



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

Postage  
Information

X

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



## Come Join Us!

Melissa and Angela would love to have you to visit them at the Community Learning Center (CLC)! It 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 Center 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**

*Check out the Activity Calendar for more information and times*

- Tuesdays - Coffee & Cards  
Dance Aerobics  
Fun with Music  
Project STIR (begins 4/9/24)  
Nature Time (4/23/24)  
Exercise Your Mind
- Wednesdays - Crafts  
Open Hearts Story Time  
Get Fit  
Game Time  
CIRCLES - Level 2 (begins 4/10/24)
- Thursday - Science Fun
- Fridays - BINGO

*\*Registration Required*

660-665-9400x4 or [clc@sb40life.org](mailto:clc@sb40life.org)

In April, Holly with the MO Department of Conservation will be back for Nature Time on Tuesday, April 22<sup>nd</sup> and Miss Bre, from Adair County Public Library, will be for Open Hearts Story Time on a new day! Miss Bre will be at the Center on Wednesdays at 1:30pm to share a story and craft. We also have two new classes on the schedule in April. Project STIR will begin on Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup> and CIRCLES Level 2 will begin on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. Both of these classes require registration in order to participate.

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



## Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board

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

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

Developmental Disability Board

Website: <https://sb40life.org>

## April 2024

### The Vital Importance of Summer Enrichment and Employment Programs for Teens and Young Adults with Disabilities

As the summer months approach, it's important to recognize the significance of enrichment and employment programs for teens and young adults with disabilities. SB40 believes that providing opportunities that empower and support these individuals is a first line to ensuring there is a successful transition to adulthood. Here are a few reasons why these types of programs are crucial:

Summer enrichment programs offer a place for teens and young adults with disabilities to develop much needed skills. Whether it's communication, social interaction, or vocational skills, these programs provide a structured environment for growth. Through tailored activities and workshops, participants can enhance their abilities, contributing to their personal and professional development.

Participation in summer programs helps grow a sense of inclusion and belonging. Teens with disabilities often face social isolation, but these programs create opportunities for meaningful interactions with peers and mentors. Building friendships and connections within a supportive community not only enriches their summer experience but also promotes social skills and self-confidence.

For young adults with disabilities, the transition from school to adulthood can be very challenging. Summer programs play a role in preparing them for this transition by offering vocational training, job shadowing, and career exploration opportunities. These experiences provide participants with the skills and confidence needed to navigate the workforce and pursue their career goals.

Employment programs provide the chance to gain real-world work experience. Through internships, job placements, or entrepreneurship opportunities, they can apply their skills in a professional setting. Having meaningful employment opportunities grows a sense of pride and accomplishment, boosting self-esteem and overall well-being.

Most summer programs facilitate the integration of teens and young adults with disabilities into the broader community. By engaging in community service projects, cultural activities, or recreational events, participants become active contributors to society. This integration not only promotes acceptance and diversity but also breaks down barriers and fosters a more inclusive society.

Northeast Missouri has several opportunities for teens and young adults to participate in during the summer including the SB40 L.I.F.E. Youth Program for youth between the ages of 13-15 years of age. New to this program is an integrative setting where youth with and without disabilities can prepare for adulthood side-by-side, learning from one another, and building positive relationships. The Vocational Rehabilitation Work Experience Program is designed for young adults who are at least 16 years of age and are beginning their Junior or Senior year. Voc. Rehab. works with several area providers who lead work experience programs that can be chosen from. Finally, the Missouri Governor's Council on Disabilities offers the Missouri Youth Leadership Forum for young adults between the ages of 16-21. This free, five-day, campus based opportunity allows the participants to be fully immersed in a campus setting while learning about advocacy, skill development, and career readiness.

For more information about any of these opportunities, please reach out to your service coordinator or Melissa at the Community Learning Center.

## Empowering Individuals: The Benefits of Competitive Wage Jobs for People with Disabilities

In our ongoing mission to promote productiveness and empowerment for people with disabilities, Adair County SB40 continually looks for ways to enhance opportunities for meaningful employment. Here, we explore the many benefits of competitive wage jobs for people with disabilities, shedding light on how these positions not only change lives but also improve our communities.

- 1. Fostering Independence:** Competitive wage jobs provide people with disabilities the opportunity to gain higher levels of independence. Securing employment based on skills and talents empowers them to become self-sufficient contributors to society, improving their sense of dignity and level of self-determination.
- 2. Economic Empowerment:** By earning competitive wages, workers with disabilities gain financial stability and security, helping them to support themselves and their families. This economic empowerment improves their quality of life and helps reduce dependence on social welfare programs, which benefits the everyone.
- 3. Promoting Social Inclusion:** Participation in competitive wage jobs makes social integration possible by providing interactions with coworkers, supervisors, and customers. These opportunities for socialization help break down barriers and combat stigma, promoting a more inclusive and diverse workplace culture.
- 4. Enhancing Skill Development:** Competitive employment offers people with disabilities the chance to develop and improve valuable skills necessary for professional and personal growth. From communication and problem-solving to time management and teamwork, these skills not only benefit them in the workplace but also in various parts of their lives.
- 5. Improving Mental Health and Well-being:** Meaningful employment has a profound impact on mental health and overall well-being. It provides people with a sense of purpose, accomplishment, and belonging, which reduces feelings of isolation and depression often associated with unemployment.
- 6. Contributing to Diversity and Innovation:** Promoting diversity in the workforce builds and encourages creativity and innovation. By using the unique viewpoints and talents of individuals with disabilities, businesses can gain a competitive edge, driving innovation and problem-solving.
- 7. Strengthening Communities:** When people with disabilities are gainfully employed, the entire community benefits. These individuals become active participants in community life, contributing to its social and economic strength while inspiring others through their achievements.



As advocates for inclusion and equal opportunities for every person, SB40 encourages you to support the rights of people with disabilities to pursue competitive wage jobs of their choice. By developing a culture of acceptance and support, we can create a society where every person has the opportunity to succeed, work, and live the life of their dreams.

Picture courtesy of supportiveconcepts.org

## Crystal's Corner



As April approaches, we're reminded of the significance of Autism Acceptance Month. It's a time for us to reflect on the diverse experiences of individuals on the autism spectrum and to foster a community where acceptance, understanding, and inclusion are paramount. At Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board, we're dedicated to promoting the well-being and empowerment of all individuals, including those with neurodivergent diagnoses.

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex developmental condition that manifests differently in each individual. While autism is characterized by challenges in social communication and behavior, it's crucial to recognize that each person's journey is unique. Within the autism community, there's a rich diversity of strengths, talents, and perspectives that enrich our society.

One important aspect to understand about individuals with neurodivergent diagnoses, such as autism, is the concept of comorbidities. Comorbidities refer to additional conditions or disorders that often coexist with the primary diagnosis. For individuals on the autism spectrum, comorbidities can vary widely and may include conditions such as anxiety disorders, ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), sensory processing difficulties, depression, epilepsy, and more.

Understanding comorbidities is essential for providing comprehensive support and care to individuals with neurodivergent diagnoses.

### Here's why it matters:

**Holistic Approach to Support:** Recognizing comorbidities allows us to take a holistic approach to support, addressing not only the core symptoms of autism but also any additional challenges individuals may face. By understanding the full spectrum of needs, we can tailor interventions and services to promote overall well-being.

**Improved Quality of Life:** Addressing comorbidities can significantly improve the quality of life for individuals with neurodivergent diagnoses. Whether it's managing anxiety, addressing sensory sensitivities, or providing support for executive functioning difficulties, targeted interventions can enhance daily functioning and overall happiness.

**Enhanced Advocacy and Awareness:** By raising awareness about comorbidities, we can advocate for better access to services and resources that meet the diverse needs of individuals with autism and related conditions. Increased understanding fosters a more inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

At Adair County SB40 Developmental Disability Board, we're committed to promoting autism acceptance and understanding throughout April and beyond. We strive to create a community where individuals of all abilities are valued, respected, and supported.

This Autism Acceptance Month, let's celebrate the richness of neurodiversity and work together to build a more inclusive world.



**Open Hearts Story Time**  
has a new day and time!  
**Wednesdays at 1:30PM**  
beginning April 3rd

**Don't forget to register for**  
**Project STIR on Tuesdays and**  
**CIRCLES Level 2 on**  
**Wednesdays!**