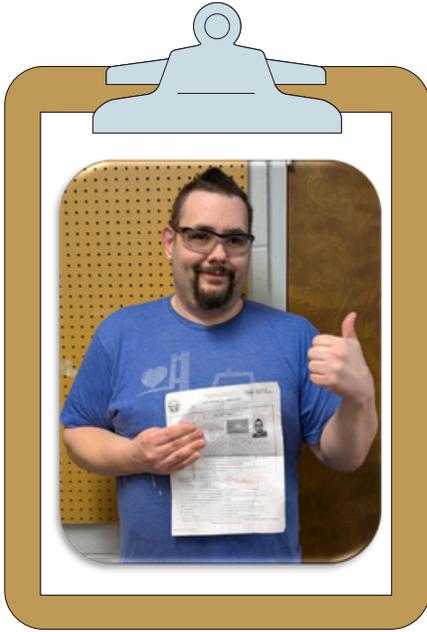
We are proud to celebrate Nate for recently earning his driver's permit!

Obtaining a driver's permit is a big accomplishment. It represents dedication, hard work, and the confidence to take the next step toward greater independence. Nate has shown dedication and determination while participating in our Driver's Permit Class. From learning road signs and traffic laws to completing practice tests and participating in interactive activities, he put in the time and effort needed to succeed.

Passing the permit test is not just about answering questions correctly – it's about understanding how to stay safe on the road and make responsible decisions behind the wheel. This achievement opens the door to new opportunities, increased independence, and expands access to employment and community activities.

We are incredibly proud of the commitment shown throughout this process. Congratulations Nate on this exciting accomplishment – the journey is just beginning, and we can't wait to see what's next!

Keep driving toward your goals!



Early Intervention Success Story



Charlie

Hello, this is Brooke Sehlmeier. I receive care for my 1 year old son through HOPE Services. He has been in physical therapy since about 4 months old. I have been extremely happy with my care for Charlie. Everyone has been so helpful in every aspect. Getting things scheduled is always quick and easy. They have gone above and beyond for any concern that I have had for Charlie. We have had hearing checks scheduled when I expressed concerns during physical therapy about how well he hears. All of the staff is always kind and friendly. Jodi is an amazing physical therapist, and because of her, Charlie is thriving. She has made sure he is meeting all of his milestones, and has great advice to get him where he needs to be. She takes the time to explain everything in detail to ensure everyone understands. Overall, I have had amazing care across the board for Charlie and I am glad I sought out HOPE Services for him.

Thank You

Honoring Caregivers

Caregivers dedicate themselves each and every day to supporting others—often placing their own needs at the bottom of the list. National Caregivers Day, observed on February 20, is a time to recognize their compassion and commitment by encouraging them to pause and care for themselves.

Below are some quick resets to experience moments of joy which are designed to be both manageable and restorative.

- Treat yourself to your favorite beverage.
- Listen to a favorite song.
- Write down one thing you're proud of.
- Call a friend.
- Take a short walk outside.
- Read something you enjoy.
- Do a puzzle or play a game.
- Watch a show you love.
- Take a warm bath or shower.
- Cook your favorite meal.
- Spend time on a hobby you enjoy.
- Say "no" to something that drains you.
- Ask someone for help.
- Put your phone away for a little while.

At HOPE Services, we believe that when caregivers are supported, they are better equipped to provide exceptional care for their loved ones at any age. While National Caregivers Day offered a meaningful moment of recognition, HOPE's commitment to caregivers' well-being continues year-round. Let's continue supporting the caregivers who give so much of themselves. If you know a family in need of support, please reach out—we are here to help. Contact your SSA or Service Coordinator at HOPE Services for more information or assistance. Today, we encourage every caregiver to take a small step toward self-care. Even the smallest act can make a meaningful difference—and caregivers truly deserve that time for themselves.

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month: The Power of Early Intervention

March is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month - a time to celebrate inclusion, promote understanding, and highlight the importance of supporting individuals with developmental disabilities in every stage of life. This month reminds us that children and adults with developmental disabilities are valued members of our communities who deserve equal opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive.

One of the most impactful ways we can support children with developmental differences is through Early Intervention especially during the critical years between ages 0 and 3

Why Early Intervention Matters

The first three years of life are a period of rapid brain development. During this time, a child's brain forms millions of neural connections that build the foundation for communication, movement, learning, and social-emotional skills. When delays or developmental challenges are identified early, targeted support can make a lifelong difference.

Early Intervention services are designed to:

- * Support speech and language development
- * Improve motor skills (walking, crawling, fine motor coordination)
- * Strengthen social-emotional skills
- * Encourage cognitive development and early learning
- * Empower families with strategies to support their child at home

Research consistently shows that children who receive services early are more likely to improve developmental outcomes and may require fewer supports later in life.

What Is Early Intervention?

Early Intervention is a federally mandated program under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). It provides services to eligible children from birth to age 3 who have developmental delays or diagnosed conditions that may lead to delays.

Services may include:

- * Speech therapy
- * Physical therapy
- * Occupational therapy
- * Developmental therapy
- * Family training and counseling

Importantly, Early Intervention services are often provided in a child's natural environment—such as the home or daycare—making learning practical and meaningful.

Signs to Watch For (Ages 0–3)

While every child develops at their own pace, consider speaking with your pediatrician if a child:

- * Is not using single words by 15–18 months
- * Has difficulty walking by 15 months
- * Avoids eye contact or social interaction
- * Does not follow simple directions by age 2
- * Loses previously learned skills

Trust your instincts. Parents and caregivers are often the first to notice when something feels different. Between ages 0 and 3, don't wait. Early Intervention services are available in every state, and referrals can often be made by parents, caregivers, or healthcare providers.

Family-Centered Support

Early Intervention is not just about therapy sessions—it's about partnership. Providers work closely with families to create individualized plans that reflect each child's strengths and needs. Parents learn practical strategies they can use every day during play, mealtime, and routines.

This collaborative approach builds confidence in caregivers and helps children practice skills consistently in familiar settings.

Promoting Inclusion Beyond Awareness

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month is about more than recognition—it's about action. We can:

- * Advocate for accessible childcare and community programs
- * Share accurate information about developmental milestones
- * Encourage developmental screenings
- * Support inclusive policies and practices
- * Celebrate the strengths and contributions of individuals with disabilities

Early support opens doors. When we identify developmental needs early and respond with compassion and evidence-based services, we empower children to reach their fullest potential.

If you have concerns about a child's development between ages 0 and 3, don't wait. Early Intervention services are available in every state, and referrals can often be made by parents, caregivers, or healthcare providers.

Together, we can build inclusive communities where every child—regardless of ability—has the opportunity to grow, learn, and shine.

EARLY INTERVENTION
PLAY GROUP

10
MARCH 2026

9:30-11AM
5:30-7PM

601 Bonaparte Dr.
Napoleon, Oh 43545

Two Opportunities Full of Family Fun

Join your Henry County Early Intervention Team on Tuesday, March 10th 9:30-11am or 5:30-7pm at Crossroads Church indoor playland for an engaging playgroup focusing on gross motor development and exploring social skills.
Can't wait to see you there!

Contact Us

HOPE Services Office	419-599-2892
Special Olympics	419-260-2176
HARC Recreation	419-591-6798

Find Event Calendars on our website.

www.henrydd.org/events

**Scan Code to sign up
for the newsletter!**



Henry County Board of Developmental Disabilities

Seeing Potential – Inspiring Opportunities

Our Mission

HOPE Services is committed to creatively working in partnership with eligible individuals and their families to discover, pursue and achieve what is important to them.

HOPE Services does not discriminate in provision of services or employment because of disability, race, color, creed, national origin, sex or age.

